

American International University-Bangladesh

Sustainable Development Goals Report



SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



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AIUB's Commitment to SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals – Sustainability Report

Introduction

American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) recognizes that cross-sector collaboration is pivotal for achieving sustainable development. AIUB has positioned itself as a model institution for **Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)** through robust partnerships at local, national, and international levels aiub.edu. These partnerships span **universities, industry, government agencies, and NGOs**, all aimed at aligning educational and research initiatives with the United Nations 2030 Agenda. By fostering joint programs, community outreach, and policy dialogues, AIUB ensures that knowledge and resources are shared to address global challenges collaboratively. This report highlights AIUB's strategic partnerships and collaborative actions that demonstrate its commitment to SDG 17, in a format suitable for the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings submission.

International Academic and Research Collaborations

AIUB has cultivated extensive **global partnerships** to enhance education quality and research impact. Notable collaborations include formal agreements with universities across **Asia, Europe, and beyond**, facilitating student/faculty exchanges, joint research, and curriculum development. For example:

- **MoU with University of Danang (Vietnam):** In July 2024, AIUB signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Danang to establish exchanges and joint research programs. This partnership with a premier Vietnamese institution strengthens research capacity and mutual knowledge-sharing, directly supporting SDG 17 and improving educational quality (SDG 4) in the region.
- **Renewed Partnership with Asian Institute of Technology (AIT, Thailand):** AIUB renewed a 20-year partnership with AIT in March 2023, focusing on capacity-building Ph.D. programs, joint research activities, and academic exchanges. This collaboration underscores a shared commitment to sustainable innovation and has led to co-organized seminars, workshops, and training programs, exemplifying how partnerships bolster academic excellence.
- **Bilateral Agreements in Central and South Asia:** In 2023, AIUB signed cooperation agreements with institutions like **Tashkent University of Information Technologies** in Uzbekistan (March 2023) to pursue joint scientific research, symposia, and exchange programs. Similarly, AIUB inked MoUs with **Amity University Tashkent** and **Kimyo International University** (November 2023) emphasizing collaborative curriculum development, doctoral study support, and institutional capacity building. These alliances enhance global best practices in higher education by fostering innovation (SDG 9) and quality education (SDG 4) through international cooperation.
- **Expanding Networks in the Philippines:** At the 1st LGU Global Engagement Forum 2024 in the Philippines, AIUB signed a comprehensive MoU with **20 Philippine universities** and the **Association of Local Colleges and Universities (ALCU)**,

massively expanding its international network. This partnership lays the groundwork for dynamic collaborations that enrich educational experiences (SDG 4) and advance research on an international scale. It demonstrates AIUB's support for developing institutions by sharing expertise and resources across borders.

- **European Consortia and Research Projects:** AIUB actively participates in multilateral projects such as the **Erasmus+ “SOHO” consortium** (2023–2026), which unites 9 universities from Europe and Asia to develop innovative education in sustainable tourism. Through SOHO, AIUB is co-creating new courses on smart transportation and sustainable hospitality in partnership with universities from Romania, France, Italy, Malaysia, Vietnam, etc., directly contributing to SDGs on decent work, innovation, and climate action. AIUB is also a supporting partner in Durham University (UK)'s **“JusTN0W – Just Transitions to a Net Zero World”** project, a £5 million interdisciplinary research program (2024–2028) that devises equitable decarbonization solutions. By engaging in these international research collaborations, AIUB advances global knowledge on sustainability and gains access to best practices for tackling urgent issues like climate change (SDG 13) and clean energy (SDG 7).

AIUB's global engagements are further reinforced by memberships in international networks and accords. The university is a signatory of the **SDG Accord**, committing to annual reporting on progress and collaboration with global partners to enhance campus sustainability. It serves as a **Satellite Higher Education Institution** in the International Association of Universities' global SDG cluster, focusing on Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Sustainable Cities (SDG 11). Additionally, AIUB has joined quality and governance networks – becoming a member of **INQAAHE** (the leading international quality assurance network) in 2024 and signing the **Magna Charta Universitatum 2020**, aligning with nearly 1000 universities in a pledge to uphold academic freedom and societal responsibility. Participation in these networks and accords is a strategic move to benchmark AIUB's standards against global best practices and to engage in policy dialogues on sustainable development in higher education.

Local and National Partnerships and Community Engagement

AIUB's commitment to SDG 17 is equally evident in Bangladesh through partnerships with **government bodies, local universities, industry, and NGOs** that address national development needs. These strategic partnerships leverage AIUB's academic and infrastructural resources to support community development, policy implementation, and capacity building at home:

- **Collaboration with Government and Public Institutions:** AIUB regularly partners with government agencies to align its programs with national priorities. In May 2024, AIUB hosted delegates from the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** and Bangladesh's Department of Environment, initiating a trilateral dialogue on future collaboration in environmental projects. This high-level meeting linked AIUB's research capacity with national environmental policies (SDG 13), illustrating how academia–government partnerships can drive sustainable development initiatives. AIUB has also engaged the **Bangladesh National Board of Revenue (NBR)**: in December 2023, it hosted a “Revenue for Development” lecture featuring the NBR Chairman to discuss how tax policy can fuel sustainable national growth. Such events

reflect AIUB's role in policy advocacy, raising awareness among students and stakeholders about good governance and economic development (SDG 8). Moreover, AIUB works with public research institutions – for instance, a March 2023 MoU with the **Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI)** (a government R&D body) and **RUET** (a public engineering university) established collaboration in sustainable architecture and engineering research, supporting SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities) and SDG 9 (Innovation) through shared expertise.

- **Academic and Technical Cooperation with Industry:** The university actively bridges academia and industry to ensure real-world impact. AIUB's Faculty of Engineering and its Dr. Anwarul Abedin Institute of Innovation (D2A2I) have teamed up with national industry players on technology development. Notably, in 2023 D2A2I signed an agreement with the **Bangladesh Satellite Company Limited (BSCL)** (a state-owned enterprise) to jointly develop a data-driven Television Rating Points (TRP) measurement system for the media industry. This research partnership not only advances media analytics innovation (supporting SDG 9) but also exemplifies knowledge transfer and local capacity building in a specialized technical field. Likewise, AIUB has partnered with **tech multinationals** like Huawei Technologies, as well as local businesses and banks (e.g., City Alo, a women-focused banking initiative) via MoUs to enrich its programs aiub.edu aiub.edu. Such agreements facilitate internships, training, and project collaborations that enhance students' skills and employability, aligning academic outputs with sustainable economic growth.
- **NGO Partnerships for Community Development:** AIUB actively collaborates with non-governmental organizations to tackle social challenges through education and volunteerism. A flagship example is the joint initiative with BRAC (one of the world's largest NGOs) called "**Shomotontro**", focusing on gender justice and diversity. In this program, AIUB's Quality Assurance office and Women Development Forum worked with BRAC to engage students in promoting SDG 5 (Gender Equality) via interactive workshops and seminars. By empowering youth as change agents in issues of gender justice, this partnership reinforces both SDG 5 and SDG 17 through multi-stakeholder engagement. Similarly, AIUB collaborates with **Grameen Shakti** (a renewable energy NGO founded by the Grameen organization) to run workshops on climate change and clean energy. These collaborative trainings raise awareness of sustainable technologies, addressing SDG 7 (Affordable Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) while equipping students to devise green solutions. AIUB's student-led social club "Shomoy" extends the university's community partnership ethos: working with local volunteers, Shomoy Club has organized nation-wide drives (e.g. winter clothing donations, blood donation camps) and idea competitions to address social issues. By engaging civil society and its own alumni and student network in such causes, AIUB builds strong bridges with the community at large, leveraging partnerships to improve lives and reduce inequalities (SDG 10).
- **Educational Outreach to Underserved Communities:** Through institutional support and student activism, AIUB shares educational resources with marginalized groups as part of its public engagement mission. The university supports **Kathpencil Pathshala**, a charity school initiative run by senior students that provides free primary education, meals, and skills training to underprivileged children aged 5–12. Operating since 2013 with AIUB's backing, Kathpencil Pathshala has created "Education Safety Zones" for street and slum children, integrating arts, crafts, theater, and play into learning. This effort exemplifies partnership for community development: AIUB joins hands with local youth volunteers and donors to ensure inclusive quality education (SDG 4) for the poor, thus directly supporting SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 17 (as a multi-sector

cooperation). In these ways, AIUB's local partnerships and outreach programs demonstrate a holistic approach to SDG 17 – engaging government, industry, and civil society to share knowledge, technology, and hope with those who need it most.

Events and Multi-Stakeholder Engagements Supporting SDG 17

AIUB has distinguished itself by hosting and co-hosting a variety of **conferences, workshops, competitions, and forums** that bring together academia, government, industry, and the public in pursuit of sustainable development objectives. These events not only facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building but also strengthen networks that further SDG 17:

- **Quality Education and Sustainability Conferences:** In November 2023, AIUB proudly hosted the **APQN Academic Conference 2023** – the first time this prestigious Asia-Pacific Quality Network event was held in Bangladesh. Under the theme “Innovation and Sustainable Development in Higher Education,” the conference convened experts from 16 countries (including representatives of Bangladesh's accreditation authority, international QA bodies, and APQN board members) to discuss quality assurance, transformative teaching, and e-learning. By facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue among educators, regulators, and NGOs, AIUB advanced SDG 4 (Quality Education) while exemplifying Partnerships for the Goals. The university's central role in APQN 2023 underscores its commitment to global collaboration for improving educational standards. AIUB also co-hosted the **Bangladesh Education Forum 2023** in Dubai – an international summit showcasing Bangladesh's higher education progress and fostering its appeal to foreign students aiub.edu. This forum, held abroad with governmental and institutional partners, highlighted how AIUB builds cross-border academic links, directly aligning with SDG 17 by forging international educational opportunities aiub.edu.
- **Workshops and Seminars for Sustainable Practices:** Throughout 2023–2024, AIUB organized numerous seminars and workshops addressing specific SDGs and involving external stakeholders. For example, a seminar on “**Responsible Marketing & Sustainable Consumer Behavior**” (August 2023) engaged industry experts and academics to sensitize students on the role of marketing in combating the climate crisis. Another seminar on **legal reforms for maternity benefits and prevention of gender-based violence** (October 2023) was led by a legal expert, highlighting policy changes for women's empowerment and aligning with SDG 5 (Gender Equality). By opening its campus to such dialogues – often in partnership with professional bodies or government representatives – AIUB leverages its convening power to advocate for policy improvements and social change (SDG 16: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions), reinforcing the multi-stakeholder nature of SDG 17.
- **Innovation Challenges and Student Competitions:** AIUB has transformed its campus into a hub for youth engagement and innovation contests that address sustainable development. The university regularly hosts large-scale, public-facing events such as the **AIUB CS Fest**, the **NASA Space Apps Challenge**, the **National Physics Olympiad**, and the **Space Exploration Olympiad**. These competitions draw thousands of students from hundreds of schools and colleges across Bangladesh. By partnering with international organizations (e.g., NASA for the Space Apps hackathon) and national academic societies, these events provide a platform to crowdsource creative solutions to real-world problems. They also build partnerships between AIUB and

secondary education institutions, identifying young talent and inspiring STEM careers that advance SDGs like Quality Education (SDG 4) and Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure (SDG 9). In 2023, the AIUB Social Welfare Club “Shomoy” organized the **IDEAS Challenge 2K23**, a national competition for social innovation that involved 350 participants presenting solutions to community issues. Such events, supported by AIUB faculty and often judged by experts from NGOs or industry, foster a culture of collaboration, volunteerism, and problem-solving among youth – directly serving the spirit of SDG 17 by building networks of changemakers.

- **Sporting and Cultural Exchanges:** Recognizing that partnerships extend beyond academics, AIUB also engages in sports and cultural events to build bridges. In 2023, AIUB signed an MoU with **Kathmandu University (Nepal)** to initiate a sports exchange program, enabling exchange of players and coaches and joint sports events. This unique collaboration uses athletics as a medium to promote well-being (SDG 3) and cross-cultural partnership (SDG 17). AIUB’s own sports teams have traveled for international tournaments and the university hosted inter-college championships involving dozens of local institutions, emphasizing teamwork and unity. Culturally, AIUB houses the **King Sejong Institute Dhaka** (in partnership with the Korean government) as a language and culture center, and it frequently welcomes foreign embassy initiatives (e.g., book donations from the Philippine Embassy). By facilitating these cultural and sports partnerships, AIUB nurtures mutual respect and understanding, essential ingredients for sustainable global partnerships.

Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Innovation through Partnerships

One of AIUB’s core strategies under SDG 17 is leveraging partnerships to build capacity—within the university, for its partners, and for society at large—while driving policy advocacy and innovation for sustainable development. Key outcomes of AIUB’s partnerships include:

- **Capacity Building in Higher Education:** Through international agreements, AIUB has expanded opportunities for advanced training and skill development. The renewed MoU with AIT, Thailand, emphasizes doctoral education and faculty development, enabling AIUB lecturers and graduates to pursue Ph.D. studies with AIT’s support aiub.edu. This exchange of knowledge and mentorship enriches AIUB’s human capital and research capabilities, illustrating how partnerships can strengthen institutional capacity (a priority indicator for Impact Rankings) aiub.edu. Likewise, MoUs with universities in Uzbekistan and India focus on *institutional capacity building* – for instance, the collaboration with Amity University Tashkent and KIUT is geared towards enhancing AIUB’s curriculum and research through shared expertise. At the regional level, AIUB’s involvement in the **Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP)** and similar bodies helps it both contribute to and learn from collective best practices in university governance aiub.edu aiub.edu. Additionally, AIUB’s long-standing membership in the **United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)** and its alignment with the **UN Race to Zero** campaign demonstrate capacity building in terms of integrating global sustainability frameworks into campus operations and teaching. By signing on to these initiatives, AIUB commits to continuous improvement and provides data on SDG progress, which in turn guides policy and budget decisions within the institution.

- **Joint Research and Innovation:** Many partnerships have a research dimension aimed at innovating for sustainable solutions. Under the Durham University-led *JusTNOW* project, AIUB researchers collaborate internationally to devise strategies for just energy transition. This partnership not only contributes to scholarly output on climate action but also integrates AIUB into global innovation networks. Similarly, the Erasmus+ SOHO project led AIUB to establish **Knowledge & Competence Centers** for sustainable tourism and to develop micro-credential courses on renewable energy and smart transportation. These outputs directly feed into capacity building for local industries (tourism, transport) and ensure that AIUB's curriculum stays at the cutting edge of sustainability innovation. On the home front, AIUB's D2A2I collaborations – such as with **Amateur Experimental Rocketry Dhaka (AERD)** – spur grassroots innovation. By funding and partnering on a hybrid rocket engine research program for young engineers (formalized August 2023), AIUB is cultivating a new generation of scientists and supporting innovation in aerospace technology (SDG 9). Such projects show AIUB's commitment to transforming ideas into practical solutions through partnership-driven research. Moreover, industry-linked research like the AIUB-BSCL TRP system project not only solves a local technical challenge but also builds research capacity within Bangladesh's media sector. Every joint research endeavor – whether developing a data analytics tool or exploring nanofluid solar concentrators – adds to the sustainable innovation ecosystem that AIUB champions.
- **Policy Advocacy and Societal Impact:** AIUB leverages partnerships to influence and support policy and societal change, aligning with SDG 17's call for multi-stakeholder engagement in governance. The cross-sector dialogues hosted at AIUB (e.g., inviting government regulators, international experts, and NGOs to APQN 2023 and the Revenue for Development lecture) have provided forums to discuss policy improvements in education quality and public finance. AIUB faculty have also participated in high-level policy research workshops, such as the Magna Charta Observatory's "Responsive and Responsible University" project, collaborating with European and Asian peers to address community challenges like urban slum development and women's entrepreneurship. The findings – e.g., proposals for improving slum housing and fostering female entrepreneurs in Dhaka – were presented internationally, positioning AIUB as a contributor to policy discourse on poverty reduction, gender equality, and urban resilience. Through the **Bangladesh Education Forum in Dubai**, co-hosted by AIUB, the university advocated for policies to enhance Bangladesh's higher education export capacity aiub.edu. Domestically, AIUB's collaborations with bodies like the Bangladesh Accreditation Council (exemplified by mutual visits and consultations) help strengthen national education standards and accountability. In summary, by actively engaging in policy-oriented partnerships and dialogues, AIUB not only adapts its own practices to global standards but also assists in shaping broader sustainable development policies, fulfilling a key aspect of SDG 17.
- **Resource Sharing and Support for Partners:** The spirit of partnership is also evident in AIUB's willingness to share resources and expertise with others, especially in support of less advantaged communities or institutions. A tangible example is **technology transfer**: in April 2025, AIUB signed an MoU with **CRID USA**, an innovation platform, which included the donation of a full-size technology simulator to AIUB for research purposes. This partnership is enabling AIUB faculty and students to work on cutting-edge simulations, while also opening opportunities for training professionals, thus building capacity both within and beyond the university. Conversely, AIUB has served as a resource hub for others – such as hosting the **Cisco Networking Academy** on campus to train students (from AIUB and outside) in IT skills, and

establishing the King Sejong Institute to offer language education to the public. When the Philippine Embassy donated books to AIUB's library in 2022, the gesture symbolized a partnership aimed at knowledge sharing between nations. AIUB's multi-country MoUs (e.g., with the 20 Philippine colleges, or with Nepal's universities) often involve commitments to share curricula, research findings, and even faculty expertise with those institutions. By treating partnerships as two-way streets—where AIUB not only gains but also gives support—AIUB exemplifies the mutual aid dimension of SDG 17. This is particularly impactful when working with institutions in developing countries or emerging education systems, as it helps build collective strength in addressing global challenges.

Conclusion

AIUB's comprehensive approach to SDG 17 showcases how a university can be a nexus for partnership-driven sustainable development. Through strategic alliances with international universities, AIUB brings global knowledge to Bangladesh while exporting its own innovations abroad. Its collaborations with government bodies and NGOs ensure that academic expertise translates into community impact and policy support. Frequent multi-stakeholder events and conferences hosted by AIUB create inclusive platforms for learning and networking, reinforcing its role as a convener in the sustainable development arena. Formal collaborations, from MoUs on joint research to capacity-building programs, provide concrete frameworks that sustain these initiatives over the long term. Finally, AIUB's culture of public engagement – from grassroots volunteer projects to global forums – underlines a commitment to sharing resources, opportunities, and hope with partners near and far. In sum, AIUB demonstrates that **Partnership for the Goals is not just a slogan but a lived strategy**, integral to its mission. This alignment with SDG 17 is evident in every facet of the university's operations, and it positions AIUB as a valuable contributor to the SDGs, a fact recognized in awards like the **APQN Quality Award 2024** for institutional excellence aiub.edu. As AIUB continues to expand its partnerships and innovate through collaboration, it solidifies its standing in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings as a catalyst for sustainable development, exemplifying how higher education institutions can work **together for a better and more sustainable future**.