

## 2018-2019 RAUN Research Theme

### **Innovations for Development: Towards Peaceful, Sustainable and Inclusive Societies**

*“Without innovation there is no way to overcome the challenges of our time”*

*Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General*

The Regional Academy on the United Nations ([RAUN](#)) is an international, multi-disciplinary education program that brings together UN Agencies and outstanding, international students and young scholars who – in the course of 9 months and as part of small teams – conduct research projects of relevance for the Agencies.

The 2018-2019 Regional Academy, to be held from **May 2018 to January 2019**, will take place at a critical time as the world is faced with persisting poverty, conflicts around the world, inequality, lack of opportunities, and environmental issues. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was created as a plan for people, planet, and prosperity that seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom (UN 2015). It recognizes that above all *eradicating poverty* in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for human development. To achieve the 2030 Agenda a holistic approach is needed that is sustainable and leaves no one behind.

New approaches and *innovations* are required to fully address the multiple dimensions of development including, among others, the provision of safe and clean environments, good health and well-being, quality education, decent work and economic growth, and peaceful and secure societies – all of which are closely linked to poverty issues. The 2018-2019 Regional Academy is dedicated to innovations for development, as advocated, promoted, and implemented by UN Agencies and their partners that seek to improve the lives of humans worldwide.

In many respects, the United Nations Agencies are at the forefront of innovation in all areas of the UN mandate. The aim of this year’s Regional Academy is to *provide greater visibility* to existing innovative approaches and measures, and to explore – with the contributions of our participants and the partnering UN Agencies and through rigorous and topical research – new innovative solutions to persistent development challenges. With our work and research, we do not only want to promote the topic, but also to foster the dialogue with civil society, academia, and policy makers.

Following a holistic approach, the 2018-2019 Regional Academy does not restrict its focus to innovations from the sphere of science and technology, but also includes, for example, social, political, economic, and legal innovations originating *from all parts of the UN family*. Innovation for development is really about identifying new and more effective solutions that add value for the people affected by development challenges (UNDP 2017).

Interested in partnering with us? ➡ You can find more information about our work [here](#)

Interesting in applying as a participant? ➡ You can learn more about the application [here](#)

## **Possible Research Areas Related to the 2018-2019 RAUN Theme**

All research topics shall focus on innovative approaches to tackling global challenges. Please note that the following represents a preliminary list of potential research areas to be covered as part of the 2018-2019 Regional Academy. It is still subject to change and may be further specified and extended depending on the interests of the cooperating UN Agencies. The areas presented here are based on the 2016 UNDP report titled *Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals* and extended by the RAUN team:

1. Eradicate poverty and leave no one behind
2. Ensure sustainability and protection of the planet
3. Build peaceful societies and prevent violent conflict
4. Implement inclusive development policies
5. Manage risk and improve disaster response
6. Advance gender equality and women's empowerment

## **References**

UN (2015): Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

UNDP (2017): Report | Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/development-impact/spark-scale-sustain---2016-year-in-review.html>