

UNAI MEMBER ACTIVITY REPORT 2016/2017

University of Pretoria

South Africa

During the 2016/2017 reporting period, the University of Pretoria undertook a number of activities that underscore its commitment to UNAI and its principles. The following examples stand out as particularly noteworthy:

Activities and projects the University of Pretoria has undertaken in the past year addressing some of the ten UNAI principles:

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of five research-intensive universities in South Africa. In 2017, more than 48 000 students were enrolled at the University. The University's long-term strategy, UP 2025, is centred on research that addresses societal problems and, in particular, problems faced by Africa as a developing region. This includes poverty, environmental change and water, health, food and energy security, governance innovation, and leadership that positions Africa as the hub for continental and global research networks on major developmental and global challenges.

Three examples are given with respect to the UN Academic Impact principles: food security, One Health, and human rights [Examples adapted from the UP 2017 Annual Review as well as recent Research Reviews of the University <http://www.up.ac.za/research-innovation/article/271011/research-reports>].

Food security

The University, together with the University of Western Cape, hosts the Department of Science and Technology-the National Research Foundation (DST-NRF) Centre of Excellence in Food Security, a virtual organisation that brings together the expertise of



numerous South African and international institutions, and over 100 researchers across several disciplines. The University of Pretoria's Institute for Food, Nutrition and Wellbeing (IFNuW) [<http://www.up.ac.za/institute-for-food-nutrition-and-well-being>] is affiliated with the Centre and focuses on applying science to solving issues related to sustainable food production, food safety, exploiting the health-promoting properties of foods to improve nutrition, influencing what people eat, and investigating the impact of policies on food security.

Researchers at UP who are affiliated with the Centre and the IFNuW have noted that in rural areas, in particular, food insecurity and severely inadequate diets constrain development and trap people in poverty. Efforts to improve food security need to be closely tied to sustainable agricultural practices in order to improve livelihoods, which require understanding how agriculture contributes to household nutrition.

For example, studies have showed that one of the problems is with the largely starch-based diets of rural households, which leads to micronutrient deficiencies, stunted growth, and increased rates of obesity. Information gleaned through research, such as the projects of the IFNuW on food, water and seasonal variations that affect poor communities, is necessary to design effective support programmes to prevent food insecurity from worsening, and to strengthen community resilience in anticipating seasonal and climate fluctuations.

Research has also shown that in addition to locally generated solutions, the complexity of the food security problem requires a systemic approach – a food systems approach, from “field to fork” to find viable solutions for sustainable development. It is in this context that the complementary of science and policy in pursuit of sustainable solutions carries the dual responsibility for scientists to engage the public and policy makers, and in turn, for the public and policy makers to engage with the scientific analyses of the problem and its possible solutions[<http://www.foodsecurity.ac.za/NewsItem/1822>].

In December 2017, the 3rd International Conference on Global Food Security was held in Cape Town. It was the first such conference held in Africa and in a developing region of the world. The conference was organised by Elsevier publishers, in association with the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security, jointly hosted by the University of Pretoria and the University of the Western Cape. The conference theme, Global Challenges, Local Solutions and Connected Pathways, brought together over 600 delegates, half of whom were from Africa, and pointed to the main challenges related to food security.

One Health

The Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Pretoria has adopted a One Health approach in its work and formal training programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate

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levels, with research focusing on the interface of human, animal and environmental health. The work undertaken in the Mnisi tribal area bordering on the Kruger National Park is recognised by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the World Organisation for Animal Health, and is one example that illustrates the success of multipronged interventions:

The Herding for Health project is an example of a pro-poor, rural development project that aims to respond to pressing local challenges. Herd monitors (with knowledge of primary animal health) and eco rangers (herders with training in environmental and livestock management) work with scientists, local government departments, and communities to improve livestock production, while restoring degrading rangelands. In addition, the Herding for Health partners also support local farming cooperatives to take advantage of economic opportunities and improve their livelihoods.

The Hluvukani Animal Clinic serves people in the community in keeping their animals healthy and diseases free. The resident veterinarian is supported by UP veterinary students who in their final year do two-week clinical rotations in the Mnisi community. Students also visit schools and dip tanks for animal health awareness and information sessions, and the clinic serves as a centre for the coordination of clinical research in the area and longitudinal studies and sampling.

Human rights

The University of Pretoria has a number of centres and institutes which focus on human rights. One of these is the Centre for Human Rights in the Faculty of Law.

The Centre for Human Rights [<http://www.chr.up.ac.za>] was established in 1986, by a small group of visionary academics at the University of Pretoria. The Centre works for human rights education in Africa, a greater awareness of human rights, the wide dissemination of publications on human rights, and the improvement of the rights of women, people living with HIV, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities and other disadvantaged or marginalised persons or groups across the continent.

In December 2017, more than 50 Master's and seven doctoral students graduated at the Centre for Human Rights. One of the most prominent academic programmes of the Centre, the Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, brings together graduates from various countries across the African continent. The course is organised in collaboration with 13 partner universities across the African continent, and celebrated its 18th year of existence in 2017.

The Centre also regularly hosts a number of training courses, forums and conferences. Five examples are given to illustrate some of the work of the Centre in 2017, and its success in

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drawing attention to issues of great concern on the African continent:

In collaboration with International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the Centre hosted its Advanced Human Rights Short Course on Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Africa from 25 to 29 September, 2017. The course brought together 32 participants from countries across Africa and Europe.

In October 2017, the Centre, in collaboration with UNESCO, held a three-day judicial training programme for judges from across Africa. The focus was on freedom of expression, access to information, and the safety of journalists. In attendance were senior judges from Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Mauritania, Mozambique, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. There was also a judge from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Community of Court of Justice. Also in collaboration with UNESCO, the Centre developed a massive open online course (MOOC) on the international and African legal framework on freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists. The course was offered for the first time in 2017, from 13 November to 18 December 2017.

The first African Forum for Doctoral Research in Human Rights (AfriDoors) was held at the University of Pretoria from 9 to 13 October 2017. AfriDoors brought together close to 50 doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and faculty from the member institutions of Strengthening Human Rights Research and Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SHUREA). SHUREA is a project funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland through the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) and is aimed at strengthening policy relevant human rights research. The member institutions are Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia), Makerere University (Uganda), University of Nairobi (Kenya), University of Pretoria and Åbo Akademi (Finland).

The Global Campus Human Rights Week was held during the week from 4 to 9 December 2017 in Pretoria. The events featured a film screening and discussion on African cinema and human rights, meetings of institutional and governance structures of the Global Campus, a visual / performance art and panel discussion on the rights of women and LGBTIQ persons, a multi-disciplinary conference on contemporary and future challenges to democracy worldwide. The event was organised by the Global Campus of Human Rights in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights.

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Academic research that is currently undertaken at the University of Pretoria which could help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals:

UP's research strategy builds on areas of strength and emerging capacity, aligned with three frameworks: the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030, the African Union's Agenda 2063 – the Africa We Want, and Our Future – Make It Work, South Africa's National Development Plan 2030.

Two examples are given to illustrate the alignment of our work to the SDGs: one of leadership development and transdisciplinary science, and the other of developing critical citizenry at undergraduate levels.

Future Africa

The Future Africa Institute [<http://www.futureafrica.science/>] at UP addresses the critical needs for transdisciplinarity and socially responsible research, for the development of a new generation of scientists with international perspectives, yet with a scholarly vision and voice that is rooted in Africa.

The Future Africa campus, situated on the UP's Hillcrest Campus is nearing completion. It is designed to provide a dynamic living, learning and research environment where a community of scholars and other societal role players will engage to advance excellence in scholarship, dialogue and impact. This new hub of scientific discovery and innovation is envisaged to become a place where Africa's leading scientists and scholars from across the world and from a broad range of disciplines can come together to leverage the benefits of transdisciplinary research to address the complex challenges that face Africa and the world. Formal programmes already active in 2017 included the African Science Leadership Programme (ASLP) and its satellite programme at UP, the TUKS Young Researcher Leadership Programme (TYRLP), an IdeasLab on Biodiversity, and a fellowship of the Centre for Governance Innovation.

Future Africa also has strong associations with international organisations to expand the reach of its network within Africa in order effectively to disseminate the outputs of research activities. These include jointly hosting the Future Earth Regional African Office, actively contributing to the establishment of a Nature Africa online portal (www.nature.com), and formal engagement with the Gauteng Innovation Hub to assist with development programmes and technology transfer, among others.

Student development

The University prides itself on producing well-rounded, creative graduates, responsible,

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productive citizens and future leaders. In pursuit of the goal that its students should acquire the key skills and attributes that will enhance social cohesion and critical citizenship, the University has run a successful community engagement programme for more than a decade. It is embedded in undergraduate and honours curricula. In 2017 approximately 15 000 students undertook community engagement for credit while a further 5 000 volunteers made the projects sustainable across about 1 500 community sites of learning. In addition, 3 000 students doing community engagement were deployed to support the anchor strategy in Hatfield, working at local institutions such as schools and the court. Training was also given by the Community Engagement Unit to various people living on the streets to rehabilitate them and about 75% of them returned home. The staff at the Brooklyn Police Station collaborated in the project. Alternative means of employment such as gathering and selling rubbish from the area gave many people new opportunities as well as resulting in the removal of tons of rubble from the area. Vegetable gardens to support vulnerable people were planted in various sites in Hatfield made available by the City of Tshwane. Two health hubs were opened in the area in which Health Sciences students work to support the anti-drug campaign of the city.

The UP Hatfield Campus Village Project is the University's strategy as anchor institution to lead urban renewal and social transformation projects around its Hatfield Campus. The Hatfield Campus Village will ensure that the university is firmly incorporated into its surrounding community, while at the same time enhancing opportunities for student access, diversity, success, work readiness and, ultimately, employment.

What do you think are the greatest issues facing the city/country/region where your institution is located?

- Inequality and poverty
- Responsible leadership
- Quality of school education
- Funding of higher education

Links:

<https://www.facebook.com/UnivofPretoria>

<https://twitter.com/uptuks>

<https://www.linkedin.com/school/university-of-pretoria>

<http://www.up.ac.za/en/research-innovation/article/271011/research-reports>

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