

E-Learning Course

Using Interreligious Dialogue (IRD) to Strengthen Peace, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion

COURSE DESCRIPTION

While interreligious dialogue benefits from being a scientific field of study, it also enjoys great applied capacity for everyday human life, within all contexts and for all situations. If the importance of interreligious dialogue may have been questioned twenty years ago, nowadays its necessity has become obvious, and many would argue even urgent. The practice of using interreligious dialogue (IRD) for building social cohesion, peace and reconciliation is rapidly emerging as a necessary tool for the twenty-first century education tool-box.

In this context, and with regards to the need for having a comprehensive and practical e-learning course on interreligious dialogue, the KAICIID E-Learning Programme has developed an e-learning course entitled, "Using Interreligious Dialogue (IRD) to Strengthen Peace, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion". This e-learning course is the result of an ongoing collaboration with renowned universities such as the University of Montreal, the Complutense University of Madrid and the Institute for the Sciences of Religions in Barcelona.

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DURATION: 8 weeks
FEES: Free of charge

LEARNING TIME: About 6 hours per week
CONTACT: elearning@kaiciid.org

COURSE GOAL & OBJECTIVES

GOAL:

This e-learning course aims to strengthen the capacities of religious leaders, policy- and decision makers, KAICIID Fellows, faith based organizations, international organizations, civil society organizations, and government officials within the field of interreligious dialogue. It includes the basic concepts, methodologies, models and tools needed to use interreligious dialogue for peace and reconciliation.

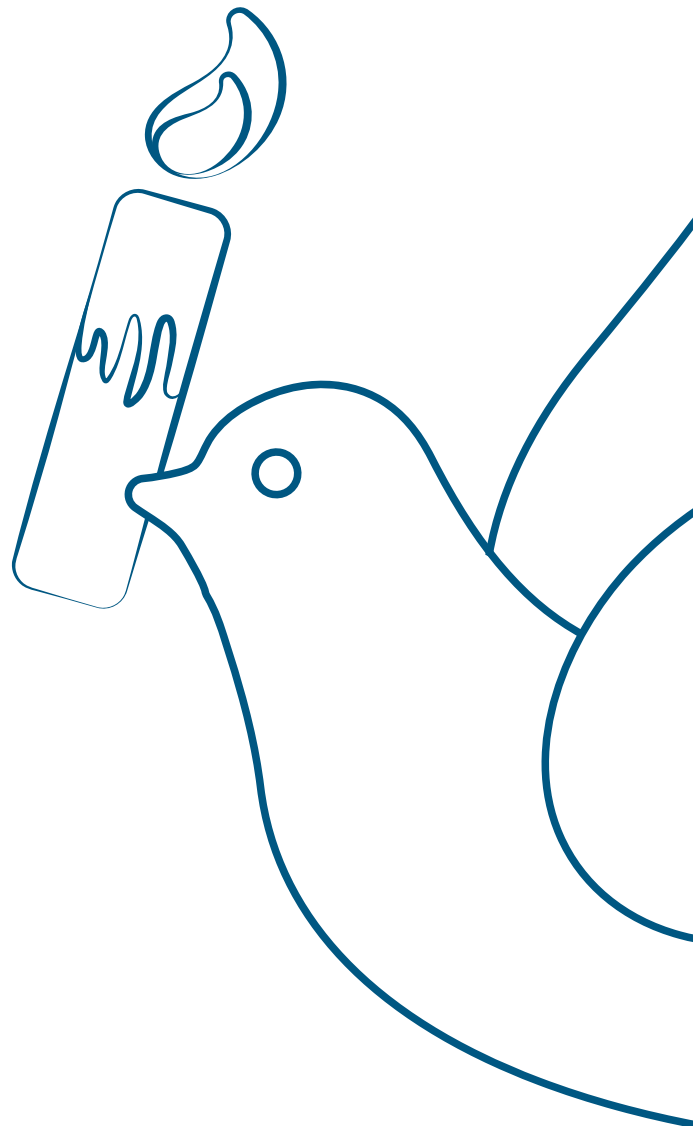
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- To provide basic knowledge and skills in interreligious dialogue;
- To outline the historical background of interreligious dialogue from the five major religions of the world (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism) and clarify the geopolitical aspects of these religions;
- To present the various elements of interreligious conflicts through real examples and case studies;
- To explain how to use key theories, models and methods in interreligious dialogue as scientific tools in a given conflict situation, and illustrate the diversity and the complexity of the factors that play a part in interreligious dialogue;
- To explain and critically analyze factors which affect or escalate interreligious conflict situations;

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate developing skills and knowledge of IRD concepts, tools and methodologies;
- Identify initiatives and best practices for addressing Islamophobia, Christianophobia and Anti-Semitism at the national and local levels
- Understand the conceptual landscape of dialogue, as well as the concepts and models of using interreligious dialogue for peace
- Experience an innovative approach to education on IRD as new scientific field





COURSE OUTLINE & MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

The e-learning course is comprised of 8 modules, which will be given in a moderated environment over an 8 week period.

Module 1

Theories and Methods in Interreligious Dialogue: A Brief Overview

Module 2

A Brief History of the Modern Interreligious Dialogue Movement

Module 3

Dialogue Theories and Ethics: Exploring the Conceptual Landscape of Dialogue

Module 4

Prejudices and Stereotypes: How to Treat Islamophobia, Christianophobia and Anti-Semitism

Module 5

Interfaith Dialogue on the Internet: The Religious Phenomenon in Virtual Communities and Social Networks

Module 6

Interfaith Peace and Dialogue Models: From Harmony to Liberation

Module 7

Interfaith Dialogue: A Venue for Peacebuilding

Module 8

Outcomes of Dialogue Processes: Obstacles and Hopes

Module 1:

Theories and Methods in Interreligious Dialogue: A Brief Overview

(Dr. Patrice Brodeur / University of Montreal)

This first module presents a brief overview on interreligious dialogue terminology as well as key theories. The aim of the module is to establish a foundation of the meaning of the dialogue, its various definitions and forms.

Key elements outlined in this module include an awareness of the diverse understandings of dialogue, the many ways in which dialogue can be used and the main methodologies which have emerged in the field.

Module 2:

A Brief History of the Modern Interreligious Dialogue Movement

(Dr. Patrice Brodeur / University of Montreal)

The second module provides an overview of key organizations involved in interreligious dialogue, including the history of their foundings. The aim of the module is to establish a foundation of significant events which have shaped interreligious dialogue both as a scientific field and also as a global solution to shared challenges. This module puts an emphasis on the historical events and key instances that contributed to the plurality and richness of the field.

Module 3:

Dialogue Theories and Ethics: Exploring the Conceptual Landscape of Dialogue

(Dr. Scherto Gill / University of Sussex)

In a highly polarized world where there are competing ideologies, values and embedded power imbalances, some decisions may be taken with finite knowledge and influenced by specific cultural and historical contexts and subjective narratives. Only dialogue, in its various forms and at its different levels, can help to recognize differences, develop shared meanings and seek understanding in order to work together towards a more just and humane world.

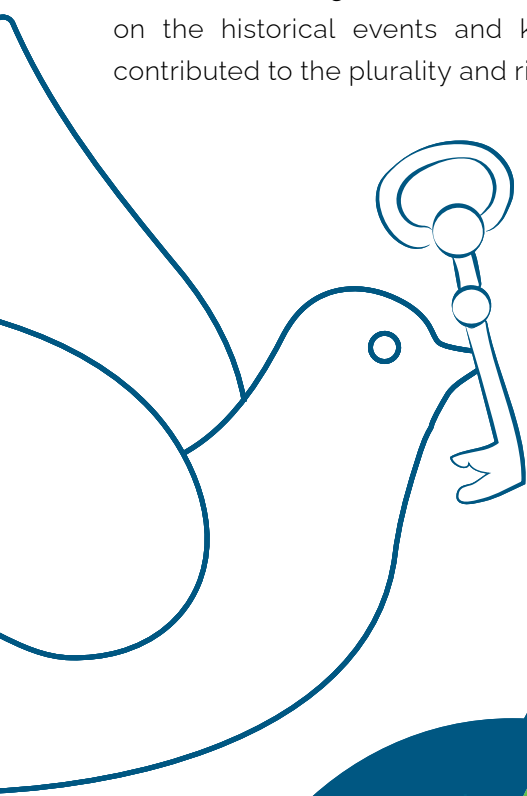
This module begins with an overview of the conceptual landscape of dialogue, and familiarizes the learner with the general arguments that propose best practices for engagement in dialogue. This overview of the general conceptual landscape of dialogue prepares participants to take a closer look at the ethics of dialogue.

Module 4:

Prejudices and Stereotypes: How to Treat Islamophobia, Christianophobia and Anti- Semitism

(Dr. Joan Hernandez-Serret / ISCREB)

Is it possible to establish a shared ethical framework for all religious traditions? This module aims to answer that question through analysis of the Global Ethic and the basis of common ethical principles. Participants will learn to place global ethics into the context of dialogue, resulting in increased efficiency in peacebuilding and greater cooperation between religions.



Module 5:

Interfaith Dialogue on the Internet: The Religious Phenomenon in Virtual Communities and Social Networks

(Dr. Javier Bustamante / Complutense University of Madrid)

In a world characterized by unrest and conflict, Information Technology is becoming increasingly relevant to everyday life. These tools can also provide great benefit to interreligious dialogue, when they are intelligently and positively used. While face-to-face dialogue is restricted to local communities, technology provides opportunities to connect with people from around the world, expanding the voices of interreligious discourse.

This module explores the religious phenomenon in virtual communities and social networks, as well as the impact of social media on interfaith dialogue, the achievements already accomplished, and the challenges to be confronted.

Module 6:

Interfaith Peace and Dialogue Models: From Harmony to Liberation

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

Dialogue is a transformative peacebuilding method because it changes a person's perception of "the Other" and of the tension or conflict between them. When these changes are mutual, dialogue transforms relationships from adversarial to respectful, opening the way for peaceful, inclusive solutions.

This module will present a comprehensive overview of the practical aspects of interreligious dialogue in the framework of conflict resolution/ peacebuilding, as well as the vital role that religions play in this process. It will also provide tested models of dialogue which place emphasis on religious identity.

Module 7:

Interfaith Dialogue: A Venue for Peacebuilding

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

This module will look at the dialogue principles, themes and topics that different interreligious dialogue groups have adopted. Building on the models discussed in the previous module, this session will dive deeper into roles that religious leaders and institutions can play in peacebuilding processes. Moreover, it further establishes a foundation for the key elements of these peace processes, and outlines the role that both religions and dialogue play.

Module 8:

Outcomes of Dialogue Processes: Obstacles and hopes

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

As a conclusion to our course, this module will introduce measurements for the effectiveness of interreligious dialogue and will analyze the different criteria used by interreligious dialogue organizations to assess their successes or failures. It will also look at the relationships between participants from different religious groups (minority or majority) and how each one of them perceives the notion of success in the field, particularly in terms of existing power-dynamics. Last but not least, the module asks a key question: where do we start and where do we want to end up in the interreligious dialogue process?



COURSE DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In order to ensure the best possible outreach, the course will be delivered through an interactive online platform, which allows users to take the course at their own pace. Course objectives are intended to be achieved through a variety of educational methods and technologies, designed to match personal learning styles, as well as by the inclusion of non-linear learning that aims to develop timely learning skills for adults.

At the same time, in order to allow participants maximum flexibility of scheduling, the learning will be conducted in an asynchronous manner. Using state-of-the-art training architecture, the KAICIID E-Learning Programme will combine self-learning with tests, assessments and online discussions. The pedagogy has been adapted for full-time career professionals and is specifically tailored to train participants through a variety of learning methods: absorb (read); do (activity); interact (socialise); and reflect (relate to one's own reality).

01. INTERACTIVE LESSON

Each lesson includes interactive exercises which give participants the chance to self-assess their knowledge. These exercises may be repeated freely, as the results do not count toward the final grade.

- Each lesson may have an average between 40-70 slides, including the interactive exercises.
- The system keeps track of your position so you may interrupt the lesson at any point. The system keeps track of your position. Upon your return the system will automatically return you to the point where you previously stopped.

02. DISCUSSION FORUMS

In each module, participants can access user-friendly forums to discuss topics initiated by the course facilitator.

Participants are also invited to initiate new discussion topics, as desired. All forums will be moderated by the course coordinator and course moderator-facilitator.

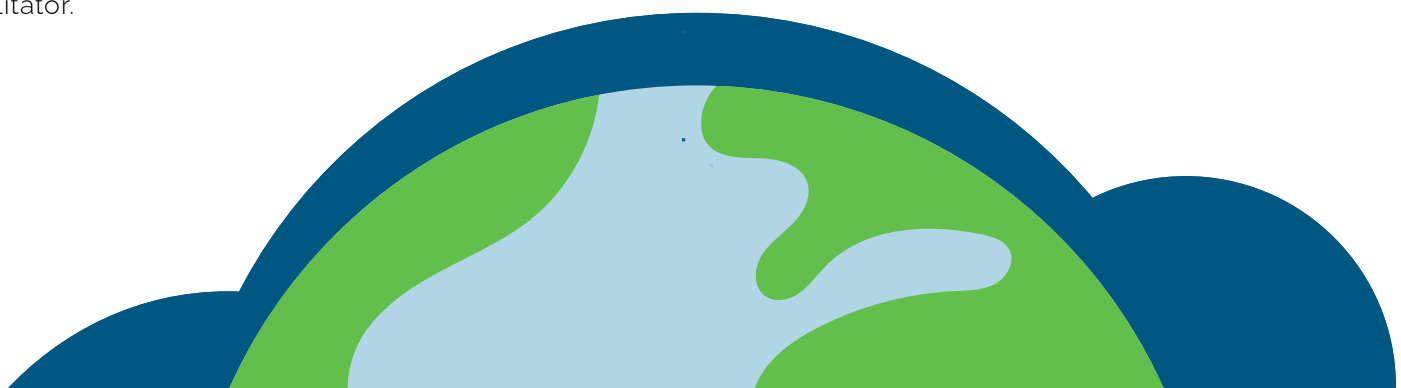
Participation in the discussion forums will not be graded. By contributing to the forums, participants gain a unique opportunity to increase knowledge of the specific subjects discussed and to share views and ideas with other course participants.

03. STUDY PLAN

The course has been designed to give each participant flexibility to plan his/her own learning progress.

The lessons, activities, and additional resources for all modules can be accessed throughout the course. Nevertheless, as this is a moderated/facilitated course, there are sessions where the progress needs to be linear to allow support by the facilitator and adequate coordination among participants.

For reference purposes, the discussions will remain available after the closing date.



PARTICIPANTS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

The following activities will be graded and will account towards your final grade.

01. EVALUATION QUIZZES

Comprehension of course content will be assessed through brief, mandatory quizzes at the end of each module. Each of the eight quizzes contain a variety of question styles including multiple choice, true or false, matching, etc. Participants can attempt each evaluation quiz an unlimited amount of times, without incurring penalties toward the final grade.

02. CASE STUDIES

These exercises provide participants with space to express opinions, share experiences and put acquired knowledge into practice. Some activities will redirect students to the forum, so they can exchange views and lessons learned with other course participants.

03. COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

Participants will form virtual teams, using online discussion forums to review IRD initiatives and programmes. These teams will be asked to identify:

- Key components of the selected initiatives
- Identify best practices and potential challenges to be expected during implementation of short and long term interreligious dialogue programmes
- Key criteria necessary for designing and effectively implementing interreligious dialogue programmes and initiatives

04. CERTIFICATION

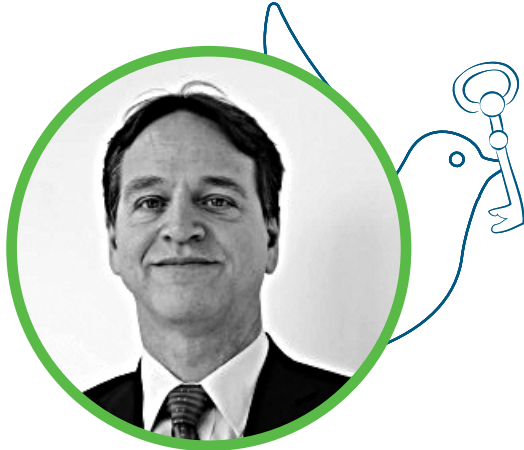
A Certificate of Completion will be issued to participants who achieve a minimum total score of 70% and who complete all the mandatory activities.

HARDWARE & SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

Recommended hardware and software requirements for taking our e-learning courses:

Modern and updated browsers.

COURSE ADVISORS



DR. PATRICE BRODEUR

Professor, Institute of Religious Studies, University of
Montreal & Senior Consultant, KAICIID

Dr. Patrice Brodeur is a Senior Consultant at KAICIID and a professor of Religious Studies at the Université de Montréal. With over thirty years of experience in the area of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, the highlights of Dr. Brodeur's career include the development of an interdisciplinary research team on Islam, pluralism and globalisation at the Université de Montréal, focusing on past and present intra- and interreligious, as well as inter-civilizational and inter-worldview forms of dialogue. An esteemed author and multilingualist, Dr. Brodeur has received numerous prestigious awards, including fellowships, scholarships, research grants and prizes during his distinguished career. He won 1st Prize in the social entrepreneurship venture plan competition at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business (2005) and received an Interfaith Visionary Award from the Temple of Understanding (2010).

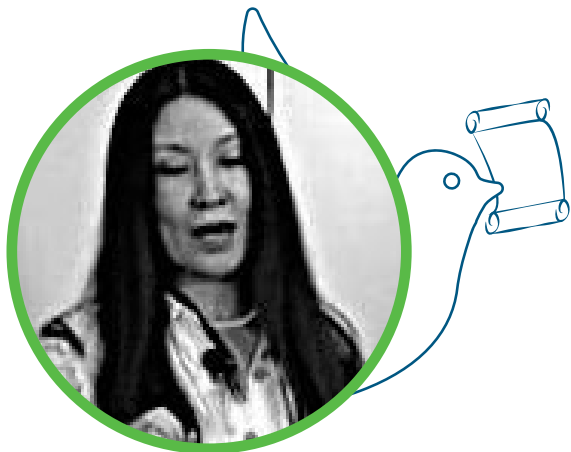


PROF. MOHAMMED ABU-NIMER

President, Salam Institute
for Peace and Justice

Prof. Mohammed Abu-Nimer is President at Salam Institute for Peace and Justice. He was a Senior Adviser at the KAICIID Dialogue Centre and Professor of International Peace and Conflict Resolution at the American University. He served as the Founder and Director of the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice, and Co-founder of the Journal of Peacebuilding and Development. He has worked for over three decades in a number of conflict areas, including: the Middle East, Chad, Niger, Mindanao, and Sri Lanka on issues related to conflict resolution; Islamic models of peacebuilding; interreligious dialogue; civic education; forgiveness and reconciliation; and evaluation of peacebuilding programmes. He has published many scholarly books and articles, and his most recent is Making Peace with Faith (2018).

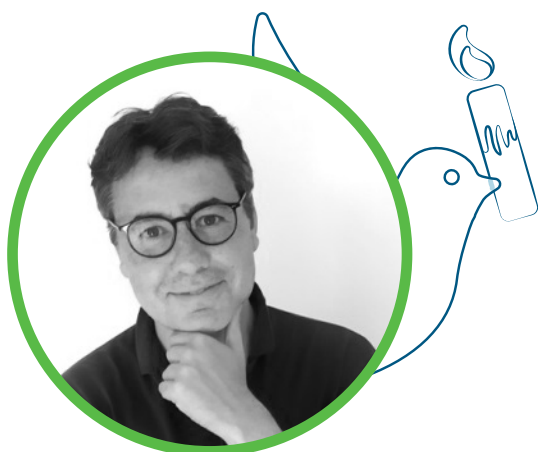




DR SCHERTO GILL

Associate Lecturer at the University
of Sussex, England

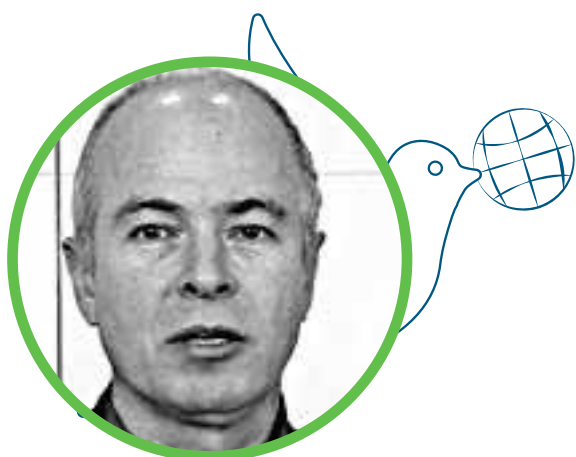
Dr. Scherto Gill is a Research Fellow and the Executive Secretary at the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, an international peace research institute based in the UK and France. She is also a visiting Fellow and an Associate Tutor at the University of Sussex's Department of Education. As a lecturer, Dr. Gill teaches courses for Masters' and Doctoral programmes at the University of Sussex. She is a member of the British Education Research Association, the American Educational Research Association and the European Society of Research in Education. Furthermore, she is a Fellow of British Royal Society of Arts (RSA), a member of the Royal Institute at Chatham House, and an Associate of Taos Institute, as well as a Board Member of the Ara Pacis Initiative.



PROF. DR. JOAN HERNÁNDEZ-SERRET

Professor at the Institut Superior de Ciències
Religioses de Barcelona (ISCREB)
and at the Faculty of Humanities of the International
University of Catalonia (UIC)

Prof. Dr. Joan Hernandez-Serret teaches courses in sociology, culture, and religious diversity for masters and doctoral programmes at universities including the Public Administration School of Catalonia, the Institut Superior de Ciències Religioses, the Faculty of Communication and Humanities of the International University of Catalonia, the University of Barcelona, and Ramon Llull University. He also serves as an adviser for interreligious and intercultural institutions such as KAICIID and Religious for Peace.



JAVIER BUSTAMANTE

Associate Professor, Department of
Moral and Political Philosophy at the
Complutense University in Madrid

Javier Bustamante Donas is a philosopher and ethical theorist with a strong background in computer science. He focuses on ethical and political issues related to cyberculture and knowledge society. He is currently an Associate Professor for the Department of Moral and Political Philosophy at the Complutense University in Madrid, and has been a visiting professor at several international universities, including University of Deusto, University of the Basque Country (Spain), Pontifical University of Minas Gerais and Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Brazil). He is also the Director of the Ibero-American Center for Science, Technology and Society (CICTES), and Vice-President of the González Vallés Foundation.

COURSE COORDINATOR



ARMEN ROSTOMYAN

E-Learning Programme Officer,
KAICIID Knowledge Hub and
the E-Learning course Coordinator

Armen Rostomyan is the Programme Officer for the KAICIID E-Learning programme as well as the KAICIID E-learning courses Coordinator. He is responsible for the development, management, and implementation of the DKH portfolio of training programmes, E-Learning courses and thematic webinars. He has over 20 years of experience working as a programme manager, lead trainer and e-learning course content moderator in various UN Agencies and International organizations such as: UNISDR, UNEP, UNDP, UNECE, World Bank (WB), Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), and Amnesty International (AI)-UK.

COURSE MODERATOR



GEORGIA GLEOUDI

Consultant, KAICIID Knowledge Hub
and E-Learning Courses Moderator

Georgia Gleoudi holds a degree in International Relations and European Studies from Panteion University, Athens and is a graduate of Master in Religion in Peace and Conflict in Uppsala University, Sweden. She has previous experience in several worldwide NGOs in the field of education and religious literacy and has also offered her services in the United Nations Development Programme by supporting peace building activities in conflict areas. In 2021, Georgia joined KAICIID and since then, she has been moderating a wide range of KAICIID e-learning courses.

COURSE IT & TECHNICAL SUPPORT



ALMIR MOREIRA

IT Officer and Technical Support
Specialist for the E-Learning courses

Almir Moreira is the KAICIID's Chief, IT. He is an ICT expert with over 20 years focused on leading teams and delivering international technology implementations within UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, IAEA, IOM) in several countries. In his current role, he works closely across the departments to deliver the required IT projects and services to support KAICIID's activities. He is also an e-learning enthusiast and is involved with the Moodle platform technical support and other e-learning and web activities.