

UNITAR & Health

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is a dedicated training arm of the United Nations. With the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization, the Institute's mission is to develop the capacities of individuals, institutions and organizations in countries and among other United Nations stakeholders.

In July 2019, UNITAR integrated the secretariat of the Defeat Non-communicable Diseases (NDC) Partnership, a public-private-people partnership that includes Governments, multilateral agencies, civil society, academia, philanthropists and the private sector. The Defeat Non-communicable Diseases Partnership provides support for the development of national capacities for planning and implementing national action plans to combat non-communicable diseases, in the form of remote knowledgesharing through webinars and online conferences. This work culminated in a high-level panel discussion on access to sustainable treatment and care for non-communicable diseases at the World Health Summit in October 2020.

In addition to knowledge sharing, UNITAR provided technical assistance to two programme countries, resulting in the development of a national costed operational plan for Myanmar covering 2021 and 2022 supporting 11 million people, and a national strategy and costed action plan for Rwanda for 2020–2025, benefiting 4.8 million people and aiming at reducing premature mortality from NDCs by 25 per cent. In those two countries, a programme coordinator and health economist delivered essential support for the convening of stakeholders to develop a multisectoral approach and carried out the necessary financial modelling.

UNITAR was also instrumental in promoting national and global efforts to ensure universal access to health care in order to reduce premature mortality due to NDCs by one third by 2030, in line with target 3.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Institute negotiated memorandums of understanding with the ministries of Health of Bhutan, Ecuador, the Gambia and Nepal, and with the Caribbean Public Health Agency, which represents 24 States members of the Caribbean Community.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, [UNITAR was able to ensure business continuity](#) with regard to planned programmes not only leveraged its virtual learning environment, the Institute also broadened its portfolio to increase awareness and develop knowledge of matters related to the COVID-19 crisis. For example, the Institute's Division for Peace published an [information package on COVID-19 preparedness and response in places of detention](#), in cooperation with the Department of Peace Operations and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. At the request of South Africa, UNITAR also led the development of a [COVID-19 tracking tool](#) that allows the Government to track symptomatic patients and then identify potential hotspots, thereby allowing health agencies to target their limited resources more effectively. Finally, UNOSAT, the Operational Programme for Satellite Analysis, provided technical support to the Solomon Island authorities by developing a [COVID-19 Dashboard](#) using Geospatial Information Technology to monitor the status of quarantine stations.

The Institute's programme of work is continuously guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and will further promote and contribute to initiatives supporting global health and well-being.