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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Knowledge to lead

Newsletter Spring 2010

Editorial

The year 2010 has started at a rapid pace for UNITAR with a strong involvement and commitment to contribute effectively in the early recovery efforts in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake.

With the increased budget approved by the Board of Trustees, the Institute has confirmed its goals for the years to come.

The UNITAR on-line calendar of events 2010 has been made available on the web site for easy and direct reference to all upcoming activities. In addition and in view of increasing its training services, a dedicated Virtual Learning Environment has been set-up for e-learning courses allowing participants to register on-line. This service is being extended to all UNITAR events in the coming weeks.

This reflects in a way the efforts invested so far in reaching out to an increased number of beneficiaries, and in upgrading UNITAR's infrastructure for advanced learning technologies.

Through increased collaboration with other UN organizations the Institute is engaged to mobilize dormant knowledge in order to provide an active learning experience that respond to beneficiaries' needs.

InFocus

UNOSAT engaged in damage assessment over Haiti

The earthquake that rocked Haiti on 12 January caused unprecedented consequences on the population and the urban areas of Haiti. Upon request by several agencies, UNITAR has mobilized its Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT) to support immediate response and early recovery planning with satellite derived maps and analyses.

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), the United Nations and the World Bank have issued a comprehensive building damage atlas in support to the Post Disaster Needs Assessment

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(PDNA) process led by the Government of Haiti to help planning recovery and reconstruction measures. Assistance was also provided by Swisstopo and the Remote Sensing laboratories of the University of Zurich (Switzerland).



Based on the comparison between pre-disaster satellite imagery and post-disaster aerial photos, the Atlas provides an overview of building damage in the main affected cities in Haiti showing that almost 60,000 buildings, ten times more than initially estimated, were either destroyed or very heavily damaged. Residential buildings and buildings in slums bore the worst damage, particularly in Port-Au-Prince, Carrefour, Delmas and Leogane communes.

A New Step in Peacekeeping Training

During the first 2 months of 2010, UNITAR successfully implemented seven face-to-face training courses. Funded by the German Federal Foreign Office the courses were designed to respond to the training needs of civilian, military, and police personnel eager to serve in peace operations.

Courses were elaborated and conducted together with the Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace & Conflict Resolution, India; the King's College, UK; the Bonn International Conversion Centre (BICC), Germany; the Crisis Management Centre, Finland; UNEP/IISD, Geneva; the Danish Group, Denmark; and the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna di Studi Universitari e Perfezionamento, Italy.

Identified through training needs assessments course topics included: Introduction to Peace Operations; Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis; Team Work and Team Management in Peace Operations; Protection of Civilians in Peace Operations; Human Security in the Practice of Peace Operations; Natural Resources Management in Post-Conflict Countries; Mission Preparedness: the Psycho Social Dimension



The response for the courses was extremely high with over 800 applications received in an advertising window of 3 weeks. Post training evaluation revealed an extremely high rate of satisfaction.

The successful completion of the 7 face-to-face courses illustrates UNITAR's commitment and objective to advance training for future peacekeepers. Most courses are being adapted to E-Learning for increased outreach and opportunities.

Second All Africa Carbon Forum

Nairobi, 5 March 2010: Conveyed by the Nairobi Framework Partners in an effort to build on the growing interest shown in the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) in Africa, the 2nd Africa Carbon Forum gathered more than 1,000 participants from both the private and public sector from Africa and other parts of the world.

As a partner of the Nairobi Framework, UNITAR was engaged in the organization and sponsored the participation of project developers from Africa. The number of participants pointed out the immense interest for CDM projects in Africa and the potential for carbon markets and trading.



His Excellency President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya, Opening the Second All Africa Carbon Forum

At the same time however many of the participants whilst interested in the carbon projects, expressed the need to understand the costing of CDM projects and the real market opportunity for Certified Emissions Reductions.

Since it was launched in November 2006 by then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, interest in the mechanism has grown, but Africa still accounts for less than two percent of the 2,040 plus CDM projects registered to date in 62 countries. By bringing together potential buyers and sellers, the Forum hopes this figure will increase.

UNITAR is turning its attention to e-learning in Spanish

Following last year's successful experience in which four e-learning courses have been conducted in Spanish with the support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MAEC) of Spain involving more than 750 participants, UNITAR and the Instituto de Estudios de las Finanzas Públicas Argentinas (IEFPA), the Fundación Escuela Superior de Economía y Administración de Empresas (ESEADE), the Universidad Austral (Buenos Aires) and the Universitat de Barcelona (Spain) are joining forces to offer greater learning and networking opportunities to more Spanish speaking professionals and officials, no matter where they are and when they can connect to the Internet.



As Spanish language has been given high priority with regard to e-learning courses that UNITAR is offering to officials and professionals from developing countries and economies in transition, UNITAR is launching eight new e-learning courses in Spanish on public finance, trade and financial governance in collaboration with selected universities and training institutes in Latin America and Spain.

The resulting joint online courses are designed to enhance the professional skills of public and private sector representatives, civil society and academics, and to promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences through UNITAR's Virtual Learning Environment.

Senior Spanish speaking experts who have in-depth understanding of current challenges and issues in their areas of specialization will mentor the course participants.

Increasing cooperation with Nigerian Federal Institutions in the Niger Delta Region

Port Harcourt, February 2010: The UNITAR Technical Capacity Development Programme for Youth motivated the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) - a Federal Government interventionist Agency - and the Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA) to commence the process of selection of additional hundred beneficiaries.



Defined by the Federal Government as "quantum of composite value added to the Nigerian economy", the new Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) has moved UNITAR/NDDC partnership to a new level by releasing 70% of pledged counterpart fund for the agreed UNITAR activities in the Niger Delta Region.

The Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD), an organization of investors, collaborators, and stakeholders in Oil and Gas industry from public and private sectors in the NDR, lauds UNITAR Technical Capacity Development Programme new milestone as a panacea for graduate re-training, perennial youth unemployment, and restiveness.

"The partnership is to be the peoples' threshold of knowledge, innovation, skill, standards, information, capacity building, and motivation in using good governance and community driven sustainable development initiatives to rapidly transform the Niger Delta Region into an economically viable, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful place".

Chibuzo Ugwoha Managing Director and CEO of NDDC

Knowledge to Lead

Intellectual Property in Today's Global Challenges

In today's increasingly knowledge-based society, ideas have become a key factor in capital generation and development. Referred to as "creations of mind", their critical value has given rise to the concept of intellectual property.

Understanding basic principles of intellectual property issues, especially for climate change, food security and other global challenges, has become a prerequisite for diplomats. While intellectual property rights have helped to promote rule of law and innovation, they have also widened the technological gap between developed and developing countries.

"Intellectual property rights often pose a sticking point in international negotiations on knowledge-sharing and technology transfer, necessitating strategic analysis and win-win approaches to ensure that intellectual property rights are used to benefit both individual creators and the international community at large".

Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Global Colloquium of University Presidents

Since the establishment of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) at the World Trade Organization (WTO), many countries have established laws and policies to enforce intellectual property rights.

In an effort to enhance delegates' understanding of intellectual property, and to help them get a firm grasp of intellectual property and its major issues of contention, UNITAR organizes annually a two-day comprehensive seminar on this topic in collaboration with WIPO at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Demystifying the UN system



Since the Charter of the United Nations was signed on 26 June 1945 the system has considerably evolved over the years, adjusting to changing situations.

From the six principal organs - General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, Trusteeship Council, International Court of Justice and Secretariat - the United Nations system has become a complex constellation of interrelated organizations assisted by an impressive number of principal and subsidiary organs.

In addition, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, decided to establish a number of programmes, funds and institutes, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), or the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to deal with economic and social issues.

The UN system includes also some 15 specialized agencies, such as ILO, UNESCO and WHO. Those are autonomous organizations that decided to be linked to the UN as equal partners through a relationship agreement in accordance with Article 57 of the Charter. Some of them, like the Universal Postal Union (UPU) or the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), were created even before the United Nations.

The relationship between some of its elements may at times be puzzling. To demystify the various elements of that system, and with the purpose of analyzing in depth the respective roles and functions of the principal organs of the UN and their subsidiary bodies, UNITAR offers to the diplomatic communities in UN locations a number of courses focusing in particular on the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council

Partnerships and collaborations

Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid

Geneva, 24 February 2010: UNITAR and the Rey Juan Carlos University (URJC) have concluded a milestone Memorandum of Understanding.



Signed by Dr. Carlos Lopes, Executive Director of UNITAR, and Prof. Pedro González-Trevijano, Rector of URJC, in presence of Prof. Cástor Díaz Barrado, Director of the Centre of Latin American Studies (CEIB), this agreement opens the door for collaboration with a Spanish academic institution with proven experience in training and research in Latin America, a region of great interest for the Institute.

Established in 1996, the Rey Juan Carlos University is the youngest public university of the Madrid Community. Its motto is "*non nova, sed nove*" (No new things, but in a new way). URJC has several research centers in areas of interest for UNITAR, such as the CEIB, which was created in 2003 with the aim of understanding and researching the Iberoamerican reality.

The aim of the collaboration is precisely to maximize the two parties' skills, knowledge and experience and to conduct joint training and research activities.

Chemical Labeling project in Asia Receives European Union Support



January 2010: A three-year project has been initiated in the context of the EU funded UNITAR/ILO capacity building programme on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) to strengthen national

and regional capacities in countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The GHS is considered a foundation for sound chemicals management and is a logical and comprehensive approach to standardizing and harmonizing the classification and labeling of chemicals.

Improved management of chemicals can also contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including reducing child mortality and improving maternal health by reducing chemicals-related disease.

The first regional GHS conference for Southeast, East and Central Asia is expected to take place in Beijing later in 2010.

National capacity development activities will be conducted in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, and support activities will also take place in the People's Republic of China.



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