

American International University-Bangladesh

Sustainable Development Goals Report



SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



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AIUB's Commitment to SDG 5: Gender Equality

Introduction

American International University–Bangladesh (AIUB) demonstrates a strong commitment to **UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality)** through comprehensive policies and initiatives. The university ensures inclusive access and non-discriminatory practices in admissions, employment, and governance, while implementing dedicated programs to empower female students and staff. This report outlines AIUB's efforts in tracking gender parity in education, enforcing gender-equality policies, providing targeted support for women (scholarships, maternity and childcare benefits), safeguarding against gender-based harassment, promoting women's leadership, and conducting awareness programs. All information is drawn from AIUB's official publications and policies, aligning with Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings evidence requirements.

Tracking and Reporting Women's Application and Completion Rates

Systematic Data Tracking: AIUB maintains a *statistical, systematic tracking system* focused on women's access to education. The university continually records the number and proportion of female students at each stage: applicants, admitted students, enrolled students, and graduates aiub.edu. For every admission cycle (Spring, Summer, Fall), AIUB measures the percentage of female applicants and how many are accepted and enrolled, using these indicators to monitor inclusivity in the intake process aiub.edu. Likewise, graduation data are disaggregated by gender: AIUB holds convocations every semester and **reports how many female students graduate each time**, comparing women's and men's completion rates aiub.edu. This diligent tracking allows the university to identify any gender gaps in admission or graduation and address them, underscoring its commitment to equitable student success aiub.edu. As a result of these efforts, women currently comprise about **24% of AIUB's student population** (2,373 out of 10,027 students), and the university is actively working to increase this share by ensuring women apply, enroll, and graduate at comparable rates to their male counterparts.

Gender Equality Policies in Admissions, Employment, and Governance

Non-Discriminatory Admissions and Hiring: AIUB upholds comprehensive non-discrimination and inclusivity policies covering all university operations. Decisions on student admission and employee hiring or promotion are strictly merit-based and **free from any gender bias or discrimination** aiub.edu. The official *AIUB Non-Discriminatory Admission Policy* states that the university admits qualified students **regardless of gender** (as well as age, ethnicity, religion, etc.), and no applicant is given preferential or adverse treatment on the basis of sex or gender identity aiub.edu. Likewise, AIUB's employment policies ensure **equal opportunity in recruitment, promotion, and compensation** for all genders: academic and non-academic staff are promoted without discrimination, and **all employees are paid equally for equal roles**, with no gender pay gap daily-sun.com. The institution explicitly prohibits any form of unequal wages or treatment based on gender aiub.edu.

Inclusive Governance and Leadership: Gender equality is also reflected in AIUB's leadership and governance structures. The university's top leadership includes women in key positions – notably, the Vice-Chancellor of AIUB is **Prof. Dr. Carmen Z. Lamagna, the first female VC of any Bangladeshi university** daily-sun.com. Women are well-represented on AIUB's Board of Trustees (5 out of 9 board members are female) and serve as heads of departments and directors of important academic and administrative units daily-sun.com. For example, women currently hold roles such as Department Advisor (Law), Director of BBA Program, Additional Director of the Institutional Quality Assurance Cell, Head of Physics, and other senior posts daily-sun.com. This strong female representation in governance testifies to AIUB's commitment to **women's inclusion in decision-making**. The university emphasizes fairness and has “*never compromised, segregated or favoured one gender over another*” in its management culture daily-sun.com.

Institutional Committees and Policies: To sustain an equitable environment, AIUB has established a **Diversity and Equality Committee** and adopted an official **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** aiub.edu. These bodies ensure that gender equality principles are embedded in governance and campus life. All university policies – from academic regulations to codes of conduct – are reviewed to align with non-discrimination standards. In sum, AIUB's institutional policies guarantee that **women and men have equal rights and opportunities** in admissions, education, employment, and leadership, thereby fostering a gender-inclusive academic community aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Scholarships and Financial Support for Female Students

Dedicated Scholarships for Women: AIUB offers a range of scholarships to make education accessible, and notably provides a scholarship **exclusively for female students** to encourage women's higher education. The flagship award is the *Dr. Anwarul Abedin Scholarship Grant for Female University Student*, founded by AIUB's late Chairman to help close the gender gap in higher education aiub.edu. Every semester (in each Spring and Fall), this competitive grant is awarded to a deserving female student, covering **100% of tuition fees for the remainder of her degree program** aiub.edu aiub.edu. Established in 2013, the scholarship aims to empower female leaders by supporting their undergraduate or graduate studies. By enabling women to pursue advanced education without financial burden, the program nurtures the next generation of female professionals and leaders aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Inclusive Financial Aid: In addition to the female-only scholarship, AIUB runs a structured financial aid program with **numerous scholarships open to all students irrespective of gender** aiub.edu. These include merit scholarships, need-based aid, sports scholarships, and other grants. The gender-neutral scholarships ensure that women have equal access to financial support based on merit or need. AIUB monitors the gender distribution of scholarship recipients as another indicator of women's ongoing participation aiub.edu. This tracking has shown that many female students benefit from general scholarships, reflecting AIUB's inclusive approach aiub.edu. Moreover, the Office of Student Affairs provides mentoring on scholarship opportunities specifically to female students to encourage them to apply and continue their studies. Collectively, these financial aid measures lower economic barriers for women and **promote the continuation of female students from undergraduate to graduate levels** aiub.edu.

Maternity, Parenting Support, and Childcare Facilities

Maternity and Paternity Leave: AIUB has instituted family-friendly policies to support student mothers and university employees who are parents. Female faculty and staff are entitled to **paid maternity leave** as per policy, ensuring they can take time for childbirth and recovery without career penalty aiub.edu. This benefit provides job security and income continuity, helping women balance work and family life. In addition, AIUB has a supportive *paternity leave* policy: new fathers among the employees can take leave to participate in childcare duties aiub.edu aiub.edu. By giving fathers leave, AIUB helps distribute parenting responsibilities, indirectly supporting female employees (and students) in their return to work or studies. These provisions cultivate an organizational culture where starting a family does not hinder one's academic or professional progression, thereby encouraging **women's continued participation** in university life.

On-Campus Childcare Facility: To further assist parents, AIUB operates an **on-campus childcare center** available to students, faculty, and staff. This facility accepts children (approximately ages 6 months to 4 years) and provides safe, professional early childhood care during working hours aiub.edu. The childcare center is run with dedicated infrastructure and trained caregivers, under the supervision of an official Childcare Committee that maintains high standards of care and preschool education aiub.edu. Importantly, the service is made affordable – it requires only a very nominal monthly fee – to ensure accessibility for all who need it aiub.edu. The presence of this childcare facility enables **student mothers to continue attending classes and staff mothers to fulfill their job responsibilities without interruption**, knowing their young children are cared for nearby on campus aiub.edu aiub.edu. AIUB reports a healthy utilization of the childcare services each year, indicating that many students and employees rely on this support mechanism to remain engaged in their studies or work aiub.edu. By reducing childcare as a barrier, the university actively empowers women (and parents generally) to pursue education and careers.

Flexible Support and Facilities: Beyond leave and childcare, AIUB's campus is equipped with amenities that consider gender-specific needs. There are separate common rooms and nursing spaces for female students and staff, private areas for prayer and rest, and flexible scheduling or make-up class provisions for new mothers when needed (as informed by case-by-case accommodations). The on-campus Medical Center provides prenatal and postnatal healthcare support as part of its free services aiub.edu aiub.edu. These health services, alongside mental health counseling availability (through AIUB's partnership with wEvolve) aiub.edu, ensure that female students and employees who are pregnant or parenting receive comprehensive support. Overall, AIUB's family-friendly policies and facilities create a **supportive environment for women**, allowing them to balance academic/professional roles with motherhood and family responsibilities aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Harassment Prevention and Response Mechanisms

Zero Tolerance for Harassment: AIUB maintains a **strict zero-tolerance policy on gender-based harassment, abuse, or violence** on campus. The university's non-discrimination policy explicitly prohibits any form of harassment or sexual misconduct against students or employees aiub.edu. To enforce this, AIUB has established formal procedures and committees to handle complaints. There is a dedicated *Sexual Harassment Complaint Committee* constituted per legal guidelines (following the directives of Bangladesh's High Court) to investigate and resolve any incidents of sexual harassment aiub.edu. This committee is empowered to receive complaints confidentially and recommend actions, ensuring that perpetrators are held

accountable and disciplinary measures are taken in line with the university code of conduct and national law.

Reporting Channels and Protection: AIUB provides clear, accessible channels for victims or witnesses to report gender-based misconduct. Students can file complaints through the Office of Student Affairs, and employees through the Office of Human Resources, using designated complaint forms or email, as part of the grievance procedure aiub.edu aiub.edu. The university guarantees that all such complaints will be addressed promptly and fairly by the appropriate authorities aiub.edu. Importantly, there are **protections in place for those who report discrimination or harassment** – AIUB’s policy ensures that no student or staff member will suffer academic or employment disadvantage for lodging a complaint in good faith aiub.edu aiub.edu. Complainants’ confidentiality is strictly maintained throughout the process, and retaliation of any kind is not tolerated. These safeguards encourage a “speak up” culture where women (and all community members) feel safe to report incidents.

Preventive Training and Resources: The university also emphasizes prevention of gender-based violence through awareness and training. Regular workshops are conducted on topics like respect in the workplace, anti-harassment training for staff, and orientation sessions for new students about consent and campus conduct standards (often organized by the Office of Student Affairs and the AIUB Women Forum). Printed guidelines and online resources on how to seek help are made available. The presence of **female counselors and advisors** on campus provides an additional confidential avenue for students to discuss any harassment concerns and get support. Moreover, AIUB collaborates with national organizations on gender justice (e.g. the BRAC **Shomotontro** program) to educate its community about preventing violence and upholding women’s rights aiub.edu. By combining clear policies, robust reporting mechanisms, and proactive education, AIUB works to maintain a campus environment where **everyone – especially women and girls – feel safe, respected, and protected from harassment or violence**.

Promoting Women’s Leadership and Representation

Women in Leadership Positions: AIUB actively promotes women’s representation in academic and administrative leadership. As noted, the university is led by a female Vice-Chancellor, and women occupy a significant portion of high-level roles including governance bodies and departmental leadership aiub.edu. Female faculty members are encouraged to take on decision-making roles such as deans, program directors, coordinators, and committee chairs. Currently, women faculty serve as heads or coordinators in departments across faculties (e.g. Law, Business, Sciences, etc.) and as additional directors in key offices like the IQAC daily-sun.com. Administratively, women also hold positions like *Associate Deans*, *Registrar (Deputy)*, and lead various service offices, contributing to policy and strategy decisions. AIUB’s Board of Trustees, as mentioned, has over **50% female membership (5 out of 9)** which is exceptional in the region daily-sun.com. This inclusive leadership structure provides role models to aspiring women and ensures that **women’s perspectives shape institutional governance**.

Advancement and Capacity Building: To cultivate a pipeline of women leaders, AIUB emphasizes professional development and equal advancement opportunities. The university’s promotion process is strictly meritocratic – “*employees are promoted...without any discrimination in regards [to] whether the applicant is male or female*” daily-sun.com. As a result, many women have risen to managerial and professoriate positions. Nearly **30% of**

AIUB's full-time faculty are female, a reflection of this supportive climate [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com). AIUB also runs mentoring programs and leadership workshops for faculty and mid-level staff. For instance, the **AIUB Women Forum** (established 2015) is an internal network that brings together female faculty, staff, and students to discuss leadership challenges and growth. It organizes talks by successful women leaders and skill-building sessions, inspiring participants to take on greater responsibilities [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com) [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com). The Women Forum also works to ensure women have representation in all important committees and student organizations.

Student Leadership and Clubs: At the student level, AIUB encourages women to step into leadership roles in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The university supports a vibrant student club culture, and **female students are actively encouraged to participate and lead**. As a result, over one-quarter of all student club members are women, and approximately **20% of club executive committee positions (Presidents, Vice Presidents, etc.) are held by women** [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com). This includes technical clubs, cultural clubs, sports teams, and academic societies which traditionally might be male-dominated. For example, the IEEE AIUB Student Branch has a Women in Engineering (WIE) affinity group that is led by female engineering students. AIUB's female athletes have also excelled in leadership on the field – the university's women's football team members have represented Bangladesh internationally (notably, AIUB alumnae were part of the national team that won the 2022 SAFF Women's Championship) aiub.edu aiub.edu. By promoting women in student governance and athletics, AIUB helps women build confidence, management experience, and a public presence. These experiences serve as a training ground for future leadership in their careers and communities.

In summary, women at AIUB are present **at all levels of leadership** – from the executive management and faculty to student organizations. The institution's policies and culture of inclusion continue to expand these opportunities, aligning with SDG 5's target of ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal leadership chances. AIUB's own female leaders often gain recognition beyond campus; for instance, the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Lamagna was honored as one of the top 100 women in the world in education [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com) [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com), and AIUB female students have twice won national "Women in Leadership (WIL)" awards for their vision and initiative [daily-sun.com](https://www.daily-sun.com). These accolades reflect the empowering environment that AIUB has nurtured for women leaders.

Gender Equality Awareness and Training Programs

Group photo from a women's empowerment seminar at AIUB, demonstrating the university's engagement of female students and faculty in SDG 5 initiatives.

Workshops, Seminars, and Events: Engaging the community in conversations about gender equality is a cornerstone of AIUB's approach. The university regularly hosts **awareness campaigns, training workshops, and celebratory events** to promote gender equity values among students and staff. For example, AIUB's Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) partnered with BRAC (a major NGO) to host "*Shomotontro*", an initiative on gender justice and diversity, bringing experts to campus to discuss gender rights and legal protections aiub.edu aiub.edu. The Office of Student Affairs and student clubs have organized workshops such as "*Practice Self-Promotion for Women*" (as part of Google's #IamRemarkable campaign) to train women in confidence-building and professional skills aiub.edu. In the engineering faculty, seminars like "*Women in Engineering*" invite female engineers and alumni to share

experiences, thereby encouraging more women to pursue and persist in STEM fields aiub.edu. These targeted events address the challenges of underrepresentation and empower women with knowledge and networks.

International Women’s Day (IWD) and Annual Campaigns: AIUB enthusiastically commemorates **International Women’s Day** each year with high-profile events. In 2023, the AIUB Women Forum organized a campus-wide IWD program titled “*Your Story Matters*” – a panel discussion where successful women (including industry leaders, alumni, and faculty) shared their journeys and insights with students aiub.edu. Such IWD events highlight women’s contributions, celebrate achievements, and foster dialogue on advancing gender equality. They also align with global IWD themes (e.g., 2023’s theme “*DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality*” was integrated into discussions on women in tech) dhakatribune.com. These annual events raise visibility of gender issues on campus and renew the community’s commitment to SDG 5. Additionally, AIUB observes campaigns like the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence*, during which seminars or poster exhibitions are held to educate about preventing violence against women.

Training and Capacity Building: The university provides **gender-sensitivity training** for various stakeholder groups. New faculty orientation includes modules on AIUB’s code of conduct regarding harassment and discrimination. Staff in student services and security receive training on handling reports of gender-based violence with sensitivity. AIUB’s curriculum is also leveraged – courses in law, social science, and business often incorporate topics of women’s rights and gender equality, ensuring students academically engage with these issues. In 2024, the Department of Law hosted a seminar on “*Recent Legal Reforms on Maternity Benefit and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence*” to educate students and the public on these critical topics aiub.edu. AIUB also participates in external networks and competitions that promote gender issues; for instance, the **IEEE AIUB WIE Affinity Group** celebrates “WIE Day” to encourage women in engineering aiub.edu, and AIUB students produce films and projects on social themes (an AIUB team won a film contest with a short film on women’s empowerment) aiub.edu.

Through these multifaceted awareness efforts, AIUB ensures that the message of gender equality permeates campus culture. On-campus events, outreach programs, and workshops not only provide valuable knowledge and skills but also signal institutional support for women’s empowerment. The engagement of male allies is also encouraged in these programs, fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding. By promoting open discussions on gender issues and celebrating women’s successes, **AIUB cultivates a culture of equality and respect**, directly contributing to the achievement of SDG 5 targets aiub.edu aiub.edu.

Conclusion

In conclusion, American International University–Bangladesh has adopted a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to advancing gender equality in line with SDG 5. From **rigorous tracking of female student metrics** to **robust policies guaranteeing equal opportunity**, AIUB integrates gender considerations into its core operations. The university backs its commitment with tangible support systems – scholarships for female students, maternity and childcare benefits, safe reporting mechanisms – that enable women to thrive academically and professionally. AIUB also actively **champions women’s empowerment** through leadership development and community engagement, ensuring that women are visible and influential in all spheres of campus life. These efforts are documented in AIUB’s official reports and

programs, demonstrating transparency and accountability in progress toward gender parity. AIUB's holistic initiatives not only fulfill the criteria for THE Impact Rankings (SDG 5) but also create lasting positive change by empowering women and promoting a culture of equality. Through sustained dedication and continuous improvement, AIUB stands as a leading example of a higher education institution contributing to **gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls** aiub.edu.