



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
14 March 2019

Original: English

---

## 2019 session

26 July 2018–24 July 2019

Agenda item 20

**United Nations research and training institutes**

## Report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University

### Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction . . . . .	2
II. Serving as a global network for research and training . . . . .	3
III. Promoting positive change through research . . . . .	9
IV. Training tomorrow's leaders. . . . .	15
V. Sharing knowledge and expertise. . . . .	18
VI. Continuing to evolve as the key think tank of the United Nations system . . . . .	22
 Annex	
Members of the Council of the United Nations University . . . . .	25



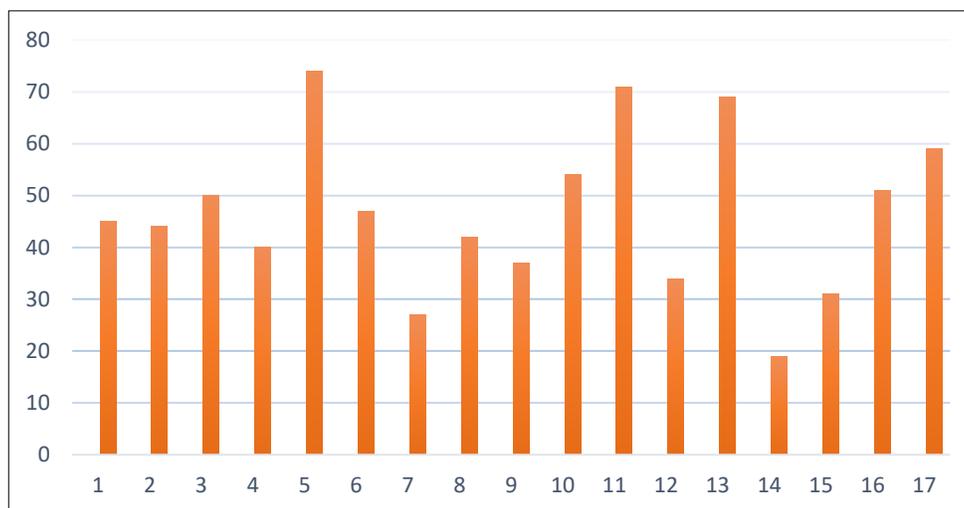
## I. Introduction

1. The United Nations University (UNU) was established by the General Assembly as an international community of scholars, engaged in research, postgraduate training and dissemination of knowledge, with a mandate to devote its work to research into the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare.

2. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the UNU research programme is closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and addresses the full range of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. UNU conducted, for example, a total of 185 projects in 2018, of which a number served to contribute to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (see figure I). Through its 16 institutes<sup>1</sup> on five continents, UNU draws on the expertise of more than 400 skilled researchers to develop evidence-based solutions and advocate realistic policies that will enable States Members of the United Nations to reach the targets contained in the Goals. Given that the Goals and their targets are interconnected, UNU is particularly active in areas in which the various Goals converge.

Figure I

### Number of United Nations University projects addressing each of the Sustainable Development Goals, 2018



3. UNU is, first and foremost, a network for solutions-focused research. Its researchers study human activities and the ways in which such activities are altering the world and affecting lives. The overarching goal of UNU is to contribute, through research, to global sustainable development that enables the present generation to live in an environment of safety, freedom, decency and good health, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

4. UNU functions essentially as a think tank for the United Nations system and is therefore uniquely positioned to be able to contribute to global debates, in addition to having the academic freedom guaranteed by its charter to allow it to provide impartial and sound academic advice on sensitive issues.

<sup>1</sup> In the present document, the term “institutes” is used in the broad sense to encompass not only the 11 units that have “institute” as part of their name but also the UNU Centre for Policy Research, the UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance and the UNU research and training programmes in Iceland and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

5. In addition to its primary research function, UNU also serves as a postgraduate training and capacity development institution. It offers unique training opportunities, including postgraduate degree programmes, that help to equip tomorrow's leaders with the academic foundations needed to solve global challenges. By disseminating its research findings through publications – most of them freely available online – and events, UNU contributes to promoting dynamic interactions in academic and scientific communities worldwide.
6. The present report serves to describe the research and training activities conducted by UNU in 2018, with a particular focus on its contributions to global policymaking processes, collaborations with other United Nations system entities and work in the field. It also covers UNU knowledge dissemination activities and highlights selected institutional developments and priorities.
7. The report does not include an exhaustive inventory of the University's operations and achievements in 2018, but rather provides a broad overview of the thematic and geographic scope of its work. Additional information about the work of UNU is available from its website (<http://unu.edu>); of particular relevance is its most recent edition of the *United Nations University Annual Report* and the online UNU Sustainable Development Explorer database (<https://unu.edu/explore>), which provides information on a selection of UNU research projects, experts and publications to showcase how the University's work relates to each of the 17 Goals.
8. Additional information about UNU contributions to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals can be found online on the United Nations System Sustainable Development Goals Action Database (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/unsurvey/organization.html?org=UNU>).
9. Monthly updates (commentaries, research and updates) from across the global UNU system are provided in the online newsletter Insights (available at <https://unu.edu/insights#archive>).

## II. Serving as a global network for research and training

### Governance and leadership

10. The governing board of the University is the 16-member Council of the United Nations University, which comprises: 12 appointed members, who serve in an individual capacity and not as representatives of their countries (see annex); the UNU Rector and 3 ex officio members, namely, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The Council meets twice annually: its sixty-ninth session was held in Bonn, Germany, on 4 and 5 June 2018, and its seventieth in Tokyo on 10 and 11 December 2018.
11. The chief academic and administrative officer of UNU is the Rector, who holds the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The Rector, who is based at UNU headquarters in Tokyo, is supported by the staff in the Office of the Rector and advised by a Management Group that comprises the Vice-Rectors, the Director of Administration and the Executive Officer.
12. Each institute of the UNU system is headed by a Director, who benefits from the guidance of an international Advisory Board.<sup>2</sup> The annual gathering of Institute

<sup>2</sup> These bodies are sometimes also referred to as advisory committees; each UNU institute has either an Advisory Committee or an Advisory Board.

Directors is known as the Conference of Directors, at which matters of policy and coordination are discussed. The fiftieth session of the Conference was held at UNU headquarters in Tokyo on 7 and 8 December 2018, and on 10 December 2018 Conference members and UNU Council members met for a full day of joint meetings.

## **Overview of the global United Nations University system in 2018**

13. UNU has 16 institutes, each with a specific research and training focus, as mandated in its statute and host country agreement. The global UNU system is coordinated by the UNU Centre, which encompasses an office in Tokyo (also known as UNU headquarters, comprising the Office of the Rector and several administrative, academic and technical services units), as well as the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe (Bonn) and an adjunct administrative services unit in Kuala Lumpur.

### **Africa**

#### *United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (Accra)*

14. For the UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA), 2018 represented a year of transition, with considerable staff movement, including the arrival in September of a new Director and the wrap-up of the Institute's 2015–2018 strategic plan. The Institute continued to focus on finding solutions to the critical questions of environment, climate and energy, as demonstrated by its work on the "Climate change vulnerability assessment of Fresco Lagoon landscape" project and the Ghana Climate Innovation Centre programme. The Institute organized or participated in several policy dialogue sessions, including a multi-stakeholder discussion on the creation of green businesses through climate-smart agriculture, and offered its flagship training programme on geographic information systems and remote sensing to natural resources researchers and managers.

### **Asia**

#### *United Nations University Institute on Computing and Society (Macau, China)*

15. In the three years since its establishment, the UNU Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS) has been able to strengthen research projects that have a direct impact on the ever-changing landscape of information and communication technologies. The Institute focused its research in 2018 on the gender digital divide, human trafficking and data for sustainable development. It created a digital tool that is being utilized by Governments and non-governmental organizations to help combat the transnational crime of human trafficking and launched a flagship research report on the digital gender divide, co-produced with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and a number of academic partners. The Institute has also strengthened its partnerships with over 40 stakeholders, including other entities of the United Nations system, to amplify the impact of its work.

#### *United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (Tokyo)*

16. The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) contributed to several international policy processes in 2018. The Institute supported the intergovernmental follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda through the high-level political forum on sustainable development, such as by presenting its research and outputs, including technical guidelines for implementing multi-stakeholder partnerships (produced jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)), at a side event of the high-level political forum. It also helped to advance the agenda of the Convention on Biological

Diversity and efforts by Member States to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets through research and policy support, such as analysis of integrated landscape management approaches in national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The Institute continued to develop linkages between the climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction agendas, including to host an expert meeting of the Adaptation Committee of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with regard to national adaptation goals and their relationship to the Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, and to contribute to the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

*United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (Kuala Lumpur)*

17. On the basis of a 2018 external review of its work and an exploration of the current global health landscape, the UNU International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH) developed a new five-year strategy that will focus efforts on translating evidence into policy, generating policy-relevant analyses and strengthening capacity for local decision-making on key issues relating to sustainable development, gender and global public health. In 2018, the Institute also co-hosted the launch of the Commonwealth Centre for Digital Health, which led to the establishment of the Global Digital Health 2030 Innovation Task Force. The Institute also co-sponsored a regional meeting with the Asian Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, using the opportunity to host a dialogue with regional ministries of health, academic experts and development partners.

## **Europe**

*United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (Bruges, Belgium)*

18. For the UNU Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS), 2018 represented a year of gradual growth. The Institute's in-house expertise grew with the addition of new professors, doctoral (PhD) candidates and long-term visiting scholars. Its newly launched research seminar series brought both established and up-and-coming academics to the Institute to share their knowledge and expertise with members of the public, students, other academics and policymakers. It also played an instrumental role in two simulation games in collaboration with other UNU institutes and local universities and developed, with the Jean Monnet Research Network on European Union–United Nations Relations, a simulation game that can be downloaded as a teaching aide and activity.

*United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (Bonn)*

19. In 2018, the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security UNU-EHS) experienced a change in senior management and the separation of the Institute's activities from those of the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe. Its achievements included the launch of the inaugural Summer Academy on World Risk and Adaptation Futures, a highly successful research-to-practice conference convened by the Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (including Climate Change); the first call for applications within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – UNU Early Career Climate Fellowship Programme; the development of the InsuRisk Assessment Tool; and the publication of numerous policy-relevant documents. The Munich Climate Insurance Initiative, hosted by the Institute, was named a strategic partner of the Vulnerable Twenty, a group of ministers of finance representing 48 of the most vulnerable countries.

*United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (Dresden, Germany)*

20. For the UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES), 2018 was a year of reflection and transformation. In the five years since its establishment, the Institute has grown from 4 to 23 employees, and in September it welcomed a new Director. At its fifth anniversary symposium, local and international experts joined the Institute's staff in looking back at its accomplishments over the years in research on the water-soil-waste nexus. Its scientists and researchers presented ongoing research projects, focusing on how resource problems arising from climate change, land-use changes and urbanization could be addressed with integrated management strategies. In September, the first researcher to pursue a joint doctoral degree programme in the integrated management of water, soil and waste at the Institute and the Technical University Dresden, defended his thesis.

*United Nations University Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility (Barcelona, Spain)*

21. The UNU Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility (UNU-GCM) had several notable achievements in 2018. It hosted six doctoral training fellows, continued its engagement with the Global Migration Group (and, subsequently, the United Nations Network on Migration) and participated in numerous academic events. It also celebrated the launch of the report entitled *Surges and Swarms: a Conversation on Responsible Coverage of Migration*, which addresses xenophobia and the role of the media in representing migrants and was jointly authored by the Institute and the UNU Centre for Policy Research.

*United Nations University Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (Maastricht, Netherlands)*

22. The UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT) focused on improving the visibility of its research on innovation and increasing interactions and partnerships across the Institute's different research themes. Among other activities, it prepared a series of agenda-setting papers that served to identify future policy-relevant research opportunities in the broad area of innovation. The papers will provide the basis for a longer-term research agenda for the Institute, in particular on the themes of artificial intelligence and machine learning. It recruited new staff with a specific focus on innovation-related topics and reorganized its PhD programme in order to place innovation more clearly at its core.

*United Nations University Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (Guimarães, Portugal)*

23. The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV) continued to be actively engaged in strengthening its network of partners, including by contributing to the 2018 United Nations e-Government Survey led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and by participating in the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative coordinated by ITU and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The Operating Unit also collaborated with the UNU Centre for Policy Research in providing input for United Nations high-level initiatives such as the Secretary-General's strategy on new technologies. In Portugal, projects were conducted with multiple government agencies and the University of Minho. In addition, it bolstered its research activity by publishing numerous research documents and filing a dozen project proposals. The Operating Unit also reinforced its external visibility by adopting new communication mechanisms.

*United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (Helsinki)*

24. During 2018, the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) experienced a transition in leadership as it welcomed a new Director in September. The year also marked the end of the Institute's five-year work programme on transformation, inclusion and sustainability. The Institute focused on balancing the delivery of projects and activities related to the five-year work programme with expanding its global presence and influence and preparing for the new work programme for the period 2019–2023. At the conference held in September on the theme "Think development – think WIDER", participants took stock of lessons learned from the work performed in the past by the Institute and looked to the future of development economics and global development more broadly, with the aim of mobilizing evidence and action around the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. The Institute published more than 300 research outputs during the year and increased its presence in the field, particularly in Africa and Asia, with the support of local partners.

*United Nations University Iceland Programmes (Reykjavik)*

25. Each of the four units of the UNU programmes based in Iceland – UNU Fisheries Training Programme (UNU-FTP), UNU Geothermal Training Programme (UNU-GTP), UNU Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (UNU-GEST) and UNU Land Restoration Training Programme (UNU-LRT) – provided specialized training and research in their areas of expertise.

**North and South America**

*United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (New York)*

26. The UNU Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) underwent a significant change in 2018, relocating from Tokyo to New York as part of its merger with the former UNU Office at the United Nations. The relocation, which has expanded the UNU presence in New York from roughly 6 to more than 20 people, was used to reposition the Centre and launch several new lines of policy research work, including on the Security Council and multilateralism, on artificial intelligence and on the management of exit strategies in situations of armed conflict. Two new major platforms were formally launched during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly: the Delta 8.7 knowledge platform and the Financial Sector Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The relocation also allowed for repositioning that has significantly increased the Centre's online engagement.

*United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (Hamilton, Canada)*

27. The UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health was part of the core team that produced the report entitled *Sustainable Development Goal 6: Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation*, which was presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The Institute also participated in several high-level political forum events. It joined the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in coordinating the UN-Water task force on implementation of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028. The Institute developed and launched (in three languages) an online policy support system tool designed to help Member States to achieve their national implementation of targets under Goal 6. During 2018, the Institute developed new partnerships, produced some 40 publications, hosted more than 30 in-house trainees, took part in numerous international and regional science and policy events, and provided support to major

Canadian research programmes, such as FloodNet and Global Water Futures, for bridging the gap between science and policy.

*United Nations University Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean (Caracas)*

28. The UNU Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean continued to co-organize courses and fellowships in Latin America and the Caribbean that were aimed at building strong research networks in innovative technologies. During 2018, the Programme supported 14 courses relating to its priority areas. It signed an agreement of cooperation with the University of Antioquia to create a big data analysis unit.

### **Human and financial resources**

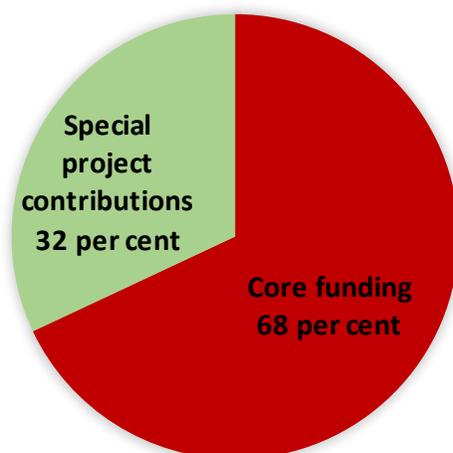
29. The global UNU system comprises a truly diverse group of researchers and managers possessing a broad and in-depth range of expertise spanning a wide range of issues. That talent extends across the five continents where UNU has a presence.

30. As at the end of 2018, the global UNU system had a personnel complement of 616. In its hiring practices, UNU strives to maintain a gender balance (currently, 52 per cent female and 48 per cent male personnel) and to ensure that developing countries are represented.

31. UNU receives no funds from the regular United Nations budget. It is funded entirely through voluntary contributions. The UNU budget for the biennium 2018–2019 is \$108.5 million: 68 per cent of which represents core funding (primarily recurring host country contributions, in addition to investment income derived from the UNU Endowment Fund) and 32 per cent of which represents special project contributions (obtained from host Governments, Member States, foundations, agencies, international organizations and other sources for specific academic projects) (see figure II). In 2018, UNU received contributions totalling \$36.9 million.

Figure II

### **Budget of the United Nations University for the biennium 2018–2019**



### III. Promoting positive change through research

32. The UNU research programme includes policy-oriented projects that address defined policy challenges. It also includes projects with a broader scope, including medium-term “horizon” studies that examine emergent issues and threats.

33. In 2018, UNU conducted 185 projects (some with multiple subprojects), including 14 that had been newly launched during the year (see figure III). The projects, which were focused primarily on Asia and the Pacific (36 per cent), Africa (29 per cent), Europe (19 per cent), and the Americas (16 per cent), encompassed both research and capacity development components (see figure IV).

Figure III  
Status of United Nations University projects, 2018

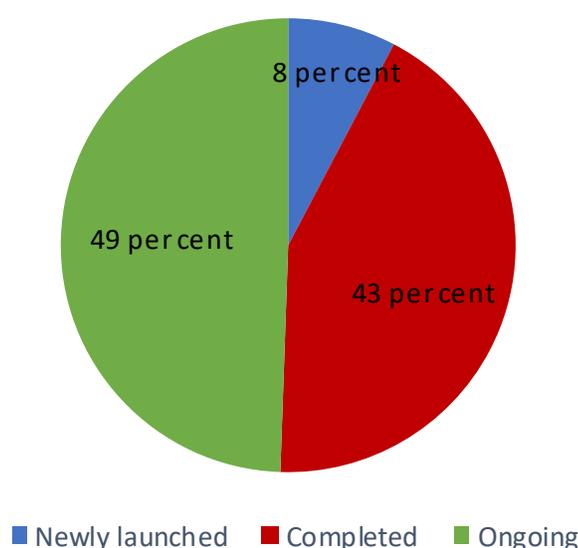
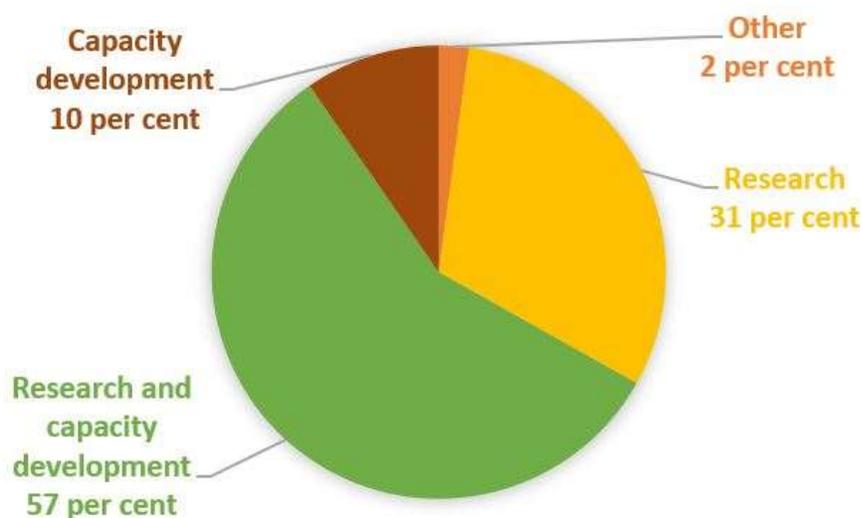


Figure IV  
Type of United Nations University projects, 2018



## Impact on policy

34. UNU is a unique research partner for other United Nations entities and for Member States. It is an academic institution with an excellent understanding of the United Nations system and its operating environment.

35. UNU also is well positioned to respond to the emerging priorities of the Secretary-General, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), senior leaders of other United Nations entities and Member State delegations. In 2018, UNU strengthened its efforts to engage with key constituencies in the United Nations policymaking community and to promote the University as a source of innovative policy ideas, a neutral voice on global policy challenges and a reliable knowledge broker.

36. In recent years, UNU has launched research in support of the following:

- Executive Office of the Secretary-General (frontier issues, cyberspace and artificial intelligence)
- Departments of Peacekeeping and Political Affairs of the Secretariat (non-state armed groups, mediation, preventive diplomacy and peace operations)
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs (United Nations development system reform process)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (privacy in the digital age)
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (World Humanitarian Summit)

37. As a result of its consultations with Member States, UNU has undertaken new projects that address such issues as human trafficking and modern slavery, the financial sector's respect for human rights, preventive diplomacy and ethics in the General Assembly.

38. UNU not only contributes to its own policy-oriented research, it also serves as a bridge between the United Nations system and the global academic community by helping to lower the barriers that bring about the often-bemoaned "research-policy gap" in the United Nations. It does this through its:

- Awareness-raising role (by publishing reports focused on the United Nations and convening events that bring together policymakers and academics)
- Communication role (by highlighting policy-relevant research findings and rendering academic research into a form most useful for policymakers)
- Gateway role (by helping the academic community to learn to navigate the complex bureaucratic and political environment of the United Nations system)
- Operational/training role (by helping to strengthen the policy research and analysis capacity of researchers and government staff in developing countries)

39. UNU research has generated greater impact on policy at United Nations Headquarters in New York and throughout the United Nations system owing, in part, to the efforts of the UNU Centre for Policy Research and the UNU Office at the United Nations, which were officially merged in January 2018, with staff of the Centre moving from Tokyo to New York in mid-2018. The merged Centre, which retains the name UNU Centre for Policy Research, will continue to ensure that UNU is kept apprised of and is able to respond to the many emerging policy challenges on the United Nations agenda.

40. The following examples highlight UNU efforts in achieving an impact on policy in 2018:

(a) UNU Centre for Policy Research:

(i) Supported the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in its consultations with United Nations entities on the Secretary-General's strategy on new technologies. Drawing on a mandate in that strategy, the Centre created an artificial intelligence and global governance digital participatory platform that enables researchers, policy actors and corporate thought-leaders to gather feedback and insights on how the United Nations can better engage with new technologies;

(ii) Helped to shape policy discussions at United Nations Headquarters through a project on the interlinkages between United Nations sanction regimes and United Nations-supported mediation processes. The Centre held multiple briefings, including a session in November for Secretariat staff members;

(iii) Participated actively in global discussions (including at United Nations Headquarters) to strengthen the international response to modern slavery and human trafficking and launched two projects during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly (see also para. 26 above).;

(iv) Undertook two projects – on preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts in fragile and conflict-affected States, and on sharpening the Resident Coordinator's prevention toolkit – that were cited widely, including by Resident Coordinators in the field, and led to the development by the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat of an assessment framework for preventive diplomacy;

(b) UNU Institute on Computing and Society: the Institute led an international expert research group, part of the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age (EQUALS initiative), to support the enhanced use of information and communication technologies to promote women's empowerment. The group published its inaugural report for policymakers on digital gender equality;

(c) UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance: the Operating Unit collaborated with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in preparing a report on the 2018 United Nations e-Government Survey by leading a pilot study as well as writing a chapter on e-government development at the local level and its implications for the achievement of the Goals;

(d) UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security: the Institute carried out a project that contributed to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction through an indicator-based risk assessment in the context of agricultural droughts in South Africa and Ukraine, on the basis of remote sensing and statistical data;

(e) UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability:

(i) Co-organized a side event in July during the high-level political forum for sustainable development to inform deliberations and examine evidence-based policy options for Goal 11;

(ii) Through its International Satoyama Initiative, contributed to the agenda of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to efforts by Member States to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (see also para. 16 above);

(f) UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health: staff made presentations at several high-level side events held during the high-level political forum to support the launch of the report entitled *Sustainable Development Goal 6: Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation*;

(g) UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research:

(i) Carried out a project to develop tax-benefit microsimulation models for selected developing Members States. The models, built in collaboration with international experts and local researchers from policy institutions in nine countries, are helping Governments to understand how various tax and benefit policy changes might affect people's lives;

(ii) Launched an initiative to help to fill the knowledge gap on why Africans are "working hard but working poor"; the findings received considerable attention among policymakers and in the academic community.

### **Collaboration with other entities of the United Nations system**

41. UNU draws on and collaborates with a variety of external partners to more effectively address today's complex, multifaceted policy challenges. There are currently hundreds of active research partnerships and collaborations with universities, research institutes/think tanks, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, foundations and private entities worldwide.

42. Its collaborative approach enables the University to focus on its strengths, provides additional means by which to broadcast UNU research outputs more effectively and helps to involve larger numbers of highly regarded researchers and academics in its work. While some UNU projects are small, others involve multi-stakeholder partnerships that bring together dozens of researchers from multiple institutions.

43. UNU maintains ongoing collaborations with departments and offices of the Secretariat and dozens of agencies, programmes, commissions, funds and convention secretariats within the United Nations system. Examples of its cooperation with and support of other United Nations system entities in 2018 include the following:

(a) UNU Centre for Policy Research: the Centre worked with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat and the Governments of Luxembourg and Switzerland on a project aimed at filling the knowledge gaps about how and why children become associated with, are used by and leave non-state armed groups, in particular, terrorist or violent extremist groups. The Centre also participated in the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration;

(b) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change–UNU Early Career Climate Fellowship Programme (administered by the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security): as a collaborative initiative, it offered study and research opportunities to recent graduates who are nationals of developing countries;

(c) UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance:

(i) Engaged in leading an initiative of more than a dozen United Nations entities in a project aimed at designing a framework for the adoption and use of distributed ledger (blockchain) technology to facilitate sustainability in smart city development;

(ii) Joined the multi-agency initiative United for Smart Sustainable Cities, coordinated by ITU and ECE;

(d) UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security:

(i) Collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a project addressing joint climate risk, adaptation and insurance in the Pacific region;

(ii) Conducted training for staff of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa on insurance approaches in the context of drought and desertification;

(e) UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources: the Institute cooperated with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to develop a monitoring methodology, the Wastewater Reuse Effectiveness Index, for target 6.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals and contributed to the 2018 edition of UN-Water report entitled *United Nations World Water Development Report 2018: Nature-based Solutions for Water*;

(f) UNU Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility: the Institute worked with a number of migration-related entities, including the Global Migration Group, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe and the United Nations Network on Migration;

(g) UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability:

(i) Worked jointly with ESCAP to develop and publish the report entitled *Partnering for Sustainable Development: Guidelines for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific*, which was introduced at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in March 2018;

(ii) Collaborated with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to showcase results from the International Satoyama Initiative;

(iii) Actively contributed to assessments of the Intergovernmental Platform, including its global assessment and Asia-Pacific regional assessment, and continued to collaborate with the secretariat of the Platform on research, technical inputs and capacity-building;

(h) UNU International Institute for Global Health: the Institute established partnerships with UN-Women, UNDP and the World Health Organization to analyse return on investment and health gains in mainstreaming gender approaches in a range of country-based programmes;

(i) UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health: the Institute worked with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to coordinate the multi-agency UN-Water task force that seeks to implement the 2030 Agenda and water-related Goals, and contributed directly to the production of the UN-Water report (see also para. 40 (f) above);

(j) UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology: the Institute continued to assist the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in the preparations for the upcoming *Industrial Development Report 2020* and to support UNIDO in its innovation capacity-building efforts in India;

(k) UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research:

(i) Collaborated with the International Labour Organization country office for Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia to promote and consolidate tax and benefit microsimulation models and with UNICEF in Mozambique on a research initiative concerning the multidimensional poverty of children;

(ii) In cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, hosted an event in April 2018 to address the Institute's research on economic development in Asia over the past 50 years and reflected on how the next 25 years might unfold.

44. UNU also worked on research and capacity development projects with government ministries, departments, and agencies of numerous Member States, including Finland, Germany, Ghana, India, Japan, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Portugal, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Viet Nam.

### **Work of the United Nations University in the field**

45. While policy-relevant research is the lodestar of the University's work, in many UNU projects researchers work at the grass-roots level, seeking to better understand complex local or regional problems and to generate practical, implementable solutions that will have local impact and improve the lives of individuals and the functioning of communities. Such research typically involves working with local populations, in close cooperation with on-the-ground partners and local universities or research institutes to ensure that research findings are not hidden in academic journals or policy reports that are difficult to access, but instead are communicated to local populations, students and civil society.

46. Highlights of the University's work in the field include the following:

(a) UNU Centre for Policy Research examined the engagement of non-state armed groups in the eastern area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the aim of improving the approach of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with regard to armed groups, including with regard to the protection of civilians. The Centre also conducted an analysis of local conflict resolution by United Nations peace operations in Somalia in support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia;

(b) UNU Institute on Computing and Society worked with partners to develop APPRISE, a mobile application that helps front line responders to identify potential victims of human trafficking. The application is being piloted in Thailand by more than 10 non-governmental organizations;

(c) UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance is working with its host university, the University of Minho, and the Government of Portugal to develop an instrument for assessing the provision of digital public services by national government agencies;

(d) UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (in collaboration with the International Centre for Climate Change and Development and the Munich Re-Foundation) worked closely with the residents of Dalbanga South village in Bangladesh to increase their understanding of the cyclone early warning systems and improve disaster preparedness;

(e) UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources is undertaking extensive field work and on-site activities with local partners in Guatemala and Mexico to understand different stakeholder perspectives regarding wastewater treatment and management;

(f) Through its operating unit Ishikawa/Kanazawa, the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability is conducting research on the sustainable utilization of biodiversity and ecosystem services in cooperation with local stakeholders. The

Institute also works with local communities and various stakeholders in Asia to support and promote the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization;

(g) In addition, the Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability contributed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local and regional levels through an initiative carried out in conjunction with the Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development and the Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net);

(h) UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa engaged with local communities on a project in the Fresco Lagoon area of Côte d'Ivoire to collect detailed information on current and potential impacts of climate change on local ecological and socioeconomic systems. Outcomes of the vulnerability assessment will guide resilience-building actions that address the concerns of the project participants;

(i) In addition, the Institute for Natural Resources in Africa carried out a project on sustainable energy solutions, in which it assessed the uptake of bamboo biomass energy in Ghana and explored the potential and enabling environment needed to ensure that green businesses operating in bamboo biomass energy production were profitable;

(j) UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health conducted a study on “fog water” collection, demonstrating the potential to improve the lives of women and girls in low- and middle-income communities and countries by harnessing alternative water sources;

(k) UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology is investigating the impacts of post-harvest storage innovations on food security and welfare in Ethiopia, and the integration of AIDS treatment with food assistance and the subsequent effects on labour supply in Zambia;

(l) In Mozambique, the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research is providing research and policy support to the national Government and academia, with a view to scaling up research and capacity for inclusive growth in order to improve the living standards of the local population. The Institute is also working with the Government of Myanmar to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and analysis in support of that country's move through a challenging structural transformation and development process, and with partners in Viet Nam to further develop two unique firm and rural household panel data sets critical to helping forge policies to manage the country's structural change;

(m) A UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research collaborative programme on inclusive economic development in southern Africa facilitated networking and discussion among stakeholders to bridge the gap between research and policymaking.

47. UNU also offers specialized training at locations around the world in cooperation with universities and other local partners (see paras. 53–55 below)

#### **IV. Training tomorrow's leaders**

48. In its teaching and capacity development activities, UNU seeks to enhance individual, group and institutional capabilities that will support the implementation of development activities. These activities place a particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries and marginalized populations.

49. UNU offers a range of unique educational courses that help to equip the leaders of tomorrow with the knowledge and techniques that will prepare them to cope with a range of problems and challenges. It awards postgraduate degrees; organizes specialized non-degree programmes, courses and workshops and provides opportunities for young researchers to work alongside UNU experts.

50. UNU strives to ensure that its capacity development activities do not duplicate the efforts of other international and national entities and that the training UNU offers complements its research activities, in order to allow students to gain theoretical knowledge and develop applied skills. Furthermore, UNU aims at achieving a multiplier effect by focusing on training the trainers and meeting the needs of research leaders and decision makers, as well as educating young scholars who may someday fill those roles.

### **Postgraduate degree programmes**

51. The University's Master of Science (MSc) and PhD programmes are intended to enhance the capacity of young researchers and academics from developing countries, as well as to strengthen partnerships with local universities and research institutions. In 2018, UNU postgraduate programmes included the following:

- Seven-semester joint PhD programme in integrated management of water, soil and waste (UNU-FLORES and Technical University Dresden)
- PhD programme in innovation, economics and governance for development (University of Maastricht and UNU-MERIT)
- Three-year PhD programme in sustainability science and a two-year MSc programme in sustainability (UNU-IAS, in cooperation with University of Tokyo; and Sophia University, Tokyo)
- Two-year joint MSc programme in the geography of environmental risks and human security (UNU-EHS and University of Bonn)
- One-year joint MSc programme in public policy and human development (UNU-MERIT and University of Maastricht)

52. As of the fourth quarter of 2018, 93 students, 72 per cent of whom were from developing countries, were pursuing PhD degrees and 245 students, 34 per cent of whom were from developing countries, were seeking MSc degrees. Women represented 58 and 60 per cent of the students in the PhD and MSc programmes, respectively. During 2018, 97 students (16 PhD, 81 MSc) graduated from these programmes.

### **Non-degree study opportunities**

53. In addition to accredited postgraduate degree programmes, UNU offers a wide variety of specialized training for postgraduate-level scholars, early- and mid-career professionals and others. These range from day-long workshops to multi-month diploma or certificate courses and programmes. In 2018, UNU organized 164 such training opportunities (53 per cent in developing countries) that were attended by more than 4,600 students.

54. Highlights of these opportunities include the annual six-month training sessions offered by the UNU Iceland-based programmes. A total of 86 students participated in such sessions in 2018:

- UNU Fisheries Training Programme: 21 fellows from 15 countries

- UNU Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme: 24 fellows from 14 countries
- UNU Geothermal Training Programme: 24 fellows from 14 countries
- UNU Land Restoration Training Programme: 17 fellows from 9 countries

55. Other training opportunities offered or co-organized by UNU in 2018 included the following:

- Seventh Doctoral School on Latin American, European and Comparative Regionalism (UNU-CRIS)
- “Migrant tech: skills training for survivors of sexual exploitation fieldwork” (UNU-CS)
- Summer Academy on World Risk and Adaptation Futures: session on urbanization (UNU-EHS)
- High-level training on State digital certification platforms (UNU-EGOV)
- Basic knowledge for the operation and maintenance of wastewater treatment plants (UNU-FLORES)
- Gender-responsive budgeting (UNU-GEST)
- Short course on gender and energy (UNU-GEST and UNU-GTP)
- Short courses on the Sustainable Development Goals, for active or potential employees in geothermal work (UNU-GTP)
- “Geothermal reservoir characterization: well logging, well testing and chemical analysis” (UNU-GTP)
- United Nations system and sustainable development; global change and planetary boundaries; and natural capital and biodiversity (UNU-IAS)
- UNU global seminar Shonan session on the theme “What can we do to realize a Sustainable society? A gender and sexuality perspective” (UNU-IAS)
- Opportunities for Japanese postgraduate students to do fieldwork at partner universities in Africa (UNU-IAS)
- Short courses on the implementation research for disease control and on health and human rights (UNU-IIGH)
- Green financing (UNU-INRA)
- Geographic information systems and remote sensing training (UNU-INRA)
- “Water without borders” (UNU-INWEH)
- Short courses on land restoration (UNU-LRT)
- Business approach to sustainable landscape restoration (UNU-LRT)
- Design and evaluation of innovation policies (UNU-MERIT)
- Development economics PhD programme (University of Ghana, supported by UNU-WIDER)
- Short-term training courses on simulating tax and benefit policies for development (UNU-WIDER)

## Research-based capacity development

56. In addition to formal study programmes and courses, UNU provides opportunities for young scholars and researchers to enhance their skills and knowledge by working alongside UNU staff.

57. Among the 185 projects implemented by UNU in 2018, about 10 per cent were focused on capacity development while another 57 per cent incorporated both research and capacity development components.

58. Other opportunities for young researchers to work with UNU staff at the institute level include a variety of fellowship programmes as well as internship and visiting scholar opportunities.

## V. Sharing knowledge and expertise

59. UNU is focused on channelling the “right” knowledge to those who need it the most, including affected populations, policymakers, academics, practitioners and the general public. The information needs to be delivered in a timely manner and in a useful form.

60. UNU disseminates its research findings by:

- Publishing a variety of print and online products (including policy briefs/reports, research reports/papers, peer-reviewed articles and books)
- Convening events (conferences, seminars, symposiums and workshops) for both stakeholders and the general public
- Organizing briefings and consultations for policymakers- and decision makers
- Utilizing the Internet, social media and traditional media to raise awareness

61. UNU dissemination strategies include both narrowcasting (focused on getting tailored findings and analyses into the hands and minds of specific influential actors) and broadcasting (focused on efforts that seek to garner attention through traditional media, social media and website postings, and events), or a mixture of the two.

## Publications

62. In 2018, the work of UNU researchers was published in the following formats: 35 books and 148 chapters in edited volumes, 289 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 95 other articles, 62 policy briefs/reports, 152 research briefs/reports and 271 working/discussion papers. More than 6,300 publications are available online at no cost at Collections at UNU database (<http://collections.unu.edu>), including almost 250 that were published in 2018; many other publications are accessible through the website of the institute that produced them.

63. The 2018 UNU publications, policy briefs, reports and working papers that were deemed to have had a significant impact on policy and/or within the academic community included the following:

### Books

- *African Peacekeeping Training Centres: Socialization as a Tool for Peace?* (UNU-GEST; Routledge)
- *Climate Risk Assessment for Ecosystem-based Adaptation: A Guidebook for Planners and Practitioners* (UNU-EHS; GIZ)

- *Cradled by Conflict: Child Involvement with Armed Groups in Contemporary Conflict* (UNU-CPR)
- *Extractive Industries: the Management of Resources as a Driver of Sustainable Development* (UNU-WIDER; Oxford University Press)
- *Gender, Work and Migration: Agency in Gendered Labour Settings* (UNU-GCM; Routledge)
- *Industries without Smokestacks: Industrialization in Africa Reconsidered* (UNU-WIDER; Oxford University Press)
- *Managing Water, Soil and Waste Resources to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals: Monitoring and Implementation of Integrated Resources Management* (UNU-FLORES, Springer)
- *Multifunctional Wetlands: Pollution Abatement and Other Ecological Services from Natural and Constructed Wetlands* (UNU-INWEH; Springer)
- *Safe Use of Wastewater in Agriculture: from Concept to Implementation* (UNU-FLORES; Springer)
- *Towards Gender Equity in Development* (UNU-WIDER; Oxford University Press)
- *Urban Climate Resilience in Southeast Asia* (UNU-EHS; Springer)

#### **Policy briefs or reports**

- “Beacons, not towers: how higher education can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals” (UNU-IAS)
- “The European migrant crisis: psychology, conflict and intergroup relations” (UNU-GCM)
- “Gender mainstreaming in the 2030 Agenda: a focus on education and responsible consumption and production” (UNU-IAS)
- Identifying migrant bodies in the Mediterranean (UNU-GCM)
- “Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific: insights from voluntary national reviews” (UNU-IAS)
- “Innovation for development in West Africa: challenges for promoting science technology and innovation policy” (UNU-MERIT)
- The limits of punishment (UNU-CPR)
- “Promoting neglected and underutilised plant species for improved food security” (UNU-INRA)
- “Strategic planning in Europe: connecting cities, migrants and migration” (UNU-GCM)
- “Sustainable smart cities: applying complexity science to achieve urban sustainability” (UNU-IAS)

#### **Reports and working papers**

- Cross-media election monitoring (UNU-CS)
- Engaging citizens for sustainable development: a data perspective (UNU-CS)
- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all: experiences of community health, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition” (UNU-IAS)

- European Union and Member State implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (UNU-CRIS)
- “External great powers as drivers for regional integration and cooperation: a comparative study on Central Asia and Southeast Asia” (UNU-CRIS)
- “Fairly clear risks: protecting United Nations sanctions legitimacy and effectiveness through fair and clear procedures” (UNU-CPR)
- Feasibility of green credit as an incentive for natural resource management in Kenya (UNU-INRA)
- *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C* (contributions by UNU-IAS)
- Official Development Assistance and target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (UNU-CPR)
- “Research report on development and implementation of national biodiversity strategy and action plans: towards realization of societies in harmony with nature” (UNU-IAS)
- Strengthening the evidence base for the Sustainable Development Goals process (UNU-EHS)
- Sustainable livelihoods in socioecological production landscapes and seascapes (UNU-IAS)
- *United Nations World Water Development Report 2018: Nature-based Solutions for Water* (with contributions by UNU-FLORES)

## Events

64. UNU institutes and UNU headquarters convene numerous events in their host cities and around the world each year. While some are targeted towards specialized audiences, most are open to the general public. Besides offering a venue for sharing knowledge and providing networking opportunities for scholars, researchers and practitioners, the events serve to extend the impact and the reach of UNU research.

65. UNU organized or co-organized more than 540 events in 2018, including 233 seminars or workshops, 133 conferences or symposiums and 129 lectures or discussions on the following topics:

- UNU Conversation Series: 23 sessions with such discussants as Helen Clark (former Prime Minister of New Zealand and Administrator of UNDP), Andrew Gilmour (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights), Mariette DiChristina (Editor-in-Chief, Scientific American), Grete Faremo (Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services), and Rima Khalaf (Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) (UNU Centre – Tokyo)
- Measuring progress towards target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (UNU-CPR)
- “Preventing tomorrow’s conflicts” series (UNU-CPR)
- “Challenges and progress: implementing the Sustainable Development Goals” (UNU-CRIS)
- European Union in International Affairs VI Conference, on the theme “Protecting and projecting Europe”(UNU-CRIS)

- Eleven sessions of the Research Seminar Series (UNU-CRIS)
- International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV), on the theme “Transforming digital governance for sustainable and resilient societies” (ICEGOV 2018; UNU-EGOV)
- Global Mountain Safeguard Research Conference, on the theme “Emerging risks and future challenges for mountain regions worldwide” (UNU-EHS)
- Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (including Climate Change) “Research to practice” forum (UNU-EHS)
- Fifth anniversary symposium of UNU-FLORES, on the theme “From isolation to integration: five years of research on the water-soil-waste nexus”
- “Water reuse: a permanent source?” (UNU-FLORES)
- Monthly sessions of the Nexus Seminar Series (UNU-FLORES)
- Nine sessions of the Noon Lecture Series (UNU-GEST)
- “Thoughts from Japan on Sustainable Development Goal 14: protecting the abundance of the sea” (UNU-IAS and UNU Centre, Tokyo )
- “Achieving the sustainable development goals: infrastructure, investment, and implementation” (UNU-IAS)
- Implementing solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals (UNU-IAS)
- “Mineral resources governance for sustainable development: a new framework” (farewell lecture by outgoing UNU-INRA director, Elias Ayuk)
- Five sessions organized at World Water Week 2018 (UNU-INWEH)
- Charles Cooper Memorial Lecture given by Professor Luc Soete, on the theme “From creative destruction to destructive creation” (UNU-MERIT)
- Global festival of action for sustainable development (UNU-MERIT and UNU-FLORES)
- “Think development – think WIDER” (UNU-WIDER Development Conference)
- UNU-WIDER annual lecture given by Professor Ernest Aryeetey, on the theme “The political economy of structural transformation: has democracy failed African economies?” (UNU-WIDER)

### **Traditional media and online and social media outlets**

66. Traditional media, websites/blogs and social media are all vital channels for raising awareness about UNU and its work, increasing public support and facilitating engagement.

67. In 2018, 7,800 global media outlets published more than 16,100 articles about UNU and its research. Coverage came mainly from outlets based in the United States (26.8 per cent), China (16.9 per cent), Japan (14.9 per cent) and Germany (4.3 per cent). By language, global coverage was primarily in English (46.8 per cent), Chinese (20.0 per cent), Japanese (15.4 per cent), Spanish (3.5 per cent), Portuguese (3.1 per cent), French (2.3 per cent) and German (2.2 per cent).

68. During 2018, UNU websites had received nearly 5.8 million page views, including more than 2.1 million page views for the main UNU website ([unu.edu](http://unu.edu)) and 739,000 page views for the Our World ([ourworld.unu.edu](http://ourworld.unu.edu)) research blog.

Approximately 62 per cent of users access UNU websites from desktop computers, while 38 per cent use mobile devices (such as smartphones and tablets).

69. As at 31 December 2018, UNU system Twitter and Facebook accounts had nearly 150,000 and 110,000 followers, respectively.

## **VI. Continuing to evolving as the key think tank of the United Nations system**

70. In order to remain a vibrant and successful institution, UNU must be able to adapt its structure and operations to take advantage of potential opportunities and to cope with existing and new constraints.

### **Managing organizational opportunities challenges**

71. During 2018, UNU was presented with new opportunities for growth and faced various funding constraints.

72. The University took important steps towards launching new UNU research and training institutes. The most advanced of the discussions in this regard were held with a group based at the Université de Bretagne Occidentale (Brest, France), which has been exploring the possibility of establishing in France a UNU institute on ocean science. Talks so far have focused on the financial and legal dimensions of the project, and funding has been made available for defining potential work areas and logistical preparations. UNU is proceeding cautiously until a firm commitment is made.

73. UNU and the Government of Senegal signed a host country agreement in 2014 to establish the UNU Institute for Economic and Social Research in Dakar, but there were significant delays in concluding the necessary bilateral (funding) agreement. That agreement was finally signed in February 2018, and the UNU Council subsequently adopted the statute of the Institute in May. The Institute will be launched when funding has been assured.

74. When voluntary (or promised) contributions are not received, however, units that lack sufficient reserves face the risk of closure. That was the case for the UNU Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility (UNU-GCM) in Barcelona, Spain, which had faced funding difficulties since its establishment in 2010 (as a result, in part, of the ongoing political situation in Spain and the Catalan region). Because an agreement on sustainable financing could not be reached within the first half of 2018, UNU initiated steps to wind down operations and closed the Institute at year-end.

75. The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance, established in 2014 and hosted by the University of Minho, also faces an uncertain future. The initial bilateral agreement has concluded, and UNU is awaiting word from the Government of Portugal regarding future funding.

### **Defining the aspirations of the United Nations University and how to fulfil them**

76. The year 2018 marked the fourth year of the 2015–2019 UNU strategic plan, which focuses on strengthening management, ensuring sustainable growth and streamlining partnerships. The underlying aim of the plan is to re-engage with key constituencies in the policymaking community in order to promote UNU as a source of innovative policy ideas, a neutral voice on global policy challenges and a reliable knowledge broker.

77. Two specific priorities to be carried out in accordance with the strategic plan are to produce high-quality research and to prioritize policy-relevant research/advice. UNU has been successful in making progress on these priorities, as indicated elsewhere in the present report.

78. During 2018, the Rectorate launched a consultation process to develop the University's 2020–2024 strategic plan, with the intent of consolidating the progress made during the previous five years while endeavouring to make further advances to:

- Ensure financial sustainability
- Prioritize policy-oriented research
- Foster collaboration and a culture of innovation
- Strengthen communications, visibility and branding
- Encourage and facilitate a gender-sensitive work culture

### Gender equality and a safe workplace

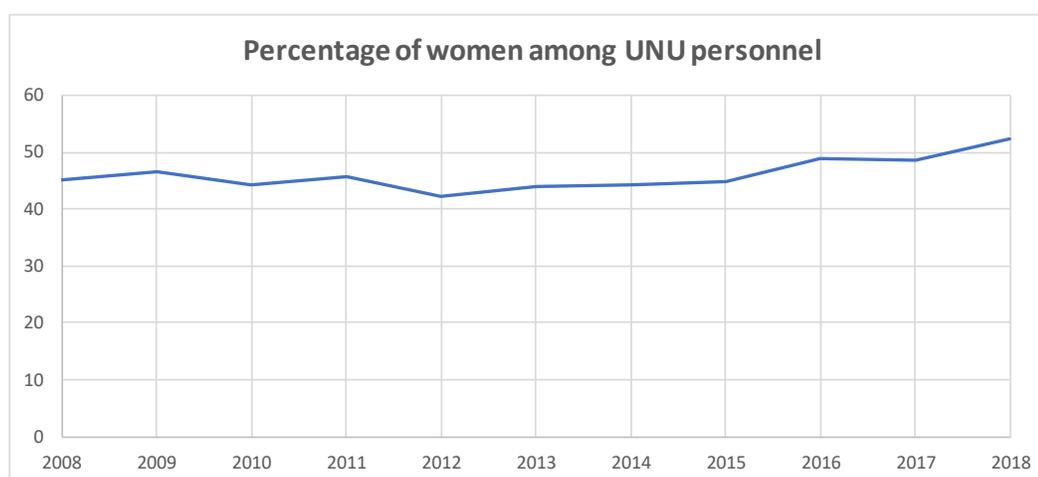
79. Throughout 2018, UNU maintained its momentum in working towards the two overarching goals of the UNU policy on gender equality and the accompanying action plan:

- Gender parity, particularly among senior personnel
- Gender mainstreaming in UNU substantive areas work

80. In addition, the University developed a new policy to address prohibited conduct, including sexual harassment, which is in line with the decisions of the CEB and related policy reforms led by the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat, and amended the UNU personnel policy accordingly.

81. UNU is committed to achieving gender balance and ensuring gender equality within the global UNU system. In 2018, for the first time, the ratio of women to men at UNU exceeded the 50 per cent mark (see figure V), with 52 per cent female and 48 per cent male personnel.

Figure V  
Percentage of women among United Nations University personnel



82. UNU management remains dedicated to closing the gender gap among its institute directors who, historically, have been predominantly men. As the result of a

targeted outreach and recruitment initiative undertaken since 2016, when only one institute director was a woman (7 per cent), 42 per cent of the directors were women in 2018.

83. The UNU Rectorate is also committed to ensuring that the membership of institute advisory boards is gender-balanced and that each advisory board will help to refine and monitor gender-specific goals and achievements at the institute it oversees.

84. UNU is an active participant in the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. A network of gender focal points within the UNU system coordinates institute-level activities that build awareness of Action Plan targets, implementation requirements and progress reporting.

### **Communicating the value and impact of the United Nations University**

85. The role of communications is vital to UNU efforts to achieve wider dissemination of the results of its research and to ensure that its research findings are seen, understood and utilized.

86. UNU launched a system-wide global communications strategy 2018–2019 that provides an overarching framework to align communications work across the UNU system during the biennium. The strategy is aimed at improving knowledge about the impact of UNU on key audiences and at increasing the University's limited global profile by:

- Communicating the value, relevance and impact of UNU work more effectively
- Improving UNU stakeholder networks
- Achieving communications successes in the contexts of local and international media
- Strengthening the UNU brand and online presence

---

## Annex

### Members of the Council of the United Nations University

#### 2016–2019

Ernest Aryeetey (Ghana), Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana

Simon Chesterman (Australia), Dean, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Elizabeth Cousens (United States of America), Deputy Chief Executive Officer, United Nations Foundation

Bassma Kodmani (Syrian Arab Republic), Executive Director, Arab Reform Initiative

Irena Lipowicz (Poland), Professor, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw

Lan Xue (China), Dean, School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University; Director, China Institute for S&T Policy

#### 2016–2022

Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz (Brazil), Scientific Director, São Paulo Research Foundation; Professor, Gleb Wataghin Physics Institute, State University of Campinas

Isabel Guerrero Pulgar (Chile), Director, IMAGO Global Grassroots; Lecturer at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Angela Kane (Germany), Senior Fellow, Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-proliferation; Professor, Political Science

Segenet Kelemu (Ethiopia), Director General and Chief Executive Officer, International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology

Radha Kumar (India) (UNU Council Chair), Former Director-General, Delhi Policy Group

Tsuneo Nishida (Japan), Director, Institute for Peace Science, Hiroshima University; Director, Toho Zinc Co., Ltd.

---