

United Nations University

Annual Report 2023



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THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



Rector's Welcome

In March 2023, I had the honour of becoming the seventh Rector of the United Nations University. My vision is to expand the University's global reach and impact. To aid in this effort, UNU has formed crucial new global partnerships, launched pioneering research and training initiatives, and boosted its visibility and presence, particularly in the Global South.

UNU remains committed to advancing the 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its

17 Sustainable Development Goals. Through influential publications, events and specialized training programmes, UNU has created policy-relevant insights from scientific research.

On the institutional front, key achievements include advancement of a planned UNU institute focused on artificial intelligence; pilot implementation (by UNU-INWEH in partnership with the University of Calgary) of an innovative "UNU Hub" concept for future research and

education collaborations; the signing of an agreement with the International Science Council on joint research, knowledge exchange and training efforts; successful culmination by UNU-WIDER of an impactful five-year programme on transforming economies to accelerate sustainable development; initiation by UNU-FLORES of a sustainability analytics hub for improved resource management; and the launch of a new UNU website platform.

UNU's engagement in emerging technology policy issues has been a notable highlight, contributing significantly to the United Nations system. Key examples of this include my appointment to the UN Secretary-General's new Scientific Advisory Board, UNU-CPR's role as secretariat for the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, and UNU-EGOV's prominent convening and agenda-setting role for the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance.

As UNU begins its 49th year of operation, the accomplishments of 2023 have helped to elevate UNU's global profile, optimize the University's contributions as a solutions-oriented knowledge institution within the UN system, and forge a future of heightened leadership in the quest for global sustainable development.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the dedicated members of the UNU Council and UNU personnel whose tireless commitment, exceptional talent and extraordinary efforts are the driving force that are propelling UNU into an exciting and impactful future. My heartfelt appreciation goes to our partners, donors and supporters from every corner of the world; together, we are forging a path towards a brighter, more sustainable world.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2023 UNU Annual Report, which highlights some of the stepping stones on this path. Herein you will learn about the global UNU system and some of the substantive work that was accomplished in 2023. UNU remains steadfast in its mission to champion inclusive, global sustainable development.

Rector Tshilidzi Marwala

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



Tokyo, JAPAN – Rector Tshilidzi Marwala hosted a town hall meeting for all UNU personnel on 2 March, a day after his term began.

Knowledge to Transform the World

The United Nations University (UNU) serves as a link between research and policymaking, generating solutions for complex and interconnected global challenges. UNU conducts multidisciplinary research across a broad spectrum of challenges to human survival, development and welfare. It encapsulates its research findings into pragmatic insights, develops viable recommendations that can drive positive change, and disseminates those insights and recommendations to those who can utilize them in the service of humankind.

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's formal adoption of the

United Nations University Charter. Guided by the mandates of that charter, UNU launched operations in September 1975 from UNU Centre in Tokyo, and today has grown to become a global network of 13 research and training institutes spanning 12 countries.

UNU's global system intersects with numerous international and regional policy arenas, integrating experts from various academic disciplines. The University's collaborative approach fosters effective partnerships and facilitates unique insights and practical solutions, thereby enhancing the impact of its work on a global scale.

The University's work is organized around three key thematic clusters — peace and security; social change and economic development; and environment, climate and energy — that encompass the full range of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Each UNU institute focuses on specific topics related to one or more of these themes.

With its unique dual identity as an autonomous research/training institution and a trusted knowledge partner within the United Nations system, UNU shapes policy processes and debates around vital global issues.

This report showcases key activities of 2023 that reflect UNU's thematic diversity and geographic breadth.

Strategic collaborations for scaled impact

UNU works with diverse UN entities, including the UN Secretariat, agencies and programmes and maintains active collaborations with numerous regional institutions worldwide. These partnerships span a range of topics relevant to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Highlights of UNU Collaborations and Partnerships

United Nations System Entities



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization:

Artificial intelligence ethics, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and sustainable higher education curricula



World Health Organization

World Health Organization:

Health-related implementation research, climate change-related health issues, enhancement of gender perspectives in research and an Asian regional implementation research training centre



United Nations Development Programme:

Alignment of science, technology and innovation with the SDGs, and water, sanitation and sustainable development policy



United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change:

Climate and security, climate adaptation, resilience and capacity building



International Labour Organization:

Jobs and social protection



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs:

E-government and social trust



United Nations Human Settlements Programme:

Sustainable urban development



United Nations Children's Fund:

Gender and immunization, impacts of the Ukraine conflict on children, gender equality, empowerment of women for gender equality and health

Regional Organizations

Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group: Measures against modern slavery and human trafficking

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Report on responses to forced displacement

European Parliament: Analysis of the African Union's political integration, and exploration of European Union-African Union relations in foreign and security policy

Andean Community: Doctoral school focusing on regionalism

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa: Projects on digital governance and sustainable development

EURAC Research Center: Policy briefs on risks in mountainous regions

UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: Research on sustainable urban development and implementation of the SDGs

Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Efforts to improve approaches to breastfeeding, gender and health

UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Work to enhance science, technology and innovation policy capacity

UN regional economic commissions for Africa, Asia and Latin America: Research on decent work and reducing inequality

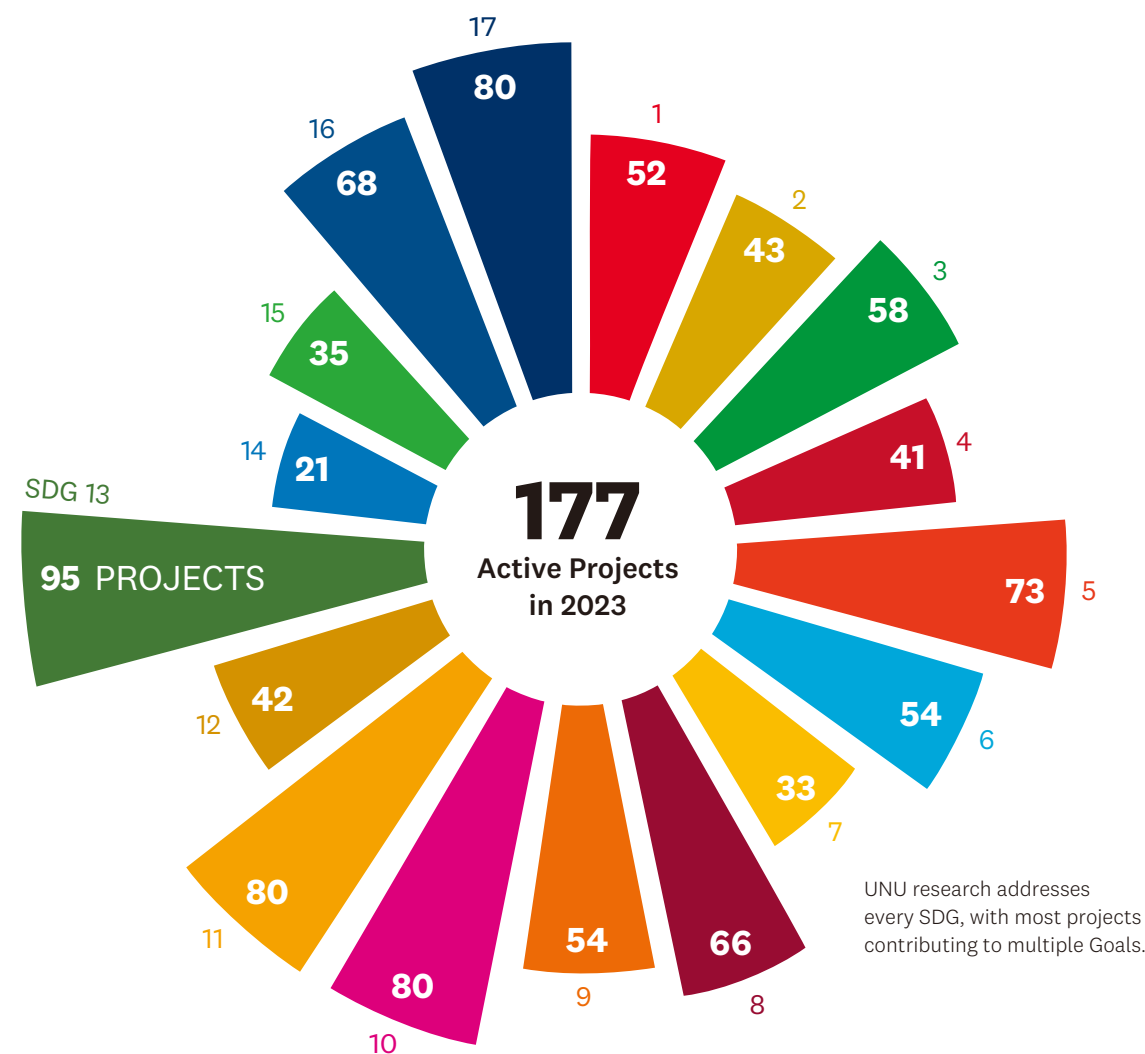
Advancing the Global Goals: What We Do

The United Nations University conducts policy-relevant research that addresses urgent global issues, providing evidence-based solutions to decision makers and the public. UNU research employs levels of analysis that are integrated both horizontally (across disciplines) and vertically (incorporating local, national, regional and global perspectives), delivering new perspectives on complex challenges. The aim is not just to develop a theoretical understanding or generate “knowledge for the sake of knowledge”, but to advance practical, real-world solutions.

UNU bridges gaps between research and policy within the UN system by collaborating extensively with a global network of partners (universities, research institutes, NGOs, governments and private entities) to generate evidence and ideas that shape the debate on vital issues. By undertaking policy-focused research and convening roles, UNU produces outputs tailored to inform policy at local, regional and international levels.

Central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNU’s multidisciplinary expertise enables it not only to tackle each goal individually but also to highlight and clarify their interdependencies and collective impact – an approach that is crucial to drive tangible progress towards achieving the SDGs. The 17 SDGs are often organized under five general categories – **People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnerships**.

Reflecting on UNU’s interdisciplinary and holistic problem-solving approach, it is important to recognize that many of UNU’s initiatives intersect with multiple SDGs. For clarity, however, each is listed only once under an appropriate category. Through its diverse research and capacity-building endeavours, reinforced by worldwide partnerships, UNU is actively furthering sustainable development and helping to forge a brighter future.



UNU research addresses every SDG, with most projects contributing to multiple Goals.



Advancing the Global Goals

People

These SDGs seek to end poverty and hunger, enhance health care and opportunities for learning, and eliminate gender-based discrimination so that everyone, everywhere, can aspire to live to their full potential with dignity, equality and opportunity.



2023 Highlights

Research projects and initiatives:

- addressing gender-based asymmetries in global health with a decolonial feminist approach, aiming for inclusive, community-informed strategies in the Global South (UNU-IIGH)
- investigating the extent and nature of gender-based violence in Malaysia, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, to develop policy recommendations for trauma-informed care models in health systems (UNU-IIGH)
- examining regional practices for integrating gender perspectives in government health programmes across Africa, South Asia and South-East Asia, and identifying success factors and transferable lessons (UNU-IIGH)
- studying the influence of global university rankings on higher education and public health policy, analysing biases in ranking systems and providing expert recommendations for improvements (UNU-IIGH)
- exploring the impacts of artificial intelligence on women's security and peacebuilding in Asia, including assessing the risks of online bullying and privacy breaches (UNU Macau)
- conducting in-depth examinations of issues such as educational disparities, social inequities and urban poverty (multiple UNU institutes)

- analysing how leveraging “citizen science” can improve pandemic preparedness and response, and developing tools and models to build collective intelligence capabilities (UNU Macau)
- empowering youth and women in Africa through incubator programmes in renewable energy and smart agriculture, focusing on green innovation and women's leadership (UNU-VIE)

Publications:

- *Asia-Pacific Regional Synthesis: Climate Change, Displacement and the Right to Education* (UNU-IAS book)
- “Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges: Reimagining a Feminist Health Workforce” (UNU-IIGH article in *The BMJ*)
- “Freedom from Want: A Critical Reflection in the Face of the Anthropocene” (UNU-EHS article in *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*)
- “Improving Parenting Practices for Early Child Development: Experimental Evidence from Rwanda” (UNU-WIDER article in *Journal of the European Economic Association*)
- “Why Global Health Continues to Deny Gender Equity” (UNU-IIGH article in *Global Policy Journal*)
- *World-class Universities? Interrogating the Biases and Coloniality of Global University Rankings* (UNU-IIGH briefing paper)

Events:

- Evidence. Voice. Action: Catalysing Change for Gender and Health Equality (UNU-IIGH Gender and Health Hub forum)
- regional launch of *The Lancet Series on Breastfeeding* (UNU-IIGH)
- Enabling Environments for Gender Equality in Health (UNU-IIGH workshop)

Education and training:

- launch of Resource Nexus for Sustainability Transformations – an innovative doctoral programme for Global South students, which focuses on interlinkages between environmental resources, and synergies and tradeoffs in their management (UNU-FLORES)
- workshops and online courses aimed at strengthening youth and community capabilities for sustainability engagement (UNU-IAS)
- support of efforts to integrate sustainability into higher education curricula and systems in Japan and beyond (UNU-IAS)
- Women, Business and the Law (UNU-FLORES workshop)
- Addressing Gender Gaps in Vaccination/Immunization (UNU-IIGH e-learning course)
- EQUALS-EU training on gender equality (UNU Macau training initiative)

- Promoting Digital Inclusion and Gender Equality for Women and Girls in Macau (UNU Macau workshop and roundtable discussion)
- Agent-based Modelling to Support Better Health Policies (UNU Macau training programme)

Advancing the Global Goals

Prosperity

These SDGs seek to ensure that economic, social and technological development are equitable, sustainable and in harmony with nature, so that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives.



2023 Highlights

Research projects and initiatives:

- building biotechnology capacities in Latin America and the Caribbean through professional networking, technical problem-solving and cultural expansion (UNU-BIOLAC)
- assessing the implementation and challenges of people-centred artificial intelligence in urban settings, with a focus on policy recommendations for AI implementation in cities and local governance (UNU-EGOV)
- transforming urban structures for sustainability and reduced carbon emissions, including establishing Urban Labs in selected Latin American cities for sustainable urban development with a focus on social justice in decarbonization (UNU-EHS)
- launching the *Sustainability Management Forum Journal* to broaden the discourse on sustainability in various sectors, including politics, business and societal practices (UNU-FLORES)
- innovating clean agricultural technologies to economically empower women and youth in rural West Africa, focusing on increasing agricultural productivity with low-cost clean energy solutions (UNU-INRA)
- addressing water scarcity in Southern Africa through digital technology and frugal innovation, aiming to foster German-African cooperation and youth entrepreneurship (UNU-VIE)

- launching an “After Carbon” initiative aimed at aligning science with policy for a sustainable, low-carbon future in Africa and addressing the gap between science and policy in the energy transition (UNU-INRA)
- establishing a large team in Pretoria to collaborate with the South African government on developing inclusive economic policies and filling crucial knowledge gaps, based on anonymized administrative tax data (UNU-WIDER)
- assessing global science, technology and innovation (STI) research trends in relation to the SDGs, emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary research and inclusion of low-income countries in STI efforts (UNU-MERIT)

Publications:

- “A Future Agenda for Research on Climate Change and Human Mobility” (UNU-EHS article in *International Migration*)
- “AI Is Here to Stay! How Artificial Intelligence Can Contribute to Economic Growth in Africa” (UNU-INRA website article)
- “Realizing Innovation and Sustainability: A Case Study of Macau SAR’s Smart City Development Capabilities” (UNU Macau article in *Journal of Urban Affairs*)

- *Barriers to Sustainable Infrastructure: The Case of Chile* (UNU-FLORES report)
- *Gender-Sensitive AI Policy in Southeast Asia* (UNU Macau report)
- *Global Assessment for Responsible AI in Cities* (UNU-EGOV policy report)
- *Leaving No One Behind in Carbon Neutrality Strategies: Insights from Developing Countries in Asia and the Pacific* (UNU-IAS policy brief)
- *The Green and Digital Transition in Manufacturing Global Value Chains in Latecomer Countries* (UNU-MERIT working paper)
- *The Job Ladder: Transforming Informal Work and Livelihoods in Developing Countries* (UNU-WIDER book)

Events:

- Globalization in Crisis: Confronting a New Economic Reality (UNU-WIDER Annual Lecture by Pinelopi Goldberg (Yale University))
- How Artificial Intelligence Can Drive Economic Growth in Africa (UNU-INRA lecture by UNU Rector Tshilidzi Marwala)
- Governance Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (UNU-CRIS lecture by UNU Rector Tshilidzi Marwala)
- The Ethical Implications and Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence (UNU Macau seminar series)

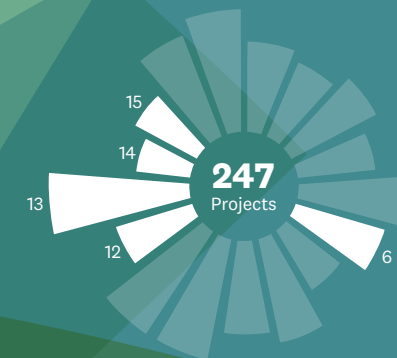
Education and training:

- Decent Work and Economic Growth: Achieving SDG 8 (UNU-WIDER online course)
- Economics of Innovation (UNU-MERIT online course)
- Water Learning Centre (a UNU-INWEH initiative providing online courses)
- Innovation, Economics, Governance and Sustainable Development (UNU-MERIT PhD degree programme)
- Spring School on Economic Complexity (UNU-MERIT co-organized school)
- National SOUTHMOD training sessions (UNU-WIDER)

Advancing the Global Goals

Planet

These SDGs seek to sustainably manage the planet's natural resources, mitigate the effects of climate change and protect the Earth's biodiversity and ecosystems from degradation.



2023 Highlights

Research projects and initiatives:

- conducting research for a flagship report on interconnected disaster risks, including development of a comprehensive framework for disaster risk reduction and management (UNU-EHS)
- integrating nature-based solutions into comprehensive disaster and climate risk management at the national level to enhance resilience, and development of training materials and a toolkit for the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNU-EHS)
- strengthening financial preparedness and resilience of Pacific communities facing impacts of climate change by introducing affordable disaster risk financing solutions, including climate microinsurance products (UNU-EHS)
- promoting integrated resource management and sustainable development through the Sustainability Nexus AID Research Programme (with over 150 potential tools for sustainable resource management practices already identified) (UNU-FLORES)
- launching a doctoral initiative to foster experts from the Global South in sustainability transformations with a focus on the Resource Nexus approach (UNU-FLORES)
- helping to accelerate progress on SDG 6 by bridging water policy evidence gaps in the Global South, including by developing an SDG 6 Policy Support System for clean water and sanitation (UNU-INWEH)
- transforming water management practices for clean water and sanitation in Asian cities, developing

- indicators for water environment evaluation and conducting projects on water security and climate change adaptation (UNU-IAS)
- leading the International Satoyama Initiative to promote biodiversity and sustainable human-nature relationships (UNU-IAS)
- developing a water information management system to enhance water and wastewater management in the Wider Caribbean Region and foster sustainable environmental and public health practices (UNU-INWEH)
- innovating recycling techniques for mixed plastic waste to reduce CO2 emissions by developing model systems for circular economy initiatives (UNU-MERIT)
- enhancing climate action in developing countries through virtual training platforms and seed grants, particularly targeting the capacity of young leaders and women to lead community net-zero carbon emission projects (UNU-VIE)
- fostering cooperation between Germany, Japan and the Republic of Korea on water security and climate change adaptation approaches by facilitating knowledge and best practice sharing (UNU-IAS and UNU-FLORES)

Publications:

- “Systematic Review of Methodological Tools for Evaluating the Water, Energy, Food, and One Health Nexus in Transboundary Water Basins” (UNU-FLORES article in *Environmental Management*)

- “Diverse Values of Nature for Sustainability” (UNU-IAS article in *Nature*)
- “The Impact of Austria’s Climate Strategy on Renewable Energy Consumption and Economic Output” (UNU-VIE article in *Energy Policy*)
- *Building Climate Resilience: Lessons from the 2021 Floods in Western Europe* (UNU-EHS, UNU-CRIS and UNU-MERIT report)
- *Climate Resilience Initiative Final Report* (UNU-CRIS)
- *Ecosystem Restoration through Managing Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes* (UNU-IAS book)
- *Global Bottled Water Industry: A Review of Impacts and Trends* (UNU-INWEH report)
- *Global Water Security 2023 Assessment* (UNU-INWEH report)
- *Interconnected Disaster Risks: Risk Tipping Points* (UNU-EHS report)
- *NEXtra Core: Sustainable Transformation in Coal Regions of the Global South* (UNU-FLORES report)
- *UN World Water Development Report 2023* (with contributions from UNU-CRIS, UNU-EHS and UNU-MERIT)

Events:

- International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative Global Conference (UNU-IAS)
- Interim Dresden Nexus Conference (UNU-FLORES)

- Celebrating Sustainability in Bonn, Germany’s UN Capital (UNU-VIE event)
- Blueprint for Setting Virtual Tech Hubs Services to Support Innovators and Entrepreneurs in the Green Sector (UNU-VIE COP28 session)
- Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Network Science-Policy Workshop (UNU-EHS)
- Responsible Resource Use in the Textile Industry (UNU-FLORES symposium)

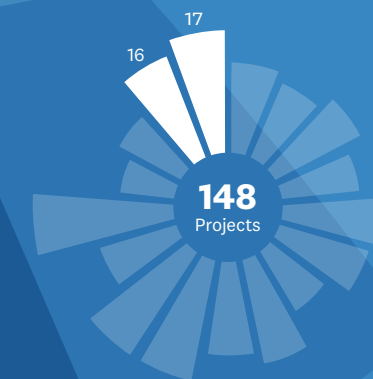
Education and training:

- Computational Genomics for the Health and Life Sciences (UNU-BIOLAC course)
- Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security (UNU-EHS MSc degree programme)
- Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change (UNU-VIE and UNU-EHS online course)
- Integrated Management of Water, Soil and Waste (UNU-FLORES joint PhD programme)
- MSc degree programme in Sustainability (UNU-IAS)
- PhD degree programme in Sustainability Science (UNU-IAS)
- Resource Nexus for Sustainability Transformations (UNU-FLORES doctoral programme)
- Metagenomics (UNU-BIOLAC course)
- Water Without Borders (UNU-INWEH interdisciplinary graduate diploma programme)
- People’s Pathways to Climate Action (UNU-EHS)

Advancing the Global Goals

Peace & Partnerships

These SDGs seek to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies in which individuals can live free from fear and violence, and to revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.



2023 Highlights

Research projects and initiatives:

- engaging the financial sector to combat modern slavery, human trafficking and associated financial crimes and corruption through the Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking programme, with the aim of influencing policy changes and recovering financial assets linked to these crimes (UNU-CPR)
- conducting a thematic review on the intersection of climate change, security and peacebuilding for the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (UNU-CPR)
- collaborating with the government of Saudi Arabia to develop innovative e-participation mechanisms and promote transparent governance and enhanced public access to information and services (UNU-EGOV)
- working with a Qatar ministry to accelerate digital transformation, including introducing new digital services and enhancing existing ones, in collaboration with local technology companies and educational institutions (UNU-EGOV)
- addressing data gaps in measuring irregular migration and its policy impacts in Europe and beyond, and developing databases and handbooks for evidence-based policy formulation (UNU-MERIT)
- investigating how violent conflicts shape long-term state-building and economic trajectories, and providing policy guidance on building strong and inclusive state institutions for post-conflict recovery (UNU-WIDER)

- facilitating the development of a report for the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, focusing on strengthening global architecture in areas including peace, security, finance, climate transitions and digitalization (UNU-CPR)
- contributing to a project that developed a framework and tools to monitor regional integration and development within the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (UNU-CRIS)
- localizing SDG indicators to aid local authorities in tracking and adjusting policies for SDG implementation, including creating a database to evaluate the performance of Flemish municipalities (UNU-CRIS)
- conducting research on aligning climate change initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (UNU-IAS)
- helping to leverage administrative tax data to improve policymaking in the Global South and develop efficient and equitable tax systems to enhance economic growth and social welfare (UNU-WIDER)

Publications:

- *Artificial Intelligence-Powered Disinformation and Conflict* (UNU-CPR policy brief)
- *Beyond Digital Access as a Human Right in Cities* (UNU-EGOV white paper)
- *Complexity of Choice in Asylum Seeker Decision-making* (UNU-CPR policy brief)

- *Digital Transformation of Social Security Administration and Services* (UNU-EGOV working paper)
- *How to Support the Emergence of Effective Tax Systems* (UNU-WIDER policy brief)
- *Towards Peace, Decent Work, and Greater Equality: Research Evidence for Transforming Economies, States, and Societies* (UNU-WIDER report)

Events:

- European Union in International Affairs Conference (UNU-CRIS)
- International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV 2023) (UNU-EGOV)
- Smart and Lean Integration: Finding Regional Solutions to Global Challenges (UNU-CRIS conference)
- Think7 Japan Summit (UNU-IAS)
- Transatlantic Paradiplomacy Scholars Forum (UNU-CRIS)
- Interconnected Disaster Risks Report outreach events (UNU-EHS)
- The Interim Dresden Nexus Conference 2023 (UNU-FLORES)
- Governing Artificial Intelligence (UNU-CPR workshop)
- Migration Policy Roundtables (UNU-CPR)
- Revving up Revenue for Development — The Role of Domestic Resource Mobilization (UNU-WIDER Development Conference)
- West Africa Digital Governance Forum (UNU-EGOV)

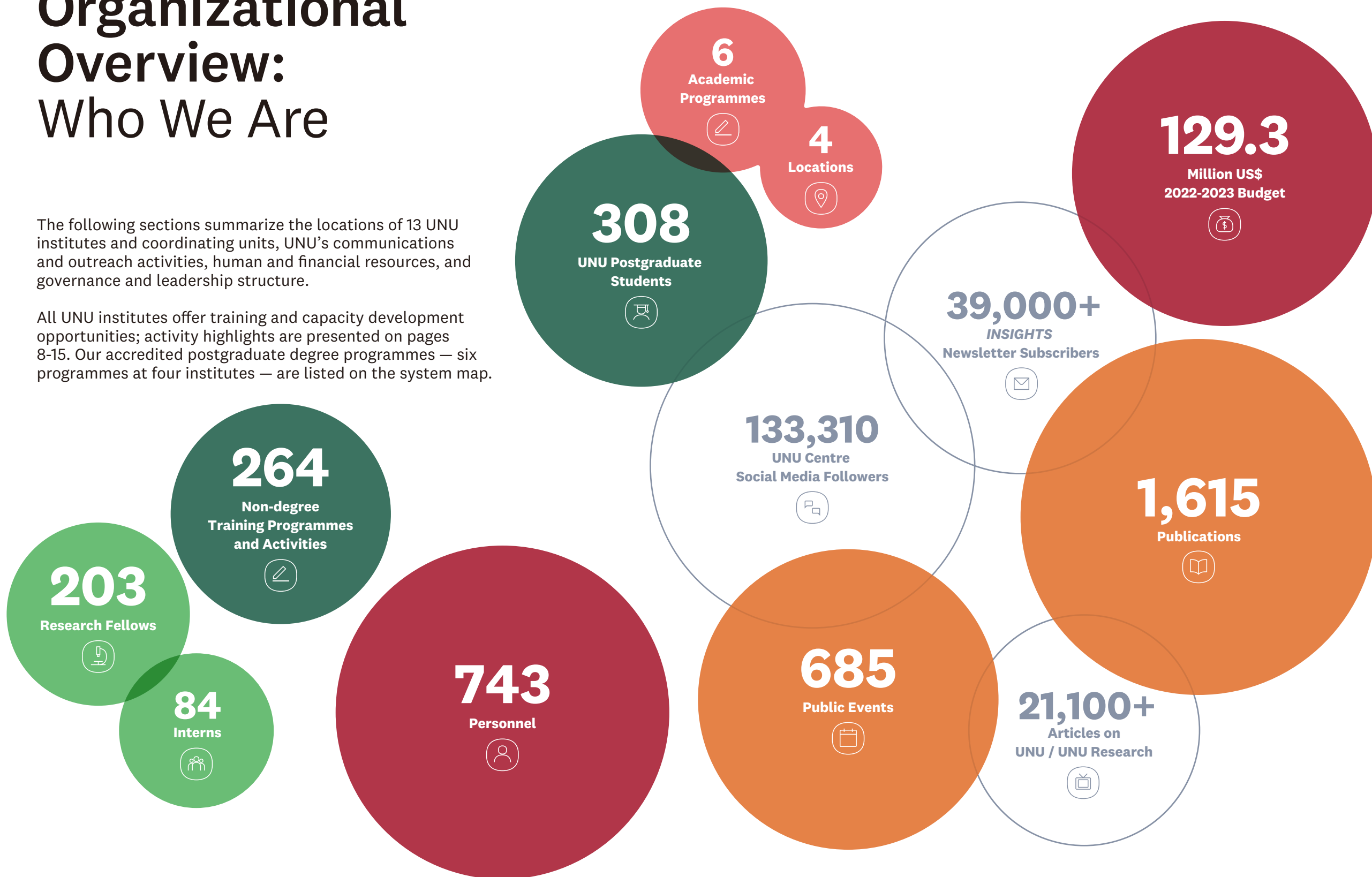
Education and training:

- Egypt Capacity Building Programme on Electronic Governance and Public Sector (UNU-EGOV)
- Fighting Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (UNU-CPR online course)
- Saudi Arabia Capacity Building Programme on Digital Transformation and Participation (UNU-EGOV)
- School of Modern Diplomacy (UNU-CRIS)
- Seasonal School: The Climate, Migration and Health Nexus (UNU-CRIS)
- Sustainable Urban Development training for Asia-Pacific mayors (UNU-IAS)

Organizational Overview: Who We Are

The following sections summarize the locations of 13 UNU institutes and coordinating units, UNU's communications and outreach activities, human and financial resources, and governance and leadership structure.

All UNU institutes offer training and capacity development opportunities; activity highlights are presented on pages 8-15. Our accredited postgraduate degree programmes — six programmes at four institutes — are listed on the system map.



Organizational Overview

The UNU System

UNU operates as a network of 13 institutes located in 12 countries. Each institute has a specific focus as mandated by its statute and host country agreement. The global UNU system is coordinated by UNU Centre, with its headquarters in Tokyo.

★ UNU Centre

- **UNU Centre — Tokyo** (Japan) serves as the programming, planning and administrative headquarters unit of the University, comprising the Office of the Rector, Administration and Financial Services units, the Campus Computing Centre and the Office of Communications.
- **UNU Centre — Putrajaya** (Malaysia) operates as an adjunct administrative, human resources and financial services unit.
- **UNU-VIE** (the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe; Bonn, Germany) supports the University's institutional development, coordinates joint activities and networks, and facilitates collaboration with UN agencies in Bonn and regional stakeholders.

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

3 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.

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



12
Countries

13
Institutes

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

6 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.

7 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.

8 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 towards sustainable societies, natural capital and biodiversity, and global change and resilience.

9 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.

10 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.

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

12 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.

13 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.

14 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.

Organizational Overview

Communicating & Engaging for Impact

UNU expands its reach and amplifies the impact of its work by sharing its research findings, insights and expertise through diverse channels: publications, events, specialized training, high-level briefings, websites and traditional/social media. This multifaceted engagement enhances UNU's role as a facilitator of knowledge exchange and a catalyst for finding solutions to real-world problems.

Sharing knowledge — UNU disseminates its research findings and insights through a wide array of publications, both internal (reports, policy briefs and working/discussion papers) and external (books, book chapters, articles in peer-reviewed journals and features in online media outlets). This enables UNU to reach a diverse audience encompassing academics, professionals, policymakers, directly affected communities and a

broadly interested public, thus contributing to the global intellectual discourse. Selected UNU publications from 2023 are highlighted in the **Advancing the Global Goals** section of this report. These, and more than 8,000 other publications (including more than 1600 publications from 2023), are accessible online through the UNU Collections repository. Other publications can be downloaded from the websites of the institutes that prepared them or the external partner that published them.

Fostering global conversations — UNU organizes a variety of events (conferences, seminars, symposiums and lectures), both in-person and online, to facilitate broad participation, stimulate innovative thinking and encourage collaboration across different fields. There were 685 such events in 2023; a selection of these is featured in the **Advancing the Global Goals** section of this report.

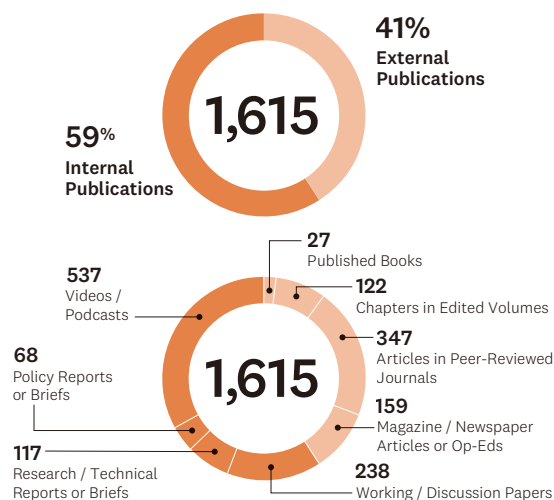
Building leadership capacity — UNU prioritizes the development of future leaders through specialized postgraduate degree (MSc and PhD) programmes that cover critical areas such as environmental risks, human security, public policy, human development, sustainability, water and waste management, economics and governance. In 2023, these programmes attracted more than 300 students, more than half from developing countries and three-fifths women. Additionally, UNU offered numerous specialized non-degree training opportunities, enhancing the skill sets of more than 7,000 participants. This commitment to education is further strengthened by giving opportunities for young scholars to collaborate with UNU experts.

Shaping policy discourse — In 2023, UNU remained a key player in providing evidence-based briefings to inform policy at the highest levels. UNU-CPR, in

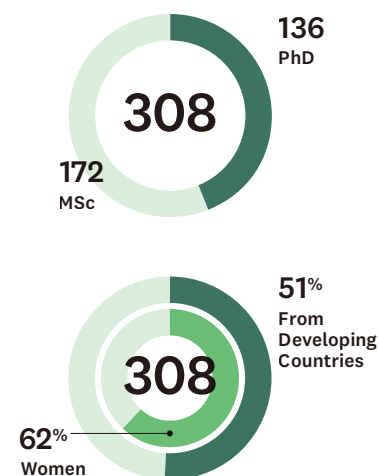
particular, was active in delivering crucial information to United Nations officials and representatives of UN Member States, with briefings focused on proposals for enhancing multilateralism and reforming the global governance architecture in preparation for the upcoming Summit of the Future.

Building engagement — To enhance its visibility among a global audience and foster increased public engagement, UNU takes a multidimensional approach utilizing mass media, online platforms and social networks. Significant media coverage in various languages and a strong presence on popular social media platforms are key components of this strategy. The 2023 launch of a redesigned, unified website platform has made accessing UNU's resources more streamlined and user-friendly, and the *INSIGHTS* email newsletter has continued to grow its subscriber base.

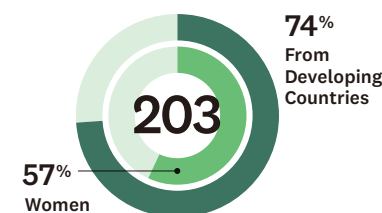
Publications



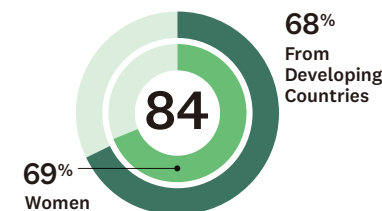
Postgraduate Students



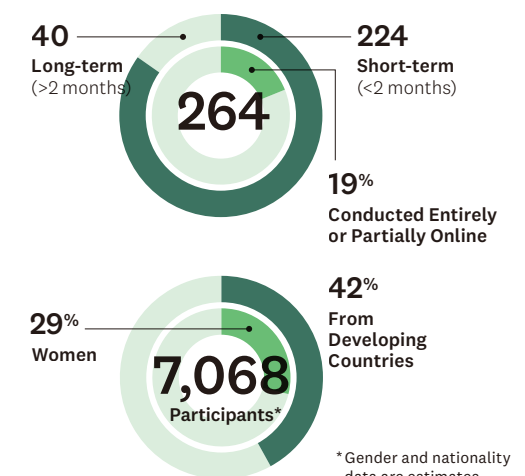
Research Fellows



Interns



Non-degree Training Programmes and Activities



Organizational Overview

Human & Financial Resources

Personnel — The University’s personnel include Professional and General Service staff (appointed in accordance with UN Staff Regulations and Rules) as well as visiting scholars, research associates, postdoctoral fellows, administrative and academic services personnel, and specialized consultants. As of year-end 2023, the global UNU system had a personnel complement of 743 (of whom 44% were developing country nationals and 56% were women).

UNU is an inclusive employer committed to maintaining an accessible and enabling workplace that embraces diversity, respects individual (racial, cultural, sexual and other) differences and is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse.

In 2023, UNU achieved 93% of the indicators of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (well above the UN system average). Globally, in 2023, UNU Centre and 10 of UNU’s 13 institutes had at least 50% female personnel. As of year-end, 82% of incumbent UNU Council members were women, 50% of UNU leadership positions were

held by women and all UNU institute Advisory Boards/ Committees had at least 40% female members.

UNU also strives for gender parity, and supports the meaningful participation by persons with disabilities, at events and in its various academic and internship programmes.

Finances — UNU receives no funds from the regular UN budget. 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 organizations and other sources) designated for specific research projects. UNU is committed to transparency and accountability in financial management and directs its financial resources in line with its strategic priorities and in service of its global mandate.

Budget — The approved UNU budget for the 2022-2023 biennium was US\$129.3 million.

Contributions Received by UNU

1 January — 31 December 2023

MEMBER STATES	US Dollars*
Australia	49,645
Belgium	1,137,913
Canada	1,467,351
European Union (European Commission)	103,211
Finland	2,773,447
France	21,875
Germany	9,400,289
Japan	5,268,359
Korea	113,797
Luxembourg	11,086
Macau S.A.R.	404,311
Norway	3,067,164
Principality of Liechtenstein	436,598
Portugal	2,155,800
Senegal	162,578
South Africa	620,782
Sweden	398,415
Switzerland	1,271,095
The Netherlands	1,222,917
United Kingdom	383,868
Subtotal	30,470,501

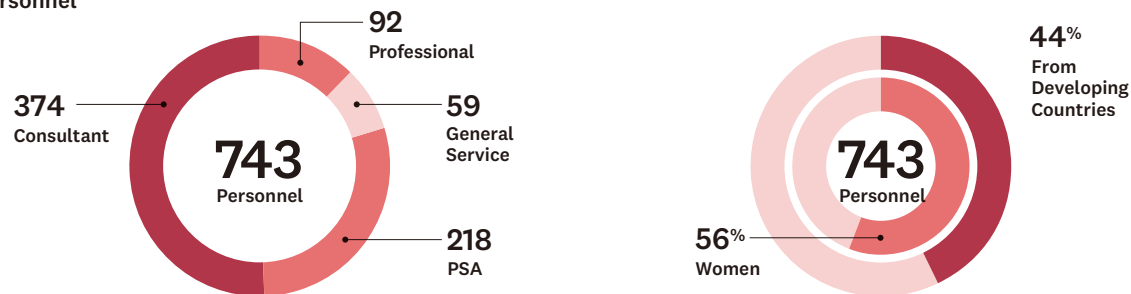
OTHER CONTRIBUTORS	US Dollars*
Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation	22,869
Asian Develop Bank, Manila-ADB-Manila	83,713
BoB Immobilienkonzepte GmbH	193,282
CIMA Research Foundation	51,875
Coventry University	78,361
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	2,086,782
Deutsches Zentrum fuer Luft-und Raumfahrt e.v. (DLR)	25,385
Eurac Research	378,832
European Investment Bank (EIB)	189,829
Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)	67,000
Farmer’s Market Association	99,216
Foundation for the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies	26,750
Guido Feger Foundation	27,422
Harbour International Education Technology Co., Ltd	98,453
Institute Of Development Studies (IDS)	58,667
International Development Research Centre (IDRC)	1,325,980
Ishikawa Prefecture	140,645
Japan Foundation for the United Nations University (JFUNU)	125,411

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

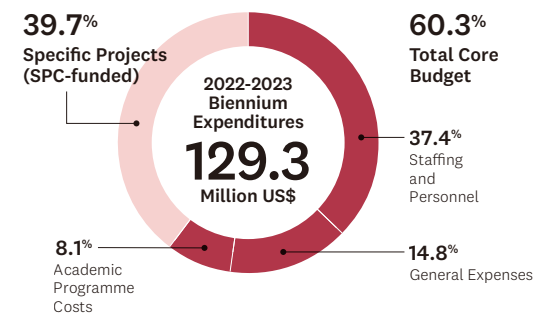
Japan Society For The Promotion Of Science (JSPS)	57,673
Kanazawa City	175,398
LGT Group	107,225
Liechtensteinischer Bankenverband (Liechtenstein Bankers’ Association)	21,172
Maastricht City Council	644,280
Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG)	202,492
Munich Climate Insurance Initiative	600,573
Munich Re Foundation	49,061
Resona Holdings, Inc	96,108
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	148,956
Stichting Deltares	62,279
Stichting Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology	104,056
Stiftelsen Global Challenges Foundation (GCF)	78,190
Tarom Foundation	54,183
Technische Universitaet Dresden	54,765
The British Institute of International and Comparative Law	39,387
The International Institute for Environment and Development	38,829
The Rule of Law Centre of the University of Helsinki	26,969
The West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)	79,382
UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO)	100,000
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	20,000
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	172,111
United Nations Environmental Program Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)	970,874
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	40,248
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)	224,288
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	750,000
United States Institute of Peace (USIP)	133,918
Universiteit Gent	66,208
University Of Copenhagen	88,708
Vrije Universiteit Brussel	131,004
Zukunft-Umwelt-Gesellschaft gGmbH	352,396
Other donors (39 other donors with individual contributions of less than US\$20,000)	167,954
Subtotal	10,939,161

Total **41,409,662**

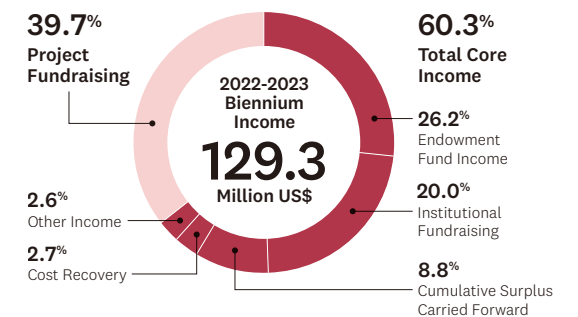
Personnel



Expenditures



Income



Organizational Overview

Governance & Leadership

UNU's operations and academic activities are guided by an integrated governance and leadership structure that spans the system-wide and institute levels.

System-level stewardship

The Council of the United Nations University (UNU Council) oversees the affairs of the global UNU system. This 16-member Council comprises 12 appointed members, the UNU Rector and three *ex officio* members (the UN Secretary-General, UNESCO Director-General and UNITAR Executive Director). The UNU Council provides strategic guidance, approving the University's work programme and budget, and sets systemwide policies. In 2023, the UNU Council convened for its 79th and 80th sessions (1–2 June in Tokyo and 30 November – 1 December in Bonn, respectively).

The UNU Rectorate provides day-to-day coordination and direction of the UNU system. Led by the Rector, who holds the rank of UN Under-Secretary-General, the Rectorate ensures integrated academic and administrative leadership across UNU's network of institutes. In March 2023, UNU welcomed its new Rector, Prof. Tshilidzi Marwala of South Africa, who succeeded Dr. David M. Malone of Canada.

UNU Administration handles the development of unified standards, financial and budget reporting, and provision of human resources, financial and procurement services across the global UNU system.

Institute-level administration

Each UNU institute is led by a Director who oversees the institute's operational management, spanning budget, human resources, and academic and research activities. The Directors meet annually at a Conference of Directors (CONDOR) and periodically through virtual calls to discuss inter-institute coordination and policy.

Advisory Boards/Committees (typically comprising three or more appointed members plus the UNU Rector and institute Director) provide expert guidance on thematic programming and management of their respective institutes.

External oversight

Key United Nations system bodies that play an oversight 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 2023

APPOINTED MEMBERS

- **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
- **Dr. Denisa Číderová** (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
- **Dr. Enrique Forero** (Colombia) — Chair of the Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean (RFP-LAC) of the International Science Council (ISC) [deceased 5 September 2023]
- **Prof. Adam Habib** (South Africa) — Director, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London
- **Prof. Catherine Kyobutungi** (Uganda) — Executive Director, The African Population and Health Research Center
- **Prof. 'Funmi Olonisakin** (*Council Chair*) (United Kingdom & Nigeria) — Vice-President & Vice-Principal International and Professor of Security, Leadership & Development, King's College London
- **Amb. Kuni Sato** (Japan) — Advisor, East Japan Railway Trading Co., Ltd., and Advisor, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage
- **Dr. Vanessa Scherrer** (France) — Vice President for International Affairs of Sciences Po
- **Prof. Brenda Yeoh** (Singapore) — Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

EX OFFICIO COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Rector of UNU
- Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Director-General of UNESCO
- Executive Director of UNITAR

UNU Rectorate

- Rector **David M. Malone** (through 28 February)
- Rector **Tshilidzi Marwala** (from 1 March)
- Senior Vice-Rector **Sawako Shirahase**
- Vice-Rector in Europe **Shen Xiaomeng**
- Executive Officer **Sabine Becker-Thierry**

UNU Administration

- Director of Administration **Joan Sawe**

UNU Institute Directors

- UNU-BIOLAC Programme Coordinator **Ivan Galindo-Castro** (through 26 January)
- UNU-BIOLAC Programme Coordinator **Gustavo Fermin** (from 27 January)
- UNU-CPR Executive Director **David Passarelli**
- UNU-CRIS Director **Philippe De Lombaerde**
- UNU-EGOV Head **Delfina Soares**
- UNU-EHS Director **Shen Xiaomeng**
- UNU-FLORES Director **Edeltraud Günther**
- UNU-IAS Director **Shinobu Yamaguchi**
- UNU-IIGH Director **Rajat Khosla**
- UNU-INRA Director **Fatima Denton**
- UNU-INWEH Director **Vladimir Smakhtin** (through 31 January)
- UNU-INWEH Director **Kaveh Madani** (from 1 February)
- UNU Macau Director **Jingbo Huang**
- UNU-MERIT Director **Bartel Van De Walle**
- UNU-WIDER Director **Kunal Sen**



Tokyo, JAPAN - Council members with Rector Marwala at the 79th session of the UNU Council in June.