

# Annual Report 2022



**UNU**

# United Nations University

## Annual Report 2022

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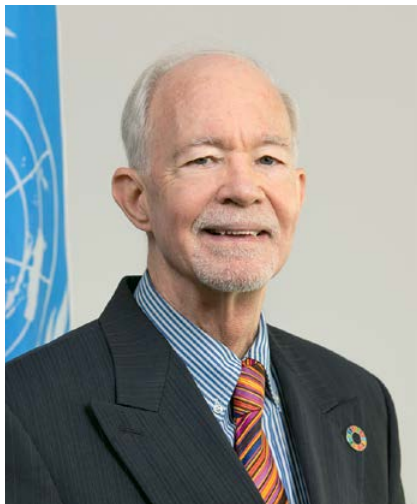
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**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

#SDGExplorer

# Rector's Welcome



This annual report covers the final full year of my ten-year tenure as Rector of the United Nations University (UNU). The world has changed considerably over the past decade, and we currently face significant challenges, including armed conflict, global health crises, and increasing economic inequalities.

But there is reason for hope. We should be heartened that smart, dedicated people across the globe are constantly exploring new ways to rise to the occasion. The United Nations system, and UNU within it, cannot be the full answer, but can play a modest, targeted role in addressing these global challenges.

Over the past ten years, I've focused on bringing UNU closer to — and making it more useful to — the rest of the UN system, while maintaining UNU's academic freedom. A brief look at three flagship initiatives in 2022 demonstrates that UNU continues to produce timely, impactful work that is relevant to the United Nations:

1. **Close Support of UN Secretary-General:** UNU-CPR, working closely with the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General, serves as the Secretariat for the Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB). The HLAB is developing concrete recommendations for the Secretary-General and Member States ahead of the 2023 Summit of the Future.

2. **Global Conference on Reducing Inequality:** UNU-WIDER hosted its seminal Development Conference in Bogota, Colombia. The conference brought together leading global scholars to discuss the latest research on reducing inequality in income, education, and health outcomes.
3. **Report on Reducing Disaster Risks:** UNU-EHS released its flagship report, *Interconnected Disaster Risks*, examining the interconnected nature of solutions to ten global disasters.

This annual report is full of additional highlights of UNU's substantive work in 2022. I'm proud that UNU is well-positioned to produce policy-relevant research in support of evidence-based solutions.

The end of my time at UNU is made easier knowing that the organisation will be in good hands. I'm particularly delighted to be succeeded by a distinguished academic leader from the Global South, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala of South Africa, who previously served as the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg. Prof. Marwala's academic expertise and leadership will be invaluable in helping UNU fulfil its mission of producing research into the pressing global problems of human development.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve the purposes, principles, and peoples of the United Nations for these ten years.

My sincere thanks to all those who help make UNU a success, in particular the Members of the UNU Council and all UNU personnel, who are unwaveringly generous with their time and effort.

The work of UNU would not be possible without the generosity of our global community of partners, donors, scholars, and supporters of all kinds. I am sure your ideas, talents, and encouragement will energise UNU for well more than another decade to come.

## David M. Malone

Rector of the United Nations University  
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations

# Council Chair's Message



This Annual Report provides a snapshot of UNU's excellent work in 2022, and as we look back, I would like to also recall the broader achievements of UNU as Rector Malone is completing his 10-year tenure. I am delighted to see that UNU is sought out across the United Nations system as a "neutral knowledge broker" that can provide objective, impartial evidence to inform policymaking processes.

Although UNU has always produced strong academic and scientific research, attention was less focused on generating policy-relevant analysis that supports the agenda of the United Nations. When Rector Malone took office in 2013, there was widespread recognition that UNU needed to become more responsive to the needs of its key stakeholders and better leverage its position as a neutral knowledge broker within the United Nations. This was a challenge that he quickly addressed.

Over the past decade, Rector Malone has launched and driven several significant changes that have fundamentally altered the character and capacities of the University. These include realigning UNU's work programme to be more responsive to the evolving policy needs of the United Nations and its Member States; emphasising the development of more ambitious research initiatives; and strengthening policy linkages with the UN system.

Central to this effort was the launch of the UNU Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), incubated in Tokyo in 2014–2018, and now located in New York. Thanks to UNU-CPR, the University's capacity to support policy needs in major UN hubs has been strengthened, and UNU's visibility in Japan and at UN Headquarters increased. Today, UNU-CPR regularly works with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General on several priority policy areas and plays an instrumental role in implementing *Our Common Agenda*, the UN Secretary-General's vision on the future of global cooperation. During his tenure, Rector Malone also oversaw the streamlining of the UNU system's governance and management by focusing on financial management, fund-raising, and investment management; strengthening the role of institute advisory boards; and enhancing the governance functions of the UNU Council.

Equally important has been the push to achieve gender parity at UNU, particularly in leadership positions. At the start of Dr Malone's term, UNU had just one female institute director, and no women in senior positions within the Rectorate. At the end of 2022, six of UNU's thirteen institute Directors, both Vice-Rectors, and its Executive Officer were women, and parity has been achieved across most levels.

Rector Malone has also strengthened UNU Centre in Tokyo as a hub for public and academic reflection, notably by inaugurating the public *UNU Conversation Series* to bring international voices to Tokyo.

On behalf of the members of the UNU Council, I would like to use this opportunity to thank Rector Malone for reconnecting UNU with the needs of the United Nations system and helping lay a foundation for the University's sustainability and long-term success.

## **'Funmi Olonisakin**

Chair, Council of the United Nations University

# UNU Research: Generating Policy-relevant, Solution-focused Knowledge

The United Nations University conducts objective, policy-relevant research on pressing global issues, and feeds its scientific expertise and evidence-based findings into policymaking, decision-making, and the broader public debate. In this way, UNU sheds light on important global problems and helps policymakers and practitioners worldwide view complex issues from fresh, critical perspectives.

UNU research cuts across fields of inquiry and schools of thought, and employs levels of analysis that are integrated both horizontally (across disciplines) and vertically (incorporating local, national, regional, and global perspectives). The benchmark of success for UNU research is not abstract “knowledge for the sake of knowledge”, but practical solutions that can help real people to solve real problems.

UNU works in partnership with a wide range of UN system entities, including the UN Secretariat, agencies, programmes, commissions, funds, and convention secretariats. The University also maintains hundreds of active formal agreements and informal collaborations with universities, research institutes, think tanks, NGOs, professional organisations, governmental units, foundations, and private entities worldwide — thereby involving larger networks of specialists and researchers in its work. In this way, UNU connects diverse international stakeholders to generate research findings, translate those findings into usable knowledge, and deliver that knowledge to those who can drive positive change.

As a United Nations system entity, UNU has privileged access to the evolving policy needs of the United Nations and its Member States, including by participating in the UN system Chief Executives Board for Coordination. UNU is thus able to share the evolving priorities and concerns with academic and research communities worldwide who otherwise would have limited awareness of the UN system’s needs, and then work with them to develop relevant knowledge and policy solutions.

There is significant demand for evidence-based research within the United Nations system to inform policymaking, but the uptake of such research often faces considerable obstacles. UNU helps to bridge this research-policy gap in three ways:

- **Indirect analytical influence** — generating evidence and ideas that help shape discourse and debate — is the most common vector by which UNU influences policy processes. The University provides evidence-driven input into policy debates on issues involving new or interdisciplinary scientific inquiry, such as development economics; modern slavery; or the integrated management of soil, water, and waste.
- **Direct engagement** is another important way in which UNU achieves policy influence. The University’s identity as “the think tank of the UN system” gives other UN actors a level of comfort and trust that may not extend to other scientists and researchers. UNU regularly works with the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General, various UN Secretariat bodies,



and other UN system entities to take on (sometimes politically sensitive) convening and policy-related research roles, or serves as a member of interagency networks such as those on water, migration, disaster risk reduction, innovation, economics, and the environment.

- **Collaborative knowledge generation** in partnership with other UN entities enables UNU to deliver specifically tailored, policy-relevant outputs to fill knowledge gaps that those entities have identified. In 2022, these intra-UNU partnerships encompassed such issues as disaster risk and climate change, gender and health, e-governance, and conflict and climate security.

At the core of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a set of 17 interlinked Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The holistic, interdisciplinary approach of UNU's research programme both enriches the value of that research and underscores the University's ability to integrate expertise and knowledge across multiple disciplines to both address the goals individually and further illuminate their interconnections.

In 2022, UNU institutes worked on some 200 projects<sup>1</sup>, most of which contributed to multiple SDGs. This section introduces a small selection of these projects, as well as related publications, events, and training, within the context of the SDGs and their interrelationships. It utilises a common grouping of the SDGs known as the five Ps — People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace, and Partnerships — that roughly corresponds to the three broad thematic clusters of UNU's work<sup>2</sup>.

This annual report does not attempt to provide an exhaustive inventory of the University's operations and accomplishments, but rather highlights selected activities and achievements that demonstrate the thematic and geographic scope of UNU's work in the context of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals while attesting to UNU's progress towards achieving the main objectives set out in the UNU-wide Strategic Plan 2020-2024. It also introduces the global UNU system: its structure, human and financial resources, and governance and leadership structure.

<sup>1</sup> Many of the projects described in this document were undertaken in collaboration with, or funded by, multiple stakeholders who, because of space limitations, are not specifically named herein.

<sup>2</sup> The three broad thematic clusters of UNU's work are (i) Social Change and Economic Development; (ii) Environment, Climate, and Energy; and (iii) Peace and Security.



**UNU Research:**

# People

End poverty and hunger in all forms and dimensions, and ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment



A nurse treats a suspected diphtheria patient near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.  
Russell Watkins / DFID - CC BY 2.0

A key ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to ensure that “no one is left behind”. The first five highly interlinked SDGs address this aspiration at the most basic level, with the aim of ensuring that all people can live healthy, constructive lives free from want and deprivation.

These goals are closely aligned with the projects undertaken within the UNU thematic work cluster on Social Change and Economic Development, and with issues that have been an important part of UNU’s work throughout its history.



**SDG 1 — No Poverty:** Working to alleviate poverty has been part of the UNU agenda for four decades. Ongoing research focuses on the socio-economic drivers and consequences for households on the move to find solutions to poverty, at both ends of the migration path. The UNU economic toolbox uses sustainable benefit models to guide developing countries as they create social protection systems.



**SDG 2 — Zero Hunger:** One of the first research initiatives undertaken by UNU at its establishment was the World Hunger Programme. Today, UNU research builds on this legacy, seeking to improve human food and livestock feed production, particularly in Africa, through such means as improved soil productivity and the safe use of wastewater in agriculture.



**SDG 3 — Good Health and Well-being:** Human health has been a central component of UNU’s work since 2007, with the establishment of the UNU International Institute for Global Health. UNU’s health-related research is helping to untangle the growing social, economic, and environmental complexity faced by governments and communities; particular focuses include stemming the rise of non-communicable diseases, responding to the emergence of global pathogens, and reducing the adverse health tolls of natural disasters.



**SDG 4 — Quality Education:** UNU organises specialised training opportunities and offers several postgraduate degree programmes that enhance the capability of young scholars to contribute to the extension, application, and diffusion of knowledge. Additionally, global learning has been an area of focus of UNU research since the late 1980s, and the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) project has been fostering learning networks among regional and local ESD initiatives since 2005.



**SDG 5 — Gender Equality:** The importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective through all UNU activities was first stressed in the *UNU Strategic Directions 2007–2010*. Today, UNU’s commitment to gender equality permeates the University’s operations, and UNU’s research supports the development of policies that eliminate barriers for women and girls in all aspects of life and empower them to be leaders in emerging fields such as science and technology.

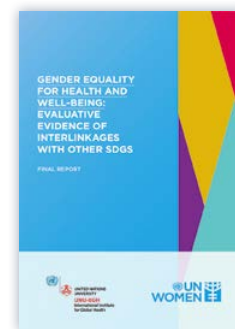
This section highlights some of UNU’s projects, publications, and activities from the past year that operated within the scope of this “people-centric” set of SDGs.



#### PUBLICATION

### ***Gender Equality for Health and Well-being: Evaluative Evidence of Interlinkages with Other SDGs***

This **UNU-IIGH** report argues that gender equality has strong linkages with health and well-being, both directly and indirectly through other SDGs under multisectoral, collaborative contexts. It concludes that promoting gender equality can lead to improvements in a variety of health, well-being, and other development outcomes.



#### PROJECT

### **Gender and Health Policy Hub**

**UNU-IIGH** is collaborating with regional, local, and global partners to consolidate evidence on and identify appropriate and effective solutions for the further integration of gender in global health policy and programming. This project, for example, leveraged and strategically disseminated the results of research that distilled transferable knowledge about what has worked (and where, why, and how) on integrating gender in health across five UN agencies. The results have been integrated into, and influenced, key global health institutions' gender and equity strategies and action plans, and have facilitated the engagement of UNU-IIGH in strategic discussions with WHO, UNDP, and others. A “think piece” and podcast series spawned by the project shared the results with and expanded their application among civil society members, policymakers, and academics, particularly those from the Global South. The project also amplifies the experience and expertise of Global South actors, experts, and institutions within the mainstream discourse of gender and global health.

#### PUBLICATION

### ***Gender and Vulnerable Employment in the Developing World: Evidence From Global Microdata***

This paper (co-written by a **UNU-WIDER** expert; published in the journal *World Development*) covers a study that investigated gender inequality in vulnerable employment (jobs typically featuring high precariousness, inadequate earnings, and lack of decent working conditions). The study, which measured long-term trends, described geographical patterns, and estimated correlates of gender inequalities, found that women are 7 percentage points more likely to be in vulnerable employment than men; that marriage and parenthood are important drivers of this gender gap; and that the gap is smaller in richer countries with relevant laws and regulations. The study also suggests that while rising levels of female education and rapidly falling fertility have until now pulled women away from vulnerable employment at a faster rate than men, the process is now largely exhausted.

#### PROJECT

### **Gender-based AI Policy in Southeast Asia**

**UNU Macau** is a participant in this project to enhance the development of standards and frameworks for critical technologies in Southeast Asia. The focus is on artificial intelligence (AI) and the potential gender and social biases linked to it. The aim is to better understand the current state of AI and of AI policy in specific country cases in the Asia-Pacific region, and to develop a framework for training policymakers in the development of gender-sensitive policies. The study has found that while gender is mentioned in most countries' AI roadmaps and strategies, gender is not explored as a key risk factor in AI systems.

#### PROJECT

##### **Building Citizen Science Intelligence for Pandemic Preparedness and Response**

This pandemic-focused **UNU Macau** project is studying how and to what extent the collective intelligence capabilities of all stakeholders can be harnessed to apply accurate, real-time, data-driven containment measures. The study follows a classical four-phase “appreciative inquiry” methodology: the “discover” and “dream” phases are being explored through a needs assessment, and will lead to the “design” and “deliver” phases that will involve pilot implementation of participatory modelling.

#### PROJECT

##### **Decolonising Global Health and Shifting Power**

The global health system (including structures and institutions of governance) is marked by deep and damaging power asymmetries and inequities, such as those between actors in the Global North and those in the Global South. The COVID-19 experience, in particular, raised questions about global health policymaking spaces having been “colonised” by powerful actors with conflicts of interest. In 2022, **UNU-IIGH** co-curated and co-facilitated a series of structured dialogues about the need to decolonise the global health system and to shift power and privilege among a range of different stakeholders, and summarised these dialogues within a set of reports. The initial activity led to formation of an explicit programme of work to conceptualise the intersecting dimensions of colonialism and power asymmetry as it affects global health, thus providing a holistic and multi-faceted framework for understanding how inequity and exploitation are sustained within the global health system.

#### EVENT

##### **Decolonising Global Health Programme Launch**

**UNU-IIGH** views the current interest in decolonisation as a useful catalyst for shifting power and encouraging forms of global health practice that are better tailored to the needs and contexts of low- and middle-income countries and of marginalised population groups everywhere. At this online event, held in September, participants celebrated the launch of the institute’s programme by discussing the intersecting dimensions of colonialism within, of, and through global health.

#### **COLLABORATION**

Collaborative partnership is a critical foundation for much of UNU’s work. Through such collaborations, the University draws on the expertise and knowledge of top academics, specialists, researchers, and practitioners worldwide, thereby expanding the scope of our research and activities.

Globally, UNU maintains hundreds of active collaborations with other United Nations system entities; universities; research institutes and think tanks; international, national, and non-governmental organisations; national government ministries and agencies; foundations; and private sector entities.

Throughout this report, in panels such as this, we highlight comments from a few of the many collaborators who contribute to UNU’s success.

#### PROJECT

##### **Improving China's Institutional Capacity Towards Universal Social Protection**

**UNU-EGOV** is working with the Chinese government (Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security) and other partners to strengthen China's institutional capacity to improve its social protection system — not only by optimising the use of technology but also to support the realisation of international standards. Specifically, the project aims to build a national strategy and roadmap for transforming the production and delivery of social security in China. In 2022, five global good practice case studies were conducted, and a mapping of trends and lessons for China was undertaken. Based on this, a summary report on key dimensions of digital transformation will be prepared, the digital transformation strategy and action plan for China's social security system will be evaluated, and policy recommendations will be developed.

#### PROJECT

##### **Lancet Commission on Gender and Global Health**

**UNU-IIGH** serves as a thought partner and secretariat for this interdisciplinary commission that seeks to advance conceptual clarity and develop evidence of what works for implementing gender-responsive policies and programmes across all sectors. The aim is to achieve both gender equality and health equity by unpacking the complex gender/health relationship, and understanding and addressing the impact of gender across the social/structural determinants of health. Questions being addressed include what will be the impact of achieving gender equality within current economic, legal, and political systems, and whether a feminist approach can be taken.

#### PROJECT

##### **Monitoring and Evaluation of WFP's Country Strategic Plan in Kenya from 2019 to 2023**

**UNU-MERIT** continues to collaborate with the World Food Programme (WFP) to evaluate and monitor the outcomes of WFP activities in three refugee settlements in Kenya, thus ensuring commitment to accountability for affected populations. The evaluation in 2022 showed that, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP has been able to maintain stable levels of food security in the settlements, although a sense of insecurity and more frequent resort to borrowing has hindered the progress of self-reliance agricultural activities. As WFP and its partners adapt and plan for the future of refugees, UNU-MERIT will play a key role in helping shape monitoring and evaluation.

#### COLLABORATION

"We are impressed by the quality of the regional synthesis, which is very well structured and organised highlighting clearly the main messages and takeaways.... [We] particularly appreciate your efforts to ensure an integrated approach from a comparative perspective. Thank you also very much for including clearly the gender dimension."

**Dr Rolla Moumne**, Programme Specialist,  
Right to Education Programme, Section of Education Policy, UNESCO

*(commenting on UNU-IAS research commissioned by UNESCO for the Asia Pacific Regional Study on Climate Change Displacement and the Right to Education)*

## PROJECT

### **Scoping and Recommendations Related to Gender Language, and Documenting Good Practice in Engaging Civil Society**

This project, by **UNU-IIGH** in collaboration with WHO, has two objectives. The first is to increase the engagement of civil society organisations (CSOs) in health policies and programmes by documenting promising practices to improve health for all at the country level. UNU-IIGH is partnering with five CSO networks in the Global South to centre and prioritise the expertise, knowledge, and best practices of civil society. By taking a feminist and inclusive approach, the aim is to clarify what to do (and not do) to jointly advance both equity and rights. The project's second objective is to advance the use of standard, inclusive, and appropriate language on gender at WHO and other UN agencies by reviewing the current status of gender language across key actors. The project has the potential to be a game changer in terms of how WHO and other stakeholders conduct business.

## PROJECT

### **SDG-Universities Platform**

Through this initiative, **UNU-IAS** is mobilising efforts by 32 Japanese universities towards achieving the SDGs. The platform engages member universities to advance local and international contributions on the global goals through collaboration and exchange of good practices. Six workshops were organised during 2022, on such topics as the role of universities in achieving the SDGs; university management, evaluation, and accountability; and SDG-focused curriculums. The platform also advanced discussion on impact evaluation in the context of the SDGs through a series of webinars for students that explored corporate “purpose-driven management”.

## PUBLICATION

### **Gender Analysis of the Climate-Water-Migration-Conflict Interactions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

This **UNU-INWEH** policy brief highlights the vital issues relating to how the current socio-economic-political-cultural practices, together with climate change, are further influencing existing human vulnerabilities in parts of the Congo Basin. The key message of the brief is that the effects of climate change in the provinces of DRC are not gender-neutral, and that current practices serve to widen differential vulnerabilities, particularly against women. This points to the need to alleviate gender inequalities, abate migration, and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities in the region.



## PUBLICATION

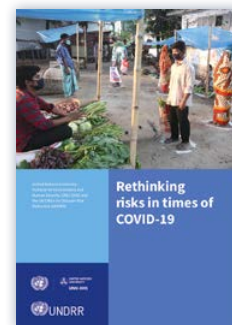
### **What Works in Gender and Health**

**UNU-IIGH** published a series of three “think pieces” that builds on a Gender and Health Hub comprehensive study of “what works in gender and health” using cases of successful gender mainstreaming across five UN agencies. The focus of these articles was on (i) the disconnect between “gender-transformative” language and action in global health; (ii) learning from, and with, feminist organising: lessons from multi-disciplinary praxis to prevent violence against women and girls; and (iii) collective power for gender equality: an unfinished agenda for the UN.

#### PUBLICATION

##### **Rethinking Risks in Times of COVID-19**

While initially viewed as a health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic affected societies to their core, exacerbating chronic environmental, political, and social challenges. While each of these crises has its own identifiable causes, the increasingly interconnected nature of our world means that we cannot view these hazards and their knock-on effects in isolation. This report by **UNU-EHS** and **UNDRR** focuses on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to shed light on the complexity of the risks we now face in our highly interconnected world, and presents lessons regarding risk management.



#### PUBLICATION

##### **ProSPER.Net: Enabling Higher Education for the Sustainable Development Goals 2015–2021**

This **UNU-IAS** report highlights education for sustainable development initiatives undertaken by higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region as part of the Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net). It takes stock of the network's contributions to the SDGs, including curriculum development, capacity building, and policy advice; reflects on the network's achievements and challenges; and introduces future network directions developed in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### EVENT

##### **Ending GBV and Achieving the SDGs**

This event on gender-based violence (GBV) was co-convened by **UNU-IIGH** in September in Mexico. Participants reflected on lessons learned in relation to participatory approaches to ending GBV, on multi-sectoral action and collaboration, and on adapting to the changes and challenges within diverse contexts.

#### EVENT

##### **Gender Equality in Digital Economies and the Environment**

**UNU Macau** co-hosted this workshop, held in November in Canada, that explored gender perspectives on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) systems in natural resources and climate management. The focus was on intersectional and applied approaches, strategies, and policies that accelerate achieving SDG 5, and research on gender equality and its intersection with AI systems and natural resource management sectors.

#### COLLABORATION

"Diverse topics but full of strong connections with each other."

"Instructors' knowledge banks on issues are phenomenal."

"I learned a great deal of practical insights in developing the right questions for issues that matter most."

"Studying at UNU-IAS has really been a life-changing opportunity for me."

*Comments from students attending the UNU-IAS postgraduate degree programmes*



#### EVENT

### **The Role of Higher Education in Transforming Climate Education & Environment Lifelong Learning for All**

This event was co-organised by **UNU-IAS** in September in New York as part of the UN Transforming Education Summit. The session explored how to bridge diverse sectors and stakeholders for a whole-society approach to mainstream climate education towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

#### TRAINING

### **Incorporating an Intersectional Gender Perspective in Implementation Research**

This massive open online course module, developed by **UNU-IIGH** in collaboration with the World Health Organization TDR programme, was offered in June–July. It provided participants with hands-on training on addressing sex and gender dimensions and other intersecting axes of inequality throughout the research process.

#### PUBLICATIONS

### ***Shifting Power in Global Health: Decolonising Discourses***

**UNU-IIGH** published three reports that summarise a series of dialogues on the problems and dynamics associated with colonial practice and relationships within global health, and how these could be changed. *Dialogue 1* focuses on identifying points of convergence and power balance in partnerships and what it means to decolonise global health; *Dialogue 2* focuses on South–South cooperation and the importance of mindsets, principles, partnership, and careful use of language in efforts to decolonise global health; and *Dialogue 3* focuses on the mechanisms that Global South practitioners, academics, and advocates can implement to harness their agency over global health financing.



**UNU Research:**

# Prosperity

Ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives, and that economic, social, and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature



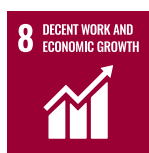
A market in Mombasa, Kenya.  
Rolf Dobberstein / Pixabay

Building on the five people-centric SDGs are five goals that focus on ensuring economic prosperity, social stability, and technological progress. These goals highlight the importance of reducing inequalities in all aspects of life, and their achievement will require the application of smart and innovative approaches that can build a sound and reliable economic foundation.

Like the previous people-centric SDGs, the issues addressed by these prosperity-focused goals are closely aligned with the UNU thematic work cluster on Social Change and Economic Development.



**SDG 7 — Affordable and Clean Energy:** UNU research focuses on enhancing the capacity of the renewable energy sector, and exploring how integrated resources-usage practices can improve energy efficiency and production.



**SDG 8 — Decent Work and Economic Growth:** UNU research provides guidance for navigating the changing geo-economic landscape while more effectively monitoring and evaluating economic progress and its social impacts, thereby helping planners to transform skewed development into opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.



**SDG 9 — Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** UNU focuses on strengthening development linkages that catalyse innovation, foster equal resource benefits, and build resilient urban systems. This includes charting policy options to help transform resource extraction sectors into engines of sustainable economic growth, and helping to ensure that expanding cities can provide basic services and livelihoods for all.



**SDG 10 — Reduced Inequalities:** UNU research is building comprehensive databases to inform policymakers and governments of where, why, and to what extent global income inequality exists. The aim is to clarify the social and political dynamics that drive inequality, so that policy and social support systems can respond to chronic and emerging trends.



**SDG 11 — Sustainable Cities and Communities:** UNU work on sustainable urbanisation seeks to overcome the tendency to treat urban issues (such as governance, water, waste, health, economic development, or vulnerability to natural hazards) as discrete problems and instead find integrated, interdisciplinary solutions.

This section highlights a selection of UNU projects, publications, and activities from the past year that operated within the scope of this “prosperity-focused” set of SDGs.



PROJECT

**Biotechnology and Development**

**UNU-BIOLAC** contributes to the sustainable development of Latin American and Caribbean countries by supporting/coordinating training and research activities oriented to resolving pertinent problems of the region. The main objective is to train young researchers in leading technologies, emphasising the benefits the training brings to the student once they return to their home countries' institutions, thus promoting social and economic development using advanced biotechnology tools.

PROJECT

**Blockchain Application to Connect Social Programmes and Agencies**

This **UNU-EGOV** research project explores the social security life challenges that could be addressed with blockchain technology, the benefits and challenges of utilising such technology, and the conditions required to implement blockchain technology. Among its first outputs was a report (presented during the World Social Security Forum in October) that presents two potential use cases of blockchain in social security: a blockchain-based referral system and a tracing and tracking system.

PROJECT

**Digital Transformation within Security Forces for Extensive Urban Areas**

This **UNU-EGOV** project analysed new solutions (including their context, limits, and challenges) concerning the evolution of mission-critical communication for security forces and emergency services in metropolitan areas. Traditional communication mechanisms, though reliable and always available, often fail to accommodate the evolving needs of public safety actors for high-volume video/audio/image sharing and seamless two-way/multiway communications, which require devices, databases, and surveillance equipment that can provide contextual awareness for everyone involved. This project surveyed technical solutions, adoption processes, and ecosystems in ten early-moving countries with the aim of supporting first responders in Buenos Aires. Its findings will ultimately benefit security and emergency services providers around the world.

PROJECT

**Earth-Shattering: Opportunities for Financial Sector Engagement at the Nexus of Modern Slavery and Natural Resources in Ghana**

**UNU-INRA** and **UNU-CPR** collaborated on this research project to better understand the relationship between contemporary slavery and natural resources in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate catastrophe. The study examined, from a survivor-centred perspective, potential interventions of governments, multilateral actors, and the financial sector to address the interconnected challenges of the climate crisis, COVID-19, and modern slavery and human trafficking in Ghana's cocoa and artisanal small-scale gold mining sectors. Project outputs included an in-depth research report, a briefing note, and a policy brief for Ghanaian decision-makers. Project recommendations demonstrate how the financial sector can synchronise action to successfully identify illicit flows from slavery and trafficking, assist victims in gaining access to remedies, and combat and prevent modern slavery in communities affected by high-risk agricultural and extractive sectors.

#### PUBLICATION

### **“A Call for Citizen Science in Pandemic Preparedness and Response: Beyond Data Collection”**

This open-access article (co-authored by **UNU Macau** researchers and others; published in *BMJ Global Health*) examines and highlights citizen science approaches in participatory data generation, modelling, and visualisation. The authors call for truly participatory and co-creation approaches across all domains of pandemic preparedness and response.

#### PUBLICATION

### ***Africa Beyond Oil and Gas: Low-Carbon Technologies and the Fourth Industrial Revolution Opportunities for Africa***

The increasing push to move away from fossil fuels poses significant concerns for emerging African countries that produce fossil fuels. Furthermore, the spectrum of natural riches held by African states is little understood. This **UNU-INRA** policy brief provides a detailed assessment of the distribution of Africa’s mineral riches and examines the development opportunities this presents to African countries in a low-carbon future. It further discusses some of the necessary governance structures that African countries must implement to take advantage of the opportunities given by a low-carbon future to produce wealth and explore new options to stimulate economic growth.



#### PROJECT

### **Integrating Ecosystem-based Approaches into Flood Risk Management for Adaptive and Sustainable Urban Development in Central Vietnam**

Floods are becoming more severe and frequent in many regions of the world. In central Vietnam, the combination of two global mega-trends (climate change and urbanisation) has caused more frequent and intense flooding. This **UNU-EHS** project is analysing the present-day situation in urban regions of central Vietnam with the aim of reducing future risks. The project will develop a “smart mix” of possible adaptation options, including ecosystem-based solutions and risk transfer mechanisms, through quantitative analysis of flood risks under current conditions, elucidate future risk scenarios, and propose entry points for adaptation. Relevant stakeholders are now refining and validating a novel, multi-criteria catalogue to guide the evaluation of different adaptation solutions.

#### PROJECT

### **Empowering African Youth and Women Green Entrepreneurs Project**

This project, implemented by **UNU-VIE** and partners, built databases of stakeholders in green innovation and entrepreneurship on the African continent, and of start-ups in the green sectors and promising market segments within these sectors for youth entrepreneurship development. A market analysis identified opportunities and conditions for the successful creation and growth of green sector start-ups, with specific attention paid to challenges faced by women-led start-ups. The result is a better understanding of the existing structure and policy frameworks on the continent for green innovation, and the corresponding role of women.



#### PROJECT

##### **Southern Africa – Towards Inclusive Economic Development**

This **UNU-WIDER** programme collaborates with and supports key departments within the economic cluster of the South African government to fill crucial knowledge gaps about, and support policy formulation to address, key challenges and promote inclusive economic development. The programme is predicated on deep engagement between researchers and public institutions, and has built networks and effective partnerships that can strengthen evidence-based policy formulation. The country's COVID-19 response was, in part, informed by the research and analysis that emanated from this programme, based on anonymised administrative tax data provided by the National Treasury Secure Data Facility. In 2022, the programme embarked on its second phase, which places a stronger emphasis on providing evidence to the economic reform projects undertaken by the South African government, and on developing synergies through collaboration and inclusivity in research, capacity development, and policy-bridging.

#### PROJECT

##### **Steering Research and Innovation for Global Goals**

**UNU-MERIT** collaborated with UNDP and six leading universities and research centres on a project that sought to better understand how science, technology, and innovation can contribute (or not) to meeting the SDGs in low- and middle-income countries. The project found that in high- and upper-middle-income countries, which dominate science and innovation, because of entrenched interests and distributed priorities, research is more often deployed to serve the interests of the most privileged (firms, governments, financial institutions) rather than focusing on meeting the SDGs to help the most needy. The project concluded with a call for a more democratic approach to science, technology, and innovation, with a stronger focus on achieving sustainability.

#### PROJECT

##### **Supporting Indonesia's G20 Presidency under the Theme "Recover Together – Recover Stronger"**

**UNU-MERIT** supported Indonesia's G20 presidency by providing an analysis of current global digital skills developments and trends, and their implications for society and the economy. The assessment and analysis were designed to facilitate the eventual development of the policies and programmatic interventions needed to foster the current and future workforce required for digital transformation and to help achieve the SDGs. The project further aimed at accelerating COVID recovery efforts and encouraging a successful recovery from the pandemic.

#### COLLABORATION

"UNU-CRIS is making a concrete contribution to the Flemish system by advising Flemish stakeholders, directing international researchers, and organising for young diplomats.... UNU-CRIS is a shining beacon and strong ambassador for the highly variable and indispensable work that the UN has been doing for generations."

**Jo Brouns**, *Flemish Minister of Economy, Innovation, Work, Social Economy and Agriculture*

#### PROJECT

##### **Transformative Urban Coalitions: Catalysing Urban Partnerships to Drive Systemic Transformation Towards Sustainability**

This **UNU-EHS** project supports cities to transform their social, technological, and political structures towards more sustainable systems. The project utilises innovative actor coalitions to co-create new strategies for addressing local challenges in urban development and inequality, while at the same time reducing carbon emissions. Urban Labs have been initiated in five Latin American cities; in each city, target areas were decided together with Urban Lab coalitions, and regular meetings are being held with political and other urban actors to raise awareness and establish good working relations. The project published five policy briefs in 2022 and presented its findings during key global events.

#### PROJECT

##### **Just Energy Transitions in the Informal Sector**

Injustices in current energy systems will be exacerbated unless specific efforts are undertaken to ensure an equitable transition and management of how Africa's fossil fuel resources are used. The problem is especially acute for the informal sector (which accounts for 80% of urban employment), where women constitute the majority. This **UNU-INRA** study seeks to clarify how the informal economy will respond to the transition, develop potential strategies for enhancing resilience to stranding risks and future energy crises, and provide a clearer understanding of effective strategies for addressing energy shortages, stimulating energy entrepreneurship, and bolstering adaptation and resilience. Through the creation of a digital information portal, the project also aims to highlight the contributions of green entrepreneurs to green transition efforts and provide a green business support infrastructure.

#### PROJECT

##### **Resource Nexus Analytics, Informatics, and Data (AID) Research Programme**

This **UNU-FLORES** research programme focuses on facilitating the sustainable management of water, soil, waste, energy, and geo-resources by governments, businesses, and societies based on nexus thinking. The programme has three pillars: The Resource Nexus Analytics pillar facilitates the extraction of information from data to inform decision-making. The Resource Nexus Informatics pillar inventories, develops, and promotes state-of-the-art tools and best practices in order to build and improve the capacity for computing and processing resource nexus data. The Resource Nexus Data pillar inventories existing resource nexus data to expedite data exchange and fill data gaps for analysing the resource nexus in coupled human-environment systems.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***The Global Inequality Boomerang***

This **UNU-WIDER** working paper looks at the confusing narratives about the historical trend in global inequality and predicts the future of global inequality to 2040. The analysis argues that although global inequality has fallen considerably and near-constantly since 1980, it will now likely reverse course (like a boomerang) and perhaps return to pre-1980 levels. This is because the past fall represented the rise of China and India — the world's two most populous countries — from the lowest per capita income ranking to near the global median; future growth in these economies will likely increase global inequality rather than decrease it.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Building Momentum for Green Hydrogen Development in Africa***

Qualitative and socio-ecological assessments of what a green hydrogen economy could mean for African countries remain scarce. This **UNU-VIE** policy brief critically reviews the current status of the green hydrogen sector both globally and in Africa. It maps the opportunities and barriers for green hydrogen futures; engages with current socio-political debates and expectations concerning green hydrogen's potential to boost North–South cooperation and contribute to climate, energy, and development goals; and offers recommendations for policy development towards a green hydrogen future for Africa.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Digital Inclusion: Improving Social Security Service Delivery***

This report on a study by **UNU-EGOV** and the International Social Security Association argues that digital inclusion must be understood as eliminating the digital divide by ensuring access in conjunction with development of the requisite skills and ability to use digital devices and content confidently, safely, and effectively. The report outlines the context of service delivery, technology, and inclusion; explains the key factors that are fundamental for making progress towards digital inclusion in social security; and concludes with several recommendations.



#### PUBLICATION

##### ***The Developer's Dilemma: Structural Transformation, Inequality Dynamics, and Inclusive Growth***

This **UNU-WIDER** book (published by Oxford University Press) explores the developer's dilemma of choosing between structural transformation versus income inequality. It addresses three core questions: What are the varieties of structural transformation experienced in developing countries? What inequality dynamics are associated with each variety? Which policies have been utilised to manage trade-offs between structural transformation, income inequality, and inclusive growth? It answers these questions by using a comparative case study approach to contrast the experience of nine developing countries.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Guide to Developing a National Cybersecurity Strategy***

**UNU Macau** contributed to the development of this strategy, published by ITU. Intended for national leaders and policymakers, the guide (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) provides a useful, flexible, and user-friendly framework to set the context of a country's socio-economic vision and security posture; to assist in the development of a strategy that takes into consideration each country's specific situation, cultural, and societal values; and to help achieve secure, resilient, ICT-enhanced and connected societies.

#### TRAINING

##### ***Biotechnological Processes to Obtain Energy and Other Valuable Products***

The focus of this two-week **UNU-BIOLAC** course, held in November, was on renewable energy, biofuel production, and circular economy. Postgraduate students studied various biotechnological processes for the production of first- and second-generation biofuels as well as other added-value products made from wastes or other low-value substrates produced in Latin America.

#### EVENT

##### **Reducing Inequality – The Great Challenge of Our Time**

The focus of this **UNU-WIDER** Development Conference, held in October in Bogotá, was on innovative, theoretical, and empirical research on inequality, and its policy take-aways. Participants took stock of where we are, evaluated progress made, and identified the challenges that lay ahead in achieving SDG 10. The conference closed with the WIDER Annual Lecture 2022 in which economist Daron Acemoğlu addressed the question “Will technology solve inequality?” and challenged the techno-optimism of our age.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Building Innovation Capabilities for Sustainable Industrialisation***

This book (co-edited by a **UNU-MERIT** expert; published by Routledge) argues that while renewable electrification in developing countries offers an important opportunity for local economic development, the development of capabilities for sustainable industrialisation are needed to achieve this. The volume focuses on case studies of renewable electrification in Kenya and other sub-Saharan African countries; it examines, inter alia, the capabilities being developed through on-going renewable electrification projects, ways in which the expansion of renewable electrification can be supported to encourage sustainable economic development, and the role of international linkages in the greening of energy systems in developing economies.

#### PUBLICATION

##### **“Digital Government as a Business Facilitator”**

Information and communication technology innovations in public administration are key for implementing policies that improve economic competitiveness. This article (published in the journal *Information Economics and Policy*) introduces a **UNU-EGOV** study of some 170 countries which found that digital government development helps reduce regulatory burdens in several stages of the business life cycle and areas of regulation. The study concludes that government digital effectiveness plays a significant role in facilitating business, and that adequate telecommunication infrastructures and literacy levels can complement digital government developments.

#### COLLABORATION

“Our partnership with UNU-MERIT has enabled us to produce policy-relevant research and deliver world-class education. We will continue to work together as UNU-MERIT delivers on its ambitions to be the UN’s go-to institute for comprehensive innovation on sustainable development. The institute offers a first-rate source of education and knowledge mobilisation as it teaches and enables the policymakers of tomorrow to make better decisions about our world.”

**Riane Letschert**, President, Maastricht University

PUBLICATION

***Interconnected Disaster Risks***

The second edition of this **UNU-EHS** flagship report analyses 10 different disasters from 2021/2022. It explains how better understanding the underlying systems that connect disasters with each other and all of us can reduce or even prevent disaster impacts. The 2022 report highlights the interconnectivity of solutions, emphasising that because of the interconnected nature of disasters, solutions work best when they are developed and implemented in combination. The report comes with its own website and supporting information.



PUBLICATION

***How Fast Is This Novel Technology Going to Be a Hit? Antecedents Predicting Follow-on Inventions***

This paper (co-written by a **UNU-MERIT** expert; published in the journal *Research Policy*) identifies novel technologies (those that make unprecedented combinations of existing components) and maps their re-use trajectories. The authors examine the characteristics of novel technologies that determine their take-off time and their maximum technological impact (as evidenced by the number of follow-on inventions). The analysis suggests that complex novel technologies resulting from combining dissimilar technological components with strong science-based content are associated with trajectories showing a long take-off time but a high technological impact, while combining similar components results in a short take-off time with low technological impact.

PUBLICATION

***“An Integrated Multi-Risk Assessment for Floods and Drought in the Marrakech-Safi Region (Morocco)”***

This article (published in the journal *Frontiers in Water*) reports on a multi-risk assessment being carried out by a team that includes **UNU-EHS** researchers to support policymakers in reducing impacts from natural hazards. The effort seeks to capture multiple components of risk while also providing entry points for the participation of stakeholders. The research (which shows more than a quarter of municipalities reaching very high multi-risk levels) has led to development of a decision-support platform for regional decision-makers.

PUBLICATION

***Labour Market Effects of Digital Matching Platforms: Experimental Evidence From Sub-Saharan Africa***

This **UNU-WIDER** working paper investigates whether digital labour market platforms reduce search frictions in either formal or informal labour markets, based on a tracer study of the work transitions of graduates from technical and vocational colleges in Mozambique. The study found that both intent-to-treat and complier average treatment effects were consistently zero, and that the overall impact on life satisfaction was negative, but that the use of informal jobs platforms leads to better work outcomes (and higher earnings) for women, especially those with manual qualifications.



#### PUBLICATION

##### **“Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Infrastructure”**

This article, published on the **UNU-FLORES** website, focuses on the role of nature-based solutions as an innovative approach for dealing with climate mitigation and adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and improved human well-being in the face of environmental unpredictability. As well as highlighting the efforts of UNU-FLORES to share knowledge across borders, it presents sustainable infrastructure technology for mitigation and disaster recovery as a step towards achieving a circular economy.

#### PUBLICATION

##### **“Our World at Risk: Transforming Governance for a Resilient Future”**

Two **UNU Macau** researchers contributed to the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction *2022 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, which offers recommendations to reduce risk and increase resilience. The central question addressed by this report is how governance systems can evolve to better address the systemic risks of the future. The report highlights that the climate emergency and the systemic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic point to a new reality; that understanding and reducing risk is fundamental to achieving genuinely sustainable development; and that to defend against future shocks we must transform our interconnected and vulnerable global systems now.

#### EVENT

##### **2022 Climate Academy**

**UNU-VIE** partnered with **UNU-EHS** and others to co-organise this September event that encompassed a 10-day online session and a five-day in-person phase in Rwanda. The focus of the academy was on digitalisation and energy transition, and their impact on climate action, particularly in the Global South. High-level experts and practitioners worked together to foster the science-policy-action interface and create new knowledge to inform global and local policymaking processes.

#### EVENT

##### **Centring Equality in the Implementation of the Global Compact on Migration**

**UNU-CPR** co-convened this side-event to the International Migration Review Forum in May. The events brought together high-level speakers from the UN, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, academia, and civil society, with the aim of deepening academic and policy understandings of the relationships between migration and inequality. Discussions focused on the implications of these relationships for implementation of the Global Compact on Migration to inform action taken by UN Member States.

#### COLLABORATION

“Structural economic reform in South Africa is key to delivering inclusive and sustainable economic growth and opportunity across the country. I am delighted that the UK Government can support achieving that through the SA-TIED Phase II programme, partnering with UNU-WIDER, together with the National Treasury and other agencies, to generate policy-relevant research and technical engagement to support economic transformation in South Africa.”

**Antony Phillipson**, UK High Commissioner to South Africa

#### EVENT

##### **How to Achieve Sustainability Without Sacrificing Equity?**

Making the fundamental changes needed to address today's problems requires a rethinking of what constitutes a successful society and human well-being, beyond the focus on increasing economic growth and its GDP measure. This event, organised by **UNU-EHS** in May in Bonn, presented alternative perspectives from around the world. Participants shared different and lesser-known pathways across time and scale, and sought to answer questions around, for each individual, "What constitutes a good life?"

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Income Distribution in Uganda Based on Tax Registers: What Do Top Incomes Say?***

While the income and wealth inequality that most people care about is the inequality between the bottom (or the middle) and the top of the distribution curve, the starkest inequality is often between the top 1%, the top .01%, and the top .001%. This **UNU-WIDER** working paper takes a first look at tax register data in Uganda to fill the knowledge gap about top incomes and reveal new insights about elite inequalities in a low-income African country.

#### EVENT

##### **Flood Knowledge Summit — From Risks to Resilience**

This two-day event, co-organised by **UNU-CRIS**, **UNU-EHS**, and **UNU-MERIT** in July in Maastricht, connected various actors (including affected citizens, first responders, authorities, researchers, and civil society) from the region, the European Union, and the Global South. Participants shared experiences with and engaged in dialogue about floods — a common environmental hazard that causes loss of lives, economic losses, and livelihood impacts around the globe. By looking both backward and forward, participants compiled lessons learned and best practices, and developed practical recommendations for research, policy, and practice towards climate-resilient development.

#### EVENT

##### **Greening the Informal Sector: Green Entrepreneurship for Just Transitions**

This online side-event at the UN Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in February, co-convened by **UNU-INRA**, interrogated the issue of "just transitions" in Africa and the implications and opportunities for the informal sector (which accounts for 80% of urban jobs on the continent). Participants discussed Africa's green transition prospects, with a focus on green entrepreneurship and job creation.

#### TRAINING

##### **Innovation, Economics and Governance for Development**

This four-year PhD programme, part of the **UNU-MERIT** Graduate School, provides advanced disciplinary and interdisciplinary training in the knowledge and skills most relevant to the economics of innovation and technology, migration, governance, social protection, and public policy analysis. Graduates receive a doctoral degree from Maastricht University.

#### EVENT

##### **Towards People-oriented Cities**

During the World Summit on the Information Society Forum in March, **UNU-EGOV** co-organised this session to raise awareness about the significant role that digital transformation can play in building people-oriented communities, improving public services, and helping cities to become smarter and more sustainable. The session looked at how international standards are helping cities become more people-oriented while also meeting the ambitious climate targets set out by the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the SDGs.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***The Emerging Digital Divides: Covid-19 and European Youth Work***

The pandemic-induced accelerated use of digital technology has increased youth work digitalisation in a short amount of time. This **UNU Macau** report provides new insights into the emerging forms of the digital divide among youth workers. In particular, it examines characteristics of two groups: (i) digitally-included and (ii) digitally- or partially digitally-excluded youth workers. The analysis suggests that youth workers and youth organisations will require strategic and ongoing support to participate in the digital transformation in an informed, proactive, and meaningful way.



#### EVENT

##### **UNU-MERIT 15-Year Celebration**

In May, **UNU-MERIT** organised a week-long series of events to mark the 15 years since the first formal collaboration between UNU, Maastricht University, and the MERIT Foundation, which led to the creation of the institute. The celebration included an academic symposium on “Comprehensive Innovation for Sustainable Development” that showcased the institute’s history and successes and explored UNU-MERIT’s research agenda on Comprehensive Innovation for Sustainable Development. Other events included several research seminars, the launch of the UNESCO Chair on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development for Latin America, a policy action lab event, and a policy research panel.

#### EVENT

##### **Migration and Governance Forum**

This event, co-organised by **UNU-CRIS** in November in Bruges, featured a keynote lecture (by Jean-Pierre Cassarino) and a panel of international experts. The lecture looked at migration governance and its unintended implications for international cooperation — in particular, how the engagement of non-Western countries in migration talks has triggered a (re)construction of their own national interests, with non-Western countries starting to disclose and defend their own representation of what cooperation on migration governance entails. The panel discussion focused on Western- and Euro-centrism within the social sciences, the historicisation of Southern contexts and colonial continuities, and questions about decentring from various disciplinary perspectives and for different geographical contexts.



**UNU Research:**

# Planet

Protect the Earth's biodiversity and ecosystems from degradation, sustainably manage its natural resources, and take urgent action on climate change to ensure that our planet can support the needs of the present and future generations



Mangrove seedlings in Karwar, India.  
Bishnu Sarangi / Pixabay

Without resolute efforts to save our planet's lifeforms, ecosystems, and resources, life for future generations will be bleak. A further five SDGs seek to reduce the adverse impact of human activity on the Earth's finite resources and its irreplaceable plant and animal life.

The SDGs focusing on these issues are closely aligned with the UNU thematic work cluster Environment, Climate, and Energy.



**SDG 6 — Clean Water and Sanitation:** Water is a core component of sustainable development that inherently links livelihoods, ecosystems, populations, and infrastructure. UNU water-related research addresses the needs of low- and middle-income countries, with a particular focus on policy guidance, problem-solving, natural resources planning, wastewater management, and new technology.



**SDG 12 — Responsible Consumption and Production:** Sustainable production and consumption is about doing more with less, and doing it better. UNU research focuses on the processes, practices, and governance of product cycles and value chains, and spotlights how traditional practices can be scaled alongside modern systems and management techniques.



**SDG 13 — Climate Action:** UNU seeks to help the vulnerable populations most affected by climate change, and to ensure global resilience later. UNU research contributes to policies and measures for mitigating and recovering from climate-related disasters, including insurance safety nets for island communities threatened by sea level rise and extreme weather as well as strategies to reduce carbon emissions.



**SDG 14 — Life Below Water:** UNU research examines human-ocean and human-freshwater relationships to help ensure mutual welfare, blending fisheries technologies with traditional management practices to support marine and coastal habitats as well as foster the sustainable use of marine resources.



**SDG 15 — Life on Land:** UNU research analyses the intersections of ecosystem change and resource use to find sustainable human-environment solutions that can preserve biological and biocultural diversity as well as safeguard traditional agricultural systems and rural livelihoods.

This section highlights some of UNU's projects, publications, and activities from the past year that operated within the scope of this "planet-preservation" set of SDGs.



#### PUBLICATION

##### **Guiding Principles for Children on the Move in the Context of Climate Change**

Already, millions of children have been displaced in the aftermath of weather-related shocks, and many millions more could be on the move in the coming years. This document, co-authored by **UNU-CPR**, is the first-ever global policy framework designed to help to protect and empower children on the move in the context of climate change. The framework sets out nine principles that address the unique vulnerabilities of children displaced, either internally or across borders.



#### PROJECT

##### **The Economic Implications of Stranded Assets in Africa**

“Stranding risk” is the danger that an asset will lose significant economic value before the end of its usable life. In order to meet global warming targets, it is projected that many African states may experience stranding of their oil and gas sector assets — particularly those countries with relatively recent fossil fuel discoveries. This **UNU-INRA** research project is evaluating the socio-economic risks that African states may suffer as a result of asset stranding caused by policy actions and implementation of the Paris Agreement. Project outputs have included two books exploring the status of Africa’s stranded assets as well as a paper for the COP27 climate conference. The institute is closing out the project with a complete economic analysis and predictions that will enable African governments to assess and manage stranding risk, avert future losses, and advance green transition planning.

#### PROJECT

##### **Global Cooperation for Climate Action: Southern Engagement with Climate Negotiations and Commitments 2020–2023**

This **UNU-VIE** initiative seeks to increase knowledge and capacities to enhance climate action in developing countries in a way that is reflective of the 2023 Global Stocktake. Work in 2022 focused on adapting the e-learning course on Climate Leadership to the African context with four relevant modules.

#### PROJECT

##### **Increasing Resilience to Water and Climate-related Risks**

This **UNU-INWEH** project identifies policy-oriented solutions that can enhance society’s resilience to water and climate risks and increase overall global water security. The project report *Water Security in Africa: A Preliminary Assessment*, which evaluates water security of 54 African countries in terms of 10 numerical measures related to SDG 6 indicators, found unacceptably low levels of water security in Africa and ranked countries in this regard. In 2022, the project completed a global assessment of water storage losses due to sedimentation of large reservoirs, now and projected into the future. The study found a significant loss of storage capacity since the peak of large dam construction in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and predicts around 25% of additional storage losses by 2050 — a trend that could soon threaten the water supply of many countries.

#### PROJECT

##### **International Satoyama Initiative**

Through this initiative, **UNU-IAS** is advancing human–environment solutions for transformational change towards living in harmony with nature. The *Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) incorporates UNU-IAS evidence-based positions on promoting landscape perspectives that embed human–nature relationships, cultural diversity, and participatory processes. UNU-IAS contributed to CBD meetings in March and to the CBD COP15 in December. UNU-IAS also led the process for UNU to join the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration as a collaborating agency and Best Practices Task Force member, and organised several events specifically designed to advance the Decade.

#### PROJECT

##### **Low-Carbon Society: An Enhanced Modelling Tool for the Transition to Sustainability**

This multi-partner project is developing sophisticated models to assess the socio-economic and environmental impact of different policy options in order to help societies make informed decisions about the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon future. **UNU-EHS** is leading the development of demography and society modules that can "humanise" the integrated assessment models by better representing human development indicators such as inequality, health, well-being, and migration. In a special session of project partners in June, UNU-EHS outlined its approach, and in September the institute contributed to a project Summer School.

#### PROJECT

##### **Multi-Actor Partnerships on Climate and Disaster Risk Financing and Preparedness in the Context of the InsuResilience Global Partnership**

**UNU-EHS** is a prominent partner in this project that seeks to strengthen technical understanding of climate and disaster risk finance and insurance (CDRFI) solutions and spur more effective collaboration between civil society organisations, governments, private-sector stakeholders, and academia. The initiative has made progress in linking stakeholders to enhance existing, or create new, CDRFI solutions and to improve the policy environment, with multi-actor partnerships having been initiated and established in the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, and Africa. The project further aims to strengthen the participation of civil society organisations in international CDRFI governance.

#### COLLABORATION

"UNU-EHS, as a global think tank, generates valuable knowledge for the United Nations and its Member States. Their research on risks and adaptation to climate change makes them unique in the academic community. The German government appreciates the excellent work of the UNU institute in Germany and will continue to provide them with core funding."

**Ms. Kornelia Haugg**, State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

#### PROJECT

##### **Promoting Unconventional Water Resources and Technologies for Water-scarce Areas**

This **UNU-INWEH** project examines and promotes a range of unconventional water resources (beyond rain and river flow) that can be combined to provide new water for human consumption and agricultural production systems. The project published a comprehensive book on the subject matter (in partnership with UNU-FLORES and FAO) as well as an article contributing to implementation of WHO guidelines for safe wastewater use in agriculture. The project is now reviewing innovative small-scale technologies for the provision of safe drinking water supply, and whether the global bottled water industry is contributing to or impeding the achievement of SDG 6 targets.

#### PROJECT

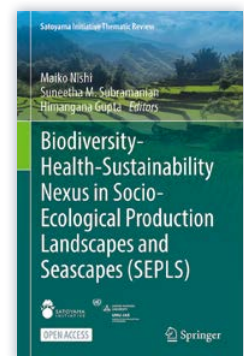
##### **Sustainable Transformation in Coal Regions of the Global South: Challenges from a Resource Nexus Perspective**

**UNU-FLORES** is conducting a capacity diagnosis project with the aim of issuing appropriate and pertinent recommendations to relevant stakeholders in the coal sectors of four Global South countries. Outputs include concrete, evidence-based recommendations from a Resource Nexus perspective to deal with the legacies of coal mining, with an emphasis on international cooperation among relevant decision-makers, other authorities, and stakeholders. The project's final report will provide descriptions of the coal sector in each country, including challenges and opportunities.

#### PUBLICATION

##### ***Biodiversity-Health-Sustainability Nexus in Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes***

This **UNU-IAS** book examines the links between biodiversity, health, and sustainability, with a focus on how local and traditional knowledge can contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity conservation and restoration, and good health for all. The book presents case studies from members of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative that demonstrate how sustainably managing landscapes and seascapes can enhance both human and ecosystem health.



#### PUBLICATION

##### **“Antimicrobial Resistance and Environmental Health: A Water Stewardship Framework for Global and National Action”**

This article, co-written by **UNU-INWEH** researchers (published in the journal *Antibiotics*) reviews 25 National Action Plans to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR). The review found that global and national stewardship primarily focuses on mitigating antibiotic use in the human and animal sectors, while overlooking environmental drivers (particularly natural water bodies). The findings highlight the need to broaden the scope of water-related AMR concerns beyond infrastructure for water supply and wastewater treatment, and to account for “environmental waters” in AMR development and dissemination.

## PROJECT

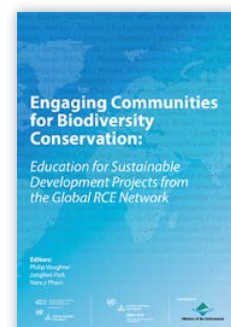
### **Water for Sustainable Development**

This four-year **UNU-IAS** project was completed in 2022 with the publication of a report (and complementary video) that provides insights, tools, and approaches to improve environmental and economic policy. The project explored the complex links between water and the economy to inform and support policymaking for SDG 6 and other goals in developing countries in Asia. Through case studies, the project developed an analytical framework to assess water sector input–output interlinkages — a tool that enables policymakers to model how changes in one sector will impact production, water consumption, and pollution loads in other sectors.

## PUBLICATION

### ***Engaging Communities for Biodiversity Conservation: Education for Sustainable Development Projects from the Global RCE Network***

This **UNU-IAS** book highlights innovative biodiversity education projects developed by regional centres of expertise (RCEs) during the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development from 2015 to 2019. It features 12 case studies that served to educate, engage, and spur action in their local communities and regions towards protecting and restoring the ecosystems, species, and habitats.



## PUBLICATION

### ***Countries' Research Priorities in Relation to the Sustainable Development Goals***

This **UNU-MERIT** working paper analyses the extent to which countries' research priorities align with their greatest SDG challenges, and whether misalignments are worse for certain SDGs. The analysis identifies research that is related to each SDG before assessing, via SDG indicators, the performance of each country. Results suggest that most research in the world focuses on issues unrelated to the SDGs, while within SDG-related research more than 90% is carried out in high- and upper-middle-income countries. At the SDG level, findings indicate a positive alignment between countries' research priorities and their SDG challenges for only four SDGs; for all the others (and especially for SDG 12), there is a misalignment or inconclusive relationship between SDG challenges and research prioritisation.

## PUBLICATION

### ***Fragility and Resilience in Green Development in Africa: Intersections and Trade-offs***

This paper, written by two **UNU-INRA** experts (published by the Institute for New Economic Thinking) discusses critical “drivers of fragility” — including climate change, land degradation, biodiversity loss, and energy poverty — that disrupt socio-economic systems, making livelihoods and society much more “fragile”. It further examines how the COVID-19 pandemic, persistent inequalities, trade deficits, and resource depletion have compounded these drivers, exacerbating underlying instabilities and wiping out progress towards the SDGs as well as threatening a cascade effect for African economies and environmental systems.

## PROJECT

### **Climate Resilience Initiative**

**UNU-CRIS** was one of the main partners in this initiative. The institute's researchers contributed to two work packages (individual & community preparedness & response, and multi-level governance). Initiative events of significance in 2022 included a July Flood Knowledge Summit and a side event at the UNFCCC COP27 on Multifaceted Impacts of Climate Change on Mental Health – Towards Integrated Climate Services.

## PUBLICATION

### ***Hazards, Exposure and Vulnerability in Indonesia***

Dealing with the risk to communities induced by natural hazards and climate change is a complex issue that requires cross-sectoral action. This report, co-published by **UNU-EHS**, brings together the different risk understandings of key international and domestic actors within the realms of social protection, disaster risk management, and climate change adaptation sectors. The report identifies commonalities across sectors to establish a joint understanding, and based on this cross-sectoral risk understanding assesses risks for Indonesia's regions and provinces.



## TRAINING

### **Advancing Efforts on the SDGs in the Anthropocene**

The annual UNU Global Seminar, organised by **UNU-IAS**, aims to enhance awareness among students about contemporary global issues and the role of the United Nations in addressing them. In the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the seminar, held in online format in March, students from some 20 universities across Japan examined the impacts of climate change with a focus on biodiversity, water, and education, and the actions needed to achieve the SDGs.

## PUBLICATION

### ***Unconventional Water Resources***

This book, co-edited by **UNU-FLORES** and **UNU-INWEH** experts (published by Springer) challenges conventional thinking about how much water is available, and how it can be managed. It provides insights into the way forward in harnessing such resources, and elucidates how water can be an instrument for international cooperation in achieving sustainable development. The volume looks at 10 unconventional resources including the harvest of rain and fog, or the use of municipal wastewater, in terms of their biophysical aspects along with related trade-offs; explores aspects of unconventional water transportation methods; and considers important aspects of water governance.

#### TRAINING

##### **Sustainability Postgraduate Degree Programmes**

**UNU-IAS**, in close collaboration with partner universities, offers a programme that confers a PhD degree in Sustainability Science and a programme that confers an MSc degree in Sustainability. The PhD programme takes an innovative approach to sustainability, seeking to promote a better understanding of the issues by incorporating global change perspectives, particularly those related to climate change and biodiversity. The MSc programme utilises an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to provide students with necessary knowledge and practical skills.

#### EVENT

##### **Reimagining the Human-Environment Relationship**

This virtual event, co-hosted in June by **UNU-CPR**, brought together a diverse community of thinkers and voices to share perspectives on the human-environment relationship that borrowed from religious thought, environmental ethics, ecosystems research, traditional ecological knowledge, and indigenous knowledge. The discussion addressed the gap between the urgency of today's environmental crisis and the willingness to collectively shift towards more sustainable forms of consumption. Participants also reflected on how the environment, and the interests of future generations, can be given a legal personality, and considered concepts such as reciprocity and intergenerational fairness

#### EVENT

##### **Valuing Water in Asia: Tools and Strategies**

**UNU-FLORES** and **UNU-IAS** were co-organisers of this online event at World Water Week 2022 in August. The session explored economic valuation methods for water and their applications in Asia. Among the topics discussed were the impact of water deficits and extreme weather events on migration and displacement, and the latest data and evidence on the linkages between water and migration. The aim was to promote better policies and strategies for water pricing and distribution, investment in water reuse, and greater societal appreciation for water.

#### COLLABORATION

"The relationship between the University of Bonn and the United Nations University is characterised by trust and common goals. Our joint master's programme with UNU-EHS (Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security) is a highly competitive programme with excellent students and academics, and we are currently looking into further expanding the cooperation between our institutions through a joint doctoral programme. With the recent publication of the second edition of its *Interconnected Disaster Risks report*, UNU-EHS has once again made its mark in the higher education sector as a place for innovative and future-oriented research."

**Prof. Dr Birgit Ulrike Münch**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, University of Bonn



## EVENT

### **Women and Water: On the Frontline of Climate Change**

This webinar, co-organised in October by **UNU-INWEH**, engaged policymakers and leaders to prioritise investment in gender transformative water security at COP27 and to commit to clear actions. Topics included water security evidence, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) as a pathway for gender equality, and the essential elements of gender responsive climate financing and investment. Participants addressed calls to action and drafted a joint statement for endorsement in the lead-up to COP27.

## PUBLICATION

### **Strengthening Wastewater Monitoring and Surveillance for COVID-19 and Other Infectious Diseases**

This **UNU-IAS** policy brief offers recommendations for scaling up wastewater surveillance as a cost-effective strategy for early detection and monitoring of infectious diseases. Focusing on low- and middle-income countries, it identifies the main challenges and opportunities for integrating wastewater surveillance systems into national and regional disease surveillance frameworks, and details how wastewater monitoring can provide a better understanding of the prevalence and evolution of diseases in communities and strengthen the early detection of future outbreaks.



## TRAINING

### **Preserving Genetic Diversity in the Age of Genomics**

This three-month **UNU-BIOLAC** training course (presented as the XV Latin American Workshop on Conservation Genetics) focused on reviewing and putting into practice genomic analysis tools updated with real data. The aim is to help Latin American scientists and professionals protect their biodiversity by using biotechnological frontier tools, and to facilitate incorporation of the workshop's content into future research projects.

## TRAINING

### **Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security**

This **UNU-EHS/University of Bonn** joint MSc degree programme provides students with detailed knowledge, critical understanding, strategies, and the tools to better understand the theoretical and methodological debates in geography regarding the complex emergence of environmental risks and natural hazards. It covers the implications of these risks and hazards for human-nature relations (vulnerability, resilience, adaptation) as well as how to best deal with them in practice.

## TRAINING

### **Foundations of Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance (CDRFI) and Impactful Civil Society Engagement**

This free, self-paced e-learning course, offered by the **UNU-EHS**-hosted Munich Climate Insurance Initiative, sheds light on potential benefits, limitations, and challenges of CDRFI solutions. It presents the conceptual and policy frameworks that lay the ground for CDRFI; shows how CDRFI approaches are functioning in practice; and provides insight on civil sector engagement and advocacy strategies at national, regional, and international levels.

#### TRAINING

##### **Climate Leadership: From Commitment to Action**

**UNU-VIE** organised an online course (May–July) to increase knowledge and capacities to improve climate action in countries in the Global South and their involvement with the ambition cycle of the Paris Agreement, focusing on the 2020–2023 Global Stocktake. The course focused on developing climate solutions from academic, entrepreneurship, policymaking, and innovation perspectives.

#### TRAINING

##### **Integrated Management of Water, Soil, and Waste**

This **UNU-FLORES**/Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) joint PhD degree programme provides students with detailed knowledge, critical understanding, strategies, and tools to take an interdisciplinary and integrated approach towards the management of environmental resources. The curriculum focuses on applying a holistic, Resource Nexus approach to sustainably managing natural resources in a practical manner, and is strongly oriented towards the problems of developing countries. Further building on this joint PhD degree programme is a Joint Junior Researcher Programme that expands the Resource Nexus approach to doctoral students enrolled in other academic disciplines, enabling them to conduct research on the sustainable management of environmental resources under the guidance of experts at UNU-FLORES and TUD.

#### EVENT

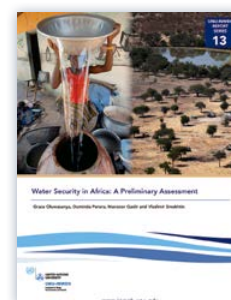
##### **Youth Empowerment on Climate Transparency and Green Recovery**

**UNU-VIE** co-organised this online side event in Uganda during the Africa Climate Week. Youth representatives and practitioners from the public and private sectors and academia discussed and advocated for policies, practices, and innovations that advance national plans and improve reporting with regard to the 2023 Global Stocktake.

#### PUBLICATION

##### **Water Security in Africa: A Preliminary Assessment**

This **UNU-INWEH** research report summarises the results of an assessment of water security in 54 countries in Africa in terms of 10 complementary and interdependent components/indicators of national water security. The assessment has revealed that levels of water security in Africa overall are unacceptably low, with only 13 countries having reached even “modest” levels of water security in recent years. When the assessment concludes, it will generate targeted policy recommendations for achieving higher water security in Africa.



#### TRAINING

##### **WASH in Health Facilities**

**UNU-INWEH** added a new 10-hour course on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) to its online Water Learning Centre. Designed for healthcare professionals, peer supporters, and community workers, the course provides an overview of technical evidence and guidance for supporting better WASH in healthcare facilities to enhance patient health outcomes and improve environmental sanitation in healthcare facilities.

**UNU Research:**

# Peace

Foster peaceful, just, and  
inclusive societies free from  
fear and violence



Egyptian peacekeepers conduct training exercises in the Mopti region of Mali.  
Harandane Dicko / UN Photo

Sustainable development is not possible without peace and justice for all, which in turn is dependent on effective, accountable, and inclusive public institutions. SDG 16 seeks to promote peaceful societies at national levels and cooperation at the international level.

The UNU thematic work cluster on Peace and Security encompasses the same vision.



**SDG 16 — Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions:** UNU research covers peacekeeping, the rule of law, and the effectiveness of judicial systems in the context of reducing violence, human trafficking, and exploitation. UNU projects on the changing nature of global violence, for example, provide insights into how humanitarian, development, and security actors must adapt to reduce violence and its impact on society and vulnerable populations.

This section highlights some of UNU's projects, publications, and activities from the past year that operated within the scope of SDG 16.

#### PROJECT

##### **Clientelist Politics and Economic Development: Theories, Perspectives and New Directions**

The aim of this **UNU-WIDER** project is to build and deepen connections between literatures on clientelist politics (giving material goods in return for electoral support) and economic development, especially with reference to the poorest of the poor. Special emphasis is placed on the associations between clientelism and poverty, state capacity, electoral politics, and policymaking by elected leaders. Project collaborators draw on expertise and ongoing research on clientelism in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia, as well as from cross-country analyses.

#### PROJECT

##### **Digital Government Assessment Project in Saudi Arabia**

**UNU-EGOV** is collaborating with the Digital Government Authority of Saudi Arabia to ensure an accessible and responsive public sector. In 2022, the project updated the government assessment framework for providing world-class digital governance and user-centric, inclusive technology-enabled service delivery. UNU-EGOV is also providing ongoing expert advice on digital, strategic, and operational priorities as well as capacity building support for technology-enabled service production and online service delivery across key government ministries.

#### TRAINING

##### **Public Policy and Human Development**

This joint MSc degree programme, offered by **UNU-MERIT** and Maastricht University, emphasises the connection between public policy and decision-making processes (specifically, the effectiveness and efficiency of governance). The focus is on understanding public policy from an evidence-based perspective, keeping in mind diversity, cooperation, and good governance.

#### PROJECT

##### **Finance Against Slavery & Trafficking (FAST)**

An estimated 50 million people worldwide remain victims of modern slavery. The FAST initiative, for which **UNU-CPR** serves as the Secretariat, is a multi-stakeholder effort to mobilise the financial sector against modern slavery and human trafficking, working with a range of government, private security, and philanthropic partners. In 2022, the reach of FAST's research and outputs continued to increase. FAST researchers also contributed to several high-level UN system-hosted meetings, and the initiative helped organise a High-Level Political Forum on child labour within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### PROJECT

##### **Institutional Legacies of Violent Conflict**

This **UNU-WIDER** project is helping to increase understanding among policymakers, academics, and practitioners of how institutional dynamics that develop during violent conflicts shape state-building and economic development trajectories in the long run. The research focuses on how and why violent conflicts persist, how and why their legacies endure across time, and what can be done to reduce the risk and impact of violence. The project is developing new comparative evidence on linkages between wartime institutions and post-conflict economic development — including the interactions between conflict dynamics, COVID-19, and associated policies to contain it. The evidence will identify entry points for and influence the implementation of more effective interventions and policies by governments as well as international and grassroots organisations towards sustainable peace.

#### PROJECT

##### **Managing Exits from Armed Conflict (MEAC)**

Despite decades of efforts to disrupt cycles of violence by providing and supporting interventions to help groups and individuals exit armed conflict, there remains a significant knowledge gap as to what approaches work most effectively, and under which conditions. This initiative by **UNU-CPR** and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research aims to fill this gap and enhance understanding of how and why individuals exit armed conflict, and which interventions are effective at encouraging transitions away from the battlefield. In 2022, MEAC analysed the experiences of women ex-combatants and worked with youth on the theme of peacebuilding in Colombia; partnered with IOM on reintegration in Iraq; and helped analyse data on human mobility in conflict settings in Nigeria.

#### PROJECT

##### **Thematic Review on Climate-Security and Peacebuilding**

Climate change and the insecurity it can generate are placing increasing pressures on peacebuilding efforts. In 2022, **UNU-CPR** undertook a thematic review to help better understand best practices and lessons learned from the multilateral system's response to climate-security challenges and to identify areas for programming improvement. The review examined global trends and approaches to sustaining peace through climate security efforts, took stock of climate security projects funded by the Peacebuilding Fund, and is helping shape a new global framework to guide future investments in climate-security. A further review examined how the UN Peacebuilding Support Office/Peacebuilding Fund can integrate human rights into its work.



#### PUBLICATION

##### **Stress Testing the UN's Regional Prevention Approaches**

This **UNU-CPR** report has already influenced changes within the UN Development Coordination Office. The report addresses how the UN can better integrate its regional prevention work and more effectively respond to major crises. It provides a brief overview of the evolution of regional prevention structures in the UN and examines three regions (the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and Latin America) where the UN has developed distinct regional approaches.



#### EVENT

##### **European Actors and the Transformation of Regional Security Governance in Africa**

This two-day conference, co-organised by **UNU-CRIS** in April in Brussels, brought together academics, policymakers, and political observers to explore the challenges and opportunities for regional security cooperation. Participants explored and debated about the dynamics of regional security governance in different parts of Africa, in the context of the evolving multi-faceted relationship between European and African actors (including national governments, the European Union, the African Union, African subregional security organisations, and ad hoc coalitions).

#### TRAINING

##### **Fighting Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking**

The **UNU-CPR** Finance Against Slavery & Trafficking initiative partnered with the Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS) to launch two training courses for the financial sector and governments. The first covers anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism obligations; environmental social governance; human rights; and enterprise risk management. The second discusses US sex and exploitation cases to help financial crime teams identify the complex set of financial activities associated with forced labour and sex trafficking. In 2022, more than 12,000 professionals from around the world participated in these two courses.

#### COLLABORATION

“The Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking (FAST) initiative [at UNU-CPR] is doing work we should have started 15 years ago. The initiative is not only mobilizing the financial sector around the world but also offers substantial solutions and teaches best practices so we can take serious measures to fight back. As a Survivor Advocate, I never felt so much hope fighting this issue until I witnessed and continue witnessing the incredible impact FAST has made in the fight against modern day slavery in the world.”

**Timea E Nagy-Payne**, Founder and CEO of Timea's Cause Inc. Social Enterprise, and award-winning global human rights activist

#### EVENT

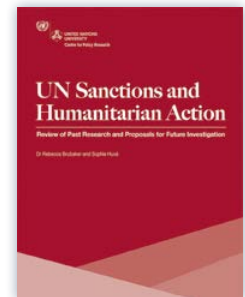
### **International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV)**

ICEGOV, the flagship annual conference of **UNU-EGOV**, has established itself as one of the most relevant and rich conferences in the domain of electronic governance and digital government. The three-day conference creates a unique link between the research and policy worlds by gathering all key stakeholders of technology-enabled transformation in government. ICEGOV 2022 was held in Guimarães in October and focused on the topic “Digital Governance for Social, Economic, and Environmental Prosperity”.

#### PUBLICATION

### **UN Sanctions and Humanitarian Action**

This **UNU-CPR** report examines the impacts of UN non-counter-terrorism sanctions on humanitarian action, and how these sanctions are being implemented at the national level. It reviews current best practices and provides guidance for Member States, sanctions experts, and humanitarian practitioners on to implement sanctions measures that are respectful of international humanitarian law. The report was used to prepare the interventions of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs ahead of Security Council sessions on sanctions.



#### EVENT

### **The Puzzle of Peace: Towards Inclusive Development in Fragile Contexts**

At this **UNU-WIDER** Development Conference, held in May in Helsinki, experts from academic and policy spheres gathered to discuss a range of topics, including peace, security, unrest, and the humanitarian fallout of conflict in different regions across the world. Participants identified the challenges faced by practitioners working in fragile contexts, and discussed how future research can support the way forward.

#### TRAINING

### **School of Modern Diplomacy**

The 2022 edition of this annual training session, co-organised by **UNU-CRIS**, was held online in August–September. Practitioners from the worlds of diplomacy, academia, policymaking, and the public sector learned about and discussed various facets of modern diplomacy and how these are being employed to shape ideas and discussion, and how they impact the world we live in.

#### TRAINING

### **Technologies and Information Systems in Government**

In 2022, **UNU-EGOV** continued to deliver this course for postgraduate students at the University of Minho. Students explored contemporary practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with the use of information systems and technologies to support and improve the execution of multiple state governance activities (e-government).





**UNU Research:**

# Partnerships

Mobilise a global partnership to  
implement the agenda



A UNU-IAS event at the COP27 conference  
in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.  
Nicholas Turner / UNU-IAS

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires mutual support and collaboration between governments (at all levels), the private sector, and civil society. SDG 17 seeks to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the collaborative effort.

Many of the projects across UNU thematic work clusters contribute to this goal of working together for the common good.



**SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals:** UNU is an active partner with academia, international agencies, government ministries, civil society, and the private sector. With expertise across the full range of the SDGs and active partnerships across all sectors, UNU facilitates knowledge dissemination and convenes a diverse range of development stakeholders. UNU research on sustainable development governance contributes to near-term SDG implementation and long-term policy frameworks for sustainability.

This section highlights some of UNU’s projects, publications, and activities from the past year that contributed to SDG 17.

#### PROJECT

##### **Building Up Efficient and Fair Tax Systems**

While countries in the Global South have increased their tax revenue in recent decades, overall revenues often remain too low to sustain provision of crucially important public goods. This project, part of the **UNU-WIDER** Domestic Revenue Mobilisation programme, analyses administrative tax data to provide knowledge for better policymaking and inclusive development in selected partner countries. This research investigates how countries could develop their tax systems by improving compliance and mitigating the potential harmful effects of taxation on enterprise growth and job creation. The project is helping develop the institutional and individual capacity of national tax administrators through technical cooperation and research co-creation, and building national and international communities of practice in the Global South. To date, UNU-WIDER has built project partnerships with revenue authorities in four African countries.

#### PROJECT

##### **Resource Nexus for Sustainability Transformations**

This programme offers opportunities for development-oriented postgraduate students to conduct doctoral studies under joint supervision of academic experts, including **UNU-FLORES** researchers. The German Academic Exchange Service will support scholarships for 7 or 8 doctoral candidates from the Global South per year, until 2030. The focus of the programme is on interlinkages between environmental resources, synergies, and trade-offs in their management, with an emphasis on the UNU-FLORES Resource Nexus concept; doctoral students, the first cohort of whom has been selected, will be “agents of transformation” who can contribute toward sustainable development in their home regions and beyond.



## PROJECT

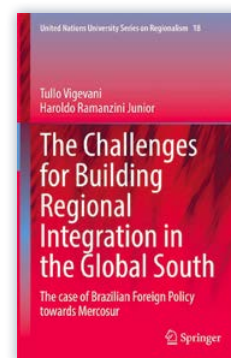
### **SDG Monitor**

Successful implementation of the SDGs is dependent upon whether the goals are adopted locally. The *SDG Monitor*, co-developed by **UNU-CRIS**, attempts to define the extent to which Flemish cities and municipalities are partners in these global goals, and to evaluate their performance. Building on the 2020 version, the 2022 *SDG Monitor* completely revisits the indicator selection process; it incorporates information on 243 indicators that track the SDG outcomes (2.5 times the number of the previous version) and uses case studies of Flemish cities. The core value of the project is the evolution and introduction of new methodological aspects for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs at the local level.

## PUBLICATION

### ***The Challenges for Building Regional Integration in the Global South***

This book, part of Springer's UNU series on regionalism (**UNU-CRIS**), analyses regional integration in South America with a focus on the Mercosur and Brazilian foreign policy from the 1990s. The book weaves two interrelated analytical dimensions: a focus on ideas and identity combined with a focus on behaviour, actions, and economic and political interests. It contains theoretical and empirical elements as well as discussions regarding the role of big, emerging countries and the potential of (and limits to) their international roles.



## EVENT

### **Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

As a co-host of this global conference, held at UNU Headquarters in Tokyo in July, **UNU-IAS** organised side events on “The Role of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Accelerate Local Action on Climate and Sustainable Society” and “Catalysing Nature-based Solutions for Biodiversity, Climate Change and Sustainable Development through Ecosystem Restoration”, as well as a two-day workshop aimed at engaging high school students in the conference and scaling up youth-led sustainability action.

## TRAINING

### **Evidence-Based Policy Research Methods**

This **UNU-MERIT** programme trains participants in the process of translating policy issues into research questions; analysing qualitative and/or quantitative data; grasping the state-of-the-art in a particular field; and designing, writing, and disseminating proposals for evidence-based research.

## COLLABORATION

“UNU-CPR has provided excellent substantive and logistical support to the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. Acting as the Board's secretariat, UNU-CPR is helping to deliver on one of the key initiatives in the *Our Common Agenda* report in a process that has involved high ambition and a tight timeframe.”

**Michèle Griffin**, Director of the *Our Common Agenda* team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, United Nations

## PROJECT

### ***Our Common Agenda*; High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism**

The UN Secretary-General initiated the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB) to help improve global governance and enhance our collective response to several critical global threats. Comprising leaders from government, civil society, the private sector, academia, and other relevant arenas, the HLAB has been mandated to build on the ideas in *Our Common Agenda* and make concrete suggestions for more effective multilateral arrangements. At the request of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, **UNU-CPR** acted as Secretariat for the HLAB from November 2021 through the end of 2022. In this role, UNU-CPR provided critical strategic, research, and logistical support to ensure that the Board could meet its key objectives of advising UN Member States on issues of global concern where governance improvements are most-needed; proposing solutions for how such improvements can be achieved; and identifying gaps, emerging priorities, and levels of urgency.

UNU-CPR helped to draft the independent report of the HLAB (including recommendations for the *Summit of the Future*) that will be submitted to the Secretary-General in April 2023. UNU-CPR also brought together more than 500 experts in 17 roundtables and thematic convenings to support the Board's work, and organised events with leading research centres committed to exploring global governance reforms. UNU-CPR thus has provided crucial input into some of the most important discussions on the future of multilateralism, contributing ideas and solutions that will help inform and shape our collective response to the climate crisis, environmental degradation, prolonged conflict, and other pressing challenges.

## EVENT

### **Climate Action and the SDGs — Closing Gaps and Strengthening Synergies; Partnership in Action for Well-being: The Satoyama Initiative and Building Back Better**

**UNU-IAS** co-organised these two online events in July as side events of the UN 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The “Climate Action and the SDGs” event identified gaps and needs in knowledge about synergies and trade-offs between climate change and sustainable development, and explored ways forward in closing these gaps, including research on transformations in energy, food, urban, and other related socio-economic systems. The “Partnership in Action for Well-being” event highlighted the role of the Satoyama Initiative in achieving the SDGs and explored the role of local action and partnerships in landscape and seascape approaches to ecosystem restoration.

## COLLABORATION

“Among other recent collaborations, we’ve much appreciated the cooperation with UNU on the recent deep dive on the triple planetary crisis. We look forward to working together in the months ahead!”

**Helena Fraser**, Director, Policy & Programme Branch,  
United Nations Development Coordination Office

## PUBLICATION

### **Regional Organisations and Africa's Development Challenges**

Achieving the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063, Africa's master plan for development, requires cooperation, coordination, and harmonisation of the rich diversity of regional organisations (ROs) on the continent. This **UNU-CRIS** policy brief is based on an analysis of all continental and subcontinental intergovernmental organisations with an African membership constituency, as well as the specialised and technical agencies and regional economic communities. From the analysis are derived several policy recommendations that outline how Africa's ROs can contribute to meeting the continent's development needs.



## EVENT

### **Artificial Intelligence Research in Health: Tackling Global Challenges as One**

During the Science Summit at the 77th session of the UN General Assembly in September, **UNU Macau** co-organised this session to explore how collaborative research in artificial intelligence (AI) for health can be established and sustained. The session also addressed the question of how technology can help to overcome pressing global health challenges (such as anti-microbial resistance, outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases, cardiovascular diseases, and environmental changes) and provide effective methods of early detection. Going beyond the traditional vertical approach, the session explored how AI can help cut across scientific silos to promote a holistic approach to solving these challenges.

## EVENT

### **Knowledge & Innovation: Investment for a New Africa**

**UNU-IAS** co-organised this side event at the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in September. The focus of the session, which featured four panel discussions, was on research collaboration between Africa and Japan, and on potential partnerships for science, technology, and investment in a wide range of sectors.

## PROJECT

### **Budding Nexus Ideas for Sustainability Transformation in Lusatia**

This **UNU-FLORES** project gives young people (age 16–25) the opportunity to take a closer look at a sustainable future in their home region and to develop ideas for Lusatia (Germany). An innovative workshop introduces participants to the SDGs while they paint their own ideas for implementing the goals. An SDG exhibition that shows how future generations understand the Goals and how they envision their implementation will be developed and presented to local and regional governments, thereby creating a basis for exchange between the young generation and policymakers in the region.

## COLLABORATION

“Many of the challenges we face are international challenges, requiring international, cross-border solutions. That is why we offer our full support to UNU-CRIS, an institute producing research to inform the policy that forms the foundation of our fight against these challenges.”

**Carl Decaluwé**, Governor, West-Flanders

## PROJECT

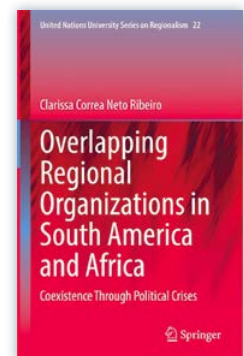
### **Governance for Sustainable Development**

A recent key area of research for this **UNU-IAS** project has been synergies between the SDGs and climate action, with a focus on identifying good practices and success factors. UNU-IAS co-organised an official side event of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that explored how to close critical gaps between these two agendas. Also, the institute co-hosted a major UN event (“Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”) at UNU in Tokyo in July, and then shared and further developed the outcomes of that conference through three side events at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27). Additionally, UNU-IAS conducted research on the social dimensions of the transition to carbon neutrality.

## PUBLICATION

### **Overlapping Regional Organizations in South America and Africa**

This book, part of Springer’s UNU series of regionalism (**UNU-CRIS**), discusses the interaction between and the impact of overlapping actions by regional organisations while dealing with critical events. It compares all the sub-regions in South America and Africa, analyses the types of institutional interaction among regional organisations and the effects of overlapping actions on the coexistence or fracturing of regional processes, and examines and compares the dynamics of these interactions.



## EVENT

### **Advancing the Nexus through Internationalisation and Networking**

At this **UNU-FLORES** online event, held in October, researchers presented their perspectives on recent innovative solutions to the Nexus challenges and explored ways to advance the Nexus by enhancing resource use efficiency and encouraging greater policy coherence. The webinar introduced ongoing Nexus initiatives and shared examples of Nexus best practices and lessons learned from around the globe.

## TRAINING

### **The Future of Regionalism After the COVID-19 Pandemic**

In the 2022 edition of the **UNU-CRIS** Online Summer School on Comparative Regionalism, held in May–June, participants were asked to rethink the role of regions and regional frameworks in addressing socio-economic, political, and geopolitical challenges in the context of post-pandemic world order.

## COLLABORATION

“A year after the Committee’s approval of its ‘strategic narrative,’ UNU-CPR continues to be an important partner, sharing its strategic policy insights to ensure that the work of HLCP remains relevant in a rapidly evolving context.”

**Ms. Maaike Jansen**, Secretary of United Nations Chief Executive Board’s High-level Committee on Programmes

# Delivering Evidence-based Knowledge to Those Who Need It

A core objective of the *UNU Strategic Plan 2020-2024* is to strengthen UNU's collaborations, communications, and visibility.

UNU disseminates relevant, evidence-based knowledge to those who can utilise it — practitioners, policymakers, academics, affected populations, and the general public — in a timely manner and in a useful form. The University does this through five main channels: publications, events, training opportunities, briefings, and mass media/online outreach.

### Publications

UNU publishes a wide variety of reports, policy briefs, and discussion papers. Additionally, UNU researchers author books, contribute chapters to edited volumes, and publish articles in peer-reviewed journals, magazines, and newspapers. More than 7,700 publications deriving from UNU research are accessible online through **UNU Collections**, including more than 270 that were published in 2022. Other publications are available to download from the websites of the institutes that prepared them or of the external partner that published them.

In 2022, UNU researchers published or contributed to 84 books and wrote or co-wrote 317 articles in scientific journals, 96 magazine/newspaper articles or op-eds, 245 working/discussion papers, 99 research/technical documents, and 97 policy papers (reports and briefs).

Several of these UNU publications are highlighted in the SDG-focused sections of this report.

### Events

Events help to extend the impact and the reach of UNU research. In 2022, UNU successfully convened more than 650 events (including 109 conferences/symposiums, 257 seminars/workshops, and 99 lectures), either organised as in-person gatherings or held online. Many UNU events are open to the general public while others target specialised audiences.

Among the prominent UNU event series held in 2022 not mentioned elsewhere in this report were the UNU Macau Conversation Series (three sessions), the Nexus Seminar Series (UNU-FLORES; eight sessions), the UNU Conversation Series (UNU Centre; seven sessions), and the Big Ideas Dialogue Series (UNU Centre; five sessions). Other major events (co-)organised by UNU during the year are included in the SDG-focused sections of this report.

### Postgraduate education & specialised training

UNU offers six postgraduate degree programmes. Three of these confer a Master of Science (MSc) degree and three award a PhD degree:

- Joint MSc in Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security (Bonn, UNU-EHS & University of Bonn)
- Double MSc in Public Policy and Human Development (Maastricht, UNU-MERIT & Maastricht University)
- MSc in Sustainability (Tokyo, UNU-IAS)
- Joint PhD in Integrated Management of Water, Soil, and Waste (Dresden, UNU-FLORES & Technische Universität Dresden)
- PhD Programme in Innovation, Economics and Governance for Development (Maastricht, UNU-MERIT)
- PhD in Sustainability Science (Tokyo, UNU-IAS)



The monthly INSIGHTS newsletter features UNU's latest research, commentary, and jobs. Subscribe at [unu.edu](https://unu.edu).



As of year-end, 251 students (152 master's degree candidates and 99 doctoral degree candidates) were enrolled in these programmes; 54% were developing country nationals and 57% were women.

UNU also organises dozens of specialised non-degree training opportunities each year, ranging from single-day workshops to multi-week courses on topics covering the gamut of UNU's thematic areas of focus. In 2022, UNU organised or co-organised 155 such training opportunities (92 of them held entirely or partially online) that were attended by more than 18,200 students, of whom more than 49% were from developing countries and 46% were women.

Complementing these formal study programmes and courses, many institutes also provide research-based training opportunities wherein young scholars and researchers can enhance their skills and knowledge by collaborating with or working alongside UNU staff.

### Briefings & presentations

UNU experts are regularly invited to give briefings at high-level forums and inter-agency bodies or to make presentations to policymakers, government officials, and key stakeholders. To highlight just one institute: in 2022, UNU-CPR researchers briefed the UN Security Council on Colombian reintegration ahead of the Colombia mission renewal; advised UN Security Council members and senior UN officials on sanctions and humanitarian action; engaged with high-level government representatives on modern slavery risks; and met with a range of UN Permanent missions. UNU-CPR also facilitated a briefing to UN Member States by the co-chairs of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

### Mass media coverage and online outreach

To raise awareness of the University's work and facilitate public engagement, UNU relies on coverage by traditional media outlets and conducts outreach via the internet, social media platforms, and a monthly email newsletter.

**Mass media** — In 2022, some 22,000 articles about UNU and its research were published worldwide, primarily in English (60%), Japanese (18%), German (5%), Spanish (3%), Chinese (3%), and Portuguese (3%). Coverage was mainly by online news sites (60%) and blogs (30%), as well as forums (4%), newspapers (3%), and magazines (2%).

**Internet** — During the year, UNU's websites received more than 5.4 million pageviews — including more than 1.6 million pageviews for the global UNU system website ([unu.edu](https://unu.edu)) and 865,000 pageviews for UNU's *Our World* research newsletter.

**Social media** — As of year-end, UNU had more than 138,000 Facebook followers, 182,000 Twitter followers, and 88,000 LinkedIn followers. During the year, more than 69,900 tweets and 4,000 Facebook messages mentioned UNU — primarily in English (75%) and Japanese (20%).

**Email** — By year-end, INSIGHTS, UNU's monthly email newsletter, was reaching more than 39,000 subscribers.

# Engaging with the Global South

UNU is mandated by its Charter to support “the continuing growth of vigorous academic and scientific communities”, particularly in the Global South, and to help developing country researchers and academics to access and participate in global knowledge circuits and policy processes.

The institutes of the global UNU system specifically consider in their planning how their work can contribute to strengthening the academic and scientific capacities of developing countries. This takes the form of undertaking research that focuses on the needs and concerns of the developing countries; collaborating with governments, research institutions, and individual researchers and scholars based in the Global South; employing developing country nationals; and giving students from the Global South opportunities to enrol in UNU postgraduate programmes or access specialised training.

To cite just some examples of UNU’s contributions to capacity development in the Global South:

- **UNU-BIOLAC** organises high-level technical education programmes in partnership with universities and research institutes in the Latin America and Caribbean region.
- **UNU-CPR** develops resources and tools to help governments in the Global South analyse and assess challenges, identify feasible solutions, and implement targeted approaches, strategies, and policies in response. Many of UNU-CPR’s Senior Fellows are based in the Global South.
- **UNU-CRIS** welcomes numerous interns from the Global South, holds specialised training sessions in Global South locations, and offers training devised specifically to build capacity in the Global South.
- **UNU-EGOV** delivers technical assistance for the implementation of digital governance projects in Africa, supports a master’s degree programme in Cabo Verde, and awards scholarships to developing countries researchers so that they can present their work at the annual International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance.
- A core objective of the **UNU-EHS** Munich Climate Insurance Initiative’s support to the V20 Group is strengthening of Global South national and institutional capacities to manage climate and disaster risks; in 2022, MCII co-organised two workshops for finance and environmental ministries of vulnerable countries. UNU-EHS also conducted a project aimed at developing and validating earth observation-based indicators for monitoring of the Sendai Framework using the example of flooding in Ecuador.
- Examples of **UNU-FLORES** projects helping to build capacity in the Global South are (i) an examination of the barriers to sustainable infrastructure in Chile and (ii) an analysis of the socio-ecological and economic multiscale sustainability of urban and peri-urban agriculture in Colombia.
- Among **UNU-IAS** initiatives focusing on capacity development in the Global South are the Asia –Pacific Mayors Academy for Sustainable Urban Development, the Satoyama Development Mechanism, and the Regional Research on Climate Change Displacement and the Right to Education project. UNU-IAS serves as secretariat of the global Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development network.
- The **UNU-IIGH** Decolonisation of Global Health programme seeks to elevate the voices and perspectives of health actors from the Global South;

the institute further uses its role within the Lancet Commission on Gender and Health as a vehicle to develop, test, and refine a decolonial feminist approach to engagement. UNU-IIGH is also a member of the consortium that maintains The Regional Training Centre for the Western Pacific Region.

- With its headquarters and five operating units in Africa, **UNU-INRA** works with local actors across the continent and monitors natural resource management trends. Central to its mission to “amplify African perspectives, promote made-in-Africa solutions, and cultivate African natural resource management capacity” is the institute’s College of Research Associates, which brings together a network of senior African scientists, academics, and development practitioners.
- **UNU-INWEH** works exclusively for, and largely with, the Global South. All UNU-INWEH outputs — replicable tools, concepts, datasets, syntheses and analyses — are developed with a view of supporting the developing countries of the Global South in their journey to sustainable development.
- Two **UNU Macau** projects promote artificial intelligence capacity building in Southeast Asia: one focuses on gender-based AI policy while the other studies the gendered implications of AI on implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.
- **UNU-MERIT** continuously engages with partners and individuals from the Global South in its core work. Many of the institute’s educational programmes either specifically target students from the Global South or focus on issues faced by the Global South. In collaboration with UNICEF, UNU-MERIT is developing a programme on social protection for stakeholders in the Global South.

- **UNU-VIE** collaborated with UNFCCC in 2022 to help young professionals in institutions and organisations in six countries in Africa and Latin America develop climate solutions and fostered the participation of young professionals and practitioners at international climate forums.

- A core aim of **UNU-WIDER** is to support the broadening and diversification of voices and perspectives in development research and thus address inequities in relations between researchers in the global North and South. Through in-depth country-level engagements, the institute prioritises the involvement of researchers based in, and proactively connects with academic and scientific communities in, the Global South. Through local trainee programmes and the embedment of researchers in local organisations, UNU-WIDER supports institutional capacity development in a set of targeted countries (including Mozambique and South Africa).

As of year-end 2022, 43% of UNU personnel were developing country nationals.

Among the 251 students enrolled in UNU postgraduate degree programmes during the year, 48% of students pursuing an MSc degree and 69% of PhD degree candidates were from developing countries. A significant number of these students received financial support through UNU fellowships and scholarships.

# Collaboration with Regional Organisations

Even as our world becomes more globalised, it is simultaneously becoming more regionalised. Regional organisations are key drivers of the development of legal and policy frameworks, and the design of effective action plans, that support the advancement of democratic transformation at national, regional, and global levels.

Regional organisations serve as a mechanism by which nations can work together on pressing issues of sustainable development, economic and social progress, and maintenance of peace and security. As such, they play an important role in our quest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals — not only by supporting the nations of their region in effective implementation of their commitments but also by monitoring their progress.


UNU routinely implements research projects, capacity-building efforts, and other activities in partnership with regional organisations. This collaboration helps to ensure that identified solutions and proposed recommendations are tailored to specific regional contexts and challenges. Furthermore, UNU has an institute (UNU-CRIS) that specialises in monitoring and assessing regional integration worldwide and in the study of interactions between regional organisations and global institutions.

The following are some recent examples of UNU work on or in collaboration with regional organisations.

- The **UNU-CPR** initiative Stress Testing the UN's Regional Prevention Approaches examined the UN's focus on regional engagement (a key priority of *Our Common Agenda*). The project developed a cross-regional understanding of how UN investments at the regional level could support risk prevention in different contexts, and how the UN's regional approach on humanitarian, development, and security tracks connect to each other and to national efforts.
- The **UNU-CPR**-coordinated Delta 8.7 initiative (Alliance 8.7 global knowledge platform) undertook research on the prevalence and nature of migrant trafficking for an IOM Malaysia project, and organised policy research workshops (in Uganda, Ghana, and Malaysia) to facilitate exchanges and identify practices and policies that address modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and child labour.
- The **UNU-CRIS**, as part of a decade-long partnership with the Andean Community, organised the 10th annual Doctoral School on Latin American, European and Comparative Regionalism in July.
- **UNU-CRIS** is working with the Regional Cooperation and Integration Department of the Islamic Development Bank to deliver training on digital governance, regional integration and investment promotion, and related topics.
- In recognition of the cross-border effects of climate change, **UNU-CRIS**, **UNU-EHS**, and **UNU-MERIT** have jointly launched the UNU Climate Resilience Initiative. This initiative is working in collaboration with partners from across the main flood-affected countries in Europe as well as other flood-prone areas of the world to share knowledge, shape policy, and drive action.
- **UNU-EHS** is conducting a project with the Mono Basin Authority and some 50 regional stakeholders aimed at implementing climate-sensitive adaptation strategies to reduce flood risk in Togo and Benin.
- The Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment initiative, led by **UNU-EHS** and the Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion, is working to increase the resilience of high Andean communities against the impacts of changing climate conditions (such as deglaciation and droughts).

- The Dresden Nexus Conference is organised by **UNU-FLORES** and Technische Universität Dresden in collaboration with the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development. The topic of the 2022 conference was “Biodiversity: Stewardship for Vital Resources”.
- **UNU-FLORES** is a member of COST Action NEXUSNET, an international network of researchers collaborating with universities, research institutions, policymakers, and the business sector, to better understand how the Resource Nexus fosters policy coherence and biophysical interactions. The network supports the transition towards a circular and low-carbon economy in Europe.
- **UNU-IAS** collaborates with UN ESCAP, UN-Habitat, and other partners to support the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy for Sustainable Urban Development. The academy provides a framework for short- to medium-term planning and action towards the adoption of more-sustainable development pathways.
- **UNU-IIGH** works in partnerships with academic institutions and civil society organisations in Africa and at the global level to consolidate and generate evidence powered by local expertise and knowledge on such topics as how to successfully scale and sustain gender considerations into government programmes.
- A regional best practices initiative by **UNU-IIGH** and key partners has catalysed the launch of a Community of Practice (CoP) on Gender and Health for the African continent that aims to empower ground implementers to pivot theory and money into action.
- **UNU-INRA** is helping to establish an African Facility for Transitions Research (AFTER Carbon), a policy research hub to support long-term sustainability and low-carbon development in Africa. The first AFTER Carbon roundtable was held in August.
- **UNU Macau** is working with UN Women on a project that exams the gendered implications of artificial intelligence on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Southeast Asia.
- As part of its Smart Citizen Cyber Resilience project, in October **UNU Macau** co-led a series of activities to raise cyber awareness, with a focus on highlighting the role of civil society organisations towards cyber resilience in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **UNU-MERIT** researchers continue to provide the major inputs to the European Commission’s *European Innovation Scoreboard*, which provides a comparative analysis of the innovation performance, strengths, and weaknesses of EU countries, other European countries, and regional neighbours.
- **UNU-MERIT** worked in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank to develop an extensive innovation and structural transformation database and a data visualisation tool covering a broad set of economies in Asia and beyond.
- **UNU-VIE** organised a workshop in South Africa that brought together representatives from several regional institutions working on water and innovation in Africa and Germany.
- **UNU-VIE** collaborated with several UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centers to organise a series of climate action events in Africa and the Caribbean region.
- **UNU-WIDER** works closely with the African Economic Research Consortium on economic issues, and with the Inter-American Development Bank on topics of violent conflict.





## The UNU System: A Global Overview

# Structure & Activities

UNU operates as a network of institutes<sup>3</sup> located in 12 countries, each of which has a specific focus as mandated by its statute and host country agreement. The global UNU system is coordinated by **UNU Centre**, which comprises a headquarters unit in Japan (UNU Centre – Tokyo), the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe in Germany (UNU-VIE, Bonn), and an administrative services unit in Malaysia (UNU Centre – Putrajaya).

**UNU-BIOLAC** — The UNU Biotechnology Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (Caracas, Venezuela) promotes the use of biotechnology for sustainable development.

**UNU-CPR** — The UNU Centre for Policy Research (New York, NY, USA) generates innovative solutions to global public policy challenges, contributes to policy debates at the United Nations, and represents the UNU system at UN headquarters.

**UNU-CRIS** — The UNU Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (Bruges, Belgium) focuses on issues of governance, cooperation, and intra- and inter-regional integration.

**UNU-EGOV** — The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (Guimarães, Portugal) works at the intersection of governance, technology, and development.

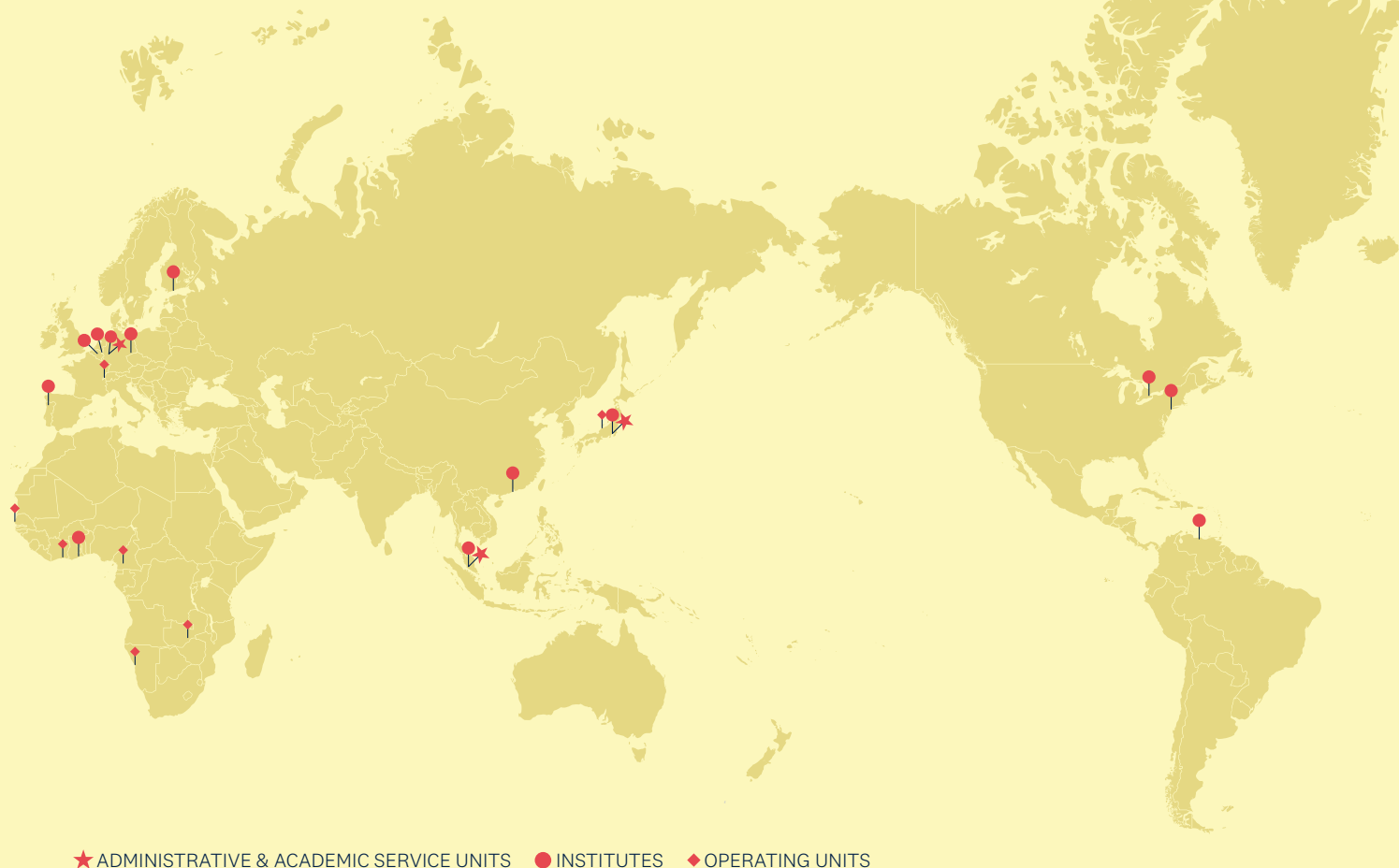
**UNU-EHS** — The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (Bonn, Germany) addresses the challenges of global environmental change, with a focus on environmentally driven vulnerability and the interplay between ecological and societal factors.

**UNU-FLORES** — The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (Dresden, Germany) contributes to the sustainable use and integrated management of environmental resources, particularly water, soil, and waste.

**UNU-IAS** — The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (Tokyo, Japan) supports efforts to achieve a more sustainable future, with a focus on transformations toward sustainable societies, natural capital and biodiversity, and global change and resilience.

**UNU-IIGH** — The UNU International Institute for Global Health (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) advances evidence-based policy on key health issues, with a focus on gender mainstreaming in health systems and supporting decision-makers in the Global South.

<sup>3</sup> In this document, the term “institutes” encompasses the global UNU system’s 13 research and academic units, not just those that contain “institute” as part of their name.



**UNU-INRA** — The UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (Accra, Ghana) provides cutting-edge knowledge about sustainable responses to Africa’s natural resources management challenges.

**UNU-INWEH** — The UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada) analyses and synthesises existing knowledge on water challenges, identifies emerging policy issues, and develops scalable solutions.

**UNU Macau** — The UNU Institute in Macau (Macau, SAR China) conducts policy-relevant research on digital technologies and SDGs to support evidence-based, knowledge-driven, and participatory decision-making.

**UNU-MERIT** — The UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (Maastricht, the Netherlands) explores the social, political, and economic factors that drive technological innovation.

**UNU-WIDER** — The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (Helsinki, Finland) focuses on the interlinked development challenges of transforming economies, states, and societies, with an emphasis on research-into-use processes.

## The UNU System: A Global Overview

# Human & Financial Resources

### Personnel

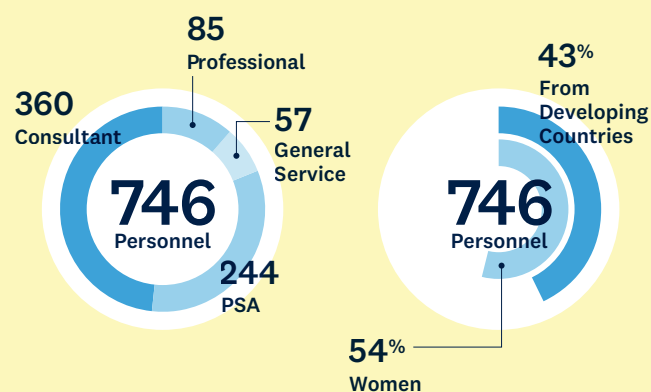
UNU is an inclusive employer committed to ensuring that its workplace culture is tolerant of racial, cultural, sexual, and other differences; is gender-balanced; supports the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities; and is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and abuse. In 2022, UNU promulgated a new Disability Inclusion Policy, in line with the *Strategic Plan 2020-2024*.

The global UNU system comprises a diverse group of personnel possessing broad and in-depth expertise. The University's personnel include a combination of:

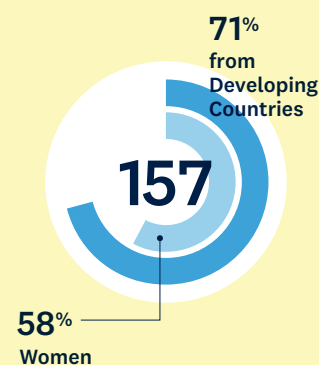
- Professional (P-1 level and higher) and General Service (GS) staff, who are appointed in accordance with United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules
- visiting scholars, research associates, postdoctoral fellows, and administrative and academic services personnel, who are employed on UNU Personnel Service Agreements (PSAs)
- external specialists, experts, and services personnel, who are employed on limited-term UNU Consultant Contracts (CTCs)

As of year-end 2022, the global UNU system had a personnel complement of 746, of whom 54% were women and 43% were developing country nationals. UNU personnel comprised 85 individuals in the Professional category, 57 staff in the General Service category, and 604 other persons employed under either Personnel Service Agreements or Consult Contracts.

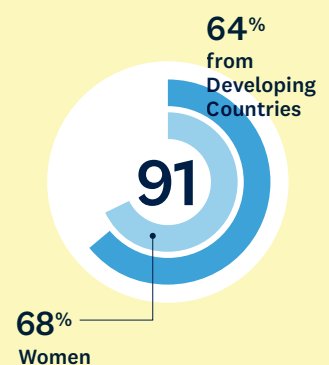
### Personnel



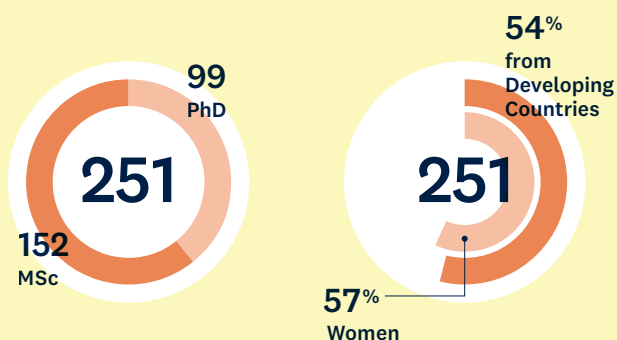
### Research Fellows



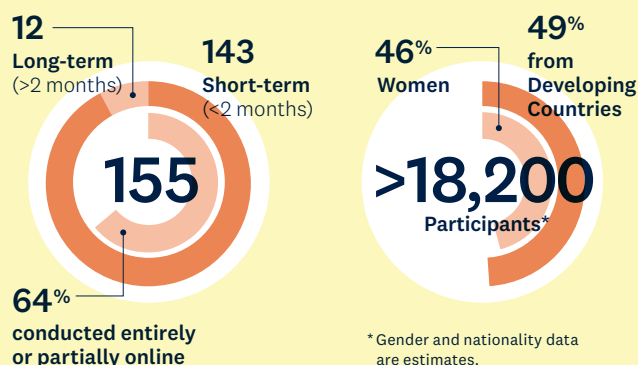
### Interns



## UNU Postgraduate Students



## Non-degree Training Programmes and Activities

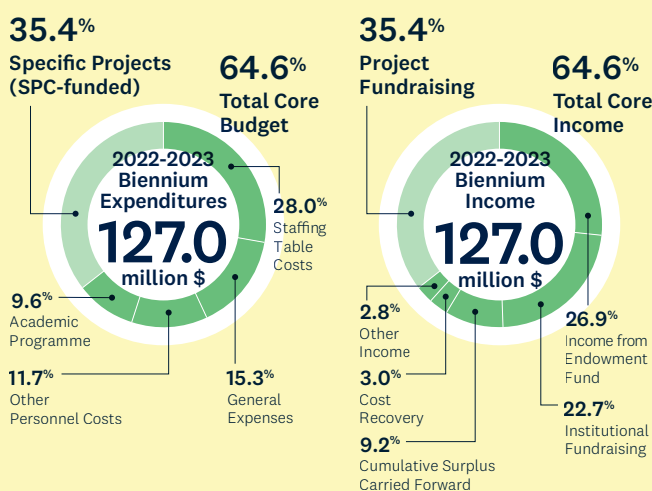


## Finances

UNU receives no funds from the regular UN budget. The operation and work of the University is funded entirely through voluntary contributions in the form of institutional funding (primarily recurring host country contributions and investment income derived from the UNU Endowment Fund) and contributions (from UN Member States, foundations, agencies, international organisations, and other sources) designated for specific research projects.

The approved UNU budget for the 2022–2023 biennium is US\$127.0 million: US\$50.3 million for staffing and personnel costs, US\$45.0 for specific project expenses, US\$19.5 million for general expenses, and US\$12.2 million for academic programme costs.

The financing for these expenditures is expected to come from project fundraising (US\$45.0 million), UNU Endowment Fund income (US\$34.1 million), institutional fundraising (US\$28.8 million), cumulative surplus carried forward (US\$11.7 million), cost recovery (US\$3.8 million), and other income (US\$3.6 million).



# Contributions Received by UNU

1 January — 31 December 2022

MEMBER STATES	US Dollars*
Australia	34,110
Belgium	1,041,463
Canada	1,545,595
European Union (European Commission)	301,239
Finland	2,312,291
France	122,962
Germany	7,149,453
Japan	4,649,103
Korea (Republic of)	77,879
Macau S.A.R.	194,937
Netherlands	1,452,156
Norway	4,796,782
Sweden	1,068,180
Switzerland	487,821
United Kingdom	766,602
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>26,000,572</b>
OTHER CONTRIBUTORS	
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	726,857
CIMA Research Foundation	34,436
Coventry University	36,353
Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)	162,965
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	178,656
Deutsches Zentrum fuer Luft-und Raumfahrt e.v. (DLR)	74,678
Eurac Research	401,476
European Investment Bank	20,851
Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)	286,000
Farmer's Market Association	76,055
Foundation for the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies	26,296
Frankfurt School of Finance & Management	41,805
Humanity United	50,000
Institute of Development Studies (IDS)	147,299
International Development Research Centre (IDRC)	699,552
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	46,126
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)	93,842
Ishikawa Prefecture	187,959
Japan Foundation for the United Nation University (JF UNU)	123,077
Japan Science and Technology Agency	43,896
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science	37,492
Kanazawa City	188,278
Liechtensteinischer Bankenverband (Liechtenstein Bankers' Association)	21,482
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine	41,885
Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSOG)	59,811
McMaster University	69,192
Munich Climate Insurance Initiative	462,041
Munich Re Foundation	63,999
National Treasury of the Republic of South Africa	1,254,652
Newcastle University	20,438
OroVerde Tropical Forest Foundation - OroVerde Die Tropenwaldstiftung	22,138
Peace Process Support - The Secretariat	105,000
Resona Holdings, Inc.	92,731
Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH	501,505
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	51,304
Stichting Deltares	20,362
Stichting Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology	274,008
Stiftelsen Global Challenges Foundation (GCF)	211,543
Technische Universitaet Dresden	56,180
UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office)	454,716
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	304,588
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	120,000
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	23,781
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Kenya	175,000
United Nations Foundation	209,000
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	343,099
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)	99,482
United States Institute of Peace	51,497
Universiteit Gent	65,240
University ff Copenhagen, Department of Economics	104,833
Vrije Universiteit Brussel	229,189
WASTE	45,558
West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use	68,535
Zukunft-Umwelt-Gesellschaft gGmbH	146,631
Other donors (40 other donors with individual contributions of less than US\$20,000)	180,879
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>9,634,245</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,634,817</b>

\* Contribution figures are converted to US dollar equivalents and rounded to the nearest dollar; subtotals may reflect rounding approximations.



## The UNU System: A Global Overview

# Governance & Leadership

Oversight of UNU's operations and academic activities is exercised by five governance and leadership structures; three of these (the UNU Council, UNU Rectorate, and UNU Administration) function systemwide while two (Directors and Advisory Boards/Committees) have institute-specific roles.

The **UNU Council** oversees the affairs of the global UNU system. The Council's responsibilities include approval of the UNU Work Programme and Budget and adoption of University-wide statutes and policies. The UNU Council reports on the work of the University to the UN General Assembly, the UN Economic and Social Council, and the Executive Board of UNESCO.

The 16-member Council comprises 12 appointed members who serve six-year terms (in an individual capacity, not as representatives of their countries), the UNU Rector, and three ex officio members from the United Nations system (the UN Secretary-General, UNESCO Director-General, and UNITAR Executive Director).

The Council met twice in 2022, for its 77th Session (30–31 May in Helsinki) and its 78th Session (1–2 December in Paris). At the session in May, UNU bid farewell to six individuals whose term as council members concluded and welcomed a cohort of six newly appointed members.

The **UNU Rectorate** provides management direction for and coordinates activities within the global UNU system. The chief academic and administrative officer of UNU is the Rector, who holds the rank of UN Under-Secretary-General. He is assisted by a Management Group and supported by the Tokyo-based Office of the Rector.

The **UNU Administration** is responsible for development of unified standards, financial/treasury system management, and budget reporting to the UNU Council. The Administration unit provides HR, financial, and procurement services to the global UNU system from offices in Tokyo and Putrajaya.

Each UNU institute is headed by a **Director**, who reports to the Rector. Directors have oversight of their institute's budget, human resources, and research and programme development. Institute Directors collectively meet (along with senior Office of the Rector and Administration officers) once annually in-person and otherwise online for the Conference of Directors (CONDIR) to discuss matters of inter-institute policy and coordination. In 2022, after a two-year hiatus, Directors were able to gather twice in person, at UNU-MERIT and in Paris, together with the UNU Council.

Each UNU institute benefits from the guidance of an **Advisory Board/Committee**. These bodies, typically comprising three or more appointed members plus the UNU Rector and Institute Director, take an active role in advising on thematic programming and management of their respective UNU institutes, including on issues of quality assurance and fundraising.

United Nations system bodies that play a governance role for UNU include the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Board of Auditors, and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

## UNU COUNCIL 2022

### APPOINTED MEMBERS

#### May 2022 – May 2028

- Ms Yamini Aiyar (India) — President & Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi
- Prof. Sir Hilary Beckles (Barbados) — Vice-Chancellor, The University of the West Indies (The UWI)
- Dr Enrique Forero (Colombia) — Chair of the Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean (RFP-LAC) of the International Science Council (ISC)
- Prof. Catherine Kyobutungi (Uganda) — Executive Director, The African Population and Health Research Center
- Ambassador Kuni Sato Advisor (Japan) — Advisor, East Japan Railway Trading Co., Ltd; Advisor, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage
- Dr Vanessa Scherrer (France) — Vice President for International Affairs of Sciences Po

#### May 2019 – May 2025

- Prof. ‘Funmi Olonisakin (*Council Chair*) (United Kingdom & Nigeria) — Vice-President & Vice-Principal International and Professor of Security, Leadership & Development, King’s College London
- Dr Denisa Čiderová (Slovakia) — Associate Professor in the Department of International Trade and Liaison for Idea Puzzle at the University of Economics in Bratislava
- Dr Comfort Ero (United Kingdom) — President and CEO, International Crisis Group
- Dr Xin Fang (China) — Professor, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Prof. Adam Habib (South Africa) — Director, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London
- Prof. Brenda Yeoh (Singapore) — Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

#### May 2016 – May 2022

- Prof. Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz (Brazil) — Senior Vice President, Elsevier Research Networks
- Ms Isabel Guerrero Pulgar (Chile) — Executive Director IMAGO Global Grassroots; Lecturer at Harvard Kennedy School

- Ms Angela Kane (Germany) — Vice President, International Institute for Peace; Senior Fellow, Vienna Centre for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament; Professor, Sciences Po (Paris)
- Dr Segenet Kelemu (Ethiopia) — Director General and CEO, International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe)
- Dr Radha Kumar (India) — Policy Analyst
- Amb. Tsuneo Nishida (Japan) — Special Advisor to the President of Kanagawa University; Honorary Director of the Institute for Peace Science, Hiroshima University

### EX OFFICIO COUNCIL MEMBERS

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- The Secretary-General of the United Nations
- The Director-General of UNESCO
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- UNU-IIGH Director Pascale Allotey (through 4 September)
- UNU-IIGH Director Rajat Khosla (from 5 September)
- UNU-INRA Director Fatima Denton
- UNU-INWEH Director Vladimir Smakhtin
- UNU Macau Director Jingbo Huang
- UNU-MERIT Director Bartel Van De Walle
- UNU-WIDER Director Kunal Sen

# About UNU

As a trusted knowledge partner within the United Nations system, the United Nations University (UNU) connects diverse groups of international stakeholders to generate and share research with a broad spectrum of publics. UNU translates this research into evidence-based policy recommendations and delivers it to those who can drive positive change, thereby helping to ensure that policy works for people, locally and globally. The University further promotes knowledge creation and exchange through education and capacity building programmes.

This year marked the 50th anniversary of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2951(XXVII) (11 December 1972), which approved the establishment of “an international university under the auspices of the United Nations to be known as the United Nations University”. It was less than three years later, in September 1975, that UNU launched operations from UNU Centre in Tokyo. Since then, UNU has expanded to become a global network of research and training institutes in 12 countries.

UNU has long been a pioneer in developing knowledge and expertise that crosses traditional scientific boundaries, reflecting the intertwined nature of global systems and the pressing problems of human survival, development, and welfare. The University has also contributed to generating innovative research methodologies; developing better ways to measure sustainable development and assess human and environmental well-being; disseminating evidence-based knowledge; and supporting individual and organisational capacity development within the Global South.

Its unique dual identity as an autonomous research and training institution<sup>4</sup> and a trusted knowledge partner within the United Nations system enables UNU to serve as a bridge linking global research communities and international policymaking communities. UNU experts conduct interdisciplinary research, translate the findings into evidence-based policy recommendations, and apprise policymakers and others who can drive positive change. The University also provides its researchers and academic partners with insight into the UN’s research needs and offers them the opportunity to help shape policymaking.

The UNU research programme covers a wide range of issues within three broad thematic clusters: peace and security; social change and economic development; and environment, climate, and energy. Because UNU operates as a global network of institutes, each focused on a specific set of topics, the University’s work spans many geographies across the globe, intersects with a multitude of international and regional policy spaces, and integrates a diverse range of academic disciplines. In 2022, the work of UNU encompassed some 200 projects and other academic activities.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

For additional information about the work of UNU, please see the UNU system website ([unu.edu](https://unu.edu)).

Additionally, we invite you to follow us on social media, including Twitter ([twitter.com/UNUniversity](https://twitter.com/UNUniversity)), Facebook ([facebook.com/UnitedNationsUniversity](https://facebook.com/UnitedNationsUniversity)), and LinkedIn ([linkedin.com/company/united-nations-university](https://linkedin.com/company/united-nations-university)).

<sup>4</sup> The Charter of the United Nations University grants UNU “autonomy within the framework of the United Nations” as well as “the academic freedom required for the achievement of its objectives”.