

American International University-Bangladesh

Sustainable Development Goals Report



SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



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AIUB's Commitment to SDG 1: No Poverty – Comprehensive Impact Report

Inclusive Admission Targets for Low-Income Students

American International University–Bangladesh (AIUB) has institutionalized policies to ensure that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds can access higher education. The university's **Admission Policy for Underrepresented Groups** explicitly designates “low-income” students as a priority cohort for admission aiub.edu. While AIUB does not impose a fixed numeric quota, it maintains a clear commitment to actively recruit students from the bottom 20% of household income in the country aiub.edu. This commitment is operationalized through extensive outreach programs: AIUB leverages nationwide academic events – such as Olympiads, coding competitions, and inter-college championships – that are free and open to all schools across Bangladesh aiub.edu. These merit-based events serve as pipelines to identify talented youth from all socioeconomic strata (including rural and first-generation students) and encourage them to apply, thus breaking down financial and aspirational barriers to admission aiub.edu. In addition, AIUB's **Non-Discriminatory Admission Policy** ensures no applicant is excluded on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or socio-economic status, underscoring the university's commitment to equitable access aiub.edu aiub.edu. Through these inclusive policies and proactive recruitment initiatives, AIUB aligns its admissions practices with the **SDG 1** goal of expanding educational opportunity to the most impoverished segments of society.

Financial Aid and Scholarships for Economically Disadvantaged Students

To support students admitted from low-income families, AIUB provides a comprehensive range of scholarships and financial aid programs. The university's **Scholarship and Financial Aid Policy** moves beyond merit-only awards to include targeted assistance for those with demonstrated financial need aiub.edu. Key among these initiatives is a **General Need-Based Tuition Fee Waiver**, which offers tuition relief to economically disadvantaged students, and a dedicated “**Scholarship for Students from Underrepresented Group**” that explicitly includes low-income learners aiub.edu. These need-based scholarships complement AIUB's merit scholarships, creating multiple pathways for financially vulnerable students to receive support. In practice, AIUB's aid portfolio covers numerous categories – from merit-based freshman scholarships to ongoing academic performance awards, as well as special provisions for female students and other marginalized groups aiub.edu aiub.edu. Notably, the **Dr. Anwarul Abedin Scholarship** (named after AIUB's founder) provides full tuition coverage to one high-achieving female undergraduate in each faculty every semester aiub.edu aiub.edu, reflecting a commitment to gender inclusion and poverty reduction by easing the financial burden on female students. Another unique category, the **Scholarship for Underrepresented Group**, targets applicants from ethnic minorities, low-income backgrounds, “third gender” communities, and refugees, ensuring they receive financial assistance once enrolled aiub.edu aiub.edu. In addition to outright tuition waivers, AIUB offers stipends and on-campus employment opportunities so that students can earn income while studying aiub.edu aiub.edu. These varied scholarship schemes and financial aid measures demonstrate AIUB's robust

support system for economically disadvantaged students, enabling them to enroll and persist in higher education despite financial hardships aiub.edu. By substantially subsidizing education for those in need, AIUB directly contributes to **SDG 1 (No Poverty)** through the transformative power of higher education aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Philanthropic Funds and Partnerships Supporting Impoverished Students

Philanthropy and external partnerships significantly bolster AIUB's capacity to support low-income students. The university's Board of Trustees has established endowed scholarships as a form of social responsibility – for example, the **Dr. Anwarul Abedin Scholarship Grant for Female Students** covers 100% of tuition for eligible female undergraduates each regular semester aiub.edu aiub.edu. (A similar grant, the **Mrs. Hasna Abedin Scholarship** for postgraduates, has been proposed to further extend support aiub.edu.) These charity-funded programs are designed to widen access for students who might otherwise be unable to afford university. AIUB also aligns with government policies to ensure vulnerable groups receive support: it offers a **Freedom Fighter Waiver** in line with national guidelines, providing tuition waivers to descendants of Bangladesh's Liberation War veterans aiub.edu. This waiver not only honors national commitments but often benefits students from modest socio-economic backgrounds aiub.edu. In addition, the university engages in partnerships with external organizations and government agencies to channel resources into education. Under memoranda of understanding with national bodies, **National Talent Scholarships** are awarded to students who have attained distinguished achievements, with tuition waivers funded according to the clauses of each MoU aiub.edu. These partnerships may include government ministries or industry sponsors, effectively mobilizing outside funds to sponsor talented students from across the country. AIUB's commitment to the **SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)** is evident in such collaborations that directly or indirectly support poor and underserved students. Furthermore, AIUB's participation in global networks (e.g. as a signatory of the **SDG Accord** and the **Magna Charta Universitatum**) reinforces its dedication to social impact and enables sharing of best practices in poverty alleviation in higher education aiub.edu aiub.edu. Through a combination of internal charity funds, compliance with government equity policies, and strategic partnerships, AIUB has created a supportive financial ecosystem for students from poverty-impacted communities.

Tuition Waivers and Subsidized Resources for Student Welfare

Beyond traditional scholarships, AIUB ensures that students from low-income households have access to essential services and resources at little or no cost. This holistic support system addresses critical barriers – such as food, healthcare, housing, and learning materials – that might otherwise impede a disadvantaged student's university education. On campus, **medical care is provided free of charge** to all students via AIUB's Medical Center, which offers general health consultations, emergency services, and even specialized support such as maternal health assistance aiub.edu aiub.edu. The university also extends free professional counseling and mental health services, recognizing that psychological well-being is key to academic success aiub.edu. To tackle housing insecurity, AIUB has **partnered with a private dormitory (Super Hostel)** under a formal MoU to secure safe, accessible, and affordable accommodation for its students aiub.edu aiub.edu. This arrangement guarantees low-cost living

quarters for both male and female students close to campus, a crucial support especially for those coming from distant rural areas or challenging financial circumstances. In terms of nutrition, AIUB has institutionalized food assistance initiatives to ensure no student goes hungry. The university subsidizes on-campus cafeteria meals and periodically organizes food distribution drives. For instance, in 2024 the student-led **AIUB Shomoy Club**, with full university backing, provided essential food staples and medical supplies to over 1,200 flood-affected and 150 underprivileged families during Eid aiub.edu. This not only aided the wider community but also demonstrates AIUB's capacity to assist its own needy students with basic food security. Additionally, the university provides **digital services assistance**, such as free internet access and computer labs, so that low-income students can fully participate in the modern learning environment aiub.edu. Affordable transportation is another priority – AIUB operates shuttle services and travel discounts as needed to help students commute safely from home or hostels aiub.edu. All of these subsidized resources (healthcare, counseling, housing, food, technology, transport) are offered as part of AIUB's student welfare program, often either free or at highly reduced cost. By lowering the ancillary costs of education and daily life, AIUB minimizes economic stress on students from poor families aiub.edu aiub.edu. This comprehensive approach improves retention and graduation rates among disadvantaged groups, directly supporting **SDG 1** by removing poverty-related obstacles to education and wellbeing.

Community Outreach and Poverty Alleviation Initiatives

AIUB's engagement with SDG 1 extends beyond its campus through numerous community outreach and service-learning initiatives focused on poverty alleviation. **Student involvement in real-world poverty issues** is encouraged as part of the curriculum and co-curricular activities. For example, AIUB's Department of Economics organized a study tour to rural **Rupganj** where students surveyed the economic conditions of local residents, identified challenges such as unemployment and lack of capital, and explored sustainable solutions like microcredit for the community aiub.edu. Such field engagements not only enrich student learning but also contribute to local development by connecting academic insights with grassroots needs. Student organizations at AIUB actively partake in charitable work; notably, the **AIUB Shomoy Social Welfare Club** regularly conducts volunteer projects to support the underprivileged. With institutional support, Shomoy Club students have delivered food, clothing, and medicine to impoverished populations during crises (as evidenced by the large-scale flood relief and Eid charity drives) aiub.edu. These community service initiatives instill a sense of social responsibility in students while directly aiding those in extreme poverty. Moreover, as part of AIUB's global commitment to social development, the university has launched a flagship outreach project in one of Dhaka's largest slums. In alignment with its signing of the Magna Charta and SDG Accord, **AIUB is implementing a project in the Korail slum** focused on providing low-cost housing and education for underprivileged families aiub.edu. By bringing its expertise and resources into an informal settlement, AIUB is helping to improve living conditions and educational access for some of the city's poorest residents. This project serves as a model of how universities can translate high-level sustainability pledges into concrete local action aiub.edu.

Another pillar of AIUB's community impact is its emphasis on **economic empowerment programs for poverty reduction**. Through the **Dr. Anwarul Abedin Innovation Institute (D2A2I)** and its Business Incubation Center, the university supports local entrepreneurs and small businesses as a strategy to alleviate poverty aiub.edu. AIUB provides training, mentorship, and even seed funding to promising start-ups that can generate jobs and income in

the community aiub.edu. In many cases, this support is delivered via competitions and hackathons where winners receive cash prizes as initial capital for their ventures aiub.edu. More broadly, AIUB acts as a bridge between budding entrepreneurs and larger funding opportunities. The university leverages partnerships with government and international organizations to bring in significant financial assistance for local innovators aiub.edu. In 2024, AIUB collaborated with the **Ministry of ICT** to host a seminar on the national Research and Innovation Center project, informing students and local start-ups about grants of up to BDT 60 lakh (≈\$70,000) available for tech-based solutions aiub.edu. Similarly, a joint program with **Orange Corners Bangladesh** introduced young entrepreneurs (with a focus on women) to an incubator offering up to €5,000 in matching grants and further soft loans up to €50,000 aiub.edu aiub.edu. By facilitating these avenues, AIUB helps channel external funds into the community to nurture sustainable businesses. These outreach initiatives – from slum education projects to start-up funding workshops – exemplify AIUB’s multi-faceted approach to poverty alleviation beyond its campus. The university not only provides charity, but also empowers communities through capacity-building and resource mobilization, thereby advancing **SDG 1** in the local context in tandem with **SDG 8** (Decent Work) and **SDG 17** (Partnerships) aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Research and Academic Engagement on Poverty

AIUB integrates the fight against poverty into its core academic and research agenda. The university recognizes that rigorous research on poverty and development issues is crucial for informed action. In recent years, AIUB faculty and students have pursued research projects that address the economic challenges of marginalized populations. For instance, researchers at AIUB have explored **optimization models for agricultural and small-business supply chains**, aiming to improve decision-making and profitability for farmers and local entrepreneurs aiub.edu. Such research on stochastic programming in agriculture can help reduce waste and increase incomes in rural communities, contributing knowledge toward poverty reduction. AIUB’s commitment to relevant research is also evident in its partnerships: notably, the university is a key partner in a **World Bank-funded research project on solar-powered irrigation** in rural Bangladesh aiub.edu. As part of this project, AIUB hosted policy engagement workshops with the Ministry of Agriculture and national agencies to disseminate research findings on climate-resilient farming and to inform policies that benefit poor farming communities aiub.edu. By leading the “research-to-policy pipeline,” AIUB ensures that scholarly work on poverty and sustainability (SDG 1, SDG 7, SDG 13) translates into tangible improvements for low-income populations aiub.edu aiub.edu.

In addition to formal research, AIUB fosters academic discourse on poverty alleviation through conferences, seminars, and student projects. The university regularly organizes public lectures and workshops on topics related to economic development, entrepreneurship, and social welfare. During the 2023 academic year, AIUB held workshops on **micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** in Bangladesh, highlighting the prospects of local products and business growth as a strategy to combat poverty aiub.edu. Another seminar titled “*Agriculture and its Prospects for Sustainable Development in Bangladesh*” brought experts to discuss how advancements in agriculture can uplift rural livelihoods aiub.edu. The Faculty of Business Administration hosted the “*Revenue for Development*” lecture series, examining how fiscal policies and revenue generation can finance poverty reduction programs aiub.edu. AIUB also emphasizes equipping students with practical skills that enhance their employability and financial independence – for example, workshops on Microsoft Excel and basic stock market trading were offered to low-income students to improve their career prospects and financial

literacy aiub.edu aiub.edu. Through these academic engagements, AIUB not only contributes to the scholarly understanding of poverty but also empowers its students and faculty to be active participants in poverty mitigation. The integration of research, policy engagement, and skill-based learning reflects AIUB's holistic response to **SDG 1**: generating knowledge, informing policy, and preparing students to drive positive change aiub.edu [## Support for First-Generation and Underserved Students](http://aiub.edu.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Many of AIUB's initiatives are tailored to support **first-generation college students, rural youth, and other underserved populations** in accessing and succeeding in higher education. Recognizing that these groups often face additional barriers, AIUB has developed specific policies and support structures to include them. The **Admission Policy for Underrepresented Groups** explicitly names under-served categories – such as ethnic minorities, applicants from low-income families, “third gender” individuals, newly settled refugees, and other non-traditional students – and commits to evaluating their applications with a view toward inclusion aiub.edu. This means that talented students from remote rural areas or from families with no prior university graduates are given a fair opportunity and consideration during admissions. To reach potential first-generation students, AIUB conducts outreach in various regions of Bangladesh, frequently visiting schools and colleges outside the capital and hosting admission information sessions. The university's nationwide contests and fairs also serve to raise awareness among rural communities that higher education at AIUB can be within their reach aiub.edu. Once enrolled, first-generation and rural students benefit from AIUB's robust **student support system**. They have access to mentoring and counseling programs (including guidance through the Virtual University Expert System) that help them navigate academic life and develop leadership skills aiub.edu aiub.edu. Many are also integrated into AIUB's various student clubs and societies, which provide peer support and enrichment activities irrespective of one's background. Importantly, all the financial aid and basic need support described above (scholarships, waivers, free services) are available to these underserved students, ensuring that coming from a rural or first-gen background does not hinder one's educational journey aiub.edu aiub.edu. By fostering an inclusive campus culture and targeted support programs, AIUB enables first-generation college-goers and students from marginalized communities to thrive. This approach advances **SDG 4 (Quality Education)** in tandem with **SDG 1**, as it broadens participation in higher education and helps break the cycle of poverty through learning and opportunity aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Conclusion

Through the strategies and programs outlined above, American International University–Bangladesh demonstrates a deep institutional commitment to **No Poverty (SDG 1)**, as measured by the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. From admissions to graduation, AIUB has implemented a continuum of support for disadvantaged students: inclusive recruitment policies, substantial financial aid, subsidized essential services, and robust academic and career guidance. These efforts are complemented by active community engagement and research initiatives that extend AIUB's impact on poverty alleviation beyond the campus gates. All these elements reflect the university's holistic approach to sustainable development – one that recognizes education as both a means to and an end of poverty reduction. AIUB's performance in the **THE Impact Rankings** for SDG 1 is thus underpinned by verifiable policies and practices tbsnews.net tbsnews.net that illustrate how the institution is contributing to eradicating poverty in its communities. In sum, AIUB's alignment with

SDG 1 is evident in its **targets for equitable access, financial and material support for the poor, partnerships and policies for social inclusion, outreach to uplift local communities, and scholarly engagement with poverty issues**. This comprehensive and evidence-based approach highlights AIUB as a leading example of a university driving positive social change while upholding academic excellence and inclusion tbsnews.net aiub.edu.