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Introduction

In September 2015, the United Nations University (UNU) celebrated 40 years of operation. For four decades, UNU researchers have been studying pervasive and emerging global problems with an eye to informing and shaping public policy.

UNU balances three separate—but-related identities. It is:
• an interdisciplinary research institution that seeks solutions to pressing global problems
• a think tank that translates its research outputs into policy-relevant recommendations for the UN system and UN Member States
• a postgraduate training and capacity development organisation

In its role as a specialised think tank for the United Nations system, UNU conducts objective analyses that shed new light on important questions, with the aim of helping policymakers and practitioners worldwide to view complex issues from fresh, critical perspectives.

In the first two years (2013 & 2014) of the tenure of its sixth Rector, David M. Malone, UNU implemented several significant institutional and operational changes aimed at positioning the University to better respond to the needs of policymakers working to address pressing global issues. These changes are intended to ensure that UNU can make useful contributions towards meeting the needs of the United Nations and its Member States, and have a tangible impact on intergovernmental policy deliberations.

The year 2015 has been a time of consolidation. Rather than introducing additional reforms, the focus this year has been on implementing the vision of the UNU Strategic Plan 2015–2019 and related management initiatives, realising greater collaboration (internally as well as with other UN entities), and ensuring that UNU has a seat at the table in important UN policy processes.

This document provides an overview of UNU’s success in these endeavours, a summary of recent institutional developments and highlights, and a snapshot of selected activities and achievements of UNU in 2015.
Council Chair’s Message

In 2015, the United Nations University celebrated its 40th anniversary. Since the launch of academic operations in September 1975, UNU has grown from a single office in Tokyo to a global network of institutes, programmes, and support units with a presence in 20 countries around the world.

The year also marked the inception of the *UNU Strategic Plan 2015–2019*. That document was developed after a critical, future-oriented reappraisal of the University’s objectives, priorities, and operations. The Strategic Plan sets out a new, rigorous approach to how UNU designs its research programmes and disseminates its findings. The focus going forward is to ensure that UNU delivers useful, science-based findings and offers pragmatic advice to inform policy regarding key issues on the United Nations agenda.

This report presents an overview of UNU’s structure, governance, and resources. It also encapsulates the research, training, and communications/dissemination activities of UNU in the first year of the 2015–2019 Strategic Plan. Although the report is fairly comprehensive, it only provides a snapshot of UNU’s activities. More detailed information about the ongoing work is available on the unu.edu website.

It has been my privilege to serve for six years as a member of the UNU Council, including four years as Council Chair. An entirely new Council will take office as of May 2016.

On behalf of the outgoing UNU Council, I would like to thank the University Rector, David Malone, and his team at the headquarters, institutes, and programmes for their efforts and dedication, and congratulate them for their remarkable achievements. Special thanks is also extended to Max Bond for his excellent services to the Council over the past six years. UNU is fortunate to have such an exceptionally high-quality group of people who, notwithstanding their many other possible career options, have chosen to contribute their expertise to the work and impact of UNU.

Finally, I would like to thank also the UNU host governments, and the global community of donors, partners, and advocates, whose continuing support has enabled UNU to become the productive institution that it is today.

Mohammed H.A. Hassan
United Nations University Council Chair
Rector’s Message

In 2015, the United Nations University completed its fourth decade of academic activity. UNU at 40 continues to deliver on its Charter mandate of “research into the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare”.

Yet the list of existing and emerging global problems is extensive — far too long for UNU to adequately address them all. We therefore focus on the issues that are deemed to be most important by the United Nations and its Member States, and where there is potential for UNU to make a contribution that others perhaps cannot.

In 2015, for example, we identified four interlinked issues where UNU research has the potential to provide policymakers with practical insights based on rigorous scientific analysis — among them, migration and urbanisation.

Cross-border migration was headline news in 2015, with a particular focus on the flow of refugees from Syria to Europe. Yet, looking beyond the headlines, the reality is that 9 of the top 20 countries of destination for international migrants are located in Asia; in this century, 30% more international migrants have settled in Asia than in Europe (26 million vs. 20 million). Nor is migration just a cross-border phenomenon. Globally, there are estimated to be three times as many internal (within-country) migrants as international migrants.

UNU — particularly through the work of the UNU Migration Network, and our participation in the UN Global Migration Group — seeks to contribute to building effective and holistic migration policies, institutions, and actions that can enable nations to better cope with shifting migration patterns and reduce negative impacts on society, while simultaneously ensuring that human rights, good governance, and democracy are served.

A related issue of concern for UNU is the rapid pace of urbanisation. More than half (almost 4 billion) of the world’s population now lives in cities, and that number is growing fast. In the Asia–Pacific alone, an estimated 120,000 people are migrating from rural communities to cities every day.

The discussion of migration policies and urbanisation policies traditionally has been relegated to separate forums, causing a lack of policy coherence. As an interdisciplinary research organisation, UNU seeks to bridge this gap; our aim is to identify and advocate feasible options for dealing with the multiple, interlocking crises that threaten to create increasingly “fragile” cities.

In these, and other areas of relevance to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, I am confident that going forward UNU will be able to deliver relevant, authoritative research and policy advice that serves the debate on and development of policy within the United Nations system, and more widely.

I hope that you will find this 2015 annual report of sustaining interest, and that it will help you to understand and appreciate the issues and concerns that UNU addresses in its role as a think tank for the UN system.

David M. Malone
Rector of the United Nations University
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
About the United Nations University

The United Nations University (UNU) is a problem-focused think tank and research arm for the United Nations system. The UNU Charter stipulates that: “The University shall devote its work to research into the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations and its agencies”.

In other words, the mission of UNU is to serve as a think tank for the United Nations, providing the UN system and UN Member States with relevant, reliable evidence in service of the debate and development of policy. UNU seeks to:

• influence policymaking at national, regional, and international levels, and within the United Nations system
• contribute to UN assessments and to the work of other UN system entities and civil society organisations
• raise awareness about pressing global issues, and contribute to the rethinking/revisiting of existing policies and perspectives
• assist developing countries to enhance their institutional and individual capacities for research and teaching, and support developing country academic communities
• provide specialised postgraduate-level training, develop relevant curriculums, and further the advancement of interdisciplinary, science-based knowledge

Our Approach

UNU operates as an autonomous organ of the United Nations under the joint sponsorship of the United Nations and UNESCO. Through a global network of academic institutes and programmes, coordinated by UNU Centre in Tokyo, UNU conducts objective, policy-relevant research that aims to offer unbiased, fresh perspectives on current and emerging global challenges. UNU employs an interdisciplinary, problem-solving approach that integrates rigorous standards of quantitative and qualitative research to produce critical insights.

Through its individual institutes and programmes as well as on a system-wide level, UNU carries out its work in collaboration with other UN system entities (agencies, programmes, commissions, funds, and convention secretariats) and with leading universities, research institutes, and think tanks worldwide. In doing so, it acts as a bridge between UN policy communities and global academic communities.
Human & Financial Resources

Personnel

UNU’s unique blend of human resources is by far its most important asset. UNU staff, personnel, and contractors have expertise in research that spans a wide range of vital issues, and in effective analysis, “knowledge translation”, and communication.

UNU strives to maintain a gender balance and to ensure that developing countries are properly represented. As of year-end 2015, the global UNU system had a personnel complement of 652 (55% male, 45% female), of whom 42% were developing country nationals. UNU personnel comprised 73 “professional” staff, 55 “general services” staff, and 524 specialist “contractors”.

Budget

UNU receives no funds from the regular United Nations budget. It is financed solely by voluntary contributions — from host governments of the University’s institutes as well as foundations, agencies, international organisations, and other sources — and by investment income derived from the UNU Endowment Fund.

In the 2014–2015 biennium, UNU’s total income was $139.2 million: core income of $81.6 million and special programmes contribution (SPC) income of $57.7 million. Total expenditure for the period was $99.8 million: core expenditures of $63.2 million and SPC expenditures of $36.6 million.

The result was a surplus for the biennium of $18.4 million for the core budget and $21.1 million for SPC funds. Of this, $12.8 million of the core surplus has been incorporated into the 2016–2017 budget to finance multi-year research projects, and the rest reinvested into the UNU Endowment Fund or held in a UN cash pool. The SPC surplus was rolled over to the next year(s) to finance ongoing programme activities.
Governance and Leadership

**UNU Council**

The UNU Council serves as the governing board of the University; its responsibilities include, *inter alia*, devising the principles and policies that govern UNU’s operations, and approving the UNU budget and work programme. The Council, which comprises 12 appointed members, 3 ex officio members (the UN Secretary-General, the UNESCO Director-General, and the UNITAR Executive Director), and the UNU Rector, normally convenes two regular sessions each year.

For more about the UNU Council and Council member profiles, see [unu.edu/about/unu-council](http://unu.edu/about/unu-council).

**UNU Rectorate**

The Rector, who holds the rank of UN Under-Secretary-General, serves as the chief academic and administrative officer of UNU. Based at UNU Headquarters in Tokyo, the Rector is responsible for the direction, organisation, administration, programming, and coordination of the University, in accordance with the general policies and criteria formulated by the UNU Council.

The current (sixth) Rector of UNU is David M. Malone. He is assisted by three Vice-Rectors: Senior Vice-Rector Kazuhiko Takeuchi and Vice-Rector Max Bond (at UNU Headquarters in Tokyo), and Vice-Rector in Europe Jakob Rhyner (at UNU-VIE in Bonn).

For leadership profiles, see [unu.edu/about/unu/leadership](http://unu.edu/about/unu/leadership).

**CONDIR**

The Conference of Directors of UNU Research and Training Centres and Programmes (CONDIR) provides an opportunity for the heads of UNU’s institutes and programmes to discuss matters of policy and research programming.
Institutional Highlights

UNU Council Sessions

In 2015, the UNU Council convened in two sessions. At its 63rd session, held in Paris on 5–6 May, the Council, *inter alia*:

- considered the Rector’s presentation on “The State of the University”
- heard and discussed presentations on four thematic research groups (governance, migration, urbanisation, and water)
- offered recommendations on UNU’s inputs into the Sustainable Development Goals process
- considered the financial overview of the University for the 2014–2015 biennium, and the income projections and timeline for the 2016–2017 academic programme and budget
- endorsed proposed amendments to the UNU Personnel Statute and Policy
- considered reports on the evaluation of UNU-CRIS and UNU-EHS
- considered the progress of ongoing and new institutional development initiatives

The 64th session of the UNU Council was held in Tokyo on 30 November and 1 December. The Council agenda at that session included, *inter alia*:

- an oral report by the Rector on “The State of the University”, and brief annual summaries of the work of the UNU institutes and programmes
- a 2014–2015 financial overview of the University, and proposed academic programme and budget estimates for the 2016–2017 biennium
- a report on progress in implementing the recommendations of the UNU 40-year evaluation and the goals set out in the UNU Strategic Plan
- progress reports on ongoing and new institutional development initiatives
- the draft “Report of the Council of the University for 2015”
- the appointment of new Council members to take office from 2016

CONDIR & Academic Committee Sessions

The 47th session of the Conference of Directors of UNU Research and Training Centres and Programmes (CONDIR47) and the 8th meeting of the UNU Academic Committee were convened at UNESCO in Paris on 4 May. In the morning, after a summary by the Rector of developments since CONDIR46, the directors heard presentations on four research areas (governance, migration, urbanisation, and water) and discussed those presentations as well as UNU’s inputs into the SDG process. In the afternoon, the directors heard and discussed reports on the revised UNU personnel policy and UNU performance appraisal system, and received an update on the UNU postgraduate degree programmes.

UNU Institute on Computing and Society

In 2015, the UNU institute in Macau was reconstituted as the UNU Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS). Prof. Michael Best took office as UNU-CS Director on 17 January. The Institute became substantively operational in mid-year, with a focus on establishing initial research priorities, building awareness of and interest in the Institute, developing internal processes and procedures, and recruiting/hiring an inaugural set of researchers and support staff.
UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance

The official opening ceremony of the UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV) was held on 24 April. The UNU-EGOV host country agreement, ratified by the Portuguese Parliament on 3 July and published on 7 August as a Presidential Decree, entered into force on 30 September.

New Institute in Algeria

The launch of the UNU Institute for Sustainable Development (L’Institut de Recherche d’Alger pour le Développement Durable de l’Afrique; UNU-IRADDA) in Algiers, originally planned for 2015, was delayed. In December, a UNU delegation headed by Rector Malone travelled to Algiers for discussion with Algerian government authorities on a concrete timeline for the launch of the institute.

Proposed New Institute in Senegal

Based on the long-term partnership between UNU-MERIT and the Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale (CRES), there has been ongoing discussion about establishing a new UNU institute focused on human resources and economic development in Dakar, Senegal. While a host country agreement was signed in 2014, negotiations are ongoing and no final agreement has yet been reached between UNU and the Government of Senegal.

Institute Status for UNU’s Iceland Units

Efforts are underway to bring UNU’s four programme units in Iceland together into one institutional structure, tentatively designated as the UNU Institute for Natural Resources and Societal Development. With the support of the UNU Council, discussions are continuing on the required legal documents for the formal establishment of this Institute. It is expected that the Government of Iceland will approve the commitments necessary for the Institute in mid-2016.

UNU Office at the United Nations in New York

In 2015, the UNU Office at the United Nations in New York (UNU-ONY) supported visits to the UN by the Rector and by delegations from nine UNU institutes and other units. UNU-ONY convened more than 10 events intended to make UNU more visible within the UN system, facilitated several launch events for the book *The Security Council in the 21st Century* (edited by Rector Malone and UNU-CPR Director Einsiedel), and implemented several projects designed to demonstrate the immediate policy relevance of UNU research.

Contributions to the Sendai Disaster Risk Reduction Framework

Through several projects, UNU contributed to the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), in Sendai in March 2015, and to development of the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015–2030 that was adopted at the conference. UNU-IAS organised four side events at the conference, and produced a series of publications contributing to the conference (including a policy brief on disaster-induced displacement and a series of working papers focused on the transition from post-disaster response to longer term recovery). Policy recommendations on mental health and psychosocial support produced by UNU were included in the final text of the Sendai Framework.
An Imperial Visit

On 30 October, UNU hosted an official visit by Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress of Japan, in commemoration of the University’s 40 years of operation in Japan. During their visit, the Imperial Couple met with students from the UNU-IAS postgraduate degree programmes.

Contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

UNU-IAS organised a two-day workshop in May (at UNU-EHS in Bonn) that brought together 21 researchers from across the global UNU system to discuss how to maximise the value and impact of UNU’s work on the SDGs. An earlier workshop, in March in Lund, considered SDG-related implementation challenges, focusing on governance issues and the science–policy interface. Two seminars at UNU Centre (in October and November) focused on the challenges and opportunities of implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Other Selected Highlights

• In April, UNU-FLORES launched its Nexus Tools Platform, an interactive comparison of more than 60 existing modelling tools related to the water-soil-waste nexus.
• Version 3.3 of UNU-WIDER’s World Income Inequality Database, the most comprehensive, freely available set of income inequality statistics, was released in September. The update covers new countries, contains nearly 2000 new observations, and provides an interactive visualisation tool.
• UNU-WIDER, established in 1985 as the first research centre of the global UNU system, celebrated its 30th anniversary in September with a three-day international conference on “Mapping the Future of Development Economics”.
• In September, in the lead-up to the UN Sustainable Development Summit, the UNU website published a series of articles by experts from throughout the UNU system exploring the issues and realities underlying each of the 17 SDGs. This first-of-its-kind system-wide initiative included 27 articles from UNU researchers.
• The UNU Office at the United Nations in New York launched its policy report “What Comes After the War on Drugs?” at UN Headquarters in New York on 3 November. Rector Malone subsequently participated in a 20 November high-level briefing by UN agencies to UN Member States ahead of the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem.
• In October UNU-EHS launched its 5th World Risk Report together with the Alliance Development Works, a group of German humanitarian aid organisations. The focus of the 2015 report was on the connection between food (insecurity and disaster risk.
• In November, UNU-MERIT released version 1.0 of the “UNU Jargon Buster” — a mobile application that clarifies hundreds of social, political, and economic terms. At launch, the app included knowledge and recommended resources from five UNU institutes/programmes.
**Contributions Received by UNU**

1 January – 31 December 2015

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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>Macau</td>
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<td>Asian Development Bank - Manila</td>
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* In addition to the above amounts, in 2015 UNU benefited from indirect contributions not paid directly to the University, including support from the Government of Iceland for the activities of UNU-FTP, UNU-GEST, UNU-GTP and UNU-LRT.*
The Global UNU System

The United Nations University system encompasses a global network of research and training institutes and programmes. Online, see unu.edu/about/unu-system.

UNU Centre

UNU Centre serves as the administrative, coordination, and services unit of the global UNU system. It comprises:

- a Headquarters unit in Tokyo (the Office of the Rector, an Administration unit, the Office of Communications, and the Campus Computing Centre)
- the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe (UNU-ViE) in Bonn
- an administrative services adjunct office in Kuala Lumpur
- liaison offices at the United Nations in New York and at UNESCO in Paris
- the UNU Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) in Tokyo
- the UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV) in Guimarães, Portugal

UNU Institutes and Programmes

The main research and academic work of the University is carried out by a global network of 11 research and training institutes:

- **UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security** (UNU-EHS) Bonn, Germany
- **UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources** (UNU-FLORES) Dresden, Germany
- **UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa** (UNU-INRA) Accra, Ghana
- **UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability** (UNU-IAS) Tokyo, Japan
- **UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health** (UNU-INWEH) Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- **UNU Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies** (UNU-CRIS) Bruges, Belgium
- **UNU Institute on Computing and Society** (UNU-CS) Macau, China
- **UNU Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility** (UNU-GCM) Barcelona, Spain
- **UNU International Institute for Global Health** (UNU-IIGH) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- **UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology** (UNU-MERIT) Maastricht, Netherlands
- **UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research** (UNU-WIDER) Helsinki, Finland

This network of institutes is supplemented by the Venezuela-based **UNU Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean** (UNU-BIOLAC) and four Iceland-based training programmes that focus on fisheries resources (UNU-FTP), gender equality studies (UNU-GEST), geothermal energy (UNU-GTP), and land restoration (UNU-LRT).

UNU Associated Institutions

The activities of the core UNU system are assisted, in some instances, by a network of designated UNU associated institutions (currently six; see unu.edu/about/unu-system/associated).
UNU System Map
Institutional Reforms & Priorities

Under the leadership of Rector Malone, the United Nations University has introduced a number of institutional reforms designed to position the University as an agile player in both the research and policy development arenas. The aim is to ensure that UNU is responsive to the needs of the United Nations and UN Member States, and will have a tangible impact on intergovernmental deliberations and policy formation.

Institutional Improvements

Under the overall rubric of “managing change for excellence”, the UNU Strategic Plan 2015–2019 — adopted by the UNU Council in December 2014 — rests on three main pillars.

**Strengthened Management** – The Rectorate has tasked UNU institute advisory board/committee members with taking a more active role in the oversight and strategic orientation of their institutes. The Rectorate will monitor the appointment of new board/committee members to ensure an appropriate geographic, age, and gender balance. To achieve a better gender balance in UNU leadership, the Rectorate will strive to ensure that all shortlists for senior-level (director) positions include at least one female candidate.

**Sustainable Growth** – The Rectorate is working with UNU host governments to ensure that UNU institutes have at least a five-year commitment of funding; this effort in 2015 included discussions with the governments of Canada (UNU-INWEH), Flanders (UNU-CRIS), and Spain and Catalonia (UNU-GCM). The Rectorate stresses to potential new host governments that at least five years of core funding as well as a capital contribution to the UNU Endowment Fund is a requirement for establishing an institute/operating unit; these conditions were a part of discussions in 2015 regarding a proposed new UNU institute in China, and of negotiations with Iceland (on creating an umbrella institute for the existing training programmes) and with Portugal (on converting UNU-EGOV to institute status). Some existing institutes, notably UNU-IAS, UNU-INRA, and UNU-WIDER, have successfully secured large, multi-year funding for new research programmes.

**Streamlined Partnerships** – UNU institutes and programmes have been advised that new partnerships should be limited to initiatives that are of clear strategic advantage to the University. Ongoing partnerships that are judged to be either financially unstable or not sufficiently meaningful for UNU will be brought to a close.

Research Priorities

Despite its name, UNU is not (and was not intended to be) a full-service “university”; it is a specialised problem-focused, research-based think tank for the United Nations system. The UNU Strategic Plan 2015–2019 calls for UNU’s expertise and resources to be focused on topics that are of particular relevance to the United Nations and its Member States, and for UNU research findings (and UNU researchers) to be more visible and accessible to policymakers and other stakeholders.

UNU institutes have been directed to design and implement research programmes that have high potential to influence policy discussions. These programmes will integrate projects that deliver insights on current policy challenges with medium-term “horizon” studies of emergent issues where there is a critical gap in existing policy expertise.
At the core of the effort to be more relevant to the needs of the United Nations are the activities of the recently established UNU Centre for Policy Research and the re-energised UNU Office at the United Nations in New York. UNU-CPR’s innovative set of policy-relevant research initiatives contributed directly in 2015 to many ongoing policy discussions and reviews within the UN Secretariat. UNU-ONY, meanwhile, has achieved representation and engagement by UNU with several Member States and with various functional units within the UN Secretariat, and supports the University’s participation in senior UN policy coordination bodies.

**Teaching and Capacity Development**

UNU’s former emphasis on postgraduate degree programmes will be less pronounced going forward. Existing MSc programmes will continue to receive support (on the condition that they maintain the highest relevance and quality), but moving forward preference will be given to doctoral-level programmes, with the intent of ensuring that UNU’s education efforts can contribute to and reinforce its research activities, and more effectively help to build capacity in developing countries.

It is intended that UNU capacity development activities will have a distinct added-value, and not merely duplicate training activities being implemented by other national or international entities.
The Work of UNU

The United Nations University functions as the global think tank for the United Nations, undertaking issue-focused research, teaching, and capacity development, and providing advisory services to the UN system and for UN Member States. UNU employs an interdisciplinary, problem-solving approach and — with intellectual independence guaranteed by its Charter — is able to offer unbiased, fresh perspectives on current and emerging global challenges.

The following sections cover highlights of UNU’s research efforts, postgraduate training opportunities, events, and communications and dissemination activities in 2015.
Research

The research programme of UNU is not static, bound by traditional disciplines or an intractable agenda. Rather, it is issue-focused, constantly evolving to remain relevant to the shifting melange of “pressing global problems” that affect humankind. UNU projects typically cut across multiple themes and specialties. During the year, the UNU system worked on 205 projects, of which 106 were conducted primarily in developing countries.

In 2015, UNU identified four broad, often-interlinked issues that are now prominent on the global radar: governance, migration, urbanisation, and water. These were presented and discussed at the 63rd session of the UNU Council in May. Under the rubric of these four issues, and three broad thematic clusters, this report highlights the range of UNU’s research work and expertise in 2015.

Governance

Governance is an important cross-cutting issue that is relevant to several major debates within the UN system. UNU's work on governance covers a broad range of thematic areas.

At the global level, UNU has been engaged with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Dialogue Process on the Future of the UN Development System (working with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs to address UN governance in the post-2015 environment). UNU research has provided input on topics of governance in relation to goal-setting and implementation of the SDGs.

UNU focuses on processes of regional integration and cooperation, including regional development in sub-Saharan Africa. Issues of national-level political and economic governance, including the role of international actors and aid in promoting “good governance”, also are reflected in the work of UNU, as are questions relating to environmental governance and sustainable development, governance in the context of international migration, and issues of information technologies and electronic governance.

For more about governance-related topics, see unu.edu/governance.
Migration

The issue of migration was prominent in global headlines in 2015. UNU research covers all aspects of migration — from the needs of migrants to the implications of migration in terms of development, policy, the environment, and health. UNU research seeks to enable nations to better cope with shifting migration patterns and reduce negative impacts on society, while ensuring that human rights, good governance, and democracy are served.

Much of UNU’s work on migration emerges from within the UNU Migration Network, which encompasses more than 50 researchers from six UNU institutes. An important aim of this network is to influence the formulation of migration-related policy within the United Nations and its Member States. The work of the network has enabled UNU to attain membership in the Global Migration Group (GMG), a UN inter-agency forum, which in turn allows UNU to directly access discussions on migration in the post-2015 development agenda.

UNU studies migration as it relates to governance and policy; this encompasses questions of migration policy and practice, citizenship, integration policies, culture, the legal frameworks for migration, forced migration (whether due to environmental factors or statelessness/persecution), and linkages between migration and health.

For more on migration-related topics, see [unu.edu/migration](http://unu.edu/migration).

Urbanisation

The world is undergoing an urban transition, the rapid pace of which places stress on city infrastructures. The issue of sustainable urbanisation interlinks with many areas of UNU’s work.

Through analyses of urban vulnerability and resilience, UNU seeks to identify feasible options by which urban populations can tackle the multiple and interlocking crises of today’s...
fragile cities. UNU research covers a wide range of urban-related issues: transformation and resilience in coastal megacities that are vulnerable to climate change, coastal risk in urban areas, vulnerability and resilience in disaster- and violence-prone cities, the integration of climate change considerations in urban governance processes, water in an urban context, and human health and well-being in the context of urban environmental mitigation strategies. Other focuses are migration and cities, development in an urbanising world, foreign aid policy in urban settings, natural resources conversion within urban systems, and energy transitions and innovation in urban transportation.

For more on urbanisation-related topics, see unu.edu/urbanisation.

Water

Many of our planet’s water resources are threatened, with much of the world’s population living in water-stressed areas. Climate change, meanwhile, is expected to bring more extreme and frequent droughts and flood. Water is thus a critical underlying factor for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; many of the SDGs have targets that rely on adequate water management.

UNU water-related research focuses particularly on the needs of developing countries, and seeks to provide comprehensive policy advice on such topics as water governance; freshwater resources; wastewater management; the nexus between water, food, and energy; water-related risk reduction; the role of water in (and its impact on) health management; and water quality guidelines for aquatic ecosystems. This work can be roughly grouped along the dimensions of health, environmental risks, and food and energy security, overlaid by cross-cutting socio-economic and political development aspects.

For more on water-related topics, see unu.edu/water.
Selected Research Projects

This section highlights 30 selected projects that produced significant outcomes/impact during the year or have been recognised as having an important policy dimension.

Peace and Governance

The Crime-Conflict Nexus project combines policy dialogue with solutions-oriented research. The project seeks to (i) fill major knowledge gaps on the interlinkages between crime and conflict, and (ii) help the UN to assess, adapt, and develop effective policy tools and interventions.

The project Governance for Health in Developing Countries (i) explores complex urban health governance challenges in Africa, South-East Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, and (ii) seeks to generate recommendations that can catalyse policy reform to respond to the spread of HIV in the prison sectors of selected African countries.

Through the project Identifying Common Ground for UNGASS 2016, UNU has been preparing for the April 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016) by organising a series of public consultations in collaboration with other UN entities, UN Member States, and the Brookings Institution. In November, UNU published a report (“What Comes after the War on Drugs?”) that offers recommendations for strengthening global drug policy efforts.

In the project Measuring the Impacts of Security Interventions, UNU collaborated with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) to analyse the latter’s effectiveness. The project focused on practical steps that OROLSI might take to strengthen its current service offerings, approach, and impact, and explored new approaches to the assessment of an array of security interventions.

The PACIFIC (Prejudice And Conflict in Forced-migration Issues: a Context) project aims to understand the main human security challenges faced by climate-induced migrants from Pacific island nations when settling in receiving countries or communities, and the major reasons for tensions or conflict. The intent is to formulate policy recommendations that could help in developing appropriate policy responses to promote human security and prevent conflict arising from climate-induced displacement and migration.

UNU is working with several partners on the project Resilience and the Fragile City, which is funded by the UN-World Bank Partnership Trust Fund. This project seeks to (i) analyse vulnerability and resilience in disaster- and violence-prone cities, and (ii) identify feasible options to reduce the vulnerability and enhance the resilience of at-risk urban populations. It will document how cumulative risks can exacerbate vulnerability in cities, outline capacities and assets that can be harnessed to mitigate risks, and explore how practical and targeted investments can help diminish risks and reverse fragility.

The project Strengthening the Global Peacebuilding Architecture Through Chapter VII, commissioned by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts, examined ways to strengthen the global peacebuilding efforts, and how cooperation between the United Nations, regional organisations, and civil society organisations could contribute to that objective.
**Global Development and Inclusion**

The project **Determinants and Consequences of Early Life Nutrition and Health** studies the long-run effects of universal salt iodisation in Cameroon (focusing on iodine deficiency during pregnancy), the link between sanitation and maternal nutritional status in Ethiopia, and the effects of local diets on child growth in Malawi.

**The Economics and Politics of Taxation and Social Protection** is a project that seeks to shed new light on the system-wide impacts of social protection and tax systems in developing countries. It involves research work that provides analytical tools for policymakers and researchers to understand the current scope of tax-benefit systems and to be able to simulate impacts of policy changes. The aim is to produce a Social Assistance, Politics, and Institutions Database and to build tax microsimulation models for several developing countries.

The project **Female Agency, Mobility, and Socio-cultural Change** looks at the question of why, despite their vulnerability and established patterns of exploitation, more and more women are choosing to migrate. A related area of focus is the extent to which women from the global south are able to access new sociocultural horizons in the global north.

**Governance of the United Nations Development System** is a project commissioned by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It seeks to (i) inform Member States about the complexities around the transition from crisis to sustainable peace and development, and (ii) propose how to address gaps and build on opportunities to strengthen the UN system’s response to peace and development crises.

The project **Impact of the Transition towards a Green Economy on Employment and Growth in Cote d’Ivoire** addresses the issue of unemployment and constraints related to the green economy transition process. The focus encompasses investment in land and water management, agricultural production, green scenarios in the energy and waste recycling sectors, and investments in health and education.

The project **Industrial Development Report 2016: Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development** searches for synergy (and trade-offs) between three dimensions of sustainability: the ability to sustain long-term economic growth, the inclusiveness of the structural transformation process, and the environmental sustainability of the process.

The **Munich Climate Insurance Initiative** explores the role that insurance-related solutions can play in adaptation to climate change. It encompasses related projects on such topics as the G7 initiative on climate risk insurance, developing a disaster risk insurance framework for Pakistan, innovative insurance solutions for adapting to climate change, and climate risk adaptation and insurance in the Caribbean.

UNU is investigating the health policies of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) through the project **Poverty Reduction and Regional Integration: a Comparative Analysis of SADC and UNASUR Health Policies**.
The Regional Growth and Development in Southern Africa project aims to (i) identify and pursue opportunities for leveraging natural resource exploitation in the region towards the enhancement of regional growth and development opportunities, (ii) facilitate mutually beneficial agricultural trade, and (iii) develop and institutionalise an enterprise monitoring system in South Africa.

The Smart Cities for Sustainable Development project, funded by the International Development Research Center, conducted a reconnaissance study that examined how countries in different development conditions apply the Smart City urbanisation model to pursue sustainability. The study found wide variation in initiatives in different development situations, but concluded that the potential of the model is not fully utilised. The study report provides a number of policy recommendations and a research agenda framework.

The project Structural Transformation and Inclusive Growth in Vietnam responds to the call by the UN Secretary General for reliable, timely, and better disaggregated country-level data in the search for an evidence-based course for realising economic transformation and sustainable development in the context of the SDGs. The project builds on, and further develops, two unique firm and rural household panel data sets in Vietnam. It encompasses in-depth research studies carried out by experts in collaboration with Vietnamese officials, with a view to informing policy formulation for broad-based, inclusive, sustained growth.

Through the Water-related Sustainable Development Goals project, UNU (in partnership with the UN Office for Sustainable Development, Global Water Partnership, and McMaster University) analysed the status of the water sector, aspirations and goals related to water, and potential roadblocks and challenges to implementing the SDGs in 10 UN Member States.

Environment, Climate, and Energy

The project Africa’s Energy Futures seeks to contribute to a knowledge base that provides insight into (i) the economics of renewable power systems on the African continent, (ii) the development advantages (if any) of a continent-wide grid, (iii) the optimal mix of power sources, and (iv) the costs and benefits of shifting from fossil fuel-based systems to renewable systems.

As part of the project Economics of Water and Land Challenges, UNU served as Scientific Coordinator for the Economics of Land Degradation initiative. The aim is to make the economics of land degradation an integral part of policy strategies and decision-making by increasing the political and public awareness of the costs and benefits of land and land-based ecosystems.

The Fukushima Global Communication programme explored the human and social impacts of the 2011 disasters in Japan. It contributed to the new Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) that was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on DRR in Sendai, Japan (March). Publications included policy briefs and series of 20 working papers.

UNU successfully implemented a climate change-related research and capacity building project on Global Environmental Change and Human Health, funded by the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research. The project involved the training of young scientists.
The project **Innovative Wastewater Management and Reuse** developed a business case for the “Waste to Wealth” initiative in Uganda by providing insight into the potential value of human waste in a global context. The project, funded by Grand Challenges Canada, was undertaken in consultation with the Ugandan government and numerous public, civil society, and business stakeholders.

**Integrating Food and Feed Crops to Improve Livelihoods and Resilience to Climate Change** is a project to evaluate how integrated systems could increase and sustain food and feed crop production, and improve climate resilience and water and nutrient use efficiency. UNU researchers are working with cassava, cereal, and legumes farmers in five villages in Ghana to integrate feed crops into their traditional farming systems.

The Gibika project — **Livelihood Resilience in Bangladesh – Turning Research into Action** — is a cooperative effort by UNU, MunichRe Foundation, and the International Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Development (Dhaka). The aim is to advance the scientific understanding of livelihood resilience and apply the conclusions towards community-led solutions. The project includes an annual Resilience Academy, which serves as a platform for connecting communities of expertise to examine livelihood resilience in the face of local and regional environmental threats.

The project **Monitoring and Evaluation Method for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use through Multi-stakeholders Governance** seeks to develop a comprehensive, results-oriented method to periodically monitor and evaluate biodiversity conservation activities, and to ensure the sustainable use of Japanese socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes.

The **Nexus Observatory – Data, Monitoring & Governance** project aims to advance data classification, strengthen monitoring frameworks, facilitate governance processes for evidence-based decision-making and knowledge transfer, and support adoption of the nexus approach for environmental resources management.

The project **Sustainable Adaptation of Coastal Agro-ecosystems to Increased Salinity Intrusion** (DeltAdapt) explores the socio-ecological sustainability of coastal agro-ecosystems (paddy rice, rice-shrimp farming, and saline aquaculture) in the Mekong and Red River Deltas, and their adaptation and adaptability to salinity intrusion and market challenges. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research, this study is being undertaken by UNU in cooperation with the University of Bonn and Can Tho University.

The project **A Web-accessible Database of Modeling Tools for Integrated Resources Management** developed an interactive Nexus Tools Platform for inter-model comparison of existing modelling tools related to the management of water, soil, and waste. The platform offers interactive charts and advanced search and filter functions that allow selection of the most appropriate (set of) model(s) for specific needs and enable a gap analysis of current model capabilities.
Policy Process Linkages

Units of the global UNU system actively participate in and contribute to many important UN and international policy processes and debates: agriculture, climate change, disaster risk reduction, food security, environment, global security, green growth, migration, sustainable development, trade, urbanisation, water, and other issues.

In particular, UNU has played a significant role in such major UN policy processes as:

• the Advisory Group of Experts Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture
• the Economic and Social Council Dialogue on the Longer-term Positioning of the UN Development System
• the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations
• the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review process
• the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)
• the World Humanitarian Summit

UNU participates in three UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) committees: the High-Level Committee on Management, High-Level Committee on Programmes, and United Nations Development Group.

Collaborations with UN Entities

In 2015, UNU collaborated with, *inter alia*, the following UN entities:

• Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
• Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
• Global Migration Group (GMG)
• International Labour Organization (ILO)
• International Monetary Fund (IMF)
• International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
• Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
• UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
• UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)
• UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)
• UN Development Programme (UNDP)
• UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
• UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
• UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
• UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA)
• UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
• UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC)
• UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
• UN Environmental Programme (UNEP)
• UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)
• UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
• UN Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases
• UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD)
• UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PRPD)
• UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)
• UN-Water
• World Bank (WB)
• World Food Programme (WFP)
• World Health Organization (WHO)
• World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Other Collaborations

In 2015, UNU worked with numerous international and regional institutions. These included, *inter alia*:

• African Union Commission
• Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention)
• Economic Community of West African States
• European Commission
• Future Earth
• Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
• Globalisation, Regionalisation and Socio-Economic Inequality network
• Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
• Inter-American Development Bank
• Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
• International Hydropower Association
• International Institute for Sustainable Development
• International Organization for Migration
• Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

UNU also works with UN Members States to develop and implement effective policies.
Postgraduate Education

UNU offers a wide range of specialised training opportunities for young scholars, researchers, and professionals: postgraduate degree programmes as well as non-degree programmes and short-term training opportunities. A particular focus of UNU’s educational efforts is fulfilling the needs of students from developing countries.

Postgraduate Degree Programmes

In 2015, UNU offered three Master of Science (MSc) and two doctoral (PhD) degree programmes:

- MSc in Sustainability (Tokyo, 14 students)
- Joint MSc in the Geography of Environmental Risks and Human Security (in collaboration with University of Bonn; Bonn, 76 students)
- Double MSc in Public Policy and Human Development (in collaboration with Maastricht University; Maastricht, 128 students)
- PhD in Sustainability Science (Tokyo, 9 students)
- Joint PhD in Integrated Management of Water, Soil, and Waste (in collaboration with the Technical University of Dresden; Dresden, 7 students)

In addition to these postgraduate degree programmes, UNU collaborates with other universities to help support developing country students enrolled in specialised master’s and doctoral degree programmes.

Non-degree Study Opportunities

Since 2013, UNU has participated in a Joint Diploma Programme on Sustainability Science with the University of Tokyo’s Graduate School of Frontier Sciences. In 2015, UNU signed credit exchange agreements with the University of Tokyo’s Graduate School of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and with Sophia University.

In 2015, UNU offered 18 long-term (of more than two months’ duration) and 66 short-term training programmes and courses that were attended by almost 3,000 students. About a quarter of the courses incorporated an online study component. Some of these training opportunities enabled students to earn credit towards a degree; others conferred a UNU certificate upon completion.

Notable among the long-term programmes offered by UNU are the annual five- and six-month training programmes of UNU’s Iceland units:

- Fisheries Training Programme (September–February)
- Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (January–May)
- Geothermal Training Programme (April–October)
- Land Restoration Training Programme (March–September)

Other representative study opportunities offered in 2015 were the following:

- “Advancing Disaster Risk Reduction to Enhance Sustainable Development in a Changing World” (1–12 June, Bonn)
- “Analysing Poverty” (co-organised by UNU, 6–10 July, Maputo)
• “Development Economics” for master’s-level students (joint master’s-level course with the Helsinki Center of Economic Research)
• Short courses on “Development Potential of the Fisheries Sector (in Iceland) and “Fish Smoking and Drying on Lake Tanganyika” (in Tanzania)
• “Discrimination and Affirmative Action” (30–31 October, Helsinki)
• Doctoral Summer School on Latin American, European and Comparative Regionalism (with Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, 6–10 July, Quito)
• “Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing” (26–30 January, Accra)
• “Greening Business through Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services” (in French; 9–13 February, Accra)
• “Integrated Drylands Management” (joint MSc programme with partner organisations)
• Migration Management Diploma Programme (April–June, Maastricht)
• Online learning courses: “Green Economy and the Life-Cycle Cost Approach”, “Rethinking Infrastructure Design for Multi-Use Water Services”, and “Financing Public Services and Environmental Sustainability” (2 March – 22 May)
• Open access postgraduate course on “Mangrove Ecosystems” (with University of International Cooperation, Costa Rica)
• “The Political Economy of Clean Energy Transitions” (with NREL, 27–28 August, Colorado, USA)
• Third Resilience Academy: “Enhancing Resilience to Minimise Loss and Damage – Providing Knowledge for the UNFCCC” (co-organised by UNU, 6–12 September, Bangladesh)
• UNU Intensive Core Courses (July–August, Tokyo)
• Water Without Borders (collaborative graduate programme with McMaster University)

Fellowships/PhD Internships

A number of institutes offer opportunities for young scholars to work with UNU research staff. These include a variety of PhD Internship/ Fellowships, Postdoctoral Fellowship programmes, and Research Internship/ Fellowship programmes as well as a Traineeship programme and Visiting Scholar opportunities.

Project-based Capacity Development

UNU seeks to enhance the education and research capacities of developing countries, and to provide additional advanced training opportunities for young researchers, through project-based capacity development. Of the 205 projects implemented by UNU in 2015, about 10% were focused on capacity development while more than half of the rest contained both capacity development and research components.
Events

UNU convenes specialised workshops and conferences as well as a wide variety of public seminars, symposiums, lectures, and other events as a means to maximise the impact and broaden the reach of its work. These events not only provide a convenient venue for sharing knowledge and offer valuable networking opportunities for scholars and practitioners, but also help to put a personal “face” on UNU for the general public.

Among events of special note in 2015:

• In the public Conversation Series events at UNU Headquarters in Tokyo, UNU Rector Malone talks one-on-one with influential experts, world leaders, and respected scholars about contemporary global issues. In 2015, 19 Conversation Series events were held; participants included IAEA Director-General Yukiya Amano, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, Ambassador Toshiro Ozawa, Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Prof. Margaret MacMillan, Prof. Amartya Sen and Prof. Emma Rothschild, and Dr Shashi Tharoor.

• On 16 March, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, UNU hosted a symposium on “The UN at the Crossroads: Embarking on a Year of Reform and Renewal”. This event featured presentations by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

• The inaugural Dresden Nexus Conference, on 25–27 March, was organised by UNU in cooperation with the Technical University of Dresden (TUD) and the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development. The conference, whose theme was “Global Change, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Nexus Approach”, drew more than 350 participants from 65 countries.

• At World Water Week 2015 in Stockholm, UNU, International Hydropower Association, and UN Development Programme convened a session to discuss the possibilities and limitations of utilising multipurpose reservoirs for integrated water management and for sustainable development.

• The UNU-WIDER 30th Anniversary Conference, “Mapping the Future of Development Economics”, was held from 17–19 September. The conference, which addressed some of today’s biggest development issues, involved more than 420 participants from 69 countries.
countries and hosted more than 150 presentations (including a keynote by Nobel Laureate Prof. Joseph Stiglitz).

- On 3 November at UN Headquarters in New York, UNU launched a policy report “What Comes After the War on Drugs?” as background for the upcoming (April 2016) UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem.
- To mark the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, a launch event was held on 2 December at UN Headquarters in New York for two policy reports by UNU and the Freedom Fund: “Unshackling Development: Why We Need a Global Partnership to End Modern Slavery” and “Fighting Modern Slavery: What Role for International Criminal Justice?”
- “Series” events held throughout the year included six UNU Library Talks, five UNU CAFÉ lectures, and four “Mandela and I” lectures (all in Tokyo); five Another Drop lectures (Hamilton, ON); five Academic and Research Seminars (Accra); and eight Nexus Seminars (Dresden).

Other Events

UNU convened more than 500 public events in 2015. In addition to the above, these included the following:

- “Symposium on Migration” (Kuala Lumpur, 13 January)
- “Future Challenges to Environmental Risk Management” (Accra, 23 January)
- 8th Conference on “Micro Evidence on Innovation and Development” (New Delhi, 10–12 February)
- “Open Forum on the Domestic Workers Convention” (Barcelona, 19 February)
- UNU–UNESCO Conference on Migration (Paris, 5 March)
- “Risk Reduction and the Transition from Response to Recovery: Lessons from Japan’s Triple Disasters” (Sendai, 16 March)
- “Measuring Sustainable Development” (New York City, 23–24 April; UNU & German Research Foundation)
- UNU-UNESCO Symposium: “Mobilization for Heritage – Iraq, Syria and Other Conflict-stricken Countries” (Paris, 6 May)
- “Bonn Conference for Global Transformation 2015” (12–13 May; with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
- “Urban Governance for Health” (Nairobi, 19–20 May)
• “International Conference on Urban Health 2015 (Dhaka, 24–27 May, co-organised by UNU)
• UNU-FLORES Lecture by Prof. Joseph Alcamo: “Systems Thinking for Advancing a Nexus Approach to Water, Soil and Waste” (Dresden, 25 May)
• “Introducing the Ishikawa–Kanazawa Biocultural Region: A Model for Linkages between Cultural Prosperity and Surrounding Satoyama and Satoumi Areas” (Tokyo, 28 May)
• “Globalisation, Innovation and Economic Change” (European Meeting on Applied Evolutionary Economics conference, Maastricht, 1–3 June)
• “Development Finance — A Role for Foreign Assistance” (Dar es Salaam, 8 June; with Embassy of Denmark)
• “Female Agency, Mobility and Socio-cultural Change” (Barcelona, 11–12 June)
• Seventh International Forum for Sustainable Asia and the Pacific: “Solutions for Change: Forging Multi-stakeholder Partnerships towards 2030” (Yokohama, 28–29 July; with Institute for Global Environmental Strategies)
• “Growth, Structural Transformation, and Rural Change in Vietnam” (Hanoi, 5 August; with Central Institute for Economic Management)
• “Addressing Wastewater Challenges with an African Bio-resource” (Accra, 20 August)
• “Fifth International Public Health Conference” (Kuala Lumpur, 26–27 August; with National University of Malaysia)
• 19th WIDER Annual Lecture by Nobel laureate Prof. Amartya Sen; “Three Decades of Change in Development” (Helsinki, 19 September)
• UNU-GTP Annual Lecture Series, by Dr Meseret Teklemariam Zemedkun (Reykjavík, 5–9 October)
• “South Africa in Africa” (Midrand, 6 October, co-organised by UNU)
• XXXVIII MIT Global Change Forum: “Environmental Change and Economic Development in Africa” (Muldersdrift, 7–9 October, co-organised by UNU)
• “African Economic Outlook 2015: Unlocking the Potential of Local Economies for Inclusive Growth” (Helsinki, 8 October; with African Development Bank & Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland)
• “Linking Science and Policy for Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (Tokyo, 24 October)
• “International Symposium on Flooding and Health Risk Reduction” (Kuala Lumpur, 26 October)
• UNU-GCM Annual Guest Lecture, by Prof. Judith Butler, (Barcelona, 5 November; with Centre de Cultura Contemporànea de Barcelona)
• “Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (Tokyo, 6 November)
• “Greening Industries and Green Entrepreneurship Promotion as a Driver of Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Rural Africa” (Accra, 9–13 November; with International Labour Organization)
• “Understanding and Communicating Risks Post-Fukushima” (Tokyo, 13 November)
• “Sustainable Development Goals and Partnerships – The Global Agenda in the Future of Corporate Social Responsibility” (Tokyo, 7 December; with Japan Ministry of the Environment)
Communications & Dissemination

The aim of UNU’s communication and dissemination effort is to provide relevant, helpful information, in an easily usable form and in a timely manner, to those audiences that most need it and can best use it. In particular, UNU strives to:

• inform policymakers, practitioners, and scholars about the findings of UNU research
• provide non-specialist audiences with a “plain language” overview of UNU’s work on current and emerging issues
• “translate” UNU research into a tailored, policy-relevant form that frames science-based advice in the context of social and political acceptability

Publications

UNU disseminates information about its research and activities through both print and electronic media. In 2015, UNU researchers published 37 books, 85 chapters in edited volumes, 255 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 102 other articles, 14 special journal issues, 34 policy briefs, 41 research and technical briefs, 280 working and discussion papers, as well as numerous proceedings and conference papers, website articles and other publications.

In total, more than 4,700 UNU publications — including 300 publications from 2015 — are available free of charge via “UNU Collections” (collections.unu.edu), an online institutional repository that offers open access to UNU academic publications, reports and other research outputs. Most publications that are not currently part of Collections at UNU are accessible via the websites of the individual UNU institutes that produced them.
Websites and Social Media

The internet is a vital communication and dissemination platform for UNU. In 2015, UNU’s websites received 6.96 million pageviews by more than 2.43 million users; of these, one-third of the pageviews (2.32 million) were recorded by the main unu.edu website.

UNU increasingly utilises the major social media channels. At year end, UNU (including the main UNU accounts and those of the individual institutes) had more than 60,400 followers on Twitter (a 70% increase from last year) and had recorded more than 51,700 “likes” on Facebook (an almost 30% increase from last year).

At year end, the main UNU YouTube channel had more than 6,800 subscribers and hosted some 480 videos. These videos have been viewed more than 5.7 million times to date; the most watched video published in 2015 (with more than 5,600 views) was “United Nations University – Agile and Adept”. Visit the UNU channel at youtube.com/user/UNUChannel.