

Annual Report 2020

UNU-WIDER



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Foreword by the Director

The year 2020 promised to be a big year for UNU-WIDER, with the celebration of its 35th anniversary, the 45th birthday of the United Nations University (UNU), and 75 years of the UN. But as the year began, the Institute's focus quickly shifted away from celebrations and towards the more pressing concerns of an unprecedented global pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken the world to its core. For UNU-WIDER it meant changing the way we work, ensuring staff could work remotely and safely, cancelling our annual development conference, and moving our meetings and seminars online. The bigger shift however was reorienting our research focus to the potential socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic in the Global South.

This was especially important given the context of the situation, which shone a light on just how important research is to the world's ability to respond. The pandemic has laid bare the existing vulnerabilities in the developing world and highlighted the deep inequalities that characterises the global economic and political order. COVID-19 poses a significant risk to the progress that has been characterizes on gender equality, workforce participation, education, global poverty, and more. The attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals will now be very challenging, particularly in the face of diminished resource flows.

Through its 35-year history, UNU-WIDER has been associated with some of the most advanced thinking in development economics. It has shown the ability to respond to the pressing development challenges of our times whether it be the causes of poverty and inequality, climate change, the roots of gender inequality, and the challenges of structural transformation for low-income countries. I am proud of how we were able to swiftly refocus our work to address the new development challenges of the pandemic, which has resulted in a range of important contributions that are highlighted in this report.

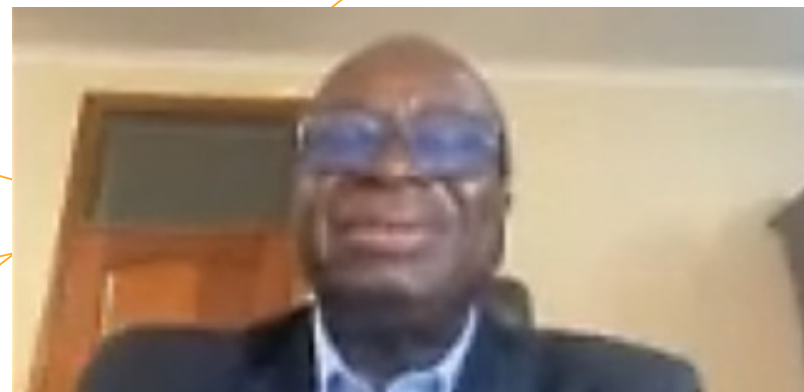
As the world now faces one of the most serious development challenges due to the pandemic it will be UNU-WIDER's utmost aim to be at the forefront of the global effort to produce rigorous research on the enormous policy changes that are being faced by countries in the Global South for the foreseeable future.

Kunal Sen



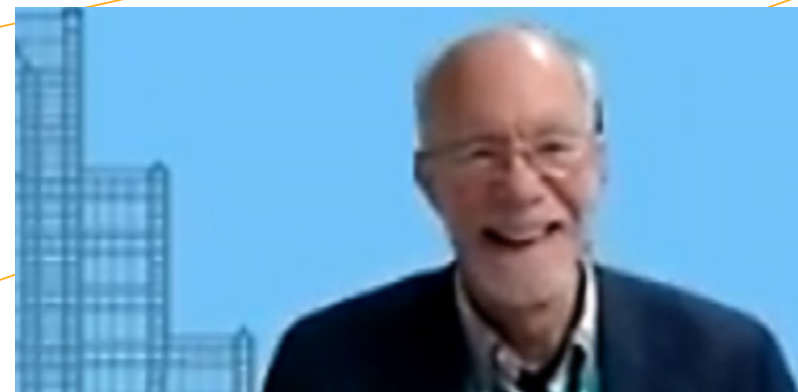
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Mwalimu Nyerere Professorial Chair on Development
University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

EX OFFICIO

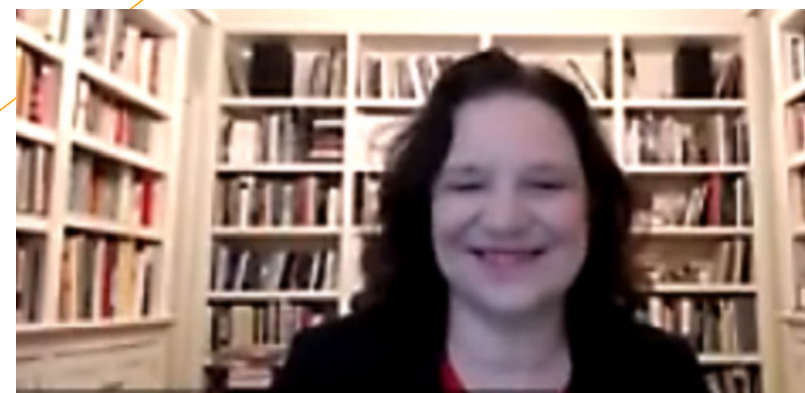


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I have watched with admiration how UNU-WIDER responded to the unprecedented public health-cum-economic crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Message from the Acting Chair

I first came to know UNU-WIDER in the early 1990s when Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum invited me to a couple of UNU-WIDER conferences on famine and hunger and on women, culture and development. A decade or so later, I was invited to participate in the EGDI-WIDER Conference on Unlocking Human Potential – Linking the Informal and Formal Sectors.

Through these two engagements, I came to admire UNU-WIDER’s commitment to issues of poverty and equality, to working across disciplines, to advancing thinking on key development challenges, and to partnering with researchers and research institutions in the Global South. It was, therefore, a great honour to be asked to join the Board of UNU-WIDER in 2017 and, more recently following the tragic loss of Benno Ndulu, to serve as Acting Chair of UNU-WIDER.

Over the past year, I have watched with admiration how UNU-WIDER responded to the unprecedented public health-cum-economic crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under Kunal Sen’s leadership, UNU-WIDER quickly and effectively shifted to working remotely and, more importantly, shifted its priorities to study the socioeconomic impacts of – and to consider appropriate policy responses to – the crisis in the Global South.

During 2020, UNU-WIDER also managed to undertake a 10-year external evaluation which concluded that the Institute has effectively balanced its three mission goals of research, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building, and played an important role in bringing different perspectives and disciplines to broader discussions on international development challenges.

I am confident that, going forward, UNU-WIDER will contribute to addressing the new development challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis which has not only caused so many deaths around the world but also undone hard-earned progress in reducing poverty and achieving the SDGs.


Martha Chen

Our work

UNU-WIDER provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and equitable development for all.

We are based in Helsinki, Finland, but operate globally through partnerships and a network of experts, and within the United Nations system. The Institute's aim is to produce knowledge that responds to the needs of people affected by poverty, inequality, and vulnerability, to support better policy making and implementation at the local, national, regional, and international levels. As a unique blend of think tank, research institute, and UN agency, we are able to create impact across these diverse networks.

Our 2019–23 work programme concentrates on a wider concept of development, aimed at overcoming the three challenges of transforming economies, states, and societies. Through our projects, we aim to contribute to positive change around five key Sustainable Development Goals that, we believe, when achieved can unlock the development potential of countries around the world. We do so by working together with in-country research and policy teams in the Global South and by creating 'public good' research, data, and models, that shape the developmental debate.

Our events serve as a forum for open dialogue, bringing together researchers, national decision-makers, and their international partners to discuss key research and policy insights. Whether in Helsinki or away, or even online, UNU-WIDER's events reach across the world and divides to include early career and established academics alike, encouraging knowledge exchange between different generations, disciplines, and regions.

Vision

The United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) provides economic analysis and policy advice with the aim of promoting sustainable and equitable development for all.

Mission

To undertake research and policy analysis on the most pressing concerns affecting the living conditions of the world's poorest people.

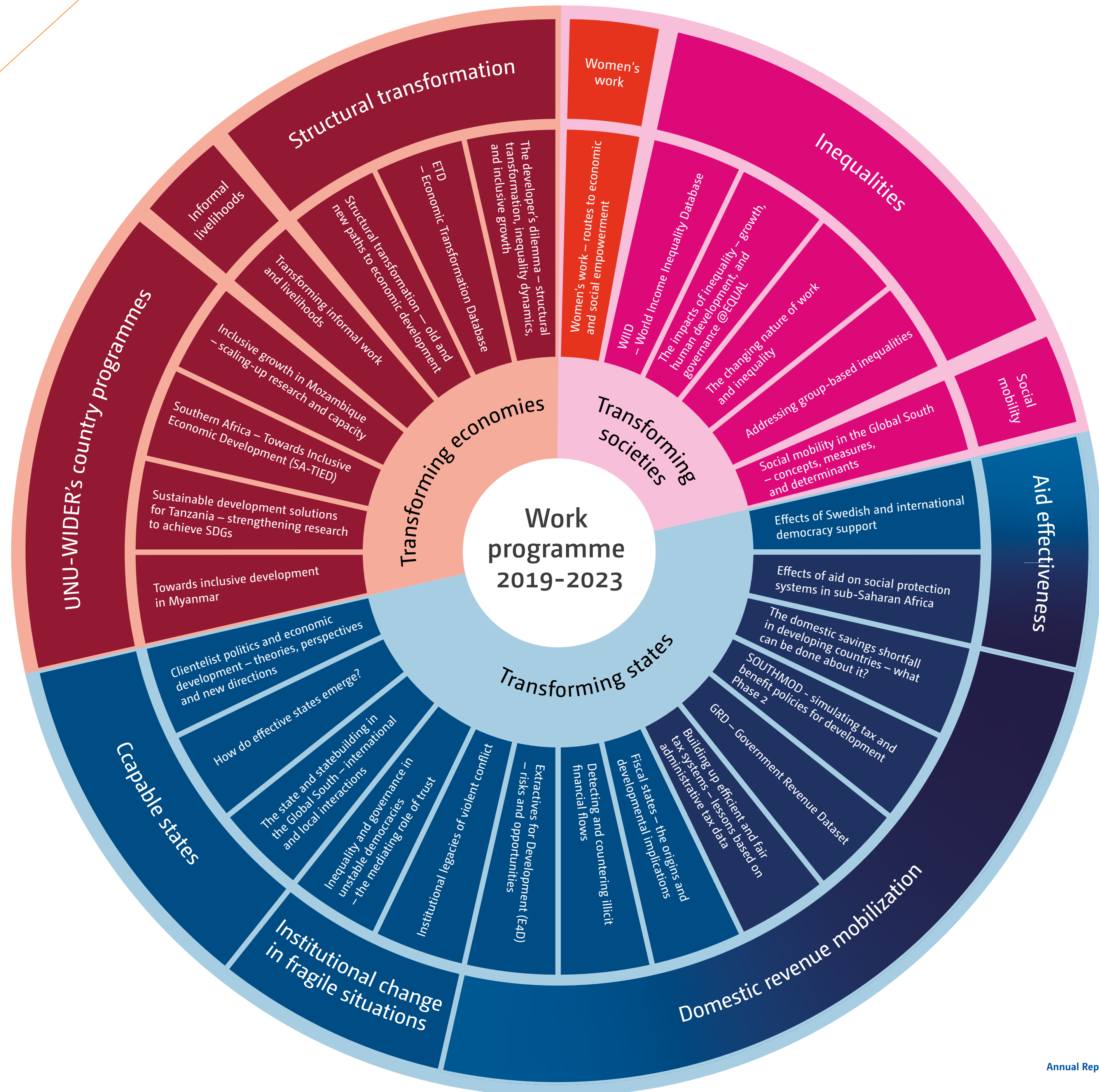
To provide a forum for knowledge sharing, discussion and debate between researchers and development professionals on how to achieve equitable, gender-balanced, and environmentally sustainable policies.

To offer capacity-building and training for researchers and decision makers in economics and social development.

Work programme 2019-2023

UNU-WIDER's 2019-23 work programme concentrates on a wider conception of development aimed at overcoming the three challenges of transforming economies, states, and societies. These transformations are central to the achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our work programme maps the three challenges against five key SDGs (5, 8, 10, 16, 17). When these goals are achieved, we believe they can unlock the development potential of countries around the world.



2020 highlights

Deepak Nayar tours with his new book *Resurgent Asia*, which provides an analytical narrative of Asia's remarkable economic progress over the last 50 years. Described as 'brilliant' and a 'must-read' in reviews, Professor Nayar presents his book at various events with academics, policy makers, students, and corporations around the world to discuss lessons that can be learned from the Asian experience.



BOOK TOUR: Resurgent Asia

First of its kind, this survey provides much-needed evidence of the experiences Mozambican university students entering the labour market, and the factors affecting their success in securing employment. The results feed into discussions within key ministries on developing policy responses to support the integration of Mozambican youth in the labour market. The research was carried out as part of the *Inclusive Growth in Mozambique* programme.



REPORT: School-to-work transition of Mozambican university students

UNU-WIDER joins a research consortium tracking the social, economic and health impacts of COVID-19 through a global online survey. The evidence produced by the ongoing study aims to support policy actions to address and mitigate the health, economic, social and political effects of the pandemic. Data produced by the survey has been cited in major global media, including *The Economist* and *Newsweek*.



RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP: Life with Corona survey

WIDER Working Paper #43 is released in conjunction with a major Oxfam report advocating for a US\$2.5 trillion global response to mitigate the negative economic impacts of the pandemic on lower-income countries and vulnerable peoples. The research findings – revealing some of the first estimates on the impacts of the pandemic to global poverty rates – hit news outlets around the world being cited in well over 2,500 print and digital news sources. Features were published in *The Guardian*, *The Huffington Post*, *DevEx*, and more.



WIDER Working Paper: Estimates of the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty

JAN

FEB

BOOK: Mining for change

This edited volume by John Page and Finn Tarp brings together a wealth of knowledge and policy guidance on how natural resources can support inclusive growth in Africa.



MARCH

TRAINING: TAZMOD – a tax-benefit microsimulation model for Tanzania

This workshop brought more than 30 policy makers and researchers up to speed with the latest updates in the model.

UNU-WIDER is working with partners to build tax-benefit microsimulation models for selected developing countries as part of the SOUTHMOD project. The models have proven to be useful tools for researchers and policy makers alike, providing knowledge for better policy-making and inclusive development. Since 2017, more than 500 people have been trained to use the models, enabling them to analyse and compare the effects of different policy scenarios on poverty, inequality, and government revenues.

WIDER FACTSHEET: The quantity and quality of women's work

A new entry to our knowledge product portfolio, the first WIDER Factsheet is published on International Women's Day.



APRIL

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Tax-motivated transfer mispricing in South Africa

Research on tax-motivated mispricing in South Africa, from the SA-TIED programme, is published. The journal article generates discussion and improves knowledge on the revenue loss to South Africa from profit shifting, which could be close to seven billion rand annually. Further it highlights the need for greater investment in the tax authority and ensuring that they have the resources necessary to collect public revenues from multinational enterprises that operate in tax havens.



2020 highlights



PRESENTATION: Kunal Sen at UNESCAP

UNU-WIDER Director is invited to present to the Senior Management Group of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) the Institute's leading-edge research on the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.

TRAINING: MOZMOD – a tax-benefit microsimulation model for Mozambique

18 government policy makers take part in an online training organized by the SOUTHMOD project.

Conducted by researchers at UNU-WIDER and the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana, Legon, this survey data allows researchers to assess the immediate and near-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related policy measures on labour market outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on the livelihoods of workers in urban Ghana.

SURVEY: How COVID-19 is affecting workers and their livelihoods in urban Ghana

UNU-WIDER partners with the World Bank, the Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), and the Network on Jobs and Development for the first time in organizing the Jobs and Development Conference. The event is held online, featuring more than 80 papers from economists and experts in 15 sessions, attracting more than 2,000 online participants.



EVENT: Better Jobs for Development conference

NEW INITIATIVE: African Cities

UNU-WIDER joins a new research consortium funded by UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Over the next six years, the partnership is expected to generate new evidence to catalyse integrated, sustainable, and inclusive approaches to urban development.

UNU-WIDER supports the high-level OECD event as a key partner of the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS). The aim of the event is to generate new thinking on the challenges and policy recommendations for LDCs on the road to the Fifth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UN LDC5) in Doha in January 2022.

EVENT: Towards UN LDC5: Recovery from COVID-19



The annual conference is the flagship event of Inclusive Growth in Mozambique programme, bringing together a global and multidisciplinary research and policy audience, and provides a window through which to follow the programme's progress. While shifting to online modality due to the pandemic, this year's conference continued the tradition of supporting quality research and important collaborations on development economics in Mozambique and internationally, while providing valuable capacity building opportunities for junior researchers and trainees involved in the programme.

CONFERENCE: Evidence to enhance inclusive growth

AUG

JOURNAL SPECIAL ISSUE: Income inequalities and redistribution in China

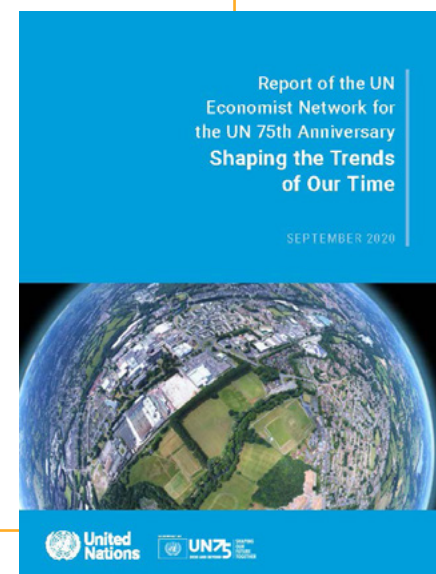
A collection of UNU-WIDER research is published in a special issue of China Economic Review.



SEPT

EXPERT CONTRIBUTION: Shaping the Trends of Our Time, from the UN Economist Network

The UN's top economists warned of crises of our own making if global 'megatrends' are left unchecked in a special report on six global megatrends. The chapter on inequalities relied extensively on data from UNU-WIDER's World Income Inequality Database (WIID) and a WIDER Working Paper by UNU-WIDER Research Fellow Carlos Gradín.



OCT

ANNUAL LECTURE: UN at 75: Slow death or new direction?

Lord Mark Malloch-Brown delivers the 24th WIDER Annual Lecture, with the event being fully online for the first time. The lecture touches on the successes, failures, and challenges of the UN, and provides a manifesto for a re-purposed UN that can be relevant for the next generation. The lecture generates lively debate during, and after the event, and prompts reflection in various UN departments.



NOV

TRAINING: UGAMOD – a tax-benefit microsimulation model for Uganda

Online training for 14 Ugandan policy makers and researchers, organized within the SOUTHMOD project.

DEC

REPORT: Effects of Swedish and international democracy aid

UNU-WIDER researchers looked at data from 148 countries for this study commissioned by the Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA) in Sweden, focusing on the question: Does development cooperation aimed at strengthening democracy actually work? Addressing a critical knowledge gap in aid assistance, the report creates widespread interest among different development actors.



2020 in figures

267 publications



Journal articles	40
WIDER Working Papers	177
WIDER Background Notes	8
Book chapters (in three book volumes)	42

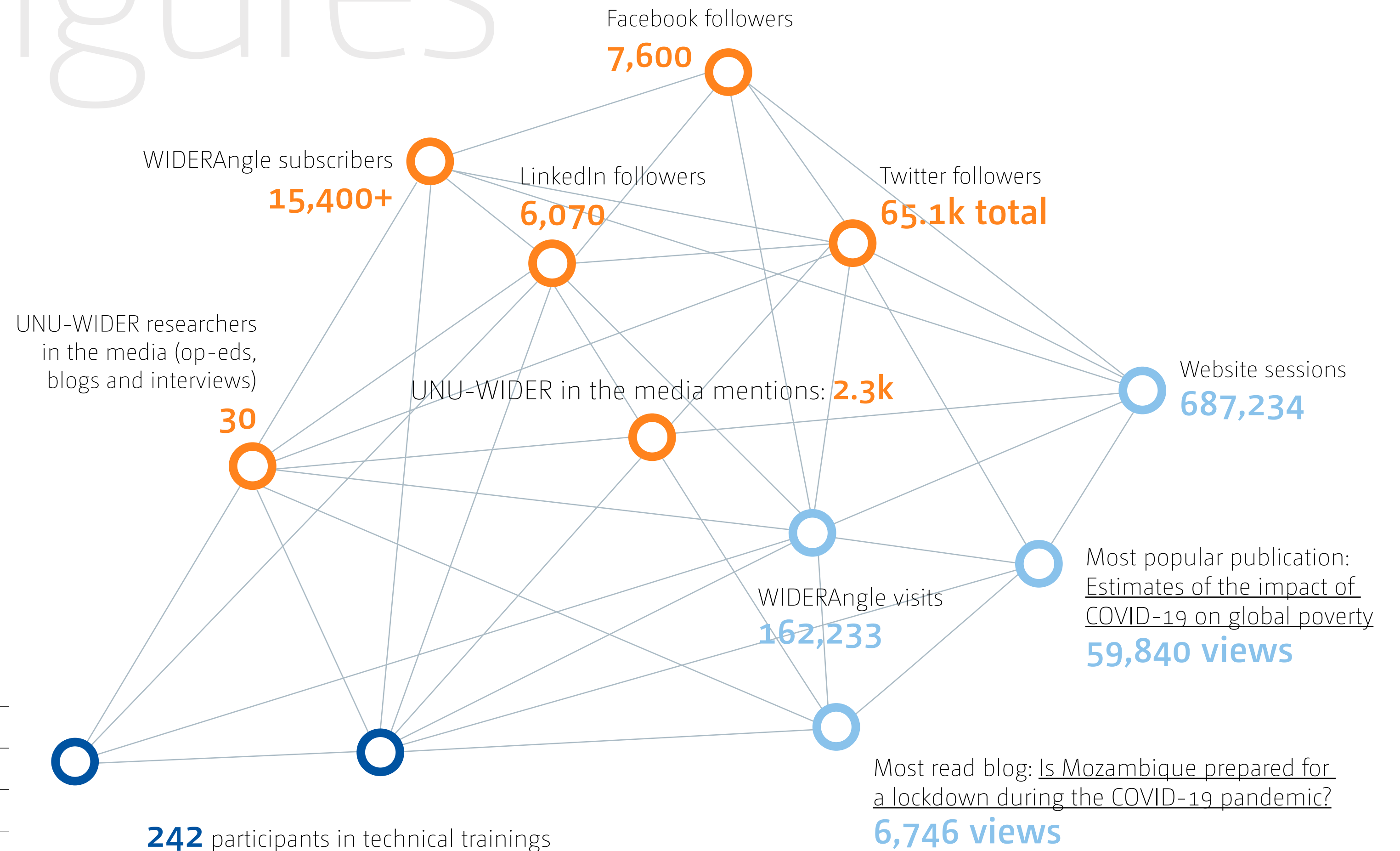


48%
co-authored by
a woman

64%
co-authored by
a researcher from
the Global South

109 events

Large conferences	2
WIDER Annual Lecture	1
Policy workshops	10
Panel discussions	7
Research seminars	46
Project workshops	11
Technical trainings	11
Lectures	7
Other presentations	14

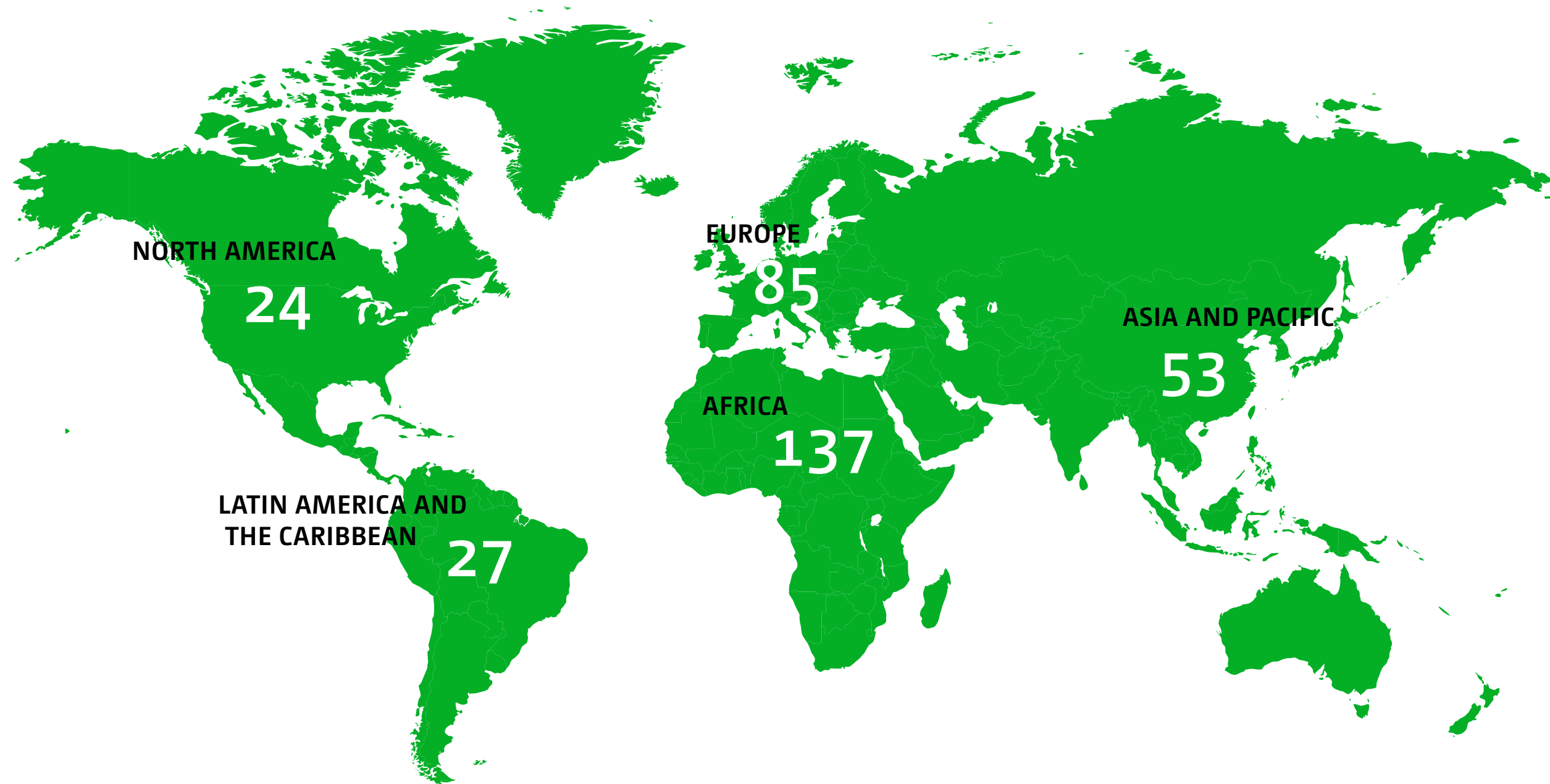


60%
women


92%
nationals of Global
South countries

2020 in figures

 Home base of 326 UNU-WIDER affiliated researchers

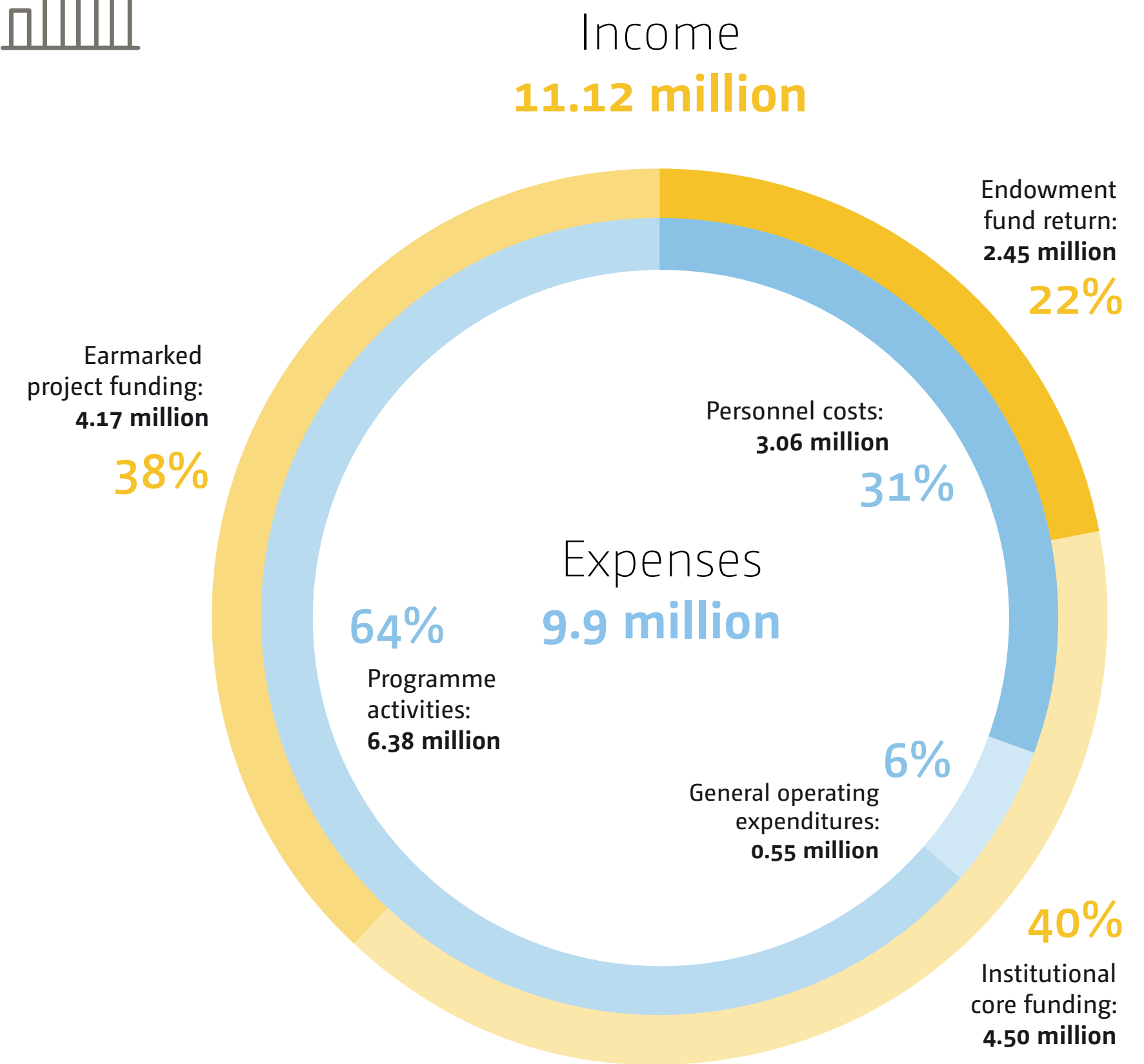


61
different nationalities

 **39%**
are women



Financials



Research to support COVID-19 mitigation and adaptation measures



As the coronavirus pandemic struck in the first quarter of 2020, UNU-WIDER swiftly reoriented its research focus to the implications of the pandemic in the Global South, and possible mitigation and adaptation measures. By adding new COVID-19 components to our projects and adjusting the focus of ongoing research, we have been able to support research efforts and policy responses with high-quality research and analysis.

Our research on the effects of the pandemic to lives and livelihoods in the Global South looks at the consequences of government lockdown policies, especially for informal workers, concerns of inequitable access to healthcare and welfare services, and the likelihood of backsliding on achievements towards equality and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. We continue to work on understanding how social and institutional trust has facilitated or hindered the spread of the coronavirus, and consequences for human rights and democracy.

Meanwhile we have been able to contribute to policy discussions through our ongoing partnerships in Mozambique and South Africa, assisting governments in efforts to model the impact of COVID-19 and their responses. In Ecuador policy makers were able to call on a simulation model we developed as part of the SOUTHMOD project to see how policy reforms could ease the economic and social impact of COVID-19.

The pandemic also meant changing how we facilitate knowledge exchange. For the first time in 19 years the WIDER Development Conference was cancelled. But although all face-to-face events were put on hold, we were quick to turn to meetings and events online, including a new webinar series focusing on COVID-19 and its impact on development.

COVID related outputs

8

Background Notes

10

Webinars

16

Working Papers

33

Blogs

Impact of COVID-19 on the South African economy

Finn Tarp

Programme Lead, [SA-TIED programme](#)

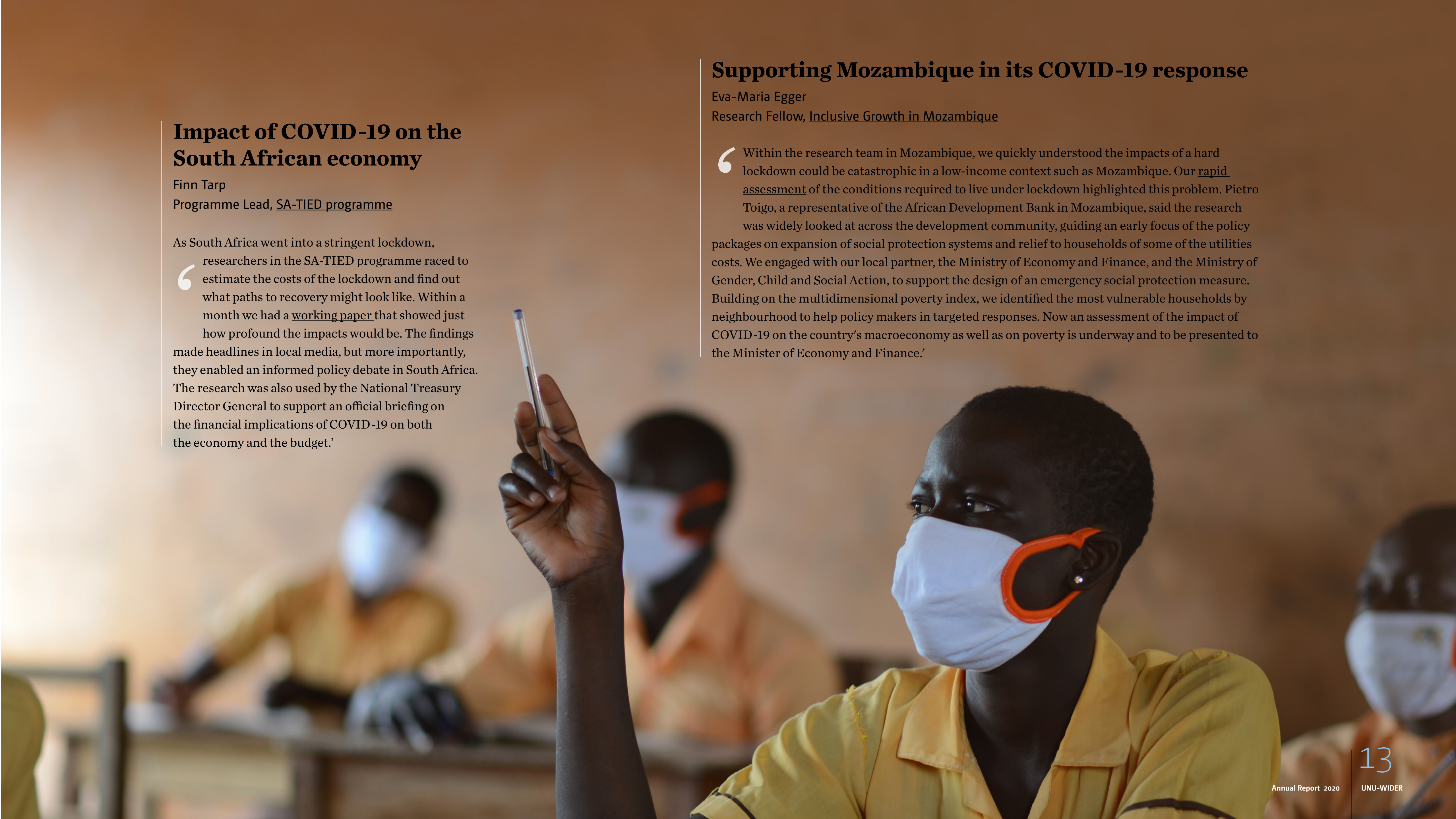
As South Africa went into a stringent lockdown, researchers in the SA-TIED programme raced to estimate the costs of the lockdown and find out what paths to recovery might look like. Within a month we had a [working paper](#) that showed just how profound the impacts would be. The findings made headlines in local media, but more importantly, they enabled an informed policy debate in South Africa. The research was also used by the National Treasury Director General to support an official briefing on the financial implications of COVID-19 on both the economy and the budget.’

Supporting Mozambique in its COVID-19 response

Eva-Maria Egger

Research Fellow, [Inclusive Growth in Mozambique](#)

‘Within the research team in Mozambique, we quickly understood the impacts of a hard lockdown could be catastrophic in a low-income context such as Mozambique. Our [rapid assessment](#) of the conditions required to live under lockdown highlighted this problem. Pietro Toigo, a representative of the African Development Bank in Mozambique, said the research was widely looked at across the development community, guiding an early focus of the policy packages on expansion of social protection systems and relief to households of some of the utilities costs. We engaged with our local partner, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action, to support the design of an emergency social protection measure. Building on the multidimensional poverty index, we identified the most vulnerable households by neighbourhood to help policy makers in targeted responses. Now an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the country’s macroeconomy as well as on poverty is underway and to be presented to the Minister of Economy and Finance.’





WIDER Webinar Series – COVID and development

Rachel M. Gisselquist
Senior Research Fellow

One of the highlights of working with UNU-WIDER has been the opportunity to engage with and learn from the WIDER network, including many working at the cutting-edge of development research. I'm pleased that, even in the midst of a pandemic, we have been able to continue that tradition. The WIDER Webinar Series helped us to take this model online, bringing together researchers from across countries and disciplines to consider the impact of COVID-19 on global development. While there's no replacing the energy of an in-person event, it has been great to host these sessions and to see colleagues tuning in from every continent.'

Estimating the impact of COVID-19 on poverty

Kunal Sen
UNU-WIDER Director

UNU-WIDER was ahead of the curve in estimating the impact of COVID-19 on global poverty thanks to some fantastic work from researchers in the WIDER Network, Andy Sumner, Chris Hoy, and Eduardo Ortiz-Juarez. They worked quickly to model the potential fallout from the pandemic and found that half a billion people could be plunged into poverty as a consequence, setting back progress on ending poverty by at least a decade. The research was released alongside an Oxfam report calling for action from the IMF and the G20.

There was so much interest in their research that a few months later the researchers delivered a follow-up paper showing COVID-19 could drive global poverty back over one billion people. The stark and sobering findings from both papers attracted media and helped to raise awareness of the damning effects the pandemic was having on hard earned progress on poverty.'

This research was cited in well over 2500 print and digital news sources including Al Jazeera, the Associated Press, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and others



35 years of influencing development and practice

In 1985, the first mobile phone call was made, the famine in Ethiopia opened many people’s eyes to the inequality rife in the world, and the temporary offices of a newly founded UN research institute were opened in Helsinki. Thirty-five years later, many more mobile phone calls have been made in the world, through concerted international effort poverty in the world has been steadily decreasing for decades, and UNU-WIDER has grown to become a world-class think tank.

The idea for a research institute focusing on development economics arose from ‘concern for the global economy combined with a recognition of the inability of existing economic theories to explain the disorder in the world and to recommend action.’ (UNU council report, 1982)

The forefathers of UNU-WIDER took that concern and built from it the idea for an institute that would bring a ‘wider’ perspective to development, beginning from an economic framing. It was Amartya Sen who developed the name for the Institute, a name that clearly states the purpose, with an acronym that captured the vision. This vision materialized in 1985, when UNU-WIDER was fully established and operational, with Lal Jayawardena appointed as its first director. By bringing together a network of scholars and practitioners from all around the world to address global development challenges, UNU-WIDER quickly became

an independent and respected voice both within the United Nations and globally.

Over the last 35 years, the Institute has influenced the discourse and contributed to better policy making. Through its partnerships with national governments, international organizations, and the United Nations, UNU-WIDER has worked on solutions to pressing global problems such as poverty, underdevelopment, economic instability, environmental decline, indebtedness, inequality, conflict, state fragility, and the underrepresentation of developing countries in global decision-making, to name a few.

Our research throughout has been geared to creating change and providing the tools and skills with which change makers can take action, while also pushing the envelope on the big issues and ideas, questioning how well-being should be measured, looking critically at structural adjustment programmes, and exposing the dramatic extent of global wealth inequality.

At 35 years, UNU-WIDER is no longer a new kid on the research block, but an established, mature, and respected institute. We will continue to work hard on creating, strengthening, and exchanging knowledge with stakeholders around the world for positive and sustainable change in the Global South.

35 years of UNU-WIDER

I first came to UNU-WIDER in 1985. I was invited to come for three months and work on Amartya Sen's project on hunger, which became three books on The Political Economy of Hunger. During my time there I made many good interactions, many whom I stayed in touch with long after. It was a very positive experience then, and for my career afterwards.
- Professor Samuel Wangwe of REPOA reflects on his memories of UNU-WIDER's 35 years, involved from the early days with Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen.



UNU-WIDER opens its doors in Helsinki

1985

[The book] broadened public understanding of hunger, promoting a definition that encompasses social as well as biological disadvantages. [Sen and Drèze] challenge the idea that famine is caused by food's unavailability, instead arguing that it is driven by individuals' inability to afford it. And they highlight the importance of democracy in preventing famine, arguing for the public provision of goods and services to combat it. Nicholas Stern, former Chief Economist of the World Bank.

Hunger and Public Action by Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen is published. The book turns out to be a fundamental contribution to the development of the capabilities approach in development and stands as an example of how research has the potential to generate bold and ambitious change in policy and practice.

1989



UNU-WIDER was first established as a place for wider and creative thinking on development – going beyond the common sense of the Washington Consensus. Nonetheless collaboration and exchange of ideas was always present in the research community around the hard issues of development.

Bringing together research and policy experts UNU-WIDER hosts a symposium with the World Bank focusing on structural adjustment programmes and stabilization

1993

UNU-WIDER has always been as good as its global network of researchers and policy makers. The Institute's work is based on research projects where network members interact to innovate and investigate the big questions in development. The WIDERAngle was established to reach outside the strict academic communities and discuss UNU-WIDER's work in a common language.

The **WIDERAngle** newsletter is launched as a platform for expert commentary from around the WIDER network

1998

1986

UNU-WIDER hosts its first meeting and workshop with international researchers focusing on changing the perspective on research of debt, structural adjustment, and development

In 1986, when I was 34 years old, WIDER had a conference for which Amartya Sen was the chief organizer. That had an impact on me, impact on my research, got me excited.
- Kaushik Basu



1988

A pathbreaking book from Lance Taylor on **Varieties of Stabilization Experience**, challenging the prevailing common sense of the Washington Consensus on structural adjustment and economic stabilization.

This publication helped generate healthy debate about the stabilization policies promoted by the IMF - Lance Taylor

1990

Eric Hobsbawm spends time at UNU-WIDER to work on his impactful third book of the Ages- trilogy; **Age of Extremes**.

The project titled National Development, Identity Politics, and Concepts of Feminism is launched, led by Valerie Moghadam.



1997

First **WIDER Annual Lecture** was presented by Nobel Laureate Douglass C. North on the importance of understanding the economic significance of institutions.



35 years of UNU-WIDER

The World Income Inequality Database (WIID), the most comprehensive set of income inequality statistics, was launched - today the original database, a standardized version, and a visualization tool is hosted and maintained as a tool kit for anyone interested to know more about inequality trends in the world.

2000



2007 Tony Shorrocks leads a project on global wealth estimation which published one of the first estimates of the distribution of global household wealth in the working paper: Estimating the Level and Distribution of Global Household Wealth.

2007



The development of tax-benefit microsimulation models for a selected group of countries in the Global South, engaging directly with governments and policy makers to support informed policy making, begins under the SOUTHMOD project.

2015

First country programme is established in Mozambique with resident UNU-WIDER research staff at the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the University Eduardo Mondlane.

UNU-WIDER brings the global best practice that brings a certain level of trust to the key agencies that one needs to participate - Duncan Pieterse, National Treasury, South Africa

Building on a successful collaboration with the National Treasury of South Africa and researchers in the Southern Africa region, the SA-TIED programme is launched, bringing UNU-WIDER's engagement in South Africa and its sub-region to a new and higher level.

2017

2001

UNU-WIDER organizes the first WIDER Development Conference that have become since then yearly gatherings of hundreds of researchers and policy makers to debate pressing development concerns

The Visiting PhD Fellowship and Visiting Scholar Programmes are launched. Since 2001, UNU-WIDER hosted, 311 researchers in Helsinki in the two programmes

2011

A large programme on research and communication (ReCom) on foreign aid is launched, with the aim of answering the question 'Does aid work?'

Between 2011-2013, 300 researchers from 59 countries came together and provided evidence on what does and could work in development aid, producing around 250 original studies. The conclusion of this highly influential research was, in short: Aid contributes to long-term growth.



The project 'Learning to Compete (LzC)', seeking to answer a seemingly simple but puzzling question: why is there so little industry in Africa?, kicks off eight year focus on industrial development and policy in Africa.

2016

UNU-WIDER starts hosting the Government Revenue Dataset (GRD), a key tool in providing high-quality and transparent cross-country tax and revenue data to researchers.

2019

The five-year UNU-WIDER work programme is launched to investigate the interconnected challenges facing many countries in the Global South of simultaneously and fundamentally transform the economy, state and society.

UNU-WIDER partners with University of Cape Town to deliver the first UNU-WIDER Summer school, providing a valuable opportunity for capacity development and networking for early-career scholars.



The WIDER Network



Mozambique: Ivandra Vieira

Ivandra was a long-term research intern for the Inclusive Growth in Mozambique programme before undertaking a Master's degree in economics with the support of the programme:

“Before I got into [the programme], I did not know who I was as an economist. I have been part of an incredible journey... I now know what I want to be and what economics means to me.”

The WIDER Network is known to bring together local, national, and global research and policy communities allowing for highly diverse and novel ideas to flourish and enable a rich exchange of analysis and experience across continents.

The network was not originally ‘designed’ nor has it been directed at any stage in its development. On the contrary, it has been driven by demand and grown organically. Through decades of research collaborations, policy support, and events across continents, UNU-WIDER has developed a network of individuals with diverse backgrounds from the Global South and North who are passionate about development and economics. These engagements have been pivotal in the reach and impact achieved by the Institute.

In 2020, the inner circle of the WIDER Network consisted of 644 people and partners who contributed with their research and policy expertise to UNU-WIDER's research projects and participated in the Institute's capacity development activities.




Cameroon: Eugenie Rose Fontep

Rose was one of 20 participants at the UNU-WIDER Summer School in 2019 in collaboration with the University of Cape Town (UCT).

“Being part of a course with other young researchers from various backgrounds and countries was also incredibly useful, both for building my network and for our research. The learning wasn't just from the lecturers, but also from other participants, we shared experiences, insights, and knowledge. We can all make our research more inclusive, and perhaps more impactful, by having a greater understanding of contexts in other parts of the world.”

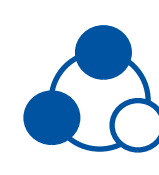
The paper Rose started working on during the summer school has since been published by UNU-WIDER as a WIDER Working Paper. It is one of ten other papers that were published in 2020 from participants of that summer school.

644 individuals

 **37%**
women

71%
nationals from
the Global South

62 institutional partners

 **52%**
Global South institutions

Network (persons)
Institutional partners



Ireland: Carol Newman

Carol, Professor in Economics and Head of the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy at Trinity College Dublin, leads the workstream on Enterprise development for job creation and growth in the [SA-TIED](#) programme.

“Working with the SA-TIED programme has allowed me to be part of a dynamic partnership between researchers and government in South Africa. Our work aims to understand better the opportunities and constraints to private sector development and productivity growth in the region. It’s exciting to be part of this collaboration as it allows us to work on important issues that support informed policy-making.”



South Africa: Thembaletu Seti

The PhD candidate at the North-West University, South Africa, Seti Thembaletu, participated in the [SA-TIED](#) young scholar programme.

“This programme is not all about taking, but it’s all about sharing information, opportunities and getting to know people in my research field. This platform offers a great opportunity for us to come together, to share ideas about the problems of this country and how we can combat the problems.”

Mozambique: Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)

UNU-WIDER partners with MEF for the implementation of the [Inclusive Growth in Mozambique](#) programme. Enilde Sarmiento, Director of MEF’s National Directorate for Economic and Development Policies on the importance of this programme.

“We must deliver results that are visible, tangible, that bring results that allow us to make policy recommendations that orient the inclusive growth in the country. For the macroeconomic impact of COVID on the economy, we could respond with studies that helped us to understand on how to deal with the pandemic and what the impact is.”

Uganda: Uganda Revenue Authority (URA)

In collaboration with URA, UNU-WIDER is conducting [research on the impacts of taxation on Uganda’s economy](#). Results are expected to provide evidence for a tax reform in the country to boost revenue. In addition to producing much-needed evidence on the impacts of taxes on the economy, the collaboration has brought new opportunities to the researchers at URA. Nicholas Musoke commended the training for increasing his research skills. Meanwhile, Dorothy Nakyambadde emphasized the great opportunity the collaboration brought in networking with ‘people doing similar work in different parts of the African continent’.



South Africa: Mamiky Leolo

As a senior official at the South African Revenue Service (SARS), Mamiky’s responsibilities include managing economic and revenue analysis, revenue forecasting, the publication of various tax statistics bulletins, and interacting with local, regional, and international institutions.

Working at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and in the SA-TIED programme, I’ve been able to be part of the important work to make tax data available for research. UNU-WIDER has been a great partner to work with as an institution, but also being part of the UNU-WIDER network has been very rewarding. I’ve collaborated with some fantastic researchers and have been able to connect with new people who are passionate about supporting the economic development of Southern African people.’



Tanzania: Jires Tunguhole

Jires, an assistant lecturer at Sokoine University of Agriculture, attended for the second time a training on UNU-WIDER’s micro-simulation model for Tanzania (TAZMOD).

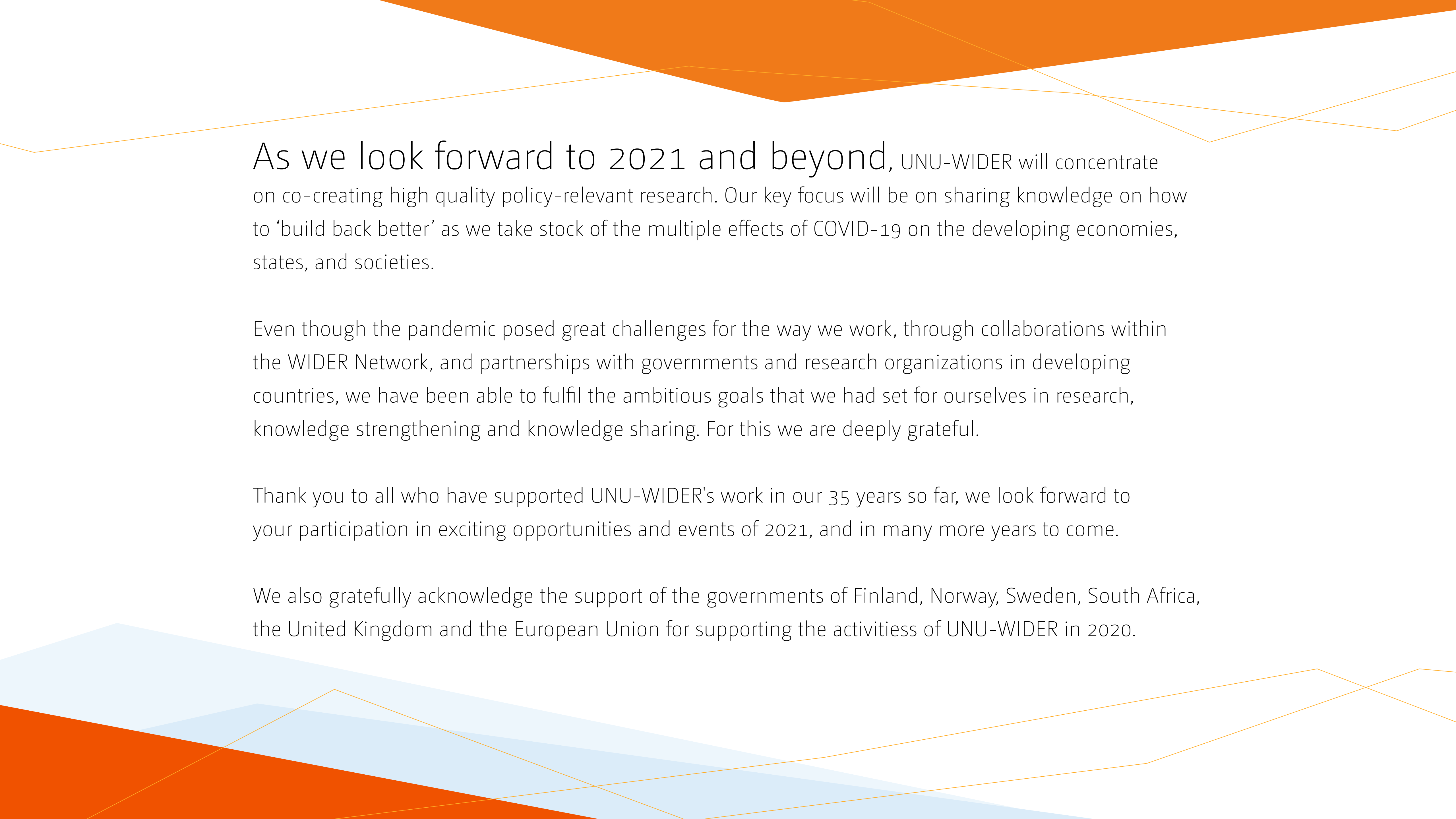
‘I find the model user-friendly, comprehensive. Both practitioners and researchers can use it to create knowledge. I am going to write a paper focussing on improving the situation of the youth as there is unemployment and crime when youth are not working or in school. Policies are needed. The model will enable me to prepare a comprehensive suggestion aimed at policymakers, including the cost and benefit analysis of a youth targeted policy.’



Rwanda: Aimable Nsabimana

In 2019, Aimable spent three months at UNU-WIDER as a Visiting Scholar, during which an opportunity came up to collaborate further.

‘The research visit at UNU-WIDER helped me to improve my work and disseminate the research results. When there was a call for research papers to contribute to a collaborative project between UONGOZI Institute and UNU-WIDER, I decided to apply with my co-author Justice Mensah. Our paper on the impact of weather shocks on child nutrition in Tanzania was published as a WIDER Working Paper in 2020.’



As we look forward to 2021 and beyond, UNU-WIDER will concentrate on co-creating high quality policy-relevant research. Our key focus will be on sharing knowledge on how to ‘build back better’ as we take stock of the multiple effects of COVID-19 on the developing economies, states, and societies.

Even though the pandemic posed great challenges for the way we work, through collaborations within the WIDER Network, and partnerships with governments and research organizations in developing countries, we have been able to fulfil the ambitious goals that we had set for ourselves in research, knowledge strengthening and knowledge sharing. For this we are deeply grateful.

Thank you to all who have supported UNU-WIDER's work in our 35 years so far, we look forward to your participation in exciting opportunities and events of 2021, and in many more years to come.

We also gratefully acknowledge the support of the governments of Finland, Norway, Sweden, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the European Union for supporting the activities of UNU-WIDER in 2020.





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