



**EUROPEAN NETWORK
FOR EDUCATION IN
INTERNATIONAL HEALTH**

Profile of tropEd

tropEd Secretariat

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PROFILE of tropEd

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1. DESCRIPTION OF tropEd

tropEd is a network of European institutions for higher education in International Health. It provides postgraduate opportunities for education and training contributing to sustainable development. tropEd focuses on improving the management of health services for disadvantaged populations. The innovative approach is based on mobility of people, the exchange of experiences in different disciplines and the establishment of a common standard in education and training. tropEd seeks to collaborate with other networks and institutions with similar goals.

The tropEd Programme in International Health is characterised by a unique synergy of experience and expertise of leading European institutions. tropEd prepares people to work more effectively in a multicultural environment by exposing them to multiple perspectives. tropEd offers a flexible modular structure and the Europe-wide recognition of education.

International Health in the understanding of tropEd focuses on poverty-related health problems in low and middle income countries. It includes the promotion of health, prevention and treatment of diseases, palliative care and rehabilitation. Studies of health systems, health economics, health policy and management of health services are central. International Health integrates a number of public-health-related disciplines including: anthropology, biology, clinical and nursing sciences, demography, economics, epidemiology, management studies, nutrition, psychology, sociology, statistics, travel & migrant health and tropical medicine. A gender-sensitive approach to health problems and health services analysis is emphasised.

The concept of partnership is central to tropEd. Currently, it is a registered association of 29 member institutions from 13 European countries collaborating in the provision of training in International Health. Managed by an Executive Committee and a Secretariat, it evolved from TROPMEDEUROP, the association of the Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine and International Health in Europe. The initial European partnership is gradually extending to the East and the South, particularly to low- and middle-income countries.

Postgraduate training is the major focus of tropEd, which aims to contribute to capacity-building through sustainable development of human resources, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, through the promotion of excellence in education and training. Key features include the exchange of teachers, students, knowledge and skills, and the encouragement of interdisciplinary approaches.

At undergraduate level, tropEd supports the view that medical education should include training on globally important diseases and their underlying environmental, cultural and socio-economic factors in addition to a main core of national relevance.

The Masters Programme in International Health follows a flexible modular framework for full-time or part-time study across member institutions. There are three components to the programme:

- **A taught core course**, equivalent to three months full-time study, introducing participants to the principles of International Health.
- **Taught optional advanced modules** selected according to the needs and experience of participants, equivalent to three to six months full-time and designed for maximum flexibility with a vocational emphasis suitable for a range of careers in International Health.
- **A research project**, submitted as a dissertation, equivalent to a minimum of three months full-time.

The three components will be completed in a minimum of one year to a maximum of five years. Guidance in the choice of modules and institutions and the research project is provided by a personal tutor. Successful completion of these components leads to a Masters degree either awarded by the institution where the participant initially

registers or by a consortium of institutions (joint or multiple degree).

tropEd recognition of the Masters level training is a statement about standards in education and training in the member institutions, as all provision is subject to external quality control. Eligibility for tropEd recognition demands that participants:

- study in a minimum of two member institutions in different countries and
- have at least two years of field experience in low- and middle-income countries or an equivalent professional experience by the time tropEd recognition is requested.

Collaboration of this type within Europe increases the number of institutions able to participate in educational programmes at Masters level. It is intended that components of the programme are offered by institutions in low- and middle-income countries.

Selection of participants is guided by the emphasis on a multidisciplinary approach to International Health. Students are recruited from a variety of backgrounds including medical doctors and nurses with an interest in public health and tropical medicine, social scientists, health educators and promoters, and health managers.

Approaches to Learning are varied. The focus is on adult learning emphasising a problem-based learning approach, with students choosing modules most appropriate to their needs. Staff within member institutions facilitate learning by providing materials, giving guidance and organising adequate learning opportunities such as seminars, tutorials, field visits, group work, practicals and lectures. Development and utilisation of open and distance learning is likely to play a key role as the initiative progresses.

1.1. Aims

In the field of International Health, tropEd aims to contribute to the sustainable development of human resources, particularly in low- and middle-income countries through:

- promoting excellence in education and training;
- facilitating exchange of knowledge and skills;
- encouraging interdisciplinary approaches;
- and fostering mobility and exchange of teachers and students.

1.2. Objectives

Within participating institutions, the specific objectives of tropEd are to:

- establish common standards in postgraduate education and training;
- set common criteria for quality assessment;
- promote the use of flexible modular programmes in International Health teaching and training;
- stimulate curriculum development, course design and the creation of new modules, courses and awards;
- achieve mutual recognition of courses and modules;
- increase students' access to courses without compromising quality;
- assist students' mobility;
- encourage the continuing professional development of teachers;
- develop mechanisms for the exchange of teachers;
- promote collaboration in the development and exchange of training materials;

- and encourage participation from disciplines other than the health sciences and medicine.

2. tropEd ORGANISATION

tropEd has three types of members: Institutional full members, collaborating institutions and individual members. To be a full member, an institution needs to offer at least one course or module to the tropEd Masters Programme and be recognised as an institution of higher education by a national authority. Other institutions of relevance to International Health, including those which may offer specific courses of interest to the network, but are not institutes of higher education, may join as collaborating institutions. Individuals who are active in and/or provide relevant contributions to the tropEd Network, may join the association as individual members. Current tropEd members are listed in the annex.

2.1. Member Institutions

The success of the initiative is dependent on the continuing commitment of each member institution, particularly through the persons identified as the authorised representatives and their named substitutes.

To gain and maintain membership, each institution agrees to:

- subscribe to the definition of International Health as agreed by tropEd and promote the work and purpose of the association;
- provide evidence on its work experience in low- and middle-income countries;
- offer courses or modules consistent with the objectives of the Masters Programme in International Health as approved by the tropEd General Assembly;
- obtain institutional approval for courses to be offered to tropEd;
- facilitate evaluation visits by representatives of the General Assembly and/or the Executive Committee;
- provide a regular update of courses and modules to be offered under tropEd;
- assess student effort in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS);
- pay an annual membership fee as decided by the General Assembly, which is used towards the aims of the network;
- admit participants to courses or modules;
- if offering a core course, facilitate training of students in other institutions;
- provide an agreed level of support to tropEd students;
- have an equal opportunities policy;
- participate fully in appeals from participants;
- issue transcripts or certificates with letter grades to successful participants in tropEd-approved courses;
- participate regularly in General Assembly meetings;
- provide the Secretariat with relevant information on students in the tropEd Masters Programme in International Health and other information necessary to facilitate their training, subject to current data protection legislation;
- contribute to the preparation of grant proposals or other documentation required for the application of support for tropEd activities.

To ensure a wide coverage of the subject area of International Health and interdisciplinary collaboration, tropEd institutions are encouraged to increase the exchange of staff, examiners and students.

2.1.1. Admission of Members

Institutions and individuals with substantial work experience in low- and middle-income countries offering postgraduate training programmes in International Health are invited to join tropEd. Formal applications to join the network are to be directed to the Executive Committee via the Secretariat or via a member institution.

The General Assembly designates one of its members or other approved person to visit and evaluate the educational programme and training facilities of the institution on-site and present a report to the General Assembly. The General Assembly accepts or rejects the applicant as a full member or Collaborating Institution. The new member pays the full membership fee for the year in which it joins the network.

2.1.2. Exclusion of Members

Members are expected to participate regularly in General Assembly meetings and to be in regular contact with the Secretariat. Institutions which do not participate in any of the activities or meetings or which have not paid their membership fee during the period of one year will receive a reminder from the Executive Committee/Secretariat and will be regarded as having withdrawn from the network if no satisfactory response is given within three months. Normally, members that do not offer courses or modules during two consecutive academic years will be excluded as full members, but may continue as Collaborating Institutions.

2.2. Collaboration with other Institutions, Networks and Associations

tropEd collaborates with other institutions, networks and associations in the field of International Health. It assists in the development of partner networks in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America according to guidelines set out by the General Assembly.

2.3. Management

2.3.1. General Assembly

Members of the General Assembly are:

- authorised representatives from each institutional member of tropEd (with one vote per institution);
- representatives from each collaborating institutions (without voting rights);
- individual members (without voting rights);
- the President or Vice-President of TROPMEDEUROP (extraordinary member without voting rights);
- other individuals may be invited to the General Assembly as observers.

The General Assembly has the following functions:

- Meets not less than twice per year.
- Admits and excludes members.
- Elects the Executive Committee.
- Decides on policies and procedures of the tropEd Masters Programme in International Health.
- Decides and oversees the annual workplan and budget as prepared by the Executive Committee.
- Receives the annual report including the financial report from the Executive Committee.
- Gives effectual discharge to the Executive Committee after receiving the audit report.
- Decides on membership fees.
- Establishes eligibility criteria for tropEd recognition of courses and modules.
- Oversees the process of accreditation of new member institutions and of continuing accreditation of existing members.
- Works with member institutions to establish a suitable process for the governance of tropEd-recognised

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- courses and to ensure that quality criteria are met.
 - Appoints working groups for specific tasks.
 - Receives and approves reports of working groups.
 - Reports to the TROPMEDEUROP annual meeting.

2.3.2. Executive Committee

Members of the Executive Committee are:

- the President;
- the President-Elect;
- the past President;
- the Executive Secretary; and
- one further member.

The Executive Secretary also serves as treasurer of the association and supervises the Secretariat.

The President is elected from among the full members at the General Assembly one year prior to taking office. He or she will become a member of the Executive Committee for three years: one as President-Elect, one as President and one as past President. No person may be elected as President who has directly before acted as President, President-Elect or past President for two successive periods of office. The Executive Secretary and the other member of the Executive Committee are elected at a regular meeting of the General Assembly from among the full members for the period of two years and can be re-elected without restriction. Decisions of the Executive Committee are taken with simple majority of votes of all members. There must be at least three members of the Executive Committee to represent the association. The Executive Committee is accountable to the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee has the following functions:

- Manages the association.
- Executes decisions of the General Assembly.
- Administrates the association's assets.
- Summons the General Assembly
- Prepares the annual work plan, budget and annual report for submission to the General Assembly.
- Appoints working groups for specific tasks and receives their report.
- Promotes the concept and purpose of the tropEd Network internationally and liaises with the Association of the Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine and International Health in Europe (TROPMEDEUROP), the European Commission, the World Health Organization, the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region, the Federation of the European Societies for Tropical Medicine and International Health and other organisations as deemed appropriate.

2.3.3. Working Groups

Working groups with at least one General Assembly member may be constituted on specific topics. They are created and dissolved as required by the General Assembly or by the Executive Committee. The chair of a working group is responsible for providing the General Assembly or Executive Committee with written documentation of the groups conclusions.

2.3.4. Secretariat

The Secretariat has the following functions:

- Assists the Executive Committee in all of its tasks and specifically in the preparation of the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings and of their agenda and in archiving their records of minutes.
- Executes the decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly and/or of the Executive Committee.
- Assists the Executive Committee in preparation of the annual workplan, budget and annual report for the programme for submission to the General Assembly.
- Works with member institutions to establish a suitable process for the governance of tropEd-recognised courses and modules and to ensure that quality criteria are met.
- Receives and processes proposed courses within the tropEd Masters Programme in International Health from all participating institutions.
- Co-ordinates the accreditation and evaluation of institutions and of courses or modules according to the principles established by the General Assembly and conveys the decision of the General Assembly in writing to the evaluated institutions.
- Compiles and advertises all recognised courses and modules and maintains and facilitates communication among the students in the tropEd Masters Programme in International Health.
- Maintains copies of student records (transcripts).
- Maintains administrative links with donors and other institutions.
- Maintains and facilitates the communication and dissemination of information among all participating institutions and individual members.
- Promotes the concept of tropEd internationally and liaises with the Association of Institutes and Schools of Tropical Medicine and International Health in Europe (TROPMEDEUROP), the European Union, World Health Organization, Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region, Federation of Tropical Associations and other organisations as deemed appropriate.

The Secretariat may, from time to time, delegate functions to tropEd member institutions.

3. PARTICIPATION OF INSTITUTIONS

3.1. Assessment and Course Eligibility

An institution may submit a module or course to the tropEd Secretariat according to the following procedure:

- The institutional representative shall submit the requested documentation to the Secretariat with the approval of the local course or module convenor. Up to two inter-network peer reviewers will be appointed to establish whether the units of learning fulfil tropEd criteria in terms of objectives, assessment and content. Due consideration will be given to any national external quality assessment which may be in force.
- For core courses, at least one inter-network reviewer will visit the institution when the respective course is running. The applying institution is responsible for meeting the travel and subsistence costs of the reviewer(s).
- The Secretariat may reject a course without sending it for peer review if the minimum eligibility requirements have not been met. These include the following points in the evaluation document: (1.1) The institute or department subscribes to the definition of International Health agreed by tropEd; (1.2) Courses are consistent with the objectives of the Masters Programme in International Health as set out by tropEd; (1.3) The academic level of courses is consistent with a Masters level programme; (1.5) Courses are recognised by the own institution as being of postgraduate standard; (2.1) There is a clear course outline; (2.2) Students

are provided with clear learning objectives for courses; (4.1) There are clearly stated admission criteria; (5.1) Academic support and tutoring is offered to students; (6.1) There are clear assessment criteria for exams. An independent external reviewer will be appointed by the Executive Committee to arbitrate on disagreement among internal reviewers.

- The General Assembly will make a final decision on acceptance of the institution and/or course or module based on the report of the reviewer(s) and a discussion with the course convenor (institutional representative).
- Institutional representatives will be required to re-submit the appropriate documentation for review every 5 years, or at any time when major modifications are made to a module or course.

3.2. Training of Trainers

tropEd has an active policy to assist course convenors and other teachers to improve their teaching skills. Training of Trainers workshops are held periodically. tropEd representatives should encourage local teachers to attend appropriate staff development sessions in their own or other institutions.

3.3. Promotion of tropEd

The Secretariat is responsible for the production and dissemination of information describing the tropEd network and the approved provision. All institutions hold and distribute application forms upon request. Information on tropEd shall be included in the promotional materials of full member and collaborating institutions. Members of the General Assembly are expected to take promotional materials to conferences and other national or international events for dissemination. Information on tropEd is compiled on the tropEd web site, at <www.troped.org>

4. MASTERS PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

4.1. Description of the Masters Programme

The Masters Programme in International Health, a flexible, modular programme offered across member institutions is intended for completion within a minimum of one year (full-time) up to a maximum of five years. Students normally carry out their studies as follows:

- registration with the home institution that will provide tutorship throughout the students' education;
- completion of a tropEd-recognised core course, equivalent to 3 months of full-time study, usually in one institution;
- successful students select optional advanced modules, that may be undertaken at different partner institutions, and collectively are equivalent to 3-6 months of full-time study;
- students carry out a research project submitted as a dissertation, equivalent to a further 3-6 months of full-time study, normally at their home institution;
- the core course should be completed within one year of registration, optional modules within two years, and the research project completed and submitted within two years; in case of a multiple/joint degree programme, three stages must be successfully completed in one year (September to August);
- students obtain a Masters degree from the home institution or a multiple or joint degree from a consortium of tropEd recognised institutions; to obtain a Masters degree, all three stages must be successfully completed.

The European Credit and Transfer System (ECTS) facilitates transfer of course credits between institutions at the same academic level. tropEd member institutions need to adopt the ECTS in the courses that are offered in the network. tropEd course evaluators advise the institutions and the General Assembly or Executive Committee on the appropriate credit level for approved courses and modules.

4.2. Home Institutions

Home institutions - as defined by tropEd - must meet the following criteria:

1. Offer a core course in line with the criteria given under 4.3. of this document and accredited by tropEd;
2. Act as an entry point for students into the tropEd Masters Programme;
3. Be able to deliver a Masters degree according to the criteria defined in this document;
4. Deliver guidance, support and counselling services to students in the tropEd Masters Programme.

4.3. Core Training

The core course has three main objectives:

- to provide knowledge and skills based on basic principles and concepts in International Health, irrespective of the subsequent specialisation;
- to provide a common culture and shared philosophy for tropEd students.

The core course duration in weeks is calculated on the basis of full-time study. A student work load of 30 hours formal teaching and private study (student-investment time, SIT) is equivalent to 1.0 ECTS credit points. The core is equivalent to a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 20 ECTS credit points (540 - 600 hours SIT).

Core training offered by different institutions must be sufficiently consistent in objectives and content to guarantee a common understanding and approach to key issues. Participating institutions wishing to offer a core course

must be prepared to adapt existing teaching or develop new modules, where necessary, to meet the following curricular criteria:

CORE COURSE CONTENT	WEEKS
Introduction and Orientation	0.5 weeks
Methodology Epidemiology Statistics Social science – concepts and methods Research methods and tools	3-5 weeks
The Health System Health policy/planning Health economics Information, Education, Communication Management	3-5 weeks
Health Problems Major endemic diseases Childhood/nutrition Reproductive health Adult health/violence Environmental health Health in Transition	3-5 weeks

4.4. Optional Advanced Modules

The list of optional advanced modules offers maximum flexibility with a vocational emphasis suitable for a range of careers in International Health. Participants select modules according to needs, guided by a personal tutor. One-year full-time students follow one of the following pre-defined study tracks: Tropical Medicine and Disease Control; Health Systems, Health Policy and Management; Sexual and Reproductive Health; Child Health; Health Research Methods; Health in Emergencies. Optional advanced modules must total 20-25 ECTS credit points (600-750 hours SIT) of which a minimum of 10 (300 hours SIT) must be earned in member institutions in a country other than that of the home institution. A maximum of 5 ECTS credit points may be obtained from distance-based advanced optional modules.

4.5. Research Project

The research project, equivalent to 15-20 ECTS credit points (450-600 hours SIT), may cover a wide range of topics and formats, ranging from experimental design, primary data collection, to policy analysis, and may be field- and/or laboratory-based. Each student has a designated supervisor with relevant experience in the chosen topic.

Guidelines for the supervision, assessment and other project requirements follow the internal regulations of the institution at which the research is carried out and submitted. These will meet tropEd eligibility and quality criteria. Assessment should involve an external examiner not belonging to the institution that awards the degrees. The title, abstract and author of each thesis will be published on the tropEd web site.

4.6. Tuition Fees

Module and course fees follow regulations current in the local institution.

5. STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION

5.1. Application and Admission

Prospective students apply to the tropEd Secretariat or directly to a tropEd home institution that is responsible for selection, assignment of tutorial support and advice on course options.

To obtain tropEd recognition of the Masters training participants must:

- register with a tropEd home institution and/or with the tropEd Secretariat;
- be bound by the ordinances and regulations current in the institutions providing training.

5.2. Assessment of Students Performance

Each student following an approved course or module is subject to summative assessment related to that course or module. The summative assessment programme will be defined and approved by the home institution and/or the multiple/joint degree consortium. The General Assembly and/or Executive Committee monitors the assessment process and its quality periodically in order to define equivalence across institutions.

The pass mark in assessed work should be defined by the home institution and/or the multiple/joint degree consortium. A participant who fails to achieve a pass mark in a summative assessment will normally be allowed up to two re-assessments, according to procedures operating in the home institution. The transcript of the participant shall record the grade awarded by the institution delivering the course according to ECTS regulations together with the local grade obtained. Details of assessments must be made explicit by all institutions offering modules or courses.

Each student has full access to academic and general appeal procedures.

5.3. Recognition by tropEd

To obtain tropEd recognition of a Masters degree in International Health, a student must achieve:

- a minimum of 60 ECTS credit points (1800 hours SIT) from a combination of taught and research components defined as eligible by tropEd;
- completion of courses in at least two institutions in different countries, with not more than 45 credit points (1350 hours SIT) from the same institution and not more than 50 credit points (1500 hours SIT) from the same country ;
- completion of the masters programme within five years from the date of first registration in a tropEd-accredited course or module, as far as local institution regulations permit; when following the part-time programme;
- completion of the masters programme within one year from the date of registration when following the

- multiple or joint degree full-time programme;
- at least two years of field experience in low- and middle-income countries or the equivalent in relevant professional experience.

5.4. Student Representation

Elected tropEd student representatives are regularly invited to actively participate in General Assembly Meetings and in all of its ad-hoc task forces.

5.5. Scholarship and Students' Support

Participating institutions are encouraged to look for total or partial financial support for tropEd students. The Secretariat will focus on international organisations such as the World Health Organization, European Union and the United Nations in attempts to secure financial support, while member institutions will approach their national organisations.

5.6. Welfare and Accommodation

Information on accommodation, health care, travel, insurance requirements, local taxes, entry and visa requirements, safety etc., are sent in advance to all students by each institution involved in their training and/or the Secretariat. Institutions will make every effort to facilitate accommodation for students in advance of their arrival. Each institution has a designated member of staff who should be the first point of contact for students requiring tropEd recognition. The tutor assigned to a student at the home institution should liaise with the tutor at any other institution where studies will be undertaken as well as with the Secretariat.

5.7. Information about tropEd

Regularly updated information on tropEd is available on the web site at <www.troped.org>. Enquiries may be directed to the tropEd Secretariat or to any tropEd member institution.

ANNEX:

Partner Institutions – Full Members

Belgium

- Prins Leopold Instituut voor Tropische Geneeskunde, Antwerpen

Denmark

- Department of International Health, Institute of Public Health, University of Copenhagen

France

- Institut René Labusquière, Université Victor Segalen Bordeaux II
- Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Médecine et Santé Tropicales, Université d'Aix-Marseille II
- Institut de Médecine Tropicale du Service de Santé des Armées, le Pharo, Marseille

Germany

- Institut für Tropenmedizin, Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Humboldt and Freie Universität Berlin
- Abteilung für Tropenhygiene und öffentliches Gesundheitswesen, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Italy

- Clinica di Malattie Infettive e Tropicali, Università degli Studi di Brescia

Netherlands

- Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Norway

- Centre for International Health, University of Bergen

Portugal

- Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical, Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Spain

- Sección de Medicina Tropical, Hospital Clinic, Universidad de Barcelona
- Centro Nacional de Medicina Tropical, Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Madrid
- Departamento de Parasitología, Universidad de Valencia

Sweden

- Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm
- Section International Maternal and Child Health, Uppsala University

Switzerland

- Schweizerisches Tropeninstitut, Basel
- Institut de Médecine Sociale et Préventive, Université de Genève
- Institut Universitaire de Médecine Sociale et Préventive, Lausanne

United Kingdom

- Centre for International Health Studies, Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh
- Nuffield International Health and Development Centre, Institute of Health Sciences and Public Health Research, University of Leeds
- Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
- Institute of Child Health, University College London

- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Partner Institutions - Collaborating Institutions

France

- Institut de Médecine et d'Epidémiologie Africaines, Université Paris VII

Germany

- Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung (InWent), Bonn

Hungary

- Tropical Health Institute, Semmelweis University, Budapest

Italy

- Fondazione Don Giovanni Calabria per la Medicina Tropicale, Negrar (Verona)
- International College for Health Cooperation in Developing Countries (CUAMM), Padova