

Report on SDG 1: No Poverty at Al-Turath University

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Committee: Al-Turath University SDG Impact Committee

Introduction

Al-Turath University (TU) continues to play a leading role in supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty). The 2024 strategy integrates social responsibility, financial aid, community engagement, and applied research to reduce poverty, empower marginalized populations, and enhance social equity. TU's programs combine humanitarian outreach, free medical and dental services, student-support initiatives, and collaborations with national and international partners to address the multidimensional nature of poverty.

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>

University Commitment toward SDG1

1. Financial Aid Programs for Low-Income Students

- TU ensures that students from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to higher education through a range of financial-assistance programs. In 2024, more than 15 % of enrolled students benefited from scholarships, tuition waivers, and reduced-fee programs. The university also offers free on-campus housing for students with economic difficulties, subsidized meals at the student cafeteria, and free transportation for students from remote areas. Counseling and mentorship services further support student well-being, retention, and academic success.

2. Financial Support Centers:

- Al-Turath University has set a target to admit students from low-income households, specifically aiming for **5%** of our student population to come from the bottom 20% of the household income group within the country. This goal is part of our commitment to ensuring equal access to education for underprivileged students and reducing financial barriers to higher education. The university actively works to identify and support these students through dedicated outreach and financial aid programs, enabling them to pursue their academic goals.
- TU has set specific goals to improve graduation rates for low-income students by expanding financial support through programs such as the <https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/financial-support-center-2/>. This initiative ensures that more full-time students receive the necessary funding to complete their education.

3. Guidance and Mentorship:

- TU has established a "Students Guidance Committee" in each department to provide academic and financial guidance, supporting students through mentorship. As a result, **95%** of the students who received financial aid have successfully graduated, with a clear *targeted completion rate for students under these programs to 100%*.

- TU is committed to ensuring that all low-income students reach graduation by removing financial barriers such as tuition fees. The university has set a clear goal to provide full financial support, ensuring that no student is prevented from earning their degree due to financial hardship.

Community Outreach and Poverty Alleviation Programs

1. Carpenter Training Program

- TU offers a free Carpenter Training Program for local community members, providing skills and resources to create sustainable income opportunities. Participants receive hands-on training, and a \$2,500 startup grant to launch their own carpentry businesses.

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/financial-support-center/community-support-programs/>

2. Women's Handicraft Cooperative

- A new initiative, the Women's Handicraft Cooperative empowers local women by teaching them marketable craft skills and supporting them with grants and access to markets, including seasonal bazaars held on campus.

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/financial-support-center/community-support-programs/>

3. Annual Free Dental Clinic by College of Dentistry

- Each year, 4th- and 5th-year dental students provide free dental services to low-income community members under expert supervision. This program addresses essential healthcare needs, reduces healthcare costs for low-income families, and enhances student training.

4. Annual Community Dental Services Initiative

- TU's College of Dentistry continues to organize free medical and dental campaigns offering examinations and treatments for low-income families and local residents, as part of its long-standing Community Dental Services Initiative. This activity is publicly documented on TU's official website

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/2023/06/annual-community-dental-services/>

5. Public Access to Recreational Facilities

- TU has made its soccer stadium accessible to the community and hosts annual tournaments during Ramadan, offering a safe and inclusive space for recreation.

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/2024/11/29006/>

Partnerships and Collaboration

Through strategic partnerships and global outreach, Al-Turath University (TU) significantly expands its role in social inclusion, capacity building, and international education. In its collaboration with the International Friendship Organization (IFO) and other NGO partners, TU provides training,

awareness-workshops, and economic empowerment initiatives to women, children, and vulnerable communities.

Moreover, TU offers free scholarships and tuition-waiver programs to international students in partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research (Iraq) and other NGOs, enabling access to higher education for students from under-represented countries.

<https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/study-in-iraq/>

In addition, TU's Continuing Education Center (CEC) provides professional development and community-training programmes in partnership with local and regional organizations, supporting lifelong learning and workforce inclusion.

https://uoturath.edu.iq/en/cec/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

These collaborations align TU's academic mission with its broader social responsibility goals, helping to reduce inequality, promote economic opportunity and support the achievement of SDG 1 (No Poverty) through inclusive partnerships and education access.

Impact Measurement and Achievements

In 2024, TU directly supported **over 600 low-income families** through community initiatives and educational programs. The **Student Financial Support Center** provided more than **120 scholarships** and **emergency grants** to financially distressed students.

Volunteer participation increased by 15 %, reflecting the growing culture of social responsibility within the university community. Collectively, these achievements demonstrate TU's measurable progress in combating poverty through education, capacity-building, and community empowerment.

Future Directions

Looking ahead, TU aims to expand its social outreach by establishing new vocational training centers, micro-enterprise funding opportunities, and a "Hope Initiative 2026" focusing on women's employment and youth entrepreneurship.

The university also plans to formalize data-tracking for low-income-student support and to develop a regional poverty-alleviation research hub that integrates academic expertise with community-based interventions.

Conclusion

Al-Turath University's dedication to SDG 1 – No Poverty is demonstrated through its strong institutional policies, community-engagement programs, and commitment to educational equity. Through partnerships, research, and student empowerment, TU continues to act as a national model for inclusive development, bridging education with humanitarian impact and helping build a more equitable society in Iraq.