

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF LEBANON REPORT ON SDG 17

PARTNERSHIP FOR
THE GOAL

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



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SDG 17 - PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOAL

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, represent basic principles to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. They were gestated at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG, 2000), to create a set of global goals related to environmental, political and political challenges. economic conditions that our world faces. They were launched in January 2016 and will guide the policies and funding of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for the next 15 years.

The United Nations Development Program works with governments to integrate the SDGs into their national development plans and policies, and this in turn has led to the need to implement a new agenda to promote Sustainable Development, Agenda 2030. Agenda 2030, is a new tool for sustainable development, which aims to end poverty, promote prosperity and well-being for all people, in addition to protecting the environment by 2030.

More and more institutions are auditing their situation with respect to the SDGs to lay the foundations of the new agenda, Agenda 2030. Those most committed and more aware of this international need will be the best positioned to carry out necessary improvements in the current management model and infrastructures with technical and financial assistance from the United Nations Development Program.

Within these institutions are the universities, where the relationship between the SDGs and the universities can be seen as mutually beneficial and necessary for both parties. On the one hand, anticipating offering training on the SDGs is a way of demonstrating the institution's ability to adapt to these changing circumstances, and on the other, funding entities and sponsors are allocating more and more aid to meeting the Goals.

Sustainable Development Goal 17 "Partnerships for the goals" refers to the need for cross-sector and cross -country collaboration in pursuit of all the goals by the year 2030. SDG 17 is a vision for improved and more equitable trade, as well as coordinated investment initiatives to promote sustainable development across borders. It is about strengthening and streamlining cooperation between nation-states, both developed and developing, using the SDGs as a shared framework and a shared vision for defining that collaborative way forward.

At the Islamic University of Lebanon, we have a strong belief that in order for our country to develop sustainably, we have to abide by and follow these SDGs where people will enjoy a better life as well as a higher standard of living. The Islamic University has already implemented many of the requirements of the SDGs and is much willing and able to implement the remaining and incorporate it in its programs and policies.

At the end, it is extremely important to note that we need as human beings living on earth to live happily and with dignity by partnering together. All of us have to have the ultimate respect and

appreciation of each other's rights; the human right. However, to be able to enjoy that and develop our lives, many elements have to be taken with great consideration. We need as humans living on this planet to care for each other by providing assistance to the less fortunate ones. And what could be better to assist than a collaborative and joint effort among all countries under the United Nations umbrella. This is the reason behind the SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals.

We, countries of the world, need to assist in preventing hunger, stressing the importance of sustainable and drinkable water, being ready to face climate change, protecting life under water and on land, respecting the order of law, treating each other equally and without discrimination, continuously and relentlessly working on looking out for other sources of affordable and clean energy, sustaining city life without having to continuously run away to the suburbs, preserving justice among us all through a good and fair judicial system, consuming and producing responsibly, stressing innovation and creativity, promoting decent jobs and good work environments without any human trafficking or child labor or money laundering, promoting good health and well-being, making education affordable and reflective of the job market demand and assuring each other of zero tolerance for hunger.

When all of these are implemented then the world will be a much better place to live. The quality as well as the standard of living of people will be better leading to a decrease in the gap between the rich and the poor. There will be more respect for the human rights, lesser crime and extremism and finally peace will prevail.

SDG 11 – SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

It is indeed one of the basics to have a roof over your head and have that place safe. In 2020, more than half of the people inhabit suburban areas. We notice that in the developed countries and especially the United States more and more people are migrating to the suburbs and this has its many reasons the least of which is safety as the suburb's municipalities collect more taxes from homeowners and thus could afford more a higher police force. In addition, suburbs have better schooling system and more technology is invested per student making the student a better learner and increases his/her chance of being more competent with a higher chance than city dwellers when it comes to landing a good job. The transportation system in the suburbs is not something that is critically needed as compared to cities as most households have at least one vehicle if not more. Moreover, the green spaces in the suburbs are incomparable to those in the cities; suburbs not only enjoy wide areas of greenery but also creeks and springs. Thus, it is necessary to enhance urban environments and make them more sustainable, inclusive, safe and resilient to bridge that huge gap with the suburbs. Universities, as communities and innovation centers, have a relevant role in becoming sustainable entities and ensuring the sustainability of their local communities. In this context, the Islamic University of Lebanon (IUL) has adopted the vision of sustainable development and the application of sustainable development goals. The mission of IUL is to ensure quality learning for all students without any discrimination. Its mission has been reflected by its slogan "A university for the whole nation" as well as the keywords on its logo: Patria, Virtus, and Scientia.

IUL and making human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable:

As previously mentioned, IUL has adopted Sustainable Development Goals and it is on its way of implementing them. In the domain of sustainable cities and communities, IUL encourages arts and activities that aim at recording and preserving intangible and tangible heritage.

IUL is aware of the relevance of green areas so the Wardeniyeh campus has been designed to be a sustainable and green campus. Moreover, IUL ensures the accessibility to green spaces and pays special attention to the conservation of those areas. Moreover, the insurance of public spaces' accessibility is on the plan of IUL. To illustrate, the stadium can be used by its neighbors free of charge with all its accompanying facilities.

IUL gives special attention to green spaces which cover an important part of the campus' area.

IUL is determined to be closely intertwined with its local environment. For this reason, the sports stadium at IUL's Wardeniyeh campus might be used by external parties with prior authorization.

Also, access to the buildings, library, and green spaces are for the public according to a list of invitations. So our university is always ready to host anyone on a condition that gets prior approval.



Figure 1. Map of green spaces - Wardenieh Campus [1]



Figure 2. IUL Wardenieh Campus [1]



Figure 3. Sport stadium at Wardenieh Campus [1]

IUL prepares events aiming at spreading awareness between students about culture and heritage to protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In this context, it organizes exhibitions and events related to several cultures. The purpose of those events is the conservation of cultures.

A cultural day about the Chinese culture in collaboration with the United Nations peacekeepers [2].



Figure 4. Taken from [2]

Hosting Genius map competition (Japanese method of calculations) [3]



Figure 5. Taken from [3]

In the domain of languages, IUL hosts and participates in events and competitions whose aim is the conservation of linguistic-cultural heritage (intangible cultural heritage).

Participating in event Arabic language [4].



Figure 6. Taken from [4]

With the support of Dr. Howayda Sharif. Female students Maya Al-Mousawi (Baalbek branch), Marwa Choucair and Hamida Choucair (Khalde branch) from the Department of Arabic Language and Translation at the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences at the Islamic University in Lebanon, were able to qualify to the final stage of the first student conference for Arab Studies organized by the university American in Beirut [5].

A number of university students in Lebanon participated in the competition, while research proposals were submitted, under the title "Arab literature", and related to:

- The Arabic language deals with issues related to literary criticism.
- How to read a literary text by observing its aesthetic properties and theoretical dimensions?
- The problematic of translation to and from Arabic, and the relationship between the Arabic language and literature.
- The relationship between the classical consecrated and the modern consecrated.

The research was presented to a committee specialized in the Arabic language, which consisted of a group of specialists and holders of a doctorate in Arabic language and translation from the American University of Beirut, as students from the Islamic University of Lebanon, the American University, the Jesuit University, the Lebanese University, and the Holy Spirit University to compete with each other on the fifteenth of April.

It is noteworthy that the conference held is the first of its kind at the American University of Beirut, and aims to make room for all undergraduate and master's students in Lebanon to present research papers on the Arabic language dealing with various issues related to Arabic literature.



Figure 7. Taken from [5]

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences at the Islamic University of Lebanon, Prof. Ali al-Qazwini al-Husseini, a lecture on the reality of the French language in Lebanon and its coexistence with the spoken (Lebanese) Arabic language and the influence of the two languages on the other, pointing to his conviction that the definition of language is not limited to being a tool for communication or expression only, but rather it conveys a cultural and intellectual heritage, which is an integral part of The components of human identity [6].

He pointed out that "we have always used to borrow Arabic from French, while it was not the case when Arabic was the language of civilization and science, so the French language was influenced by Arabic," referring to the desire of the Francophone Lebanese to have a French-language "made in Lebanon" that expresses the two components of their identity.

This day also falls within the framework of the project "Spoken French in Lebanon, a preliminary study: the reality of the situation in Beirut" funded by the University Agency for Francophonie

(AUF) and managed by the French Institute for the Near East (IFPO) and the Center for Modern Arab World Studies (CEMAM) at Saint Joseph University and the Center for Language and Communication Sciences at the Lebanese University and the ICAR laboratory at the French University of Lyon.



Figure 8. Taken from [6]

IUL organizes theatrical performances about the ethical values of Imam Hussain to ensure the transmission of Islamic cultural heritage to future generations. In the same context, it celebrates religious events such as Eid-e-Miladunnabi (the birth of the Prophet Muhammad).



Figure 9. Theatrical performance about Imam Hussain



Figure 10. Celebration of Eid-e-Miladunnabi

Recording and conserving cultures interest IUL and the are continuous activities in this domain. It also collaborates with the missions of the United Nations in Lebanon. Cultural interactions are encouraged at the university. In addition, religions are also considerable cultural characteristics. The Islamic University of Lebanon adopts the value of the Islamic religion and promotes its values. For this reason, the IUL community celebrates Islamic events and promotes Islamic culture and values through its courses (Religions and ethics). The university participates, hosts and organizes events aiming at conserving languages especially the Arabic language (the language of Quran) and the French language (IUL is an active member in the domain of “la Francophonie”).

Gastronomy is the study of the relationship between food and culture, the art of preparing and serving rich or delicate and appetizing food, the cooking styles of particular regions, and the science of good eating because food constitutes a dimension of the cultural heritage for a given community. IUL students explore gastronomic heritage through the preparation of meals related to different cultures, especially during Islamic events.

فاز الطالب علي مزهر من كلية السياحة في الجامعة الإسلامية في لبنان بالميدالية الفضية في مسابقة " جونيور بيف برغر" التي أجريت في معرض Horeca في الببال - بيروت.



Figure 11. Participating in events related to gastronomy



Figure 12. Preparing local and international dishes



Figure 13. Taken from [7]

Also, IUL is concerned by the conservation of natural and building heritage. It organizes visits to the sites considered as a cultural or natural heritage in order to raise students' awareness in this domain.

Moreover, the faculty of tourism at IUL schedules visits to sites considered as a cultural or natural heritage in order to train students on the methods used to conserve this heritage and the concept of ecotourism and sustainable methods in tourism.



Figure 14. Natural heritage sites

The university is interested in integrating the concepts of Sustainable development, resilient cities, and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in its curriculum and its extra-curricular activities. For this reason, it organizes, in collaboration with others, events about the culture of public safety and sustainable development.

The faculty of engineering at IUL is interested in integrating the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction and management in its curriculum and its extra-curricular activities. For this reason, it did, in collaboration with the Lebanese order of engineers and architects, an event about the public safety culture. The aim of this event was the promotion of public safety culture and its integration in education as well as in practice. Several universities and public institutions participated in this event [8].

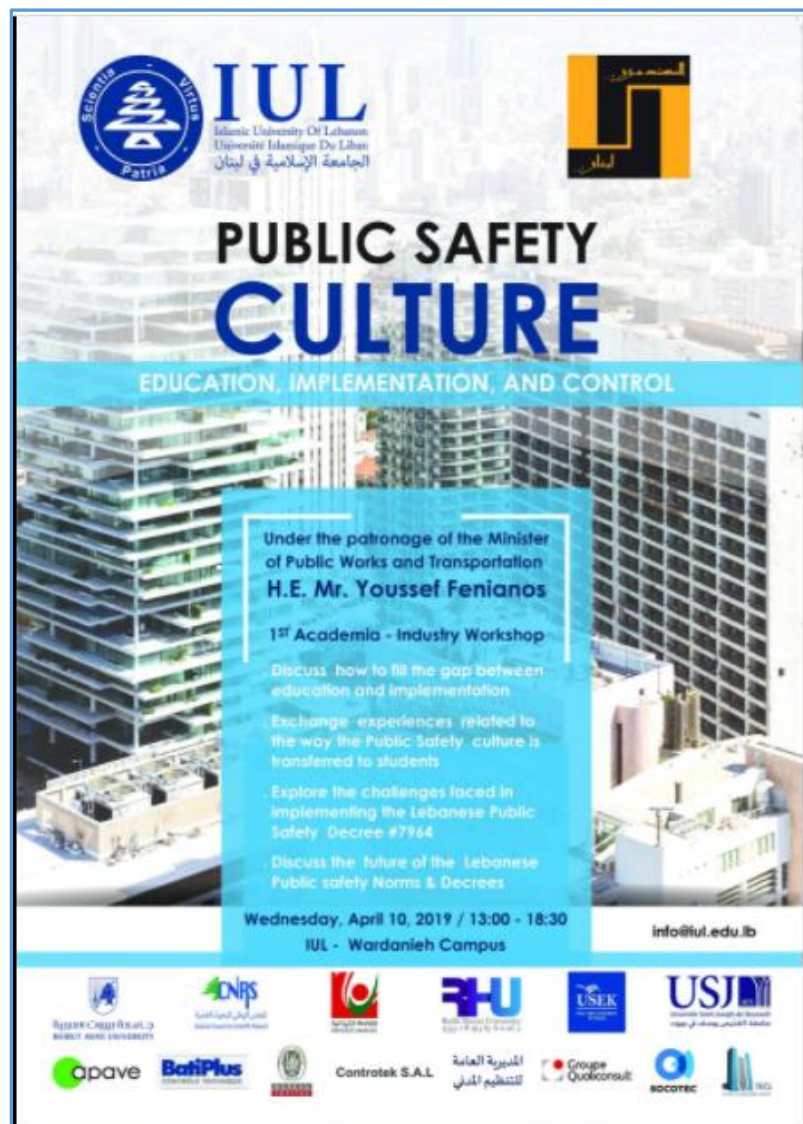


Figure 15. Taken from [8]

In the Islamic University of Tire, Novo and iET held an exhibition entitled "Smart Technology", under the patronage and in the presence of Minister of Technology and Investment Adel Afouni and in the presence of Deputy Inaya Ezz El-Din, President and members of the Professional Informatics Association in Lebanon, PCA, members of the Lebanese Federation for Informatics and Communications ALMA, and the general coordinator of the community network Civilian digital transformation. Nadim Mansouri, mayors, and a group of engineers.

The exhibition dealt with the latest smart technology solutions in the field of education, municipalities, smart cities, protection, communication, in addition to smart devices in institutions, homes, schools, and universities [9].



Figure 16. Taken from [9]

As far as its internal organization, IUL adopts the concepts of remote working. In other words, IUL employees can access and control their personnel computers remotely from their home to finish some administrative work needed to be done. Furthermore, they can also access, in real-time, student information to quickly resolve issues and audit students grades to improve their success.

During the pandemic situation, the university has used the MOODLE platform to let instructors to work remotely so they can register students, teach and grade easily.

A video tutorial of how to enter Moodle application via the Islamic University of Lebanon website [10].

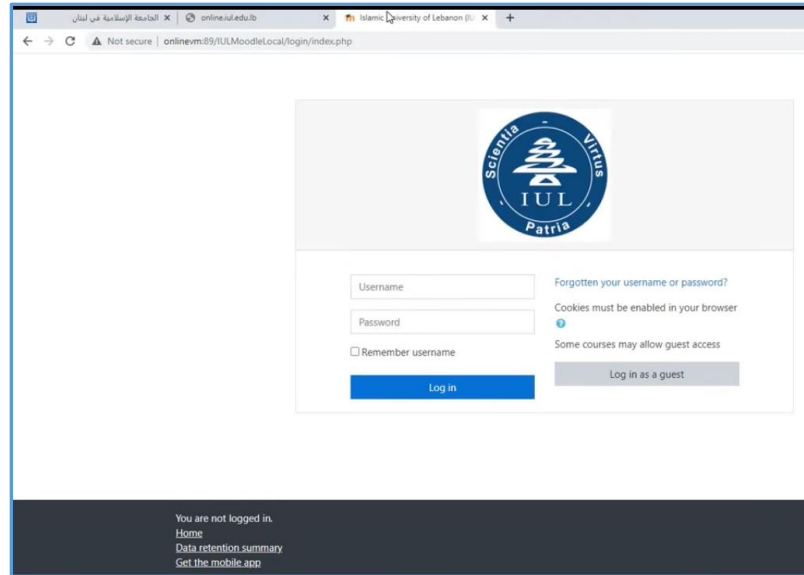


Figure 17. Taken from [10]

In the domain of transportation, IUL has adopted a plan to reduce congestion and pollution and enhance air quality by ensuring free transportation for IUL students, ensuring places in its parking for private buses and prioritizing pedestrian access on campus because all students can access all buildings and can move between buildings without any means of transportation. It is worth mentioning that the university has its own means of transportation to transport students from and to the university free of charge. The insurance of free transportation is a relevant measure to enhance air quality and reduce pollution.

As previously mentioned, IUL ensures free transportation for its students. The buses have several starting points to organize the procedure. However, some students prefer to use private buses. IUL encourages those practices by ensuring places in its parking for those buses.



Figure 18. Parking location: including parking for buses and for private cars

IUL aims at prioritizing pedestrian access on campus. For this reason, IUL's Wardenieh campus is completely accessible on foot. In other words, all students can access all buildings and can move between buildings without any means of transportation.



Figure 19. Walkability in the campus

There is no need to provide housing for employees due to the fact that the Islamic University of Lebanon, has 4 campuses well geographically distributed (Baalback, Khaldeh, Werdaniyeh, Tyre). Every employee is appointed to his proximity to the university campus location.

Students' dorms might reduce roads' congestions and air pollution in its surroundings. For this purpose, IUL is establishing compromises with its neighbors in order to provide students with affordable housing.

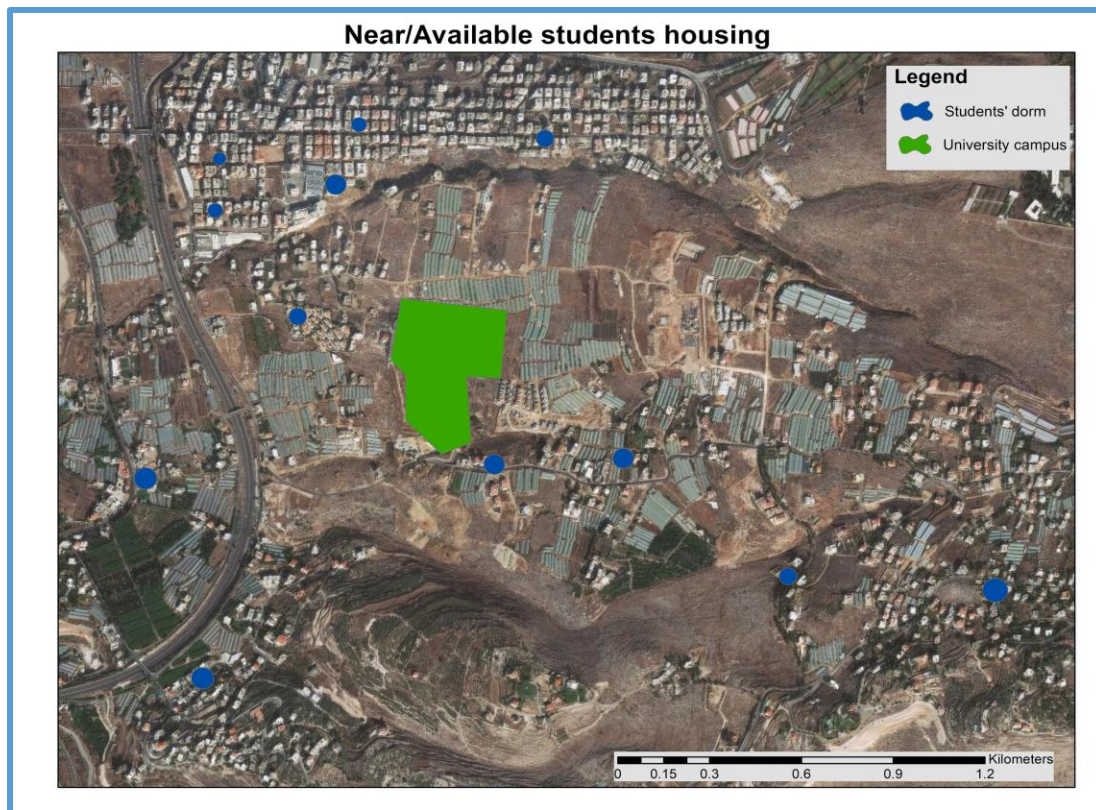


Figure 20. Students housing distribution

The mission of IUL is to ensure quality learning for all students without any discrimination. Its mission has been reflected by its slogan “A university for the whole nation” as well as the keywords on its logo: Patria, Virtus, and Scientia. Its mission is in accordance with the 7th target of SDG 11 which states as follows: “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”. In this context, IUL is an inclusive environment for people with disabilities by launching an initiative entitled “Inclusion is a right” to prove its inclusive policy towards everyone. There exist special parking spaces for people with disabilities as well as ramps and others to facilitate their lives on campus.

Recommendations and future perspectives:

IUL thrives to increase public access to green spaces and allow local community members to access the campus and spend time in nature and also encourage students to walk and modify the design of roads to make it easier for students to walk to campus should they prefer. It also encourages students and staff members to organize and participate in events aiming at preserving intangible cultural heritage such as local folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge.

IUL will develop a policy of remote working and teaching by implementing the required measures that allow employees to work remotely while conserving the performance of administrative units.

Regarding the treatment of solid waste, IUL will adopt the concept of 3Rs: Reduce, reuse and recycle, and it will encourage the initiatives aiming at improving solid waste collection. It will also

adopt a policy for social inclusion to be able to include more people and reduce inequalities. In addition to that, IUL will adjust, as much as possible, the design of its buildings and facilities to be more sustainable.

As far as transportation, IUL will develop further its policy of transportation to reduce congestion, enhance air quality and adopt more sustainable means and it will ensure affordable housing for its students who want to live in its surroundings.

IUL will support arts and cultural events activities by organizing regular cultural and artistic events, encourage the use of technology in teaching to reduce the consumption of papers, increase the use of renewable energy and IUL will continue in adopting its policy as a university for the whole country and in being more inclusive environment.

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