



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Sharing expertise to ensure high-quality medical education worldwide

To raise standards of medical education globally and encourage more clinicians to build careers within the healthcare systems in their home countries, staff in the UCL Medical School are collaborating with medical educators to support teaching programmes around the world.

“We are working with partner institutions across the globe to adapt elements of UCL’s internationally recognised medical programmes and tailor them to make them relevant to different local cultural, ethical and regulatory contexts,” explains Dr Ahmed Rashid, who leads the UCL Medical School Education Consultancy Unit.

In one partnership, UCL academics worked with colleagues at New Giza University, Egypt, to devise modern and innovative undergraduate medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy programmes, to be taught in Egypt. They used established materials, assessments and processes from the equivalent programmes at UCL as the programme’s basis, and adapted them to Egyptian sociocultural, ethical, professional and regulatory frameworks.

Dr Rashid’s research with students and educators in partner institutions has identified challenges such as language barriers and differing sociocultural traditions, which have been overcome by working with local education leaders to develop personalised programmes that fit the local context.

“These adaptations help to ensure graduates develop a sense of social responsibility and an understanding of local health challenges, making it more likely that they will stay in the healthcare system in their home country, where they are needed most,” explains Dr Rashid.



UCL hosts global conference on Sustainable Development Goals

A virtual conference at UCL in October 2020 brought together world-leading experts and champions of sustainable development to examine how universities can galvanise research and teaching to support the SDGs. ▶

“The conference was a tremendous opportunity for UCL staff, students and the public to come together to discuss how and if universities, through research and teaching activities, can contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”



**Professor David Price,
UCL Vice-Provost
(Research, Innovation
& Global Engagement)**

◀ ‘Beyond Boundaries: Realising the UN Sustainable Development Goals’ was jointly hosted by UCL Grand Challenges and the UCL Global Engagement Office. Thousands of attendees from over 55 countries joined the event online to hear presentations and panel discussions on a range of key topics, including sustainability in a COVID-19 context, achieving inclusive wealth and addressing global inequalities.

Professor David Price, UCL Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement), said: “The conference was a tremendous opportunity for UCL staff, students and the public to come together to discuss how and if universities, through research and teaching activities, can contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

More than 60 speakers joined from countries including Australia, Japan and South Africa and from across government, academia, the media and think tanks. They included former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, Special Envoy of WHO Director-General on COVID-19 Dr David Nabarro, Delhi-based environmentalist and author Dr Sunita Narain and Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town.



UCL's own researchers also presented, including renowned economist Professor Mariana Mazzucato, doctor and former WHO Director Professor Anthony Costello, behaviour-change expert Professor Susan Michie, and climate scientist and author Professor Mark Maslin.



Students address challenges facing Mumbai through virtual teaching programme

An innovative online teaching programme co-created by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India, and UCL gave students a unique insight into the challenges facing the vast Indian city – which has a population of 20 million, and growing.

The week-long programme was delivered by TISS academics and organisations working with local communities in Mumbai. They explored themes including displacement, climate change, water and marginalised communities. In addition, two UCL academics led virtual sessions.

Students also worked in interdisciplinary teams facilitated by TISS postgraduate coordinators to discuss the topics covered each day and to explore the themes more deeply.

“The coordinators provided further knowledge of the subject area, as well as local insight and perspective, which was particularly useful for students learning about Mumbai from afar,” explains Professor Monica Lakhmanpaul, UCL Pro-Vice-Provost (South Asia), who helped to organise the programme.

The teams concluded by presenting the challenges facing Mumbai associated with a particular SDG – including plastic pollution, and educational campaigns and policies for girls – and proposing how they might be tackled locally.

“It was truly an exemplar of how to learn together on global issues and hear the perspective from the local community,” added Professor Lakhmanpaul.”





Mobilising science and technology to meet the SDGs

To ensure that investment in science, technology and innovation (STI) is aligned to the SDGs the STRINGS project, led by Professor Joanna Chataway (UCL Science, Technology, Engineering & Public Policy, STEaPP) and colleagues at the University of Sussex, is mapping the synergies, competing priorities and trade-offs between STI and the SDGs at local, national and global levels, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

“To mobilise science, technology, engineering and policy expertise to help change the world for the better, we must include communities in the research and innovation process at a local level, and steer investments to help ensure the most effective outcomes are achieved for the people most affected,” she explains.

Professor Chataway is also collaborating with the UN Development Programme and a consortium of five other universities and research centres in Argentina, India and South Africa.

The project is creating a worldwide map of the key areas of research and innovation that relate to the SDGs, both now and in the future. The consortium is also looking in depth at specific examples across the world to see where there is alignment (and misalignment) with the SDGs, with a view to applying any lessons learned elsewhere.

In India, a STRINGS review of research into rice identified clusters of research on plant protection, crop yields, use of fertilisers and socio-economic issues. Yet research focused on improving the nutritional value of rice is lacking.

“Our aim is to provide evidence, tools and guidelines that will inform more effective policy actions and debates about the possible roles for science, research, technology and innovation in meeting the SDGs,” adds Professor Chataway.



A network of innovation to deliver the SDGs

“Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 will require a concerted effort from everybody on the planet,” says Professor Dame Henrietta Moore (UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, IGP).

“While governments, large organisations and big business inevitably have key roles to play in this, we believe that the most critical contributions will come from the growing number of small, fast-moving, innovative organisations that are springing up all over the world.”

To harness and maximise these contributions, in 2015 Professor Moore established Fast Forward 2030, a network of London-based entrepreneurs hosted by UCL IGP.



“We need to inspire the next generation of leaders who, by 2030, will be the shapers of institutions, directors of businesses, producers of knowledge and inventors of technology,” says Professor Moore. “They will be key to achieving the Goals.”

Professor Moore launched Fast Forward 2030 in partnership with one such entrepreneur, UCL alumnus Arthur Kay (Bartlett School 2013), Chief Executive of bio-bean, a biofuel and biochemical company that recycles waste coffee grounds. Arthur co-founded bio-bean in 2013 while a student at UCL, with support from UCL Innovation & Enterprise.

Through its research, website and workshops, Fast Forward 2030 provides space for policymakers, entrepreneurs and citizens to share and collaborate on new projects and solutions to ecological and social problems.

Following the success of the London hub, Fast Forward has gone on to launch networks in Lebanon and Kenya.



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Read more on these activities and other examples of how UCL is helping to achieve SDG17 are on the [UCL SDGs Initiative website](#).