UNITAR Division for Prosperity
Opportunities for Partnership
MEETING NEW CHALLENGES WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Director’s Message

In 2019, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) set up the Division of Prosperity. The Division for Prosperity is committed to supporting countries in shaping an inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world.

We seek to address growing inequalities, help lift people out of extreme poverty and establish global prosperity by offering innovative training and creating learning opportunities for people around the world. We work in solidarity with diverse partners at the local, regional and global levels to drive the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense hardship across the globe. Progress in key areas of need has been regrettably reversed. Marginalized and traditionally under-represented peoples – women, LGBTQIA+, youth, the elderly, the disabled, the indigenous, refugees and displaced peoples, to name some – have been disproportionally affected. While estimates vary, due to the pandemic around 163 million more people have been pushed into poverty.¹ Now, more than ever, we must meet growing global needs effectively and efficiently as we continue to drive towards our goal of sustainability for all.

With staff in Geneva and Hiroshima, as well as field staff across the world, our reach is global, allowing us to deliver critical training and support to learners from more than 90 countries.

On behalf of the Division, I thank you for your interest in our work and hope that you will join us in supporting our vital mission. Working together, we can make meaningful progress in building the next generation of changemakers and move closer to eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities for a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous future for all.

Mihoko Kumamoto  
Director, Division for Prosperity  
Director, Hiroshima Office  
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

¹ United Nations, The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021,  
UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Why UNITAR?

Established in 1963, UNITAR is a training arm of the United Nations system, headquartered in Geneva. In 2020, UNITAR reached over 300,000 learners globally. We provide innovative learning solutions to individuals, organizations and institutions, to enhance global decision-making and support country-level action for shaping a better future. Our alumni include diplomats and other government officials, non-governmental representatives, private-sector actors, and local authorities.

Innovating with Purpose

The Division for Prosperity is one of the eight divisions of UNITAR and consists of the Public Finance and Trade Programme Unit and the Hiroshima Office. Driven to “leave no one behind,” we provide creative, cutting-edge learning solutions to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth. We strive to reach society’s most vulnerable, including women, youth, and those in conflict situations. Our clients are individuals and institutions in least developed countries, small island developing states, and conflict and post-conflict countries.

Key Areas

We seek to advance positive global change through six key areas:
Customized to Local Needs
Our customized in-person and online training, with methodologies adapted to the needs of the regions and individuals we serve. UNITAR can develop customized programmes to support donor and partner development targets in the core areas. Talk to us about how we can build a programme to meet your organization’s goals.

Promote Diversity and Inclusion
All UNITAR programmes seek to promote diversity and inclusion. We listen to the voices of all, including those who have been marginalized by traditional structures, so we may nurture systemic change in communities.

Through our courses, UNITAR aims to deepen participants’ empathy and consideration for all members of society. The disaster risk reduction training programme, for example, teaches participants how to include persons with disabilities and other vulnerable people in an inclusive community-based response. We work with local partners to encourage women and people from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds and geographic regions to join our programmes, and we consider diversity when selecting participants, local resource persons and coaches.
Training That Makes a Difference

Tailored and Relevant
Up-to-date and relatable content is tailored to the target audience’s needs and regularly revised to explore the most pressing issues of our time. Grounded in proven adult-learning principles, our programmes allow learners to take ownership of what they learn and use it to solve specific local development challenges.

Flexible and Innovative Delivery
Cultivating new platforms and e-learning tools alongside traditional approaches allows us to better meet participants’ needs and deliver concrete results. The flexibility of mobile-based learning dramatically increases reach: learners can join even if they are living in complex socioeconomic conditions or remote areas, or do not have access to computers or steady Internet. To help bridge the digital divide, we also provide Internet bundles and access points.

In addition, thousands of learners around the world can access for free e-courses adapted from our portfolio through the Educate All library, a joint initiative with the microlearning platform EdApp.

Cross-Cutting Expertise
Partnerships with renowned academic institutions, think tanks, the private sector, civil society and international organizations allow UNITAR to blend external expertise with practical UN experience.

Sustained, Multiplier Effect
Practical and relevant training with meaningful follow-up and sustained engagement empower learners and institutions to put new skills to use. Learners bring about real transformation through changing their behaviours and attitudes and sharing knowledge, multiplying the programme’s effects and ensuring long-term impact.
The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating unemployment, poverty, and social inequality, particularly for women and youth, and hindering progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Entrepreneurship is central to addressing poverty and social inequity. Small and medium-sized enterprises contribute to 35 per cent of gross domestic product in developing economies\(^2\) and are an important source of employment for women and youth. Yet, these enterprises are among the first to be affected by the pandemic.\(^3\).

Sustained and inclusive economic growth through entrepreneurship and private-sector development can drive progress, create decent jobs, and improve living standards.

**What We Do**
UNITAR equips women and young entrepreneurs/social entrepreneurs with the skills and support to run a successful business. Early-stage entrepreneurs and established business leaders in least-developed, conflict and post-conflict countries gain the know-how, skills, and network to run social/for-profit enterprises that provide social goods for their communities. Participants and alumni are brought into learning communities that support and sustain each other for the long run.

**Impact**
UNITAR alumni are using their new skills to solve social problems and build scalable, sustainable enterprises that contribute to their communities’ economic and social development. In 2021, over 1,780 entrepreneurs in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, Iraq, Kenya, and South Sudan developed skills to unlock solutions to poverty, youth unemployment, social inequality, climate change, and the impact of the pandemic. After the programme, most participants said that they will continue their project to create social or for-profit value. All coaches who supported the learners were UNITAR alumni; their continued engagement contributes to long-term, sustainable changes on the ground.

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Focus Topics
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Leadership & Communication
- Gender Equality
- Planning & Risk Mitigation
- Network & Fundraising
- Project Operationalization & Mentorship

Programme Targets 2021-2023
- Geographical areas: Middle East and Africa (including Afghanistan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, and South Sudan)
- Estimated number of people: 15,000 people
- Estimated budget: US$5 million

Partners
- The Government of Japan
- Global Innovation Catalyst (GIC)
- UNILEVER Kenya (Sunlight)
- The Station Iraq
- UNDP Ethiopia
- ABSA Bank Kenya

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS

The young Kenyan entrepreneur Maureen Nduta took part in the UNITAR programme Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Leadership Training for Women Entrepreneurs in Africa. She empowers women in her community through her farm in the coastal region of Mombasa.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Maureen to start her business sooner than she planned. She joined the UNITAR programme and is applying what she learned to her start-up.

“What we are doing is contributing to alleviating poverty, empowering women and promoting the SDGs. Women have a lot of potential – we can achieve anything we want. So let’s just get out there and do something,” says Maureen.

She thinks her experience motivates the women she works with: despite setbacks, she has made new friends, moved past her losses, and is now running a farming business while pursuing a business degree. “So they think, if Maureen can do all this, why not me, why not us?” she says.

The Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Leadership Training for Women Entrepreneurs in Africa programme is run by UNITAR, Unilever’s Sunlight and Absa Bank Kenya. The online programme trains women entrepreneurs in Kenya to develop their social or for-profit businesses.
Youth are the driving force shaping the future; yet, they are often excluded from decision-making processes. Young people are readier than ever to tackle the world’s most pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges. As our global community collectively builds back from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must create spaces for youth where they can lead action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Harnessing their potential is essential to help our world build back better, greener, and stronger.

What We Do
Since 2010, the UNITAR Youth Ambassador Programme is moulding young leaders and future changemakers who will shape an inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous world. Over 10 weeks, high school students learn from local and international experts about the world’s most pressing issues. They discuss topics such as youth leadership, the United Nations and the SDGs. While devising innovative solutions to promote the SDGs, the Youth Ambassadors – supported by mentors and coaches, peers, and subject-matter experts – develop essential leadership skills.

The programme started in Hiroshima and expanded to the Asia-Pacific region in 2021.

Impact
Over 100 Youth Ambassadors have taken part in the Hiroshima-based programme since its launch. “My world drastically expanded when I gathered the courage to join the programme,” says Sakura Omura, a 2020 Hiroshima UNITAR Youth Ambassador. In 2021, 16 Youth Ambassadors from Hong Kong joined the Asia-Pacific programme. “In the programme, we are all changemakers who can learn so much from each other. We support each other,” says Bella Li, a 2021 Asia-Pacific UNITAR Youth Ambassador. Many former Youth Ambassadors remain engaged with the SDGs and play active roles around the world.
Focus Topics
- Leadership of Self
- Team & Organizational Leadership
- Effective Communication & Negotiation
- Implementing the SDGs
- Innovation & Technology
- Multistakeholder Analysis
- Project Development

Programme Targets 2021–2023
- Geographical areas: Scaling up to 5 countries and regions.
- Estimated number of participants: 1,500 youth ambassadors
- Estimated budget: US$1,062,000

Partners
- Hiroshima Prefectural Government
- ITS Education Asia
- The Crimson Education

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: BECOMING AN EDUCATOR FOR CHANGE

“My world drastically expanded when I gathered the courage to take this step,” says Takeda High School student Sakura Omura, 2020 UNITAR Youth Ambassador.

The UNITAR Youth Ambassador Hiroshima programme for high school students nurtures young people, giving them insights into global affairs so they can play a role in the international community in the future.

For three months, Sakura learned through webinars and a smartphone app and interacted virtually with participants of a UNITAR youth entrepreneur programme in Iraq. In groups, the Youth Ambassadors explored an SDG of their choice. Sakura’s group chose Goal 16: to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Sakura became acutely aware of how little she knew about the violence and brutality in the world. If she does not know the facts, Sakura thought, there is no way for her to take action.

Through her experience as a Youth Ambassador, her future path became clearer. “Low-quality education fails to produce people of talent. I started to think of becoming a professional educator who can impart knowledge to people in need.” Sakura is now studying pedagogy in university. Her message to fellow youth: “Be courageous. You can gain so much. You get a lot of support from people around you. You can learn from that and start to take action.”
Gender Empowerment Now!

Women’s empowerment is fundamental to a sustainable and prosperous world. Women play a vital role in community building and shaping social, economic, environmental, and political growth. Yet, deep-seated gender inequality and violations of women’s human rights persist. We must urgently confront gender-based disparities, discrimination and violence and ensure that women have equal opportunities to exert leadership and participate in all levels of decision-making.

What We Do
In 2021, UNITAR trained government officials in Jordan and Lebanon responsible for gender issues to help them implement their countries’ gender policies. The 10-week online pilot programme, Gender Empowerment Now: Building Capacity to Mainstream Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment into the Government Policy of Jordan and Lebanon, covered gender terminology, the legal basis of gender equality – especially the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security – and how to use strategic and budgetary planning. The next phase in 2022 will build on the first and introduce participants to tools to operationalize gender indicators and guidelines.

Impact
Fifty-eight government officials (55 women and 3 men) took part in the 2021 programme. They represented not only departments in which women traditionally are placed, such as education and welfare, but also energy, security, economy and tourism sectors. Ninety-two per cent of the participants said the programme was practical and useful for their work. The learners enjoyed the self-paced online learning. “This is the first time I took a training course through an online platform,” said Mona Nahlawi, Gender Focal Point at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jordan. “In the beginning it was technically challenging, but it became easier.”
Focus Topics
- Gender Mainstreaming, from Designing to Implementing and Monitoring
- Results Chain Framework
- Leadership of Self
- Team & Organizational Leadership
- Effective Communication & Negotiation
- Project Development

Programme Targets 2021–2023
- **Geographical areas:** Scaling up to 5 countries and regions
- **Estimated number of participants:** 500 participants
- **Estimated budget:** US$500,000

Partners
- Cypriot Government
- UN Women
- The Jordanian National Commission for Women
- National Commission for Lebanese Women

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: STEPS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

“We learned that solutions are developed through strategic and operational planning, so they can be changed by empowering women and taking gender into account in legislation, policies and business. This leads to changes in relations between the genders, by changing the social, economic and physical environment surrounding women. Gender-responsive budgeting is a financial planning tool to achieve gender equality. It has economic and social dimensions that aims to equitably distribute opportunities between men and women.”

- Alin Aoun, Executive Assistant, the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon

“I found the module on gender equality and SDGs to be very useful, as it drew my attention to the importance of ensuring that the SDGs are incorporated in all government policies, projects and plans. It taught me that fulfilling the SDGs will not happen without gender equality and mainstreaming. The training was efficient and straightforward, despite of a lot of content. The way this training programme was presented inspired me to use a similar approach and method in the future in training programmes in my work.”

- Majd Al-Qudah, Researcher, Department for the Development of the Institutional Performance and Policies, Jordanian Cabinet
The COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges for women and youth, overlaid on long-established ones. Even as the world shifts to understand and adapt to a post-pandemic future of work, the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), a period of rapid developments in digitization, offers an opportunity for women and youth to break free of the social constraints that limit their educational and professional progress and address the wage and skills gap exacerbated by the pandemic.

**What We Do**

UNITAR reskills/upskills women and youth in digital technologies in conflict and post-conflict countries to address the digital divide and gender and education gaps. Women and youth are equipped with new skill sets to engage with the 4IR, get or create jobs, and contribute to an inclusive, sustainable society. Our innovative approach combines in-depth technical skills development with women’s empowerment and leadership training.

**Impact**

In 2021, nearly 2,200 women and young people in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal learned about digital technologies and how to use them to address critical needs in their communities.

This built on a 2020 pilot programme, in which 32 women entrepreneurs in Afghanistan and Iraq developed their gender leadership, entrepreneurial and digital skills for their socially oriented start-ups. The participants of the pilot showed a 59% increase in their level of confidence in running a gender-sensitive start-up business using artificial intelligence. All indicated their intent to use their new knowledge and skills to empower other women and mobilize youth, create job opportunities, and address their society’s problems.

“People should not surrender because they have some challenges. Because there’s too much to win in this programme,” says Mohamadou Bello, a Cameroonian educator who joined the 2021 programme.
Focus Topics
• Digital Literacy
• Working with Data
• Programming & Coding
• Applications Development
• AI & Machine Learning
• Cybersecurity
• Women’s Empowerment

Programme Targets 2021–2023
• Geographical areas: Afghanistan, Sahel countries (8 countries), North and Central African countries, Iraq, and potentially Latin American countries
• Estimated number of people: 7,600 women and youth
• Estimated budget: US$2,580,000

Partners
• Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
• Government of Japan
• Hiroshima Prefecture Government

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN LEADING THE WAY

Between May and July 2021, before the dramatic turn of events at the end of August, 19-year-old Najia (not her real name) joined the UNITAR course Leading Inclusive 4IR: Empowering Women in Afghanistan for the Future of Work through Digital Reskilling to make her vision of gender equality and prosperity a reality.

Najia is a university student studying cybersecurity who is committed to serving her community and helping girls in Afghanistan access education.

Through self-paced mobile-phone-based lessons and webinars, Najia and her cohort learned about the SDGs, coding skills, algorithms, app development, cybersecurity and AI training, and gender leadership. She found support among her course mates and from local mentors.

Despite the uncertainty in her country, Najia hopes for better things to come. Her dreams to make a positive impact on the world remain unshaken: she hopes to set up a fund that provides for women in need and support female-led businesses. “The experience made me want to work forward and attend more courses and classes. It was really something that I needed,”

The digital gender divide is likely to widen without a focus on skills training on innovative technologies, particularly in least developed countries, according to the UN International Telecommunication Union.
Digital Financial Inclusion

As governments around the world respond to the health, social, and economic impact of COVID-19, digitalization and access to digital financial services have become ever more essential to daily life. However, not everyone can access the opportunities offered by digital financial services. There is thus an urgent need for training and education to help reduce digital inequalities and to facilitate financial inclusion.

What We Do
The Division for Prosperity launched its Digital Finance Initiative in 2021 to bring together the private sector, regulatory organizations and development agencies to harness digital innovation and scale financial inclusion to support the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs). The first annual virtual conference was held with UNITAR’s development partners to build knowledge and understanding of the implications and benefits of digital finance. New e-courses on FinTech, blockchain, artificial intelligence, and other digital technologies are being developed and offered to a global audience.

Impact
Leading FinTech innovators, regulators, experts, and practitioners from the financial sector engaged with UNITAR through the Digital Finance Initiative. Over 850 finance officials from around the world, of which 31% were women, participated in digital-finance training activities. Training participants rated the activities highly, with 91% saying that the activities were useful overall and they would recommend them to a colleague. New development partners have confirmed they will collaborate with UNITAR from 2022 and beyond to scale up the positive effects on digital financial inclusion.
Focus Topics
- FinTech & Innovation
- FinTech Risks in Financial Services
- Blockchain & Trade Finance
- Financial Analysis
- Financial Instruments
- Lending Methodologies
- Measuring Performance
- Future Growth
- Digital Transformation in Finance & Trade

Programme Targets 2021–2023
- Geographical areas: Africa, Middle East and Latin America
- Key outputs: University accredited training programmes jointly delivered with UNITAR
- Estimated number of people: 2,500 participants
- Estimated budget: US$2,500,000

Partners
- Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND)
- Swiss Finance + Technology Association
- National Bank of Hungary
- Geneva Finance Research Institute, University of Geneva

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: MICROFINANCE FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

“The course was of particular interest to me: it provided information concerning microfinance, principles and systems around it, plus overall insights on services offered, risks, threats and opportunities, and practices applied in the microfinance world today. With the knowledge from this course, I believe I will be able to fully comprehend the microfinance concepts and all financial services offered under it, and the need of financial intermediation, especially to the poor within the society.

“Seeing the microfinance concept is established globally, I intend to apply all what I’ve learned from this course within our local ‘chamas,’ of which I am part. Through these ‘chamas,’ provision of financial services and access has been improved especially to women within the society. Through the knowledge from this course, I will be able to understand and facilitate the growth of these local groups.”

- Aisha M. Ibrahim, Kenya
Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

The year 2020 marked 75 years since the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings – the first and only use of nuclear weapons in the world – and the 50th anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). And in 2021, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons entered into force, cementing a categorial ban on nuclear weapons.

Yet, the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed large-scale commemorations. What is more, the annual Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, where diplomats gather to review the operation of the treaty, has been postponed several times from its original 2020 date. It is now expected to be held in 2022.

What We Do
Based in the symbolic city of Hiroshima, UNITAR Division for Prosperity has an inherent interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Since 2015, we have been training government officials from Asian countries who are on the front-line of nuclear disarmament negotiations.

The UNITAR programme gives participants a deep understanding of the latest nuclear-arms-control debate. Participants learn about the protocols and procedures of disarmament and non-proliferation conferences, such as the NPT Review Conference, and build their communication and negotiation skills.

Impact
Since 2015, 137 government officials from ministries of foreign affairs and defence in Asia have completed the UNITAR programme. The 2022 participants hailed from 11 countries, and 52% of the participants were women. Eighty-eight per cent of the 2022 participants said that the programme content was relevant to their professional roles and 87% said they intended to use their new knowledge.

The programme advanced dialogue and coordination among states in the Asian region: meeting like-minded colleagues fostered a common understanding that regionally aligned movements are some of the best ways to achieve nuclear disarmament and global peace.
Focus Topics
- Global Trends in Nuclear Negotiations
- Negotiation & Cross-Cultural Communications Skills
- Challenges & Opportunities for Nuclear Disarmament & Non-Proliferation

Programme Targets 2021–2023
- Geographical areas: scaling up in Asia (including the Pacific region), Middle East and Africa
- Estimated number of people: 300 government officials and NGO staff
- Estimated budget: US$980,000

Partners
- Hiroshima Prefectural Government
- City of Hiroshima
- United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
- United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT: GOVERNMENTS AND NON-PROLIFERATION

Amaraa Erdenebaatar, a diplomat of Mongolia, learned skills to become a better negotiator in the 2021 UNITAR Hiroshima Training Programme on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. Mongolia is the only country in the world with a self-declared nuclear-weapon-free status.

Amaraa enjoyed the combination of theory with practice, including an online conference simulation in which participants negotiated a paragraph of an NPT Foreign Ministers Communiqué. He was also moved to meet a hibakusha (survivor of the atomic bomb).

“Diplomats – most of the time we engage with papers and words. But listening to real stories of hibakusha – that makes us work hard.” Amaraa will continue promoting security and disarmament to make the world safer for his children.

Contact Us
Mihoko Kumamoto, Director, Division for Prosperity
Judit Kozenkow, Partnerships Expert
prosperity_partnership@unitar.org

Since 1963, UNITAR has been empowering individuals and institutions from public and private sectors to overcome pressing global challenges. As the principal training arm of the United Nations, we use our unique expertise to design and deliver customized training activities to every region of the world. In 2020, UNITAR delivered close to 900 learning activities for more than 300,000 participants, of which 80 per cent were from developing countries.