

UNIVERSITIES FOR LOCAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

What is ART Universitas?

ART Universitas is one of the international network programmes associated with the ART Initiative, designed to involve universities from the countries of the South and North associated with ART in university-level training, research and knowledge dissemination related to local human development and multilateral cooperation.

ART Universitas is based on the premise that universities and research institutions have an important role to play in local, national and global development processes. Not only do universities have the responsibility for forming present and future generations of development leaders and managers; in an increasingly knowledge-based society, they and other research institutes are also engaged with governments and public and private institutions to help define policy options. A strong alliance among universities, governments and the United Nations is central to the production and circulation of knowledge for human development. ART Universitas aims to contribute to the role of the UNDP and the other partners associated with the ART Initiative in producing practice-based knowledge for human development.

Amongst other things, ART Universitas is conceived as a means for universities to engage constructively in multilateral development programmes oriented towards the objectives of human development and the MDGs, and that adhere to the principles of aid effectiveness as put forward in the Paris Declaration.



What does it do?

ART Universitas implements activities at international level and, at country level, as part of ART GOLD framework programmes.

AT COUNTRY LEVEL, ART Universitas complements the GOLD framework programmes. This component works specifically with the universities and research centres in the countries where the GOLD programmes are active, involving them in research and training activities designed to accompany the human development programmes with a view to the long-term sustainability of the programmes' results and innovations. In particular, ART Universitas aims to strengthen the capacity of the national universities to support processes of local human development in the country, by contributing to the development of the human resources and the policies that these processes require.

To achieve these objectives, ART Universitas provides technical assistance to ART GOLD Programmes for the planning and realization of the following types of activities, inter alia:

- Organizing university-level training activities oriented toward the planning and management of participatory local development processes for the professionals and policy makers in institutions and civil society organizations implicated in the programmes. Some examples include the organization of short university-level courses on strategic issues the programme is addressing, such as industrial conversion, decentralization, integrated development of historical centres, etc. Such courses tend to include both a conceptual element and a more practical one and lead to a certificate or diploma from the responsible university.





- Where possible, Universitas supports the development and piloting of post-graduate diploma or Masters Programme in the strategic management of local human development in a globalized context. The Diploma or Master thus continues to provide specialized training to national and local professionals engaged in policy development and management of local development processes, even once the ART GOLD programme has concluded. The inter-university relationships established continue to contribute an international perspective to the teaching programme and encourage knowledge sharing.
- Establishing “Universitas Laboratories on territorial human development” based on an alliance between the local government, social actors and the university. The “Laboratories” directly involve the local universities in documenting and systematizing the innovative experiences realized through the GOLD programmes, so as to identify lessons which can be shared and potentially contribute to national and international policy processes. The laboratories also offer an organized context for action research and practical internships for national and foreign students from universities that collaborate with ART.

To support this work, ART Universitas encourages the establishment of partnerships with universities and institutions in involved donor countries. These may be part of broader decentralized cooperation partnerships or inter-university partnerships only.

INTERNATIONALLY, ART Universitas is conceived as one of the tools of the ART Initiative for building a global culture of human development and active multilateralism. ART Universitas supports the networking of the universities involved in the different country framework programmes and their university partners in donor countries through the implementation of a number of international initiatives and tools:

MASTER IN LOCAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

ART Universitas is collaborating with a number of universities in ART GOLD countries and in partner universities in associated donor countries to establish an initial network of Masters Courses in local human development and international cooperation. These courses have the common objective of contributing to the formation of development professionals who have the conceptual and methodological tools for the strategic and participatory planning of local development processes in an era of globalization, share a common conceptual framework and core curriculum.

ART Universitas supports curriculum development, faculty and student exchanges and practical student internships with multilateral cooperation programmes associated with ART.

RESEARCH AND SYSTEMATIZATION

ART Universitas is interested in research that contributes to renewing the practice of international cooperation for local and global human development and to developing teaching material that can be integrated into curriculum development. ART Universitas therefore gives priority to systematizing innovative practices and experiences of human development, especially those realized as part of the programmes associated with ART, through the growing network of Universitas territorial laboratories.

ART Universitas works with the ART Scientific Committee and the other ART partners to define a research agenda. Research is disseminated through HDRNet, the ART electronic journal and other means managed by ART and in collaboration with its UN partners, academic partners as well as in collaboration with external publishers.

INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

Human Development Resource Network (www.yorku.ca/hdrnet)



In collaboration with York University in Canada and the international university network, ART Universitas has created a specialized electronic information gateway called “HDRNet”. HDRNet provides free access to more than 800 documents related to different dimensions of human development and international cooperation, many of which are not available through internet or mainstream publications. HDRNet aims to disseminate research and innovative experiences of local human development produced in collaboration with ART, especially by researchers and practitioners in the South.

Workshops and policy dialogues

ART Universitas organizes workshops and policy dialogues on strategic issues addressed by the ART Initiative that bring together academics, practitioners and policy makers. Examples of past workshops include two workshops on urban poverty, at York University and the Autonomous University of Honduras, on decentralized partnerships for local development, in collaboration with CIDA, in Ottawa, on post-graduate curriculum development for local human development and international cooperation, in collaboration with the PDHL and Universitas Cuba, in Havana.

Publications

ART Universitas has launched an electronic journal using open-source publication software, entitled “Universitas Forum” (www.universitasforum.org). The journal publishes research related to human development and international cooperation and also innovative experiences of local human development and international cooperation, emerging from the ART initiative’s international programmes and country GOLD programmes. The journal is thus conceived as a tool for encouraging the systematization of local experiences, with the contribution of local journalists and academics. The editorial policy is determined by an editorial board comprising members of the ART Scientific Committee and other leading international figures.

ART Universitas has also produced anthologies of the diploma courses both as CD ROMs, and other means that do not require internet access and that can be published locally in printed form if required.





How to participate

IN ART GOLD COUNTRIES, the universities present in the local areas where the programme is implemented are invited to join the local working groups and participate in the planning process initiated by these programmes. Through the ART GOLD Programme Manager, they can request the activation of the Universitas component of these programmes and their participation in the international activities promoted by ART Universitas. ART Universitas will then make available its technical assistance for the development of a specific plan of action and activate partnerships through the international university network. It will also facilitate participation in its international activities and international tools for knowledge dissemination.

IN PARTNER COUNTRIES AND IN COUNTRIES WHERE ART GOLD PROGRAMMES HAVE NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED, universities can participate in the international activities of ART Universitas. For example, they can establish a post-graduate course on local human development and international cooperation that adopts the core curriculum developed through ART Universitas, and participate in the exchanges and other network activities promoted by ART Universitas. They can establish a territorial Universitas laboratory with the other actors in their territories to systematize potentially innovative practices or carry out action research and contribute to the tools for international knowledge dissemination and policy dialogue promoted by the ART Initiative. ART Universitas will participate in resource mobilization for activities jointly developed.

For further information, contact:

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ART - Articulating territorial and thematic networks for human development, is an international cooperation initiative that brings together programmes and activities of several United Nations agencies. It promotes a new type of active multilateralism in which the United Nations system works with national and local governments to facilitate the active involvement of local communities and their social actors from the South and North in international cooperation towards the objectives of human development and the Millennium Development Goals.

ART promotes and supports national framework programmes for Governance and Local Development – ART GOLD. These programmes create an organized institutional context at national and local levels in which various national and international actors can contribute in a coordinated and complementary way. Participants include donor agencies, United Nations agencies, regional governments, city and local governments, associations, universities, private sector organizations, civil society organizations, NGOs, etc. ART is thus an operational tool for implementing the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness through a coordinated territorial approach.