



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



SDG-17 REPORT



Sustainable Development is the bedrock of COMSATS' mandate long before the institution of the United Nations' Development Agendas (MDGs and SDGs). Accordingly, the Organization has streamlined its undertakings for meeting the challenges pertaining to various dimensions of sustainability through suitable tools and mechanisms. By expanding the scope of its activities towards Asia, Africa and Latin America, COMSATS has been able to establish itself as an ardent advocate of science for development of the South. The CUI management is directly involved in national government or regional non-government organisations, SDG policy development - including identifying problems and challenges, developing policies and strategies, modelling likely futures with and without interventions, monitoring and reporting on interventions, and enabling adaptive management.

Since its establishment, COMSATS has organized/co-organized over 250 national and international events on various subjects ranging from scientific capacity-building, renewable energy, water resource management, mathematical modelling, weather prediction, biotechnology, nanotechnology, repair and maintenance of scientific equipment, national innovation systems, science journalism and telecommunication & Internet Security to South-South and North-South collaboration in research and development. These events have provided a useful platform to the members of the scientific community, development-experts, donor and development agencies, and the decision-makers to share their views and experiences on contemporary issues of vital concern.

COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability is developed for the said purpose, several SDGs related activities are conducted through this center. Which are reported in SDG Report 2021 and Annual Report 2020-2021

Workshop on “Engaging University Faculty for Mental Health Wellbeing of Youth”, 14 October 2021, COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Islamabad, Pakistan

To observe this year's World Mental Health Day, COMSATS in collaboration with its Centre of Excellence, COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Islamabad, organized a Workshop on “Engaging University Faculty for Mental Health Wellbeing of Youth”, on 14th October 2021. Held at CUI, Islamabad, the Workshop had physical and virtual participation of 30 faculty members belonging to various fields of arts and science. The subject event along with the overarching theme of mental health and wellbeing of youth also had the backdrop of Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and 4 (Quality Education).

Opening the event, Dr. Azeema Fareed, Pr. Medical Officer and Focal Person COMSATS Telehealth Project, underscored the significance of the subject and need for creating awareness about it among people of all age groups. She also highlighted COMSATS' efforts and contribution towards the realization of 2030 Global Agenda.



CCIB Workshop on Technical Innovation in Traditional Plant Medicine, 13 October 2021, Beijing, China

COMSATS in collaboration with its Centre of Excellence in China, the Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB), organized a virtual workshop on 'Technical Innovation in Traditional Plant Medicine', from the platform of COMSATS Joint Centre for Industrial Biotechnology (CCIB), on 13th October 2021. The objective of the event was to provide a platform for interaction, knowledge sharing, and expertise exchange in the field of biomedicine and synthetic biology, with a purview to contribute towards 'Good Health and Well-Being', Sustainable Development Goal 3 of the UN Global Agenda 2030.

With physical and virtual participation (at CCIB/TIB and COMSATS Secretariat) of over 60 scientists/officials belonging to 13 Member States of COMSATS, including Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ghana, Iran, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, and Turkey, the webinar covered talks by experts from China, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan.



Webinar on South-South Cooperation: creating Headways for Post-Pandemic Inclusive Recovery, 21 September 2021.

To celebrate United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation (12th September 2021), COMSATS organized a webinar entitled "South-South Cooperation: Creating headways for Post-Pandemic Inclusive Recovery", on 21st September 2021. Joined by notable speakers from United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), New York; South Centre, Geneva; Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO), Beijing; InterAcademy Partnership (IAP), Trieste; Network of African Science Academies (NASAC), Nairobi; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Bangkok; and Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), Rabat, the webinar had virtual gathering of over 90 persons from 28 countries. Overall, participation included individuals from Bangladesh, Benin, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Ghana, the Gambia, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, USA, Venezuela, and Yemen.



Opening the session, Executive Director COMSATS, Dr. Akhtar Nazir (Federal Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan), welcomed the participants and extended gratitude to distinguished speakers to become a part of the event bearing an important theme relating to global development. He opined that resolution of contemporary socio-economic challenges requires enhanced global cooperation, particularly, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, in various sectors. He considered digital technologies indispensable for inclusive recovery from the pandemic and, in this connection, communicated COMSATS' resolve to work with like-minded institutions.



Virtual Conference on Ecosystem Restoration in the Global South, 7 June 2021,

COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS) in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme-International

Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) organized a virtual conference to commemorate the World Environment Day. The conference bearing the theme of the Day – Ecosystem Restoration – was held on 7th June 2021 with speakers from China, Colombia, Ghana, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.



Webinar on Addresses Deforestation Challenges in the Global South, 18 February 2021

COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS) in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of Ghana, Forestry Research Institute (FORIG) of Ghana, and Forestry Research Network of Sub-Saharan Africa (FORNESSA) co-organized a webinar entitled “Sustainable management of forests and challenge of deforestation in the Global South”, on 18th February 2021. The webinar was aimed at sharing knowledge and insights on the theme of the event as well as propose actions for governments to accelerate and scale up efforts to mitigate deforestation.



The event was moderated by Dr. Ernest Gordon Foli, Principal Research Scientist at FORIGs – CSIR, and member of UN Secretary General's Advisory Group on the Global Sustainable Development Report (2019), and included following speakers: Dr. Tonjock Rosemary Kinge, Associate Professor of Mycology, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Bamenda, Cameroon; Mr. Mauricio Andrés Valencia Camelo, Environmental Engineer, International Centre for Physics (CIF), Colombia; Mr. Jacob Amoako, Measurement, Reporting and GIS officer at Climate Change Directorate of the Forestry Commission of Ghana; Prof. Dr. Maher J. Tadros, Department of Natural Resources and

Environment, Jordan University of Science & Technology, Jordan; Dr. Steve Makungwa, Forest measurements, modeling and climate change expert at University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi; Mr. Shiva Pariya, Forest Officer, Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forests and Environment, Nepal; Dr. Samuel Olalekan Olajuyigbe, Senior Lecturer, Department of Forest Production and Products, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; and Mr. Ashiq Ahmad Khan, Scientific Representative of EvK2CNR Association, Pakistan.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Shahid Kamal, Head of CCCS, highlighted the importance of forests and discussed the environmental, economic and social aspects of this ecosystem. Prof. Daniel Ofori, Director of FORIG/CSIR, delivered his key note address in which he highlighted the challenges of deforestation and mitigative strategies to cope this challenge.

The speakers highlighted some key points on the theme of the event. Significance of forests from cultural, economic, social and environmental perspectives was highlighted. Deforestation was considered a key contributor towards water scarcity and creating imbalances in ecosystems. Irrational urban development was considered a key challenge threatening forests and related ecosystems, due to loss of biodiversity and overuse of wood for timber and fuel. Loss of natural habitats causes major environmental setbacks in terms of climate change and biodiversity. Commercially, forests were considered important for providing ecotourism opportunities for livelihood of people, which is why reduction in forest cover could increase unemployment.

The event recommendations included:

- Alternate and clean fuel is best approach to reducing demand of fuel wood coming from forests;
- Mainstreaming of new technologies and environment-friendly approaches is necessary to reduce dependence on fuel wood;
- Formulation and implementation of suitable government level policies is necessary for forest preservation and regeneration; and
- Urban forestry could be a good approach for clean environment and fresh air, while agro forestry could be a useful adaptive approach to address food insecurity.

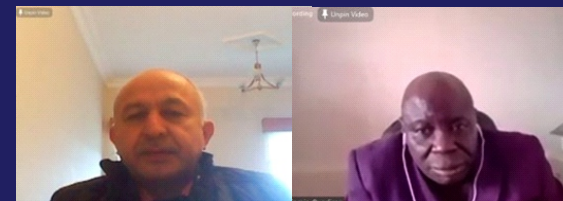
Webinar on Modeling and Simulation on Climate Change and Environmental Pollution: Strengthening Resilience in the Global South, 12 January 2021

COMSATS organized a webinar on “Modeling and Simulation on Climate Change and Environmental Pollution: Strengthening Resilience in the Global South”, on 12th January 2021. Co-organized by COMSATS Centre of Excellence in Nigeria – National Mathematical Centre (NMC) – and COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS), the webinar gathered scientists, researchers and policy makers to exchange information, share knowledge and good practices to strengthen climate actions in the Global South, as well as highlight the role of modelling and simulations for evidence-based knowledge to help formulate policies and legislation for climate action.



The webinar was moderated by Mr. Bilal Anwar, General Manager, Commonwealth Climate Finance Hub, and included following speakers: Dr. Daniel Tutu Benefoh, Deputy Director, Climate Change Unit, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana; Prof. Dr. Ghasem Azizi, Department of Physical Geography, University of Tehran, Iran; Prof. B. O. Oyelami, Head of Mathematical Modeling and Simulation Research Group, National Mathematical Centre (NMC), Nigeria; Dr. Zia Ur Rehman Hashmi, Head of Water Research Section, Global Change Impact Studies Centre, Ministry of Climate Change, Pakistan; and Prof. Hüseyin Toros, Professor of Climate Change, Air Quality and Modeling, Istanbul Technical University (ITÜ), Turkey.

Welcoming the participants, Ambassador Shahid Kamal, Head of CCCS, stated that the past decade was the hottest with record increase in the level of carbon emissions. He considered climate change as one of the biggest challenges of all time and deemed mathematical modeling and simulation important for decision making relating to climate mitigation and adaptation within the framework of Paris Climate Agreement and 2030 Development Agenda. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Stephen Onah, Director of NMC, Nigeria, opined that mathematical modeling is the most efficient way to predict and mitigate adverse impacts of climate change.



COMSATS' programmes are formulated keeping in view all the three aspects of sustainable development, i.e. social, economic and environmental. The mandate of COMSATS lends it the flexibility to work within a wide range of technology spectrum. On the high-end of the spectrum, special attention is being given to build indigenous capacity and competence in the emerging sciences and technologies. On the other end of the spectrum, efforts are being made to bring the benefits of technological revolutions in the areas of education, health, and energy to as large a cross-section of population as possible, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged sections of COMSATS' Member States.

Dr. Khalid Saeed Khan, Member of Government of Pakistan's Task Force on COVID-19, and Distinguished Investigator, University of Granada, Spain, visited COMSATS' flagship projects in Pakistan, COMSATS Telehealth Centre and COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), on 26th January 2021. During his visit to CTH, Dr. Khan was shown around the facilities and given a briefing on telehealth model of CTH. CTH, it was informed is currently working with 06 active telehealth clinics of Baluchistan and 01 in Jhelum (Punjab). Besides provision of primary and secondary healthcare services, the Programme is also helping to build capacity of paramedical staff as well as to create awareness among general public. Dr. Nadia Rasheed, Project Manager along with her team of doctors briefed the esteemed guest regarding

the operations of CTH at CIS.

COMSATS Centres of Excellence urged to initiate new projects and programmes related to SDGs to be facilitated by COMSATS Secretariat for submission of the joint proposals through donor agencies and international partner organizations for potential funding. In this connection, one project titled “Feasibility Study for Provision of Safe Drinking Water through Water Conservation (SDWC)”, led by CUI Pakistan having participation from Egypt and Nigeria, was submitted by COMSATS under D-8 Project Support Fund which had been approved. Moreover, ITI-Sri Lanka signed MoUs with CUI-Pakistan and ICCBS-Pakistan for collaboration in a number of fields of science and technology in presence of Prime Ministers of Pakistan and Sri Lanka, on 23rd February 2021. Furthermore, another cooperation agreement is being worked out to be signed by CUI-Pakistan and UTG-Gambia to facilitate academic exchange between the two higher education institutions of COMSATS' network

The COMSATS Centres of Excellence are providing postgraduate scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships at COMSATS' Network. Under this center CUI-Pakistan offers scholarships to the students vetted by COMSATS Secretariat in master's & PhD Programmes. Open for admission in Fall 2022 semester, the call for nominations under this offer was disseminated among the Centres of Excellence and the Focal Points. Moreover, ANSO has invited COMSATS to recommend students belonging to its member states for availing scholarships for young students for Fall 2022 semester, announcement of which has been disseminated among the Focal Points and Centres of Excellence. Pertinent actions in

this respect are being taken. COMSATS participated in the opening ceremony of the 34th Khwarizmi International Award (KIA), organized by IROST-Iran, on 7th February 2021. In this connection, certificates of the winners and Executive Director's message were shared with IROST

COMSATS Telehealth (CTH) for All

During the 23rd Council meeting, the Centres of Excellence were urged to emulate COMSATS Telehealth programme in their respective countries. This advice was especially pertinent and relevant in view of the healthcare related issues and pressing needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. As an effort in this direction,

possibilities of collaboration with COMSTECH were explored to extend the benefits of CTH programme to common member states. COMSATS' team held discussions with Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Director ICCBS-Pakistan/ Coordinator General COMSTECH, and discussed opportunities in this respect with a special focus on African region. The discussions led to a team from COMSTECH visiting COMSATS Telehealth facility in Islamabad for orientation on the telehealth system and its operations.

