

PEACE & PROGRESS

UNU Graduate Student Journal

Transforming our world **NEWSLETTER**

The Arab states in 2017: UNU Conversations Series

By LUISCE, Tamara



The ongoing turmoil in the Middle East and in the Arab States is at the centerpiece of numerous analyses and debates. Beginning in Tunisia in late 2010, the Arab Spring was part of a broader international movement seeking democratic change and bring about changes in national leadership across Arab nations. The actual effects of the Arab Spring and its status have been put into question. Moreover, the broader changes in the international scene particularly in the West can have a significant effect in the Middle East. [Read More](#)

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Asia's Economic Rise — *Prospects and Pitfalls*

By Jheel Bastia



Asia's economy has evolved through homegrown models of economic development centered primarily on catering for the needs of their citizens. The strengths have always been in the homogenous nature across a specific country in every dimension, be it population outfit, basic food necessities, culture, or societal structure. One can find that if the onus and policies are strong, the trend lines are strong and vice versa. Countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia have grown drastically in comparison to many Pacific nations, owing largely to the differences in historical evolutions. [Read More](#)

DATA HARNESSING FOR ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

By Nsioh Macnight



Achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is a major governance challenge that will require, amongst other things, informed decision-making based on reliable and timely data. In our current 'Information Age', data sources are growing exponentially; from all kinds of citizen-generated data and satellite imagery to administrative records and mobile phones. Continuous technological innovation and diverse data collection methodologies, analysis and dissemination are an opportunity to produce the knowledge and statistics required by decision-makers to tackle some of the pressing challenges facing our world such as climate change, poverty, and conflicts. More than ever, official data management systems are needed for a new 'data architecture', one that provides principles and rules to boost statistical capacities and at the same time protect the privacy of individuals [Read More](#).

Is democracy in Africa a 'dictatorship of the majority'?

By Mebeelo Kafungwa



What is a democracy? Africa's democracy in practice is not as theory tells it - by the people, for the people, democratically elected governments, that includes the liberal ideals espoused by western democratic nations. Perhaps it is just the political systems within the countries. However, this article exposes on a new language in governance being referred to us a "dictatorship of the majority?" It has existed in Africa since post-colonial times. This is a democracy with only a small group of people rotating the leadership circle to govern a nation, and yet they still earn their power through the "democratic process". It is a leadership with the same network of people having access to stand for or be nominated for the presidency or any high-profile leadership position because they are part of a majority. [Read More](#)

Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week Welcomes UNU-EHS Students in Geneva

By Joseph Cook

The Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) was a five-day conference held at the International Conference Centre of Geneva, hosted by the Swiss Government, and co-chaired by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in early February 2017. The conference brought together professionals working within the humanitarian sector, private sector, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations to share ideas, experiences, and recommendations on how best to address some of the challenges of the humanitarian sector today. [Read More](#)

Climate change and variability in South Asia

Research by Singay Dorji,
Ph.D. candidate UNU-IAS

The year 2016 marked the third consecutive hottest on record per the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes that the warming in the climate system is unequivocal. In the Conference of Parties (COP21), the Paris summit in Dec 2015 agreed to limit the rise in global temperature below 2°C above the pre-industrial level. Climate change is a significant challenge to achieving the sustainable development goals. Read more of Singay's abstract and get an inside into his work at UNU-IAS. [Read More](#)

Comparing Socio-ecological Vulnerability Assessments in the Mississippi Delta.

Research by Carl Anderson,
UNU-EHS Master's student

There are many index-based approaches intended to assess socio-ecological vulnerability to natural hazards. Two such indices are the Global Deltas Risk Index (GDRI), created by UNU-EHS, and the Social Vulnerability Index (SoVI), introduced by Cutter et al. (2003) and a continued research focus at the Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute (HVRI) at the University of South Carolina. As part of his Master's thesis at UNU-EHS, Carl is comparing these indices in the social-ecological context of the Mississippi Delta, one of the most vulnerable regions in the US. [Read More](#)



UNU-IAS students take a picture with Dr. David Malone, Rector of the UNU



Some UNU-EHS students in Netherland, UNU-MERIT

For the annual global simulation competition for graduate students in public policy and administration