



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2023

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The Way Forward

Director's Note

As I look back on 2023, I am amazed at how fast five years have passed since I was given the humble task of leading this organization. Five years ago, the world was in a very different place; technologies were different, and this organization was also very different. We have navigated through the worst international health crisis in a century, an economic recession, and an inflationary period that is still looming over the multilateral system. In the midst of this, we have seen new fronts of geopolitical instability and the rapidly growing dissemination and impact of fast-advancing technologies.

Yet, UNICC has thrived over these past five years. We have maintained the right outlook, solidifying the organization as the primary strategic partner providing digital solutions, cybersecurity, and advanced computing services within the UN system.

Since the beginning of my tenure, I have heeded the call by the UN Secretary-General to use new technologies to better serve the mandates of every UN entity, creating economies of scale, synergies, and a nimble ecosystem where innovation and efficiency are embedded in every project and every decision taken at our growing organization.

All those efforts are reflected in the milestones that UNICC has achieved over the past five years. The professional staff at our organization has grown by **37.5%** in that time from 261 (in 2019) to **359** (in 2023). In total numbers, including consultants, we grew by **85.2%** and transformed from a 482-person organization to an **863**-person workforce. More women are joining our workforce as a result of the implementation of the organization's Gender Parity Strategy, reaching **36%** in 2023 and gender parity in senior management since 2022.

New services were added to our ever-growing portfolio. Following the request of our partners, we are now more than ever focusing on cybersecurity, AI and data analysis, and cloud services. This growth is testimony to the trust that more than **100** international organizations place in UNICC to support them in delivering their mandates through digital transformation and innovation.

This 2023 report also shows how UNICC is focusing on strategic partnerships to have a greater impact on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2023, we worked with an array of stakeholders, both in the private and public sectors, including not-for-profit organizations and academia, to propel the impact of digital and smart technologies in the three pillars of the UN system: Human Rights, Peace and Security, and Sustainable Development.

I remain committed to multiple initiatives like greening UNICC – for the third successive year, we are a carbon-neutral organization. We have also remained the main technical partner, also for the third consecutive year, to the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). On gender inclusivity, we participated for the first time as a separate UN entity in the UN System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality. And we welcomed new organizations like the African Union (AU) and the African Development Bank (ADB). The complexity of 2023 is reflected in this report, which I invite you to carefully read.

Many of the milestones achieved during the past five years, and in particular in 2023, would not have been possible without the tireless support of my colleagues, to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude. Their hard and

Since I became Chair of the Management Committee in 2021, I have witnessed the transformation of UNICC. It is partnering with all of us, 100 + agencies of the UN wide system, to progressively add digital solutions, cybersecurity and advanced computing services to its classic ICT services. I cannot imagine a digital UN without UNICC at its core.

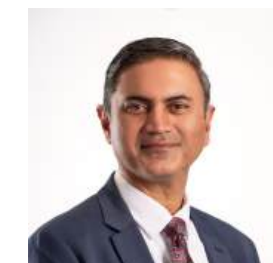
Fabrice Boudou

Director of IT Solutions Division, World Trade Organization and Chair of UNICC's MC

dedication make this operation the success that it is. I would also like to thank all of our partners for their ongoing trust, and our Management Committee (MC) and Advisory Groups for their advice and good guidance over the year. A special thanks is reserved for our MC Chair, Fabrice Boudou, and MC Vice-Chair, Salem Avan, whose leadership and sage counsel inspire me to shepherd UNICC to new heights.

While 2024 comes with new challenges and opportunities, we remain committed to the same mission – delivering innovative, forward-looking, and reliable system-wide solutions to help the UN system achieve its mandate.

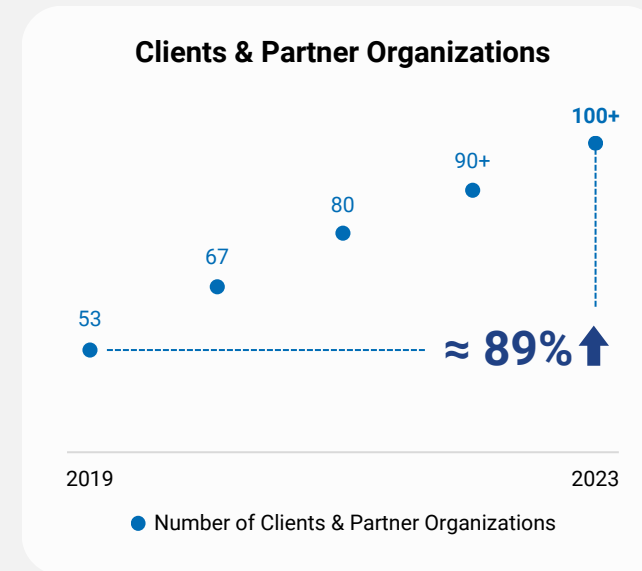
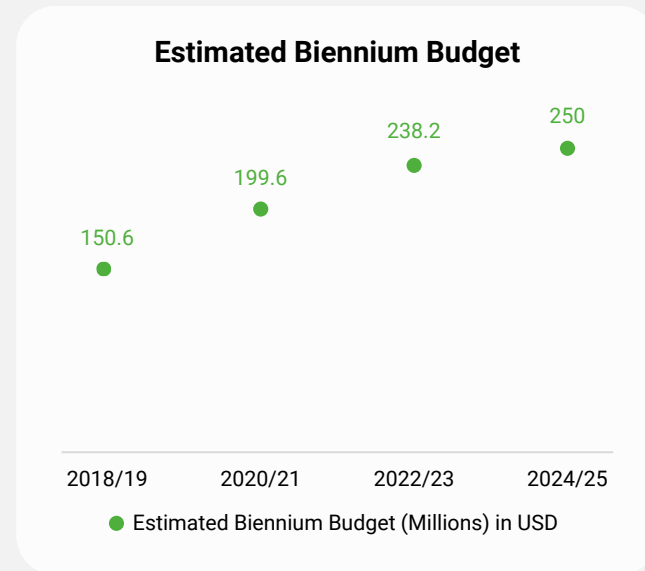
We will keep championing technology as the world's great equalizer to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and prosperity on a global scale. I hope you will find inspiration in this report and the snapshots it captures.



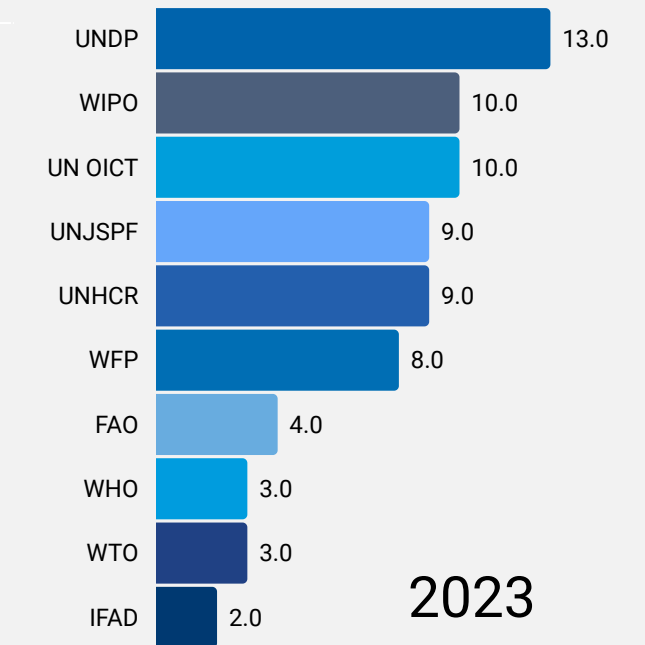
Sameer Chauhan
Director
UNICC

2019 - 2023

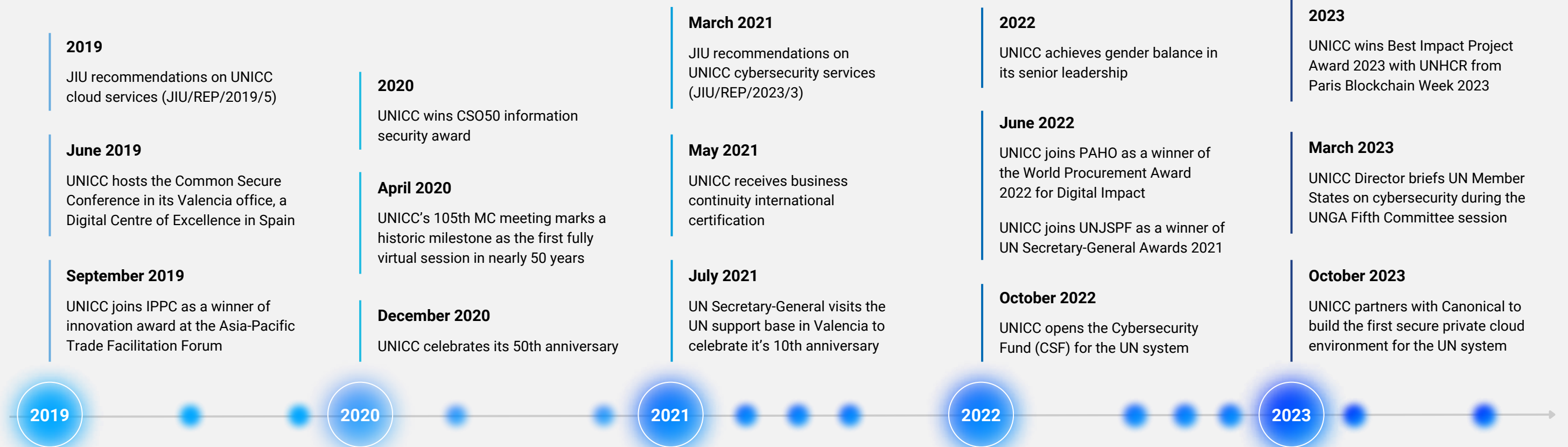
UNICC over Five Years



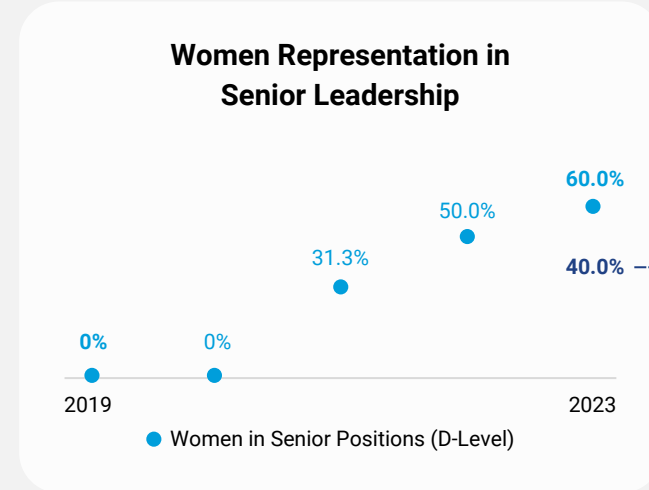
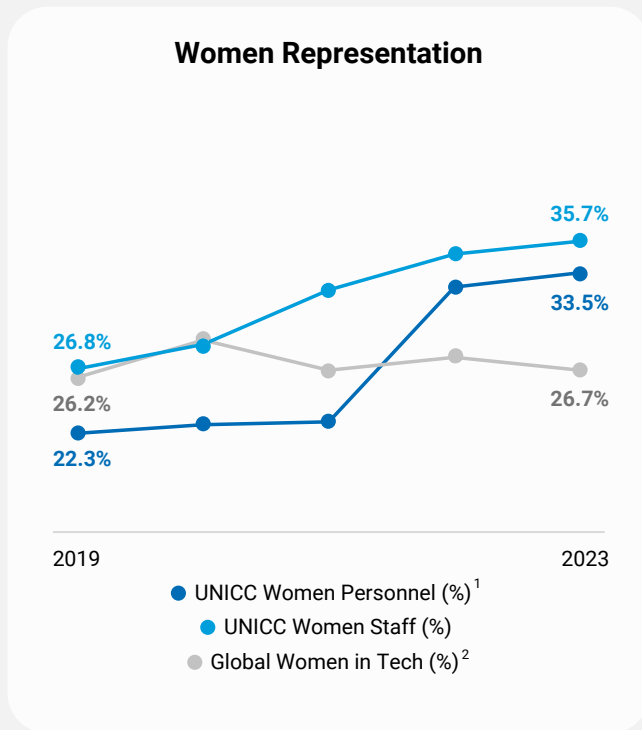
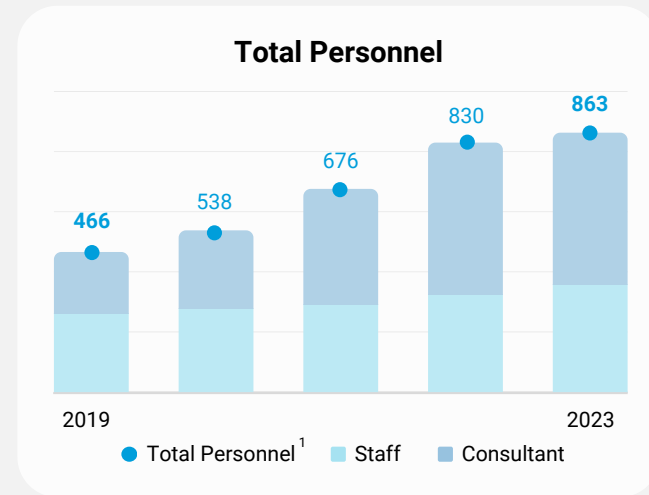
Top 10 Partner Organizations by Services Delivered



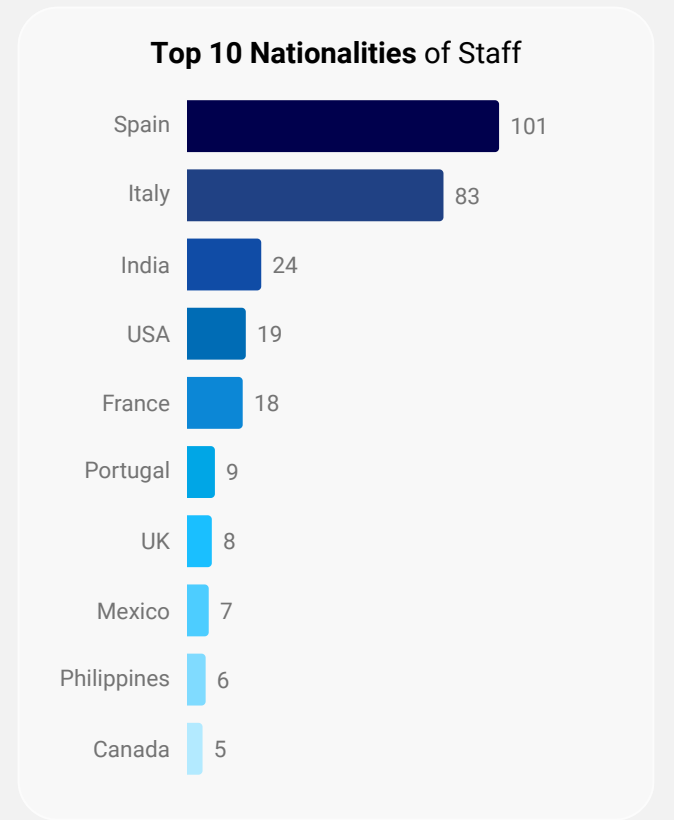
Milestones



Personnel Highlights

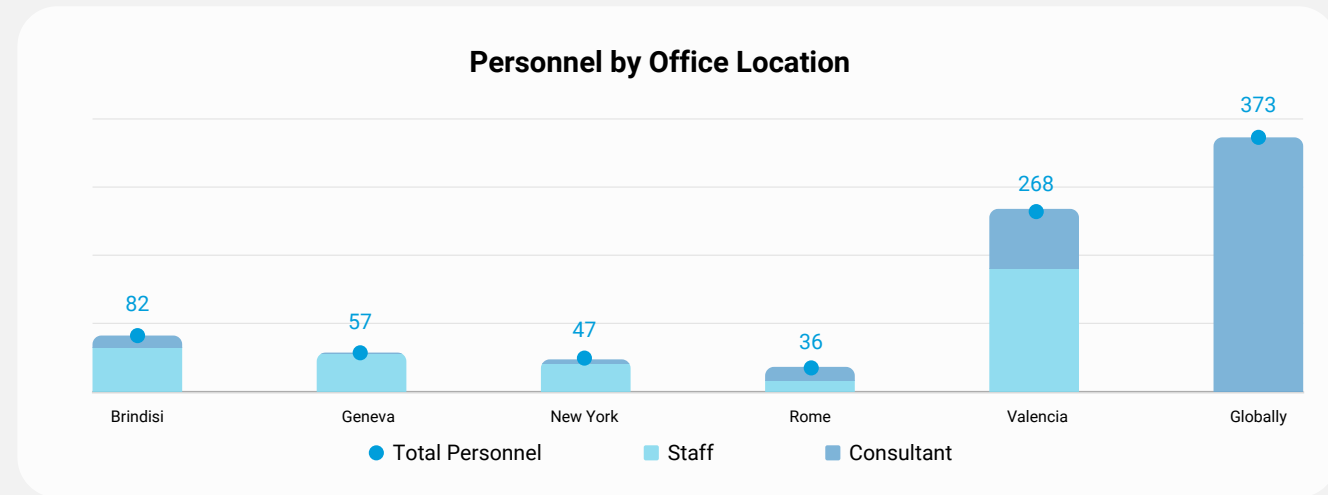


26.5% of women hold leadership positions in S&P companies*



52.4% of staff are internationally hired

14% more nationalities compared to 2019



To build for everyone, we must **build with everyone.**

1. Personnel includes staff and consultant

2. Source: Statista

History

UNICC was established in 1970 by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. UNICC was born as an inter-organizational body to provide a common electronic data processing (EDP) facility. Once a small entity supporting some of the UN entities with mainframe computers, infrastructure, networking, storage and computing, UNICC has grown to support more than 100 partners and delivers an entire spectrum of reliable digital solutions from five strategic locations around the world.

UNICC enables its partners to achieve their mandates and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda through accelerated digital delivery, with support in technology areas spanning cybersecurity, analytics and data management, software services and cloud, network and infrastructure and other client services.

[More on UNICC Website](#)



UNICC Valencia Office in Spain

Governance



112th UNICC Management Committee (MC) meeting, first MC meeting in Nairobi

UNICC is governed by a Management Committee (MC) comprised of one representative from each of its UN Partner Organizations. All UN Partners meet twice a year and share responsibility for key decisions, providing guidance in charting UNICC's strategic direction and approving the Centre's budget, financial reports and service rates. The organization's Director oversees the day-to-day business and is advised by the Advisory Group.

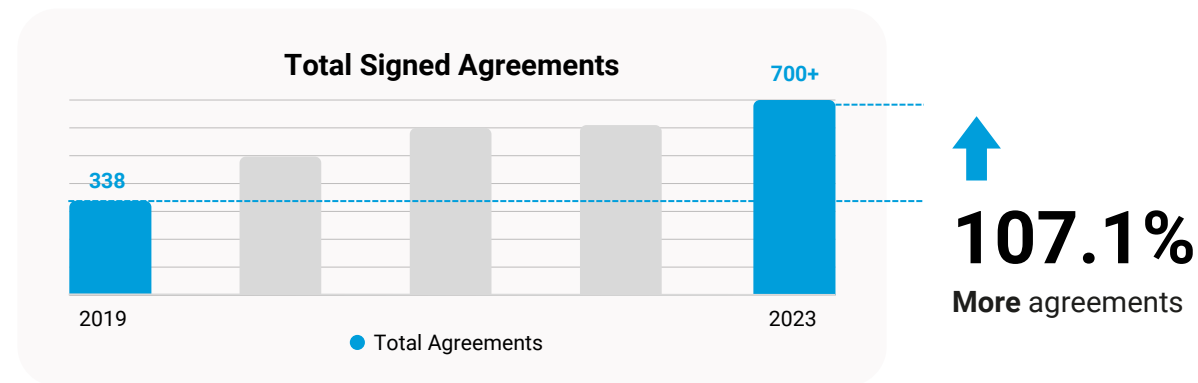
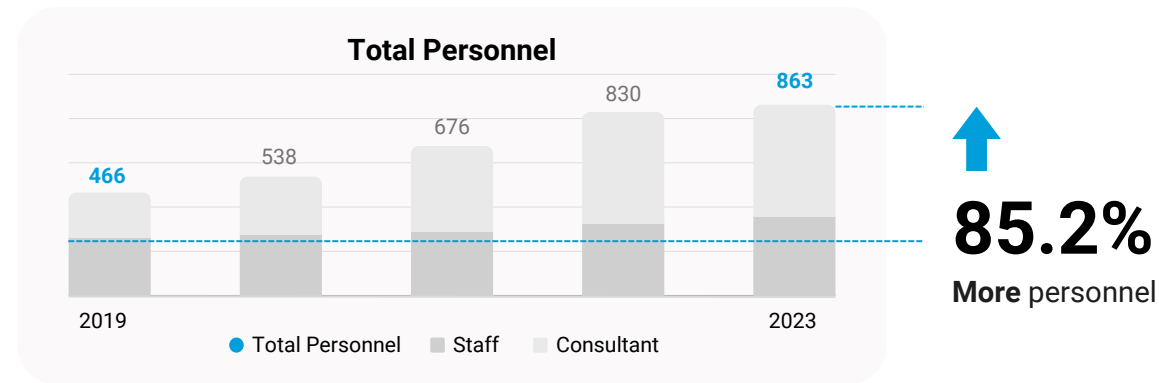
UNICC's Advisory Group is composed of the MC representatives of the top five UN system contributors to UNICC plus one to three additional MC members suggested by the Chair of the MC and endorsed by the MC members. The Advisory Group works throughout the year with UNICC's Director to undertake preliminary work on topics of interest, to provide advice on MC agendas and to make recommendations on items presented for MC decisions.

Financial Overview

2023 was a unique year for UNICC and for the multilateral system. The financial crises resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent inflation are still looming above the entire UN system. New geopolitical instabilities added more constraints to the already-shrinking budgets for humanitarian and development assistance. As a cost-recovery organization, we could feel firsthand the reduction in funds, while at the same time, clients are requesting more outcomes with those shrinking numbers.

Despite the challenges, UNICC experienced significant growth in 2023, with over 700 projects signed. This expansion is especially notable as we maintain our workforce, with a slight increase from 830 personnel in 2022 to **863** in 2023. Our focus has been on enhancing organizational efficiency and continually improving processes to ensure we make the best use of our resources. By optimizing operations, we've successfully implemented a 'doing more with less' approach, prioritizing agility and impact in every initiative.

In the past five years, UNICC has grown its staff by **85%** and the number of signed agreements by **107%**. This reflects the increasing demand within the multilateral system for shared digital solutions and services tailored specifically to its unique needs. Looking ahead, UNICC will continue to focus on cost efficiency, collaboration and economies of scale while exploring innovative business and funding models to better serve its clients and support their missions.



2023 Highlights

Technology in Action

Cybersecurity | Data & Analytics | Digitalization of the UN system

As the UN's critical digital arm, UNICC continues to harness innovative digital tools to accelerate the digitalization of the UN system. In 2023, UNICC collaborated with UN partners to deploy impactful, technology-backed tools to automatize processes and unlock human potential, making it possible to use the human resource for other activities. At the same time, we unlocked the power of data, to analyze past and current trends and enable leadership to be better informed when taking decisions, or to reinforce risk assessments and risk-reduction specially for those high-impact UN entities. UNICC data scientists are creating platforms to optimize operations. The new systems combined as many frontier technologies as needed, including satellite imagery, climate models and machine learning to predicts droughts/famines in African countries, but also in other parts of the world, enabling target aid delivery, like in the case of our partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP). The organization designed, piloted and implemented a blockchain solution to securely share verified digital IDs with UNHCR to improve assistance for displaced people globally.

Process automation and artificial intelligence remain essential for modernizing outdated UN system workflows. Our digital transformation team has worked closely and tirelessly with all UN partners to ideate tools that are high impact while at the same time globally scalable and adaptable to different circumstances and needs. During 2023, UNICC rolled out chatbot

assistants to handle thousands of IT help desk tickets automatically.

A major priority during 2023 was cybersecurity. The cybersecurity team has worked tirelessly to offer best practice, best service, and aligned with international standards and National Computer Emergency Response (CERT) guidelines to defend the UN system and other international organizations against ever growing cyberthreats and cyberattacks. UNICC's priority is to cyber-defend the entire UN system, to safeguard sensitive data and to ensure resilience. The main concern is to institutionalize new multi-layered protections including encryption, access controls and AI-powered threat detection. As per clients and partners request, UNICC is providing training and guidance on cybersecurity best practices as threats grow more advanced.

UNICC assists the UN system to ethically harness leading-edge technologies to empower UN entities to fulfill their mandate and accelerate achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals. As this report captures, our 2023 initiatives – from strengthening system-wide cybersecurity to leveraging frontier data analytics to delivering digital automation – all ultimately align to economically and socially empower vulnerable communities worldwide during this decisive Decade of Action.

"UN 2.0 is about strengthening our expertise and culture in data, digital, innovation, foresight, and behavioural science – to build a UN System that can better support Member States in the years to come."

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES

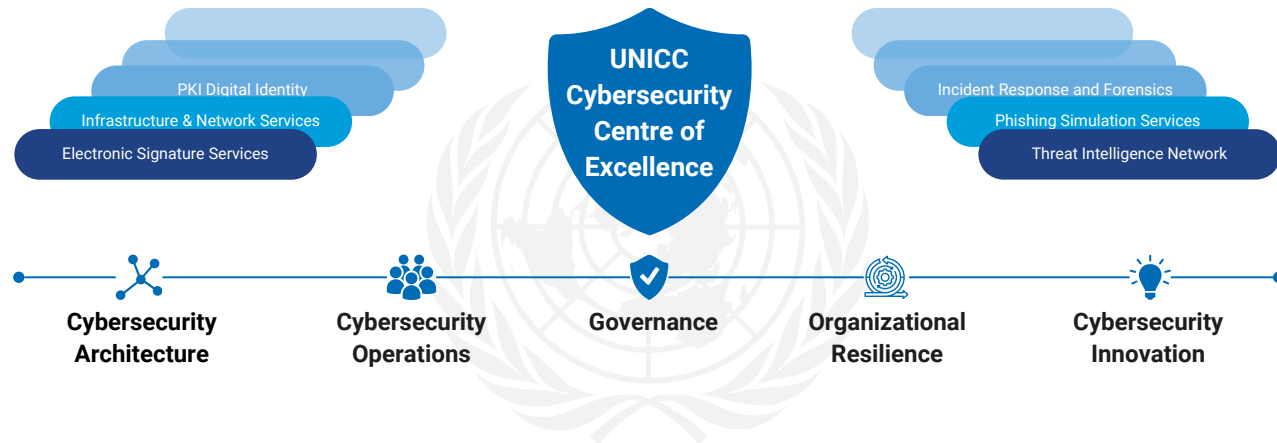
United Nations Secretary-General

First Ever Briefing of UNICC's Director to the UN Membership - the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly

In March 2023, UNICC's Director was invited by the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly (Administrative and Budgetary matters) to brief the UN Member States on the topic of cybersecurity, as outlined in the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report on Cybersecurity in the UN system organizations. For the first time, UNICC's Director addressed direct questions from UN Member States related to the cybersecurity services provided by UNICC and the posture of the UN system. This strategic briefing also served to explain to the membership what UNICC has been doing and standing for since its creation 53 years ago.

Technology in Action

Cybersecurity for the UN system

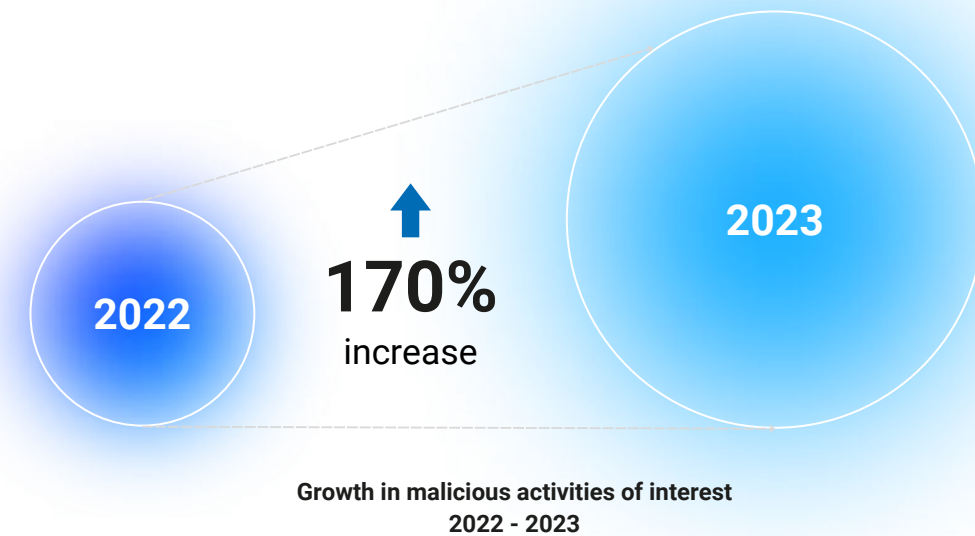


In 2023, UNICC's Cybersecurity Division delivered **17 common security solutions** to **70+ organizations** (UN system and other International Organizations). These solutions enhanced the security and resilience of those organizations, while also improving their ability to respond to cyber threats and incidents.

As part of the service portfolio, UNICC supported many UN organizations to conduct security audits, assessments and technical tests to ensure that vulnerabilities are discovered and remediated in a timely manner thereby reducing the likelihood of those organizations being exploited. Specifically, UNICC conducted over **20** audits across Azure, O365, Intune, AWS, Google and other Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions. Furthermore, UNICC supported around **20** organizations in remediating critical vulnerabilities and configuration issues in their cloud environments. The cybersecurity team performed **47** Penetration tests across many organizations and **23** business applications were continuously scanned with the objective to discover and promptly address any newly discovered vulnerability.

The Offensive Security Team executed several red teaming exercises to continuously assess and enhance the capabilities to detect and respond to malicious activity of interest. UNICC also launched a common solution to perform third party risk assessments that aimed at ensuring the supply chain of the organizations are also adhering to industry standards on cybersecurity. Through this common solution, UNICC performed **17** third party risk assessments supporting **six** different UN entities; **10** Cybersecurity Resilience Maturity Assessments; and supported seven audit engagements, ensuring compliance with ISO standards. UNICC underwent several external audits and certifications, achieving the successful integration of the three main Management Systems (Information Security, Business Continuity and Service Management) into a single Integrated Management System (IMS). UNICC executed tabletop exercises in **five** UN entities to prepare them for adverse cyber incidents both at a technical and managerial level.

On the detection response and recovery front, the UNICC's 24x7 Common Cybersecurity Operations Centre (CSOC) continuously monitored security events coming from the analysis and the ingestion of approximately **800 TB** (terabyte) of relevant data. This analysis allowed the CSOC to promptly detect, respond and contain **48,000 malicious activities** of interest that would have resulted in a cyber security incident impacting the availability, confidentiality and integrity data processed by the monitored organizations. Beside this, the CSOC developed a capability to proactively search for signs of malicious activities that would not be detected with traditional methods. UNICC also expanded the Web Application Firewall (WAF) and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) mitigation services to support **220 domains** for **10 organizations** mitigating **230 million requests** through DDoS, API security, bot protection, and WAF. The Common Secure threat intelligence team actively tracked Threat Actor Groups and proactively shared about **120,000 technical indicators** and **3,000 related events** (Indicator of Compromise, Techniques, Tactics and Procedures) and about **400** strategic actionable cyber threat intelligence notifications with organizations.



During 2023, UNICC's Cybersecurity Division responded to a large number of cyberattacks targeting multiple UN organizations and observed relevant malicious activists distributed over various regions worldwide. The analysis and the correlation of this data highlighted a **170% increase** in malicious activities of interest when compared to 2022. The cybersecurity division provided confidential support to targeted organizations to address various cyber threats. In the majority of the incidents, the cyber threat landscape mirrored the geopolitical situation, as cyberattacks were increasingly used to achieve objectives in strategically relevant crisis zones. In 2023, the Common Secure Cyber Threat Intelligence Team observed and tracked more than **50 different adversaries**, including more than **30 never-seen-before targeting UN organizations**. These groups range from opportunistic individuals to highly sophisticated groups leveraging advanced attack techniques and capabilities. The main goals of these adversaries included information gathering, financial gain through different targeted frauds schemes or disrupting the mandate of UN organizations.

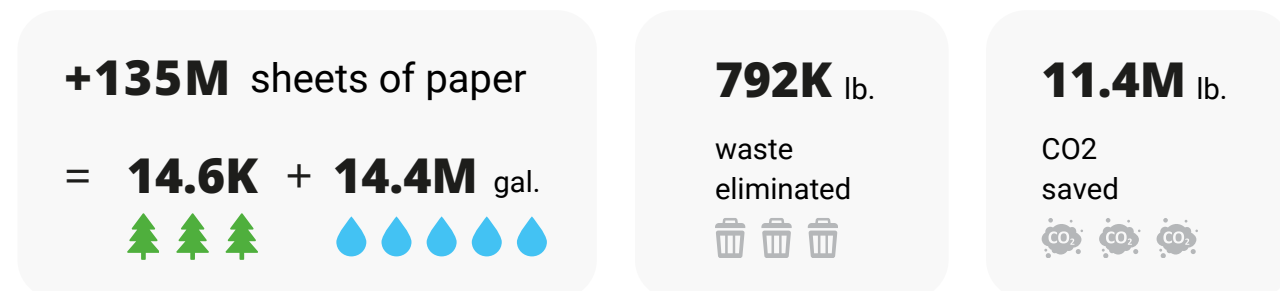
Leveraging the skilled cybersecurity experts in digital forensics, UNICC also enabled UN entities on investigative support services aimed at empowering internal audit teams to effectively use technology to perform digital forensics and investigations.

During 2023, UNICC supported key initiatives in several UN entities to reduce the likelihood of cyber incidents from occurring by implementing advanced cybersecurity capabilities. UNICC successfully operationalized privilege access management for UNICC's core infrastructure, enhancing our privileged access management capabilities and security controls. UNICC also built and delivered identity lifecycle management solutions for UN entities by selecting a leading industry partner in this domain. The solution processed **100,000 requests** in 2023 enforcing strict security boundaries and segregation of duties based on business requirements. UNICC's cybersecurity team also developed a comprehensive Cybersecurity Governance Framework in collaboration with six participating UN entities for the UN Digital ID Programme.

UNICC's Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) Support Service expanded too and now counts **nine UN organizations** with some UN entities relying entirely on UNICC for their Cybersecurity Programme and CISO role. Data protection has emerged as a critical area of focus, driven by increasing demands from UN organizations. UNICC currently supports four UN entities in implementing data protection measures, including gap analysis, privacy impact assessments, data inventory and data scanning activities. UNICC's cybersecurity awareness services saw a **20% increase** in the number of organizations participating, bringing the total to **23 subscribers**. **117,000 users** were trained through phishing simulations, with the objective of enhancing their ability to recognize and respond to potential cyber threats.

UNICC's physical cybersecurity team completed a thorough physical security assessment of UNICC's enterprise data centers, ensuring critical assets are well-protected. UNICC ensured carbon neutrality by monitoring and managing its carbon footprint. With the experience gained by becoming carbon neutral, UNICC launched a new environmental resilience solution to support the UN organizations in producing digital solutions in an environmentally friendly approach. Meanwhile, UNICC Electronic Signature Common Solution leveraged by 22 UN organizations contributed to saving **over 135 million sheets of paper** which equates to about **14,600 trees** and **14.4 million gallons of water** saved. Additionally committed to renewable energy with **792,000 pounds** waste eliminated and **11.4 million pounds** of CO2 saved.

Special Facts: Savings from the UNICC Electronic Signature Common Solution



UNICC Cyber Threat Landscape Report, published in May 2024

Cyber Threat Landscape Report 2023

This is the second time that UNICC has published a Cybersecurity Landscape Report. The first time was in 2022, and the report became very quickly a very much sought after and a very successful report among the cybersecurity community. Many UN organizations recognized UNICC's effort to publish the Report, which is charged with lots of insightful information and describes the position of the UN system vis-à-vis cybersecurity. Following that success and the voices requesting a follow-up Report, UNICC's cybersecurity team gather all the information to create the Cybersecurity Landscape Report 2023. In the Report you will find insights on the cybersecurity posture of the UN system.

[Read more](#)

Common Secure Conference 2023

UNICC hosts an annual Common Secure Conference with the goal to bring its cybersecurity Clients and Partners Organizations together to increase the UN family circle of trust, share intelligence on cyber practices and provide feedback on UNICC common secure services. The multi-day workshop blends vendor and regional stakeholder sessions with feedback, presentations and input from participating UN Agencies and some public and open sessions.

The fifth version of the Common Secure Conference took place in September 2023, in Valencia, Spain, where UNICC has its Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence. The Annual event has become a well expected and visited event for the cybersecurity community and ecosystem for the UN system but also for other important stakeholders.

[Read more](#)



Left: Tima Soni, UNICC Chief of Cybersecurity Division at the Common Secure Conference 2023
Right: Group photo from the Common Secure Conference 2023 in Valencia, Spain

Cybersecurity Fund

In 2021, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations (UN) system, reviewed cybersecurity practices across the UN system and issued its report "Cybersecurity in the United Nations system organizations" (JIU/REP/2021/3). Two of the report's five recommendations pertain directly to UNICC and its role as the primary shared cybersecurity service provider of the UN system.

The JIU made the following recommendations to enhance the overall cybersecurity posture of the UN system:

JIU Recommendation 3

The Director of the [United Nations International Computing Centre](#) should seek to establish by no later than the end of 2022 a trust fund for donor contributions, which would complement the capacity of the Centre to design, develop and offer shared services and solutions to enhance the cybersecurity posture of the United Nations system organizations.

✔ Oct 2022

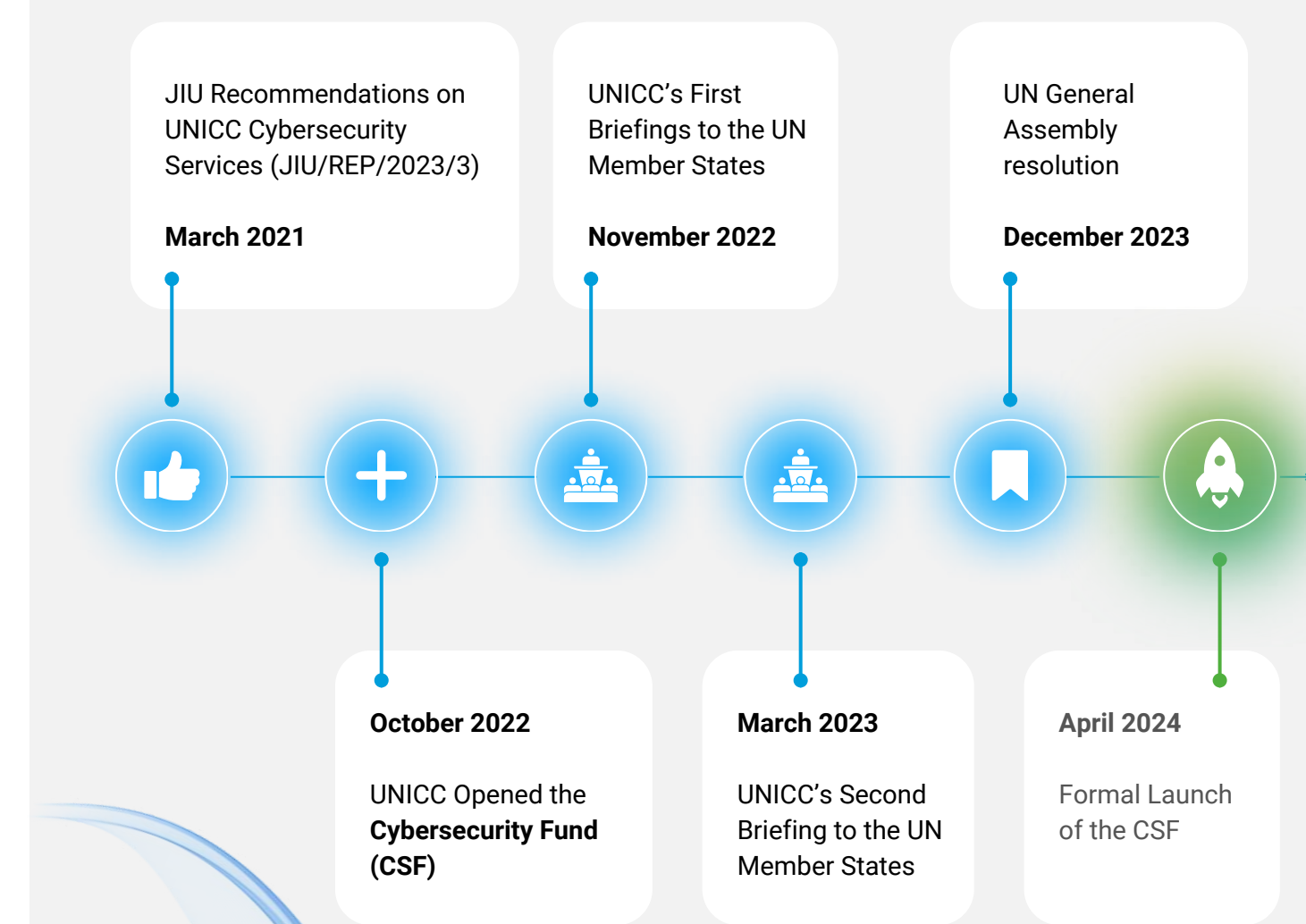
JIU Recommendation 4

The General Assembly of the United Nations should, no later than at its seventy-seventh session, take note of the recommendation addressed to the Director of the [United Nations International Computing Centre](#) to establish a trust fund for shared cybersecurity solutions and invite Member States wishing to reinforce the cybersecurity posture of the United Nations system organizations to contribute to the trust fund.

✔ Dec 2023

In 2022 UNICC created the Cybersecurity Fund (CSF) as part of its commitment to honour the findings and recommendations contained in the JIU's report. In December 2023, in a Resolution that addressed the JIU report on Cybersecurity, the General Assembly noted "with appreciation the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on cybersecurity in the United Nations system organizations, and [requested] the Secretary General and invites the executive heads of the member organizations, as appropriate, to implement the relevant recommendations" (A/RES/78/243).

The cybersecurity fund will be a game changer to enhance UNICC's capacity in supporting the entire UN system on various aspects of digital security and pave the path for greater adoption of robust digital products and solutions within the UN eco system.



Cybersecurity Fund Timeline

Technology in Action

Data and Analytics

As some frontier technologies get more attention like cybersecurity, AI and supercomputing, Data and Analytics is getting established as the cornerstone for every business or professional activity. More than ever, the modern society works on information (data) and the analysis of that information. There is no sector of our modern societies that is not involved in gathering information and analytically analyzes that data.

The United Nations system is particularly at the helm of gathering information and producing outcomes with that information. The UN systems sits on an incredible amount of information that assist High-Level functionaries of the UN system to take the right decisions, and it also assist UN Member States to be informed and create the right policies for their constituents.

UNICC has an incredible vibrant and agile team in the Data and Analytics Services Section assisting all our 90+ partners to make the most and best out of the data they have, or lack of. Our experts use AI and other state-of-the-art technologies to analyze the information, creating accurate solutions and digital tools, including dashboards for the intended audience to better understand, perceive, digest, and transform the analyzed data into actions and impactful programmes.

UNICC's data and analytics services section worked tirelessly during 2023 to create better solutions for the UN system, a curated list of examples is available in the following page, including the data solutions support for the COP28 – Climate Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

UNICC Supports the COP28 Climate Conference

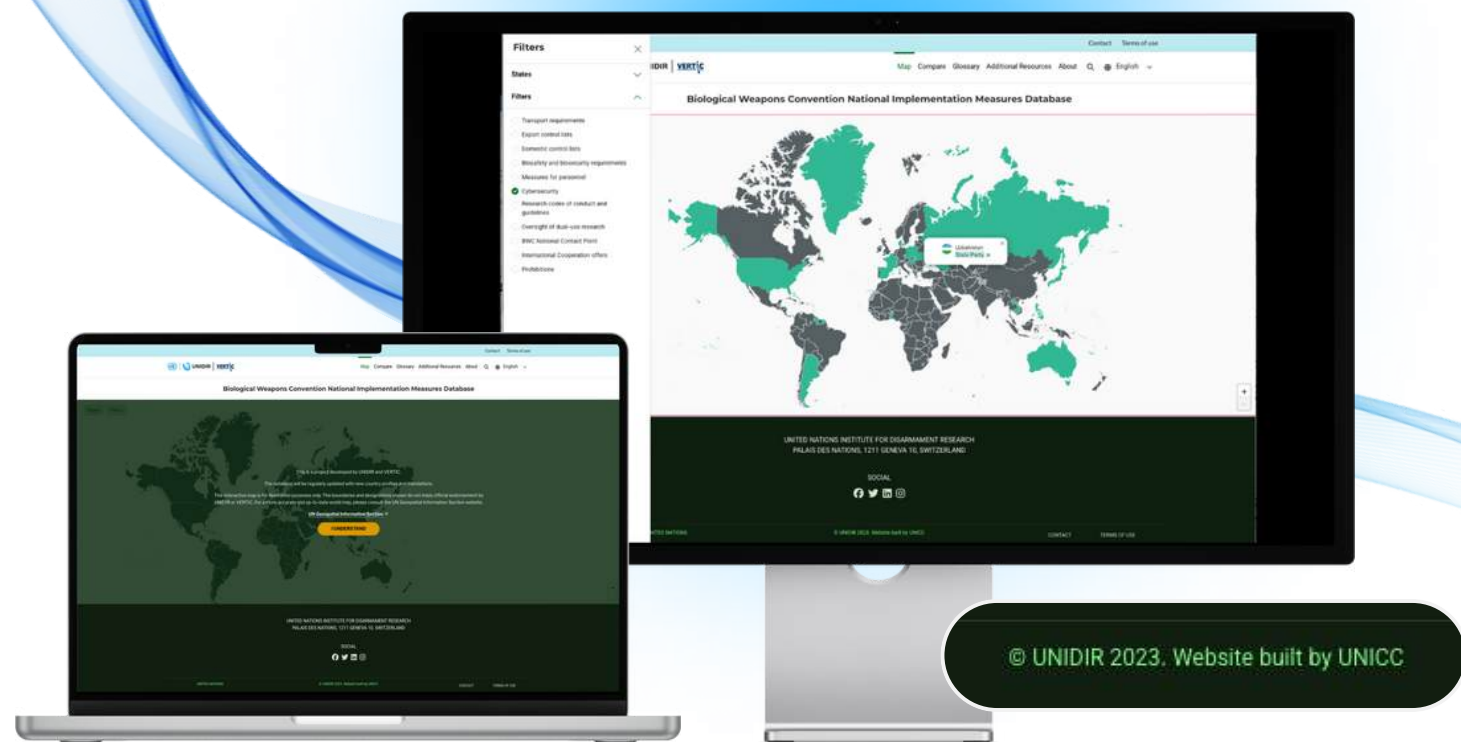
UNICC played a significant role in providing cybersecurity and data solutions support for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) during the Conference of the Parties (COP 28), held at Expo City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 13 December, 2023. Following its successful provision of conference management and registration cybersecurity support at COP26 and COP27, UNICC was entrusted by UNFCCC to continue its services for COP28. This included conducting a comprehensive cybersecurity assessment of the virtual conference platform and its infrastructure, deploying cybersecurity experts on-site for real-time support, and implementing data and analytics solutions to enhance information management.

These efforts were directed towards optimizing participant data, improving data quality, and enabling informed decision-making by UNFCCC management. Additionally, UNICC's data and analytics team focused on developing tailored solutions to support conference affairs, ICT, and operations coordination teams. Concurrently, the UNICC Security Operations Center (SOC) was responsible for evaluating existing cybersecurity measures and participating in security operations during COP28 to ensure a secure information environment for all participants and delegates.

Through its comprehensive support, UNICC contributed significantly to the smooth execution of COP28, aligning with UNFCCC's objectives in addressing climate change on a global scale.



UNICC team at COP28 Climate Conference in Dubai



Biological Weapons Convention National Implementation Measures Database website built by UNICC

Biological Weapons Convention National Implementation Measures Database

As part of a joint effort, UNICC, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research ([UNIDIR](#)) and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre ([VERTIC](#)) proudly presented the [Biological Weapons Convention \(BWC\) National Implementation Measures Database](#). This comprehensive and publicly accessible repository showcases the commitment of States Parties to the BWC, a crucial disarmament treaty prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons.

Since its inauguration in August 2023, this innovative database has developed as a powerful tool to strengthen the global implementation of the BWC. It provides States Parties and stakeholders with valuable insights into different national implementation approaches worldwide. Moreover, it serves as a confidence-building measure, fostering trust, transparency and cooperation among nations regarding the BWC.

While UNICC focused on technical support, UNIDIR and VERTIC took charge of gathering, reviewing and publishing database content from publicly available official sources. Employing a detailed data collection protocol, the information is regularly updated and translated into all six UN languages to reflect the latest legislative, regulatory and other relevant developments. This collaborative effort ensures the accuracy and relevance of the presented data.

Through this new online database which features a multi-lingual and mobile-friendly interface, UNICC helps UNIDIR making the BWC member states' national implementation measures accessible and searchable to all, and eventually helping strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.

Simon Boisseau, Technical Lead for Application Delivery, UNICC

[Read more](#)

Technology in Action

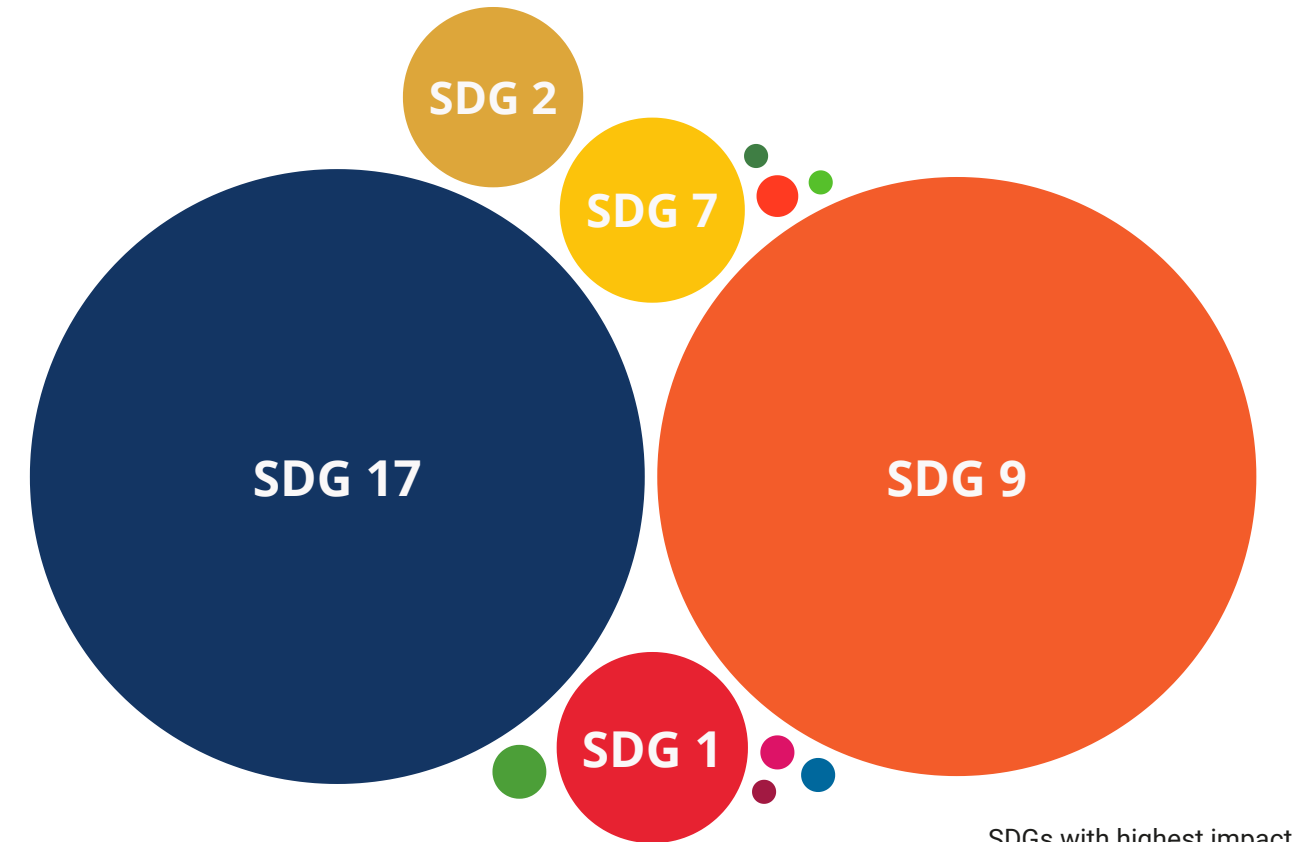
Digitalization of the UN system

Innovating for the SDGs

The internal digitalization of the UN system continues permeating all corners of the UN family. Adding to previous efforts, UN 2.0 “encapsulates the UN-Secretary General’s vision of a modern UN system, rejuvenated by a forward-thinking culture, and empowered by cutting-edge skills fit for the twenty-first century”. The vision is to take advantage of data, innovation, digital, foresight and behavioral science to transform the UN system into a more agile, diverse, responsive and impactful organizations, accelerating systemic shifts that deliver for all, including women and girls.

As the UN entity that provides most of the digital and cybersecurity services in the entire UN system, UNICC embraces the UN 2.0. vision and puts the principles into practice, creating more impactful, resilient, agile, inclusive digital tools and solutions for the entire UN family. UNICC’s 90+ clients (UN entities and related international organizations) are provided with digital solutions that allow them to take advantage of frontier technologies and put them at the use of their stakeholders and beneficiaries, fulfilling their mandate in a more robust and nimble manner.

All these efforts are focused on accelerating the implementation of the SDGs, creating new synergies and partnerships for the Goals. UNICC partnered in 2023 with several UN entities to advance the Quintet of Change’s principles, making technology the engine for a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

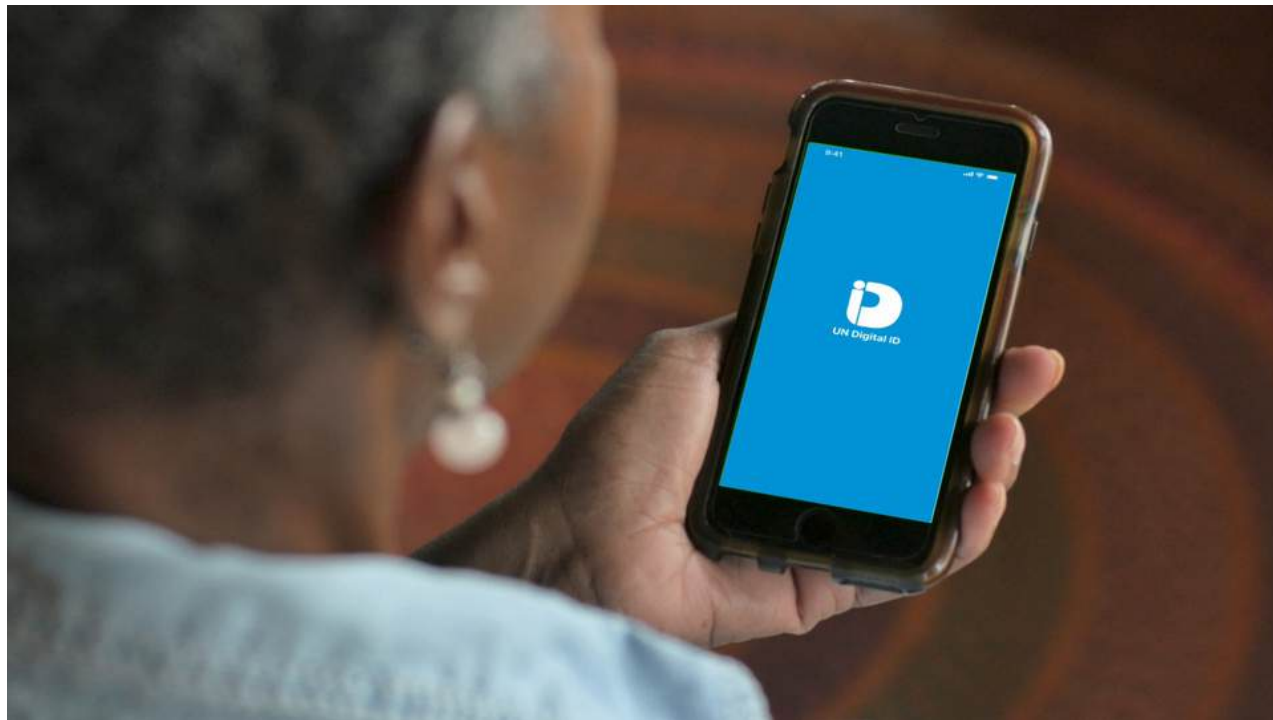


SDGs with highest impact from UNICC projects

● SDG 17	44.5%
● SDG 9	42.3%
● SDG 1	8.7%
● SDG 7	8.1%
● SDG 2	7.7%

All data as of December 2023.

For UNICC the SDGs are a reminder of how we can act together and put resources together, with all sectors of the economy, to reach those communities where assistance is most needed. UNICC is committed to make an impact through its tech and digital solutions focusing on all SDGs, while at the same time and due to the nature of the mandate, the impact is more tangible in certain Goals, like **SDG 9**: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, or **SDG 13**: Climate Action, **SDG 4**: Gender Equality, and **SDG 17**: Partnerships for the Goals, among others.



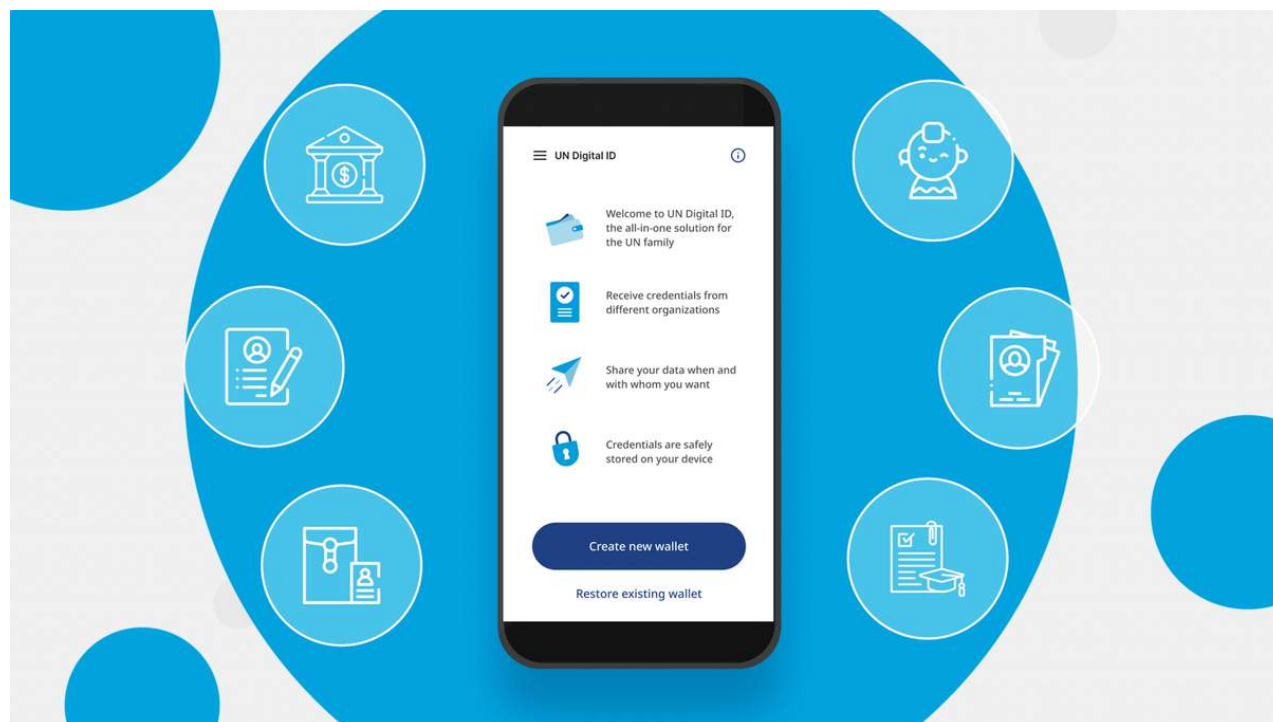
UN Digital ID – One Solution for the Entire UN System

The UN Digital ID mobile solution, developed and supported by UNICC, represents a significant leap forward in how United Nations system personnel manage their personal data. Set to debut in June 2024, this groundbreaking tool holds the promise of bolstering data integrity and streamlining information exchange throughout the UN ecosystem.

The UN Digital ID gives ownership and control of the data back to the individual while, at the same time, it brings transparency on the management and quality of data for each participating organization. It aims at mitigating data fragmentation and duplication across the UN system, thereby facilitating seamless information sharing, daily workflows and access to essential platforms and facilities. This initiative serves as a catalyst for simplifying administrative processes and fostering operational efficiency across all UN organizations.

More than just a technology solution, the UN Digital ID is a concrete step towards realizing the Secretary-General's UN 2.0 vision, paving the way for a united UN: doing better and faster together. It ensures consistency from initial onboarding to eventual retirement. Through its ability to scale to as many use cases as feasible using the same underlying technology investment, the UN Digital ID sets the foundation to empower efficient workflows and collaborative endeavors across all facets of the UN.

[Read more](#)



Screenshot from the UN Digital ID App introduction video



A refugee holding a credit card in their hand

UN Digital Hub of Treasury

Providing a UN financial gateway for collaboration opportunities to access global financial ecosystems.

UNICC has partnered with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to build the Digital Hub of Treasury Solutions (DHoTS), to distribute urgent humanitarian aid to refugees in need. This means secure, speedy and optimized financial transactions like online access to services and cashless payments to people the agency serves. It allows users to access global financial and supply ecosystems anywhere, anytime, from any device, with traceability and accountability of transactions. It strengthens UNHCR's ability to provide humanitarian assistance, inclusion and development.

As an example, secure electronic data transfer between banks and an organization was established for Moneygram money transfers in just a couple of weeks, in a joint UNICC - UNHCR effort to facilitate cash distribution to Ukrainian refugees in Romania.



UNICC Common Secure Operation Centre at UNICC Valencia Office

UNICC Cloud

Amid growing concern within the UN and among Members States regarding the use of commercial cloud providers for storing and processing sensitive and confidential data, UNICC is working with Canonical to leverage its OpenStack Distribution private cloud software. This open-source solution has unparalleled flexibility and customization, which will allow UNICC to tailor the software to the specific operational needs of the UN system and seamlessly scale while maintaining consistently high performance.

UNICC partnered with Canonical, provider of open-source security, support and services, to build and deliver the first secure private cloud environment for the UN system, providing cutting-edge security and data sovereignty for the UN's most sensitive data and software applications.

UNICC Cloud leverages the advantages of cloud computing and the legal protections offered by UN Privileges and Immunities, with the unique added benefit of direct and independent control over data through nodes operated exclusively at UNICC data centres and the guarantee of UNICC's world-class cybersecurity capabilities. The first node will be located in UNICC's data centre in Valencia, Spain, thanks to the generosity of the Spanish government. Discussions to create additional nodes are underway with various UN Member States.

[Read more](#)



External Engagement

UNICC's mandate is to provide digital tools and solutions, and cybersecurity services to the entire UN system, which defines to a certain extent the nature of the organization, to work in close cooperation with, and in partnerships with the entire UN ecosystem, including international organizations, Member States, private and public sector organizations, academia, and other relevant stakeholders. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations with other international bodies, UNICC facilitates the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and best practices in the field of frontier technologies, digitalization of systems and processes, and cybersecurity.

These external engagements enable UNICC to innovate and stay at the forefront of technological advancements, ensuring that the UN system remains equipped with cutting-edge solutions to address global challenges effectively. By fostering dialogue and cooperation with diverse stakeholders, UNICC contributes to the implementation of the sustainable development goals, guided by the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change, and championing women in technology. Furthermore, these engagements provide opportunities for capacity building, knowledge transfer, and the dissemination of UN values and principles to a broader audience.



UNICC team at the Biannual International Gender Champions (IGC) Network meeting in Geneva, Switzerland

UNICC's Director Hosted the Biannual IGC Network Meeting

Dozens of gender champions attended the Biannual International Gender Champions (IGC) Network meeting on 26 January 2023, hosted by UNICC Director Sameer Chauhan on behalf of the Geneva Steering Group. The International Gender Champions is a leadership community, with over 322 champions and 343 alumni, that brings together women and men decision-makers determined to break down gender barriers and make gender equality a working reality in their spheres of influence.

At the IGC meeting, gender champions were invited to speak in their personal capacities, share their intended commitments for 2023 and consider ways that IGC can achieve more collective impact as a key, multi-lateral hub. New impact groups were launched, including one on climate and gender as well as a second one on women, peace and security. This was followed by an open discussion on IGC's strategic objectives for 2023 led by Esther Dingemans, Executive Director of the Global Survivors Fund.



UNICC at UNGA 78

During the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA78), UNICC actively participated in a series of events focused on harnessing technology for humanitarian assistance and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the Global Blockchain Business Council's (GBBC) Blockchain Central event, UNICC's Chief of Digital Solutions Centre, Anish Sethi, highlighted the organization's role in developing shared digital business solutions for its UN partners across the United Nations system. Additionally, UNICC leadership made significant contributions during the SDG Action Weekend, held on 16-17 September 2023.

On 17 September, key UNICC figures, including Director Sameer Chauhan, Deputy Director Milena Grecuccio, and Chief of Digital Solutions Centre Anish Sethi, actively engaged in discussions at the SDG Digital session hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) at United Nations Headquarters in New York, exploring how digital technologies can accelerate progress on the Global Goals. The session rallied leaders, activists and influencers to support the movement towards 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, our Deputy Director attended the 'Sustainable DPI and DPI for Sustainability' side-event, spotlighting the transformative potential of digital public infrastructure in advancing environmental objectives. These engagements underscored UNICC's commitment to harnessing digital solutions to address global challenges and drive progress towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.



UNICC senior leaders at UNGA 78, United Nations Headquarters, New York



UNICC Academic Partnerships Help Students Take Learning Beyond the Classroom

Through its collaboration with universities and academic institutions around the globe, UNICC has shown its commitment to empowering young people with professional experience while benefiting from project support from students in an increasingly diversified workforce, enhancing the organization's knowledge base and gaining access to new theoretical and technical knowledge and resources. UNICC has been working to expand its academic partnerships across the globe, offering internships, engaging in seminars, research, capstone projects and with possible employment.

In 2023, UNICC facilitated several Student Capstone Projects in the field of data science. These projects, designed for students enrolled in applied Master's programs, aimed to provide them with hands-on experience in tackling real-world data challenges. Among these initiatives were:



Students from the UNICC - UPV Capstone Project explore the UNICC office in Valencia alongside the UNICC Data and AI team

- UNICC - UPV Capstone Project: Misinformation Detection for Election Monitoring**
Students were tasked with developing a Machine Learning (ML) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) solution to detect misinformation in social media data, specifically for election monitoring purposes. The project, applied during the Nigeria Elections 2023, provided students with firsthand experience in combating misinformation, enriching their understanding of data science beyond theoretical frameworks.
- UNICC - Columbia Capstone Project: Gender Bias Detection and Mitigation**
In collaboration with subject matter experts from UNICC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), students from Columbia University undertook the challenge of developing an AI/ML-based data auditing solution to identify and address gender bias within user datasets. This project aimed to contribute to the promotion of gender equality through data-driven insights.
- UNICC - Cornell Capstone Project: Energy Transition Misinformation Detection**
Students from Cornell University embarked on the task of developing an AI/ML solution to detect misinformation related to the energy transition, a critical issue in today's context. Through rigorous analysis and experimentation, the student team successfully created an AI model capable of identifying and combatting misinformation in social media platforms.
- UNICC - UPV Capstone Project: Identifying and Combating Online Sexism**
Recognizing the pressing issue of online violence against women and girls, particularly in regions like Guadalajara, Mexico, students collaborated with subject matter experts from UNICC and UN Women Mexico to develop strategies for identifying and addressing sexist content on digital platforms. Leveraging pretrained language models and various analytical techniques, the project aimed to raise awareness and foster a safer online environment for all users.

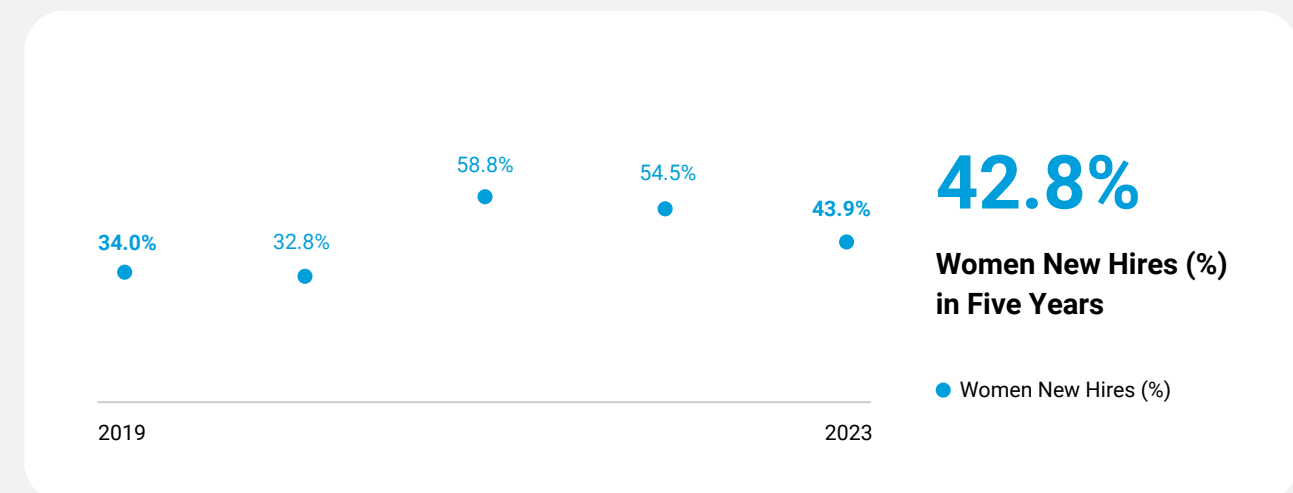
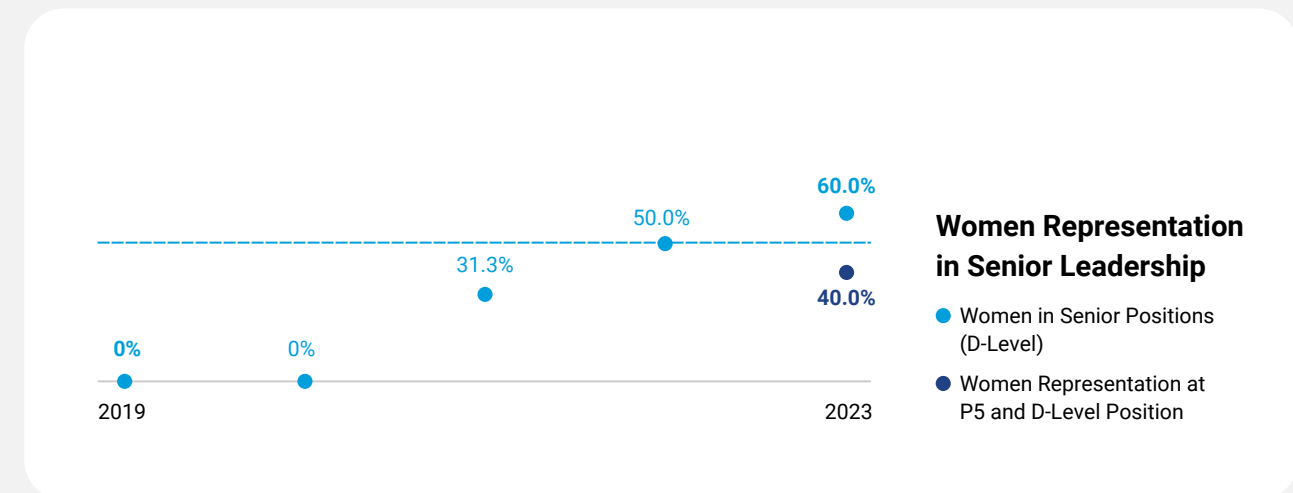
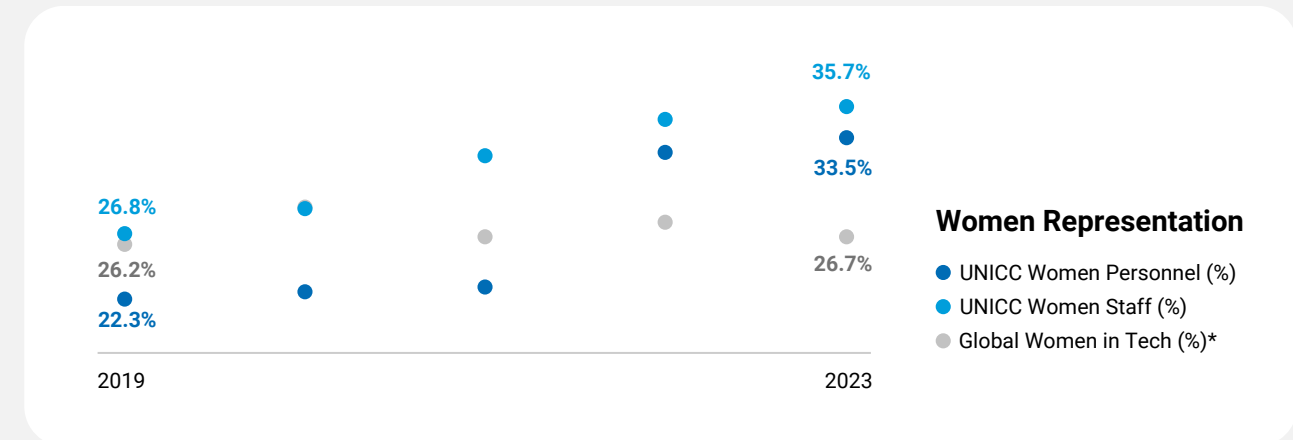
Gender, Diversity and Inclusiveness

UNICC has made gender, diversity and inclusiveness central to its mission and is committed to **bring gender parity, diversity and inclusiveness** into the digital business field. Ending discrimination is crucial to an equitable, sustainable future and it is an accelerator towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. Internally, the organization is focusing on increasing its gender parity and its diversity. Gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness have been among the top priorities of UNICC's Director, Sameer Chauhan, since he assumed leadership of the organization five years ago.

He has not only championed this effort, but he has embodied it by becoming a Gender Champion himself through the International Gender Champions (IGC) network. Under his leadership, the organization is implementing the Gender Parity Strategy, designed to achieve gender parity across UNICC by 2028.

In 2023, the organization reached **35.7%** representation of women among staff, or **33.5%** among total personnel (including staff and non-staff). Five years ago, the numbers were not encouraging, 27% among staff and 22% among total personnel. In the private sector the mark is 30% among the tech companies. Most importantly, among Senior Leadership in the organization, D1s, the gender balance was achieved since 2022, and in 2023 it continued forward to **60%** women representation in senior leadership (three out of five D1s are women). Going down to the next tier of leadership P5s (including D1s too), the representation is high at **40%**, on the way to become gender balanced. Out of the 98 new staff members hired in 2023, **43.9%** were women, which is very encouraging and not far away to become gender balanced and in general supporting the organization's trend to become gender balanced by 2028 as pledged by Director Chauhan.

UNICC also champions gender, diversity and inclusiveness through strategic partnerships and collaborative activities worldwide, such as the SDG global challenge Think-a-Thon, in partnership with Columbia University, which aimed to finding solutions for two significant global challenges: Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Climate Action (SDG 13).



*Source: Statista



Left: UN-SWAP annual conference at New York. Photo: UN Women. Middle: UNICC colleagues at the End-of-Year celebration. Right: Emily Bennett (BRM, UNICC), led as MC for the Cybersecurity Conference

In 2023, the organization reached a symbolic achievement regarding gender inclusivity among the UN system. UNICC participated for the first time in the UN-SWAP Conference, showing, in this way, serious interest to the interagency dialogue on gender related issues and leading as an example for promoting and encouraging the participation of women in tech. Main focus of the conference were:

- Tech and Innovation: inspiring exploration of cutting-edge technology and innovative approaches to drive gender mainstreaming in the tech industry.
- Latest developments on UN system-wide capacity and results on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls: We explored together how we can continue pushing boundaries and making progress.
- Cutting across sectors: dynamic discussions were held on how to use financial resource indicators to expand the power of gender units and networks and ignite change within entities.

The lesson learned from the Conference participation is that the key words for change are: **Leadership and Policy.**

The United Nation System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) is a framework for accountability which provides guidance not only to senior managers but for all business units on gender equality matters. UNICC is pleased to work with UN-SWAP to measure its progress towards outstanding goals in gender equality and to share them with the entire UN community and international fora.

UNICC is now committed to the second UN-SWAP Report experience. The grade of excellence received in the first reporting period for the Communication and Human Resources department shows the commitment that UNICC has embarked on by creating and widespreading new values with strictness and steadiness to definitely break down the "cliché" tha IT is just a men enviroment.

UNICC is an equal opportunity employer, seeks out individuals across race, gender, nationality, age, and sexual orientation.

The Way Forward

As we close this cycle, marking five years since I was entrusted with the humble task of leading this incredible organization, I am proud of what UNICC represents today: an agile, nimble, and growing organization that stands apart from all other UN entities by offering **common, trusted and cybersecure digital foundations for the entire UN system.**

We champion **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**, partnering with all UN system organizations to create value by providing **responsive and agile digital foundations, secure digital environments, and robust governance structures.** We assist these entities in achieving their technology goals and accelerating their mandates.

My aspiration for the next five years is that UNICC continues its digital journey, remaining the go-to partner for the entire UN family—not only in digitalizing their systems but also in innovating and testing new technologies. Guided by UN 2.0, the foresight of UNICC's Management Committee (MC), and the sage advice of the UNICC MC Advisory Group, I am confident that we will continue to provide essential digital foundations for the UN family in the years to come.

At the core of these foundations is the digitalization of the UN system, driven by digital solutions created by the UN system for the UN system.

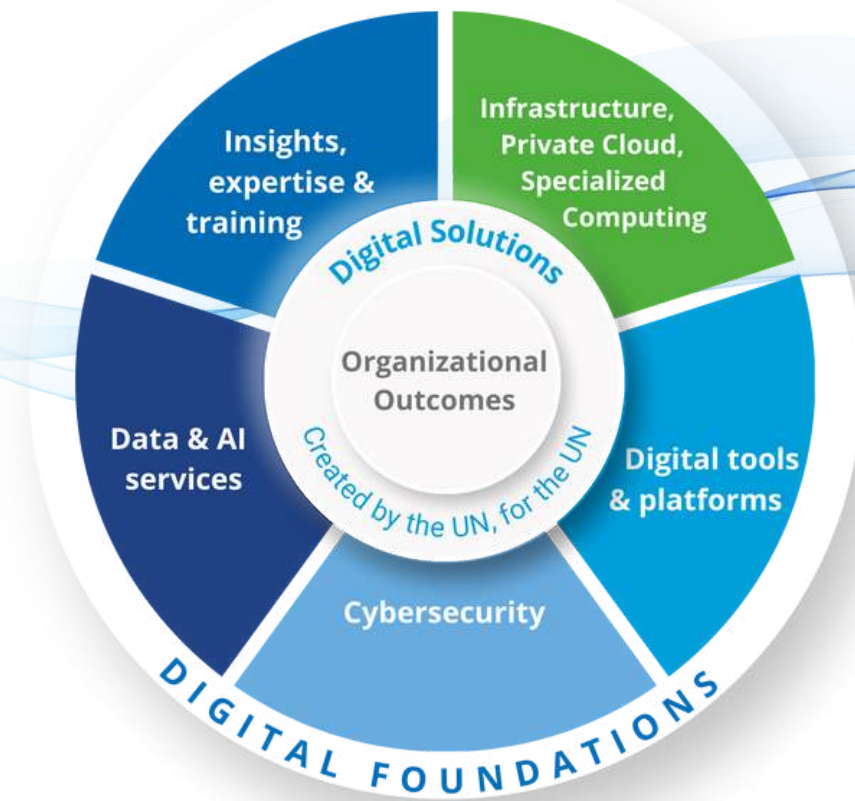
We aim to enable the ideation and co-creation of digital tools and platforms by providing cybersecurity, infrastructure, cloud services, supercomputing capabilities, and data and AI solutions, as well as leveraging UNICC's insights, expertise, and training capacities.

I am now more optimistic than ever about the UN family's path toward digitalization. UN Secretary-General António Guterres is leading the way with major initiatives such as the Summit of the Future, set to take place during the High-Level Debate of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 79); the Global Digital Compact, led by the UN-SG Special Envoy on Technology; the AI for Good Global Summit 2024, hosted by the ITU; and many other system-wide efforts to underscore the importance of technology in accelerating the implementation of the SDGs, bridging the technology gap, and ensuring no one is left behind.

None of these efforts would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our most valued asset: our talented, curious, and dedicated personnel. To every one of my colleagues, I extend my sincere thanks for making all of this possible in these challenging times.

We must also thank our valued partners and other stakeholders, including Member States. They are our *raison d'être*, and without their support UNICC would be a very different organization today. I am deeply grateful to the MC for their unwavering support of UNICC's mandate.

Moving forward, our success will depend on continued cooperation and partnerships. Our strategic vision is to grow our knowledge and expertise while staying true to our origins as the primary digital services partner for the UN system. We will elevate our strategic partnerships, and focus on continuing our journey as a critical digital hub for the UN system, grounded in a UN-



centric, tech-native approach to the production of knowledge and insights.

In the coming years, our trajectory will be determined by our ability to swiftly adopt sustainable technologies and leverage them for the betterment of the UN system, its Member States, and the communities we all support.

I trust this report has been insightful, and I hope you will continue to be our trusted partner on the **UN family's digitalization journey.**

Yours truly,
Sameer Chauhan
 Director
 UNICC



About UNICC

The United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) has over 50 years of experience as the largest strategic partner for digital solutions and cybersecurity within the United Nations system. We design and deploy transformational digital tools and programmes to support over 100 partners in fulfilling their mandates.

UNICC is committed to delivering innovative, forward-looking and reliable system-wide solutions in line with the UN Secretary-General's Strategy on New Technologies, the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda. With our world-class Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, data and analytics practice and an array of platform, software and infrastructure solutions, UNICC serves the entire of the UN family and other international organizations with similar missions and values for the benefit of the world.

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