

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Al Ain University



جامعة العين
AL AIN UNIVERSITY

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 17

Sustainability Literacy Initiatives at Al Ain University

Integration of Sustainability into Curriculum

Al Ain University (AAU) has woven sustainability principles and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its curricula across various disciplines. The university integrates sustainability concepts across its undergraduate and graduate programs, offering numerous courses that embed sustainability principles aau.ac.ae. For instance, in the 2019/20 academic year AAU offered **62 courses** with sustainability content embedded in their syllabi green.aau.ac.ae. These courses span different colleges (engineering, business, education, etc.), ensuring that all students receive exposure to sustainable development themes. By aligning course outcomes with SDG topics, AAU cultivates graduates who understand environmental and social responsibility regardless of their field of study. This comprehensive curriculum integration reflects AAU's commitment to producing sustainability-literate graduates.

Student and Staff Sustainability Training

Beyond formal coursework, AAU promotes sustainability literacy through co-curricular training programs, workshops, and seminars for students and staff. The university is dedicated to addressing environmental and sustainability issues by regularly **arranging seminars, conferences, and scientific activities** on these topics aau.ac.ae. For example, the Deanship of Student Affairs organizes interactive workshops such as “*Sustainability is a Way of Life*” to engage the campus community in sustainable practices aau.ac.ae. These sessions often feature experts (e.g. from government bodies like **Tadweer**, the waste management center) and highlight practical steps like waste sorting, recycling, and energy saving. New student orientation programs also include sustainability components, familiarizing entrants with the campus's eco-friendly policies and encouraging green habits from day one. Through such training initiatives – from induction sessions to themed workshops – AAU ensures that both students and staff continually build their sustainability knowledge and skills.

Workshop entitled “Sustainability is a Way of Life”



The Deanship of Student Affairs at Al Ain University (Abu Dhabi Campus) organized an interactive workshop entitled “Sustainability is a Way of Life” as part of the university’s keenness to participate in the COP 28 activities, in cooperation with the Abu Dhabi innovation company “Tadweer”, presented by Ms. Najla Al Balushi - awareness mentor.

Mrs. Najla Al-Balushi spoke about the main companies for recycling the various types of waste in a sound and safe manner and treating it in sound and safe ways. Al-Balushi also provided general guidelines for dealing with waste, sorting it in correct ways, and only reconsuming it, including national ambitions for sustainability.

The goal of this event is to introduce an innovative company to the challenges of recycling, and then it remains one about waste management in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, which has leadership in extracting value from waste. We also seek to provide the opportunity for participants to use their creative ideas in reproducing a set of materials and tools used in creative paintings.

She was able to interact with wealthy people in the field of environmental promotion with attendees and waste management and dealing with it naturally, as many fine art posters were produced from products that can be recycled.

Al Ain University organizes the Engineering Sustainability Forum 2023



Al Ain University (AAU) represented by the College of Engineering (CoE), organized the AAU Forum for Sustainability in Engineering 2023, which aims to raise awareness on various

sustainable engineering topics by bringing researchers, professors, engineers and students together under one roof to share their knowledge and experiences from various engineering fields, emphasizing the motto that was raised for this year, "Today for tomorrow".

The forum was attended by Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, AAU President, Prof. Amer Qasem, AAU Vice President (Abu Dhabi Campus), Dr. Qutaiba Al Thebyan, Dean of the CoE, Dr. Faten Kharabat, Deputy Dean of the CoE, and a number of academic staffs, students and visitors.

The forum included a number of discussion sessions that contribute to empowering a new generation of pioneering creative engineers, presented by a group of keynote speakers, Dr. Hashem Hamed AlMansoori- (Expert Advisor on ICT and S-Gov., to the G. Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowment). Eng. Abdel Aleem Khan (Specialist - Policies & Environment Urban Policies – Planning & Infrastructure Sector – DMT) And, Mr. Rafael Villalona (CEO of CEMEX UAE and Country Director of CEMEX EMEA).

The AAU President stated that this forum is a component of Al Ain University's efforts towards promoting sustainability in the UAE, as per the directives of the wise leadership to attain sustainable development. Al Ain University is dedicated to addressing developmental, environmental, and sustainability issues by arranging seminars, conferences, and scientific competitions, as well as advancing scientific research that aligns with the objectives of sustainable development.

Moreover, the forum included a competition for university students across the UAE from a variety of engineering fields, where they competed by presenting scientific posters with sustainable engineering ideas to a jury of professionals and academics.

A number of institutions and entities participated in an exhibition organized by the Deanship of Student Affairs (Abu Dhabi Campus) on the sidelines of the forum entitled "Together towards a better future by achieving sustainable development goals", during which they reviewed some of the most important initiatives and projects implemented to achieve sustainable development goals.

such as: Emirates Red Crescent, Zayed Foundation People of Determination, Emirates Scouts Association, Tadweer, Bawabat Al Sharq Bakery Equipment Factory / Milieu / Cemex / Mediclinic.

Campus-Wide Initiatives and Clubs

AAU's Al Ain campus fosters an active culture of sustainability through various initiatives, student clubs, and awareness campaigns. The university supports student-led organizations devoted to sustainability. Notably, the **AAU Environmental Club** spearheads many activities, engaging students in projects that promote environmental protection and sustainable living on campus green.aau.ac.ae. (Students have also formed interest groups like a "Sustainable Lifestyle Society" and a "Green Innovators Society" to focus on green living and eco-innovation,

respectively.) Alongside club activities, AAU hosts frequent sustainability-themed events and campaigns. On average, about **32 sustainability-related events** (e.g. tree-planting drives, recycling campaigns, sustainability fairs and lectures) are held each year on campus green.aau.ac.ae. One highlight was the “*Engineering Sustainability Forum 2023*”, a campus-wide event bringing together students and faculty to discuss sustainable engineering solutions. Through these clubs and events, AAU cultivates peer-to-peer learning and encourages the university community to adopt sustainable practices in daily campus life.

Number of student organizations related to sustainability

Number of student organizations related to sustainability, in AAU at the moment this value is one.

AAU environmental club

It is a group of students committed to protecting the environment that seeks to sensitize with direct messages both university actors and the external community, about the importance and impact of our actions in nature.

Number of Events Related to Sustainability

The number of events related to sustainability (average during the last 3 years) is around 32 events per year.

Outreach and Community Engagement for Sustainability

AAU extends its sustainability literacy efforts beyond the campus through public outreach, school engagement, and partnerships with community stakeholders. The university actively collaborates with local organizations on projects related to sustainable development – including initiatives in **urban planning, waste reduction, and environmental awareness workshops** for the broader community aau.ac.ae. For example, AAU has partnered with the Abu Dhabi Waste Management Center (Tadweer) to host awareness workshops where students are encouraged to adopt sustainable habits like donating used items, sorting waste at source, and using reusable products aau.ac.ae. The university also engages with schools and youth in the region by organizing sustainability competitions and educational visits, aiming to inspire younger students to embrace the SDGs. These community outreach programs and partnerships (such as joint events with the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi) amplify AAU’s impact by disseminating sustainability knowledge to society at large. By acting as a “sustainability hub” in Al Ain, AAU helps raise environmental literacy and engagement beyond its own campus.

"Sustainability as a Way of life" Workshop to Promote Environmental Awareness



As part of its efforts to instil the values of sustainability, the Deanship of Student Affairs at the Abu Dhabi campus organized a workshop titled "Sustainability as a Way of life", in collaboration with Tadweer – the Abu Dhabi Centre for Waste Management. The event falls within the university's community engagement initiatives.

The workshop highlighted the importance of sustainability and waste recycling, showcasing the UAE's efforts in environmental protection and pollution reduction. Practical examples of recycling were presented, such as transforming used car tires into decorative elements for public spaces.

Tadweer encouraged participating students to adopt sustainable habits, including donating old devices and clothes, sorting waste, and using reusable products in their daily lives.

The workshop contributed to raising environmental awareness among students and motivated them to embrace practices that support sustainability and help build a more environmentally conscious future.

Al Ain University (AAU) and SDG 11: Creating Sustainable Campus and Community Engagement

Al Ain University (AAU) supports SDG 11 by integrating sustainable development principles into its campus infrastructure and operations. The university uses energy-efficient lighting and smart water systems to minimize resource use, creating a model for sustainable facilities. AAU also engages students in urban sustainability topics through academic courses and community initiatives. The university's collaborations with local organizations include projects on sustainable urban planning, waste reduction, and environmental awareness workshops that benefit the community.

Furthermore, AAU promotes a culture of sustainable practices on campus by organizing events on green transportation, eco-friendly architecture, and resource-efficient living. These efforts enable students to understand the importance of sustainable urbanization and to apply these principles in their lives, contributing to the UAE's SDG 11 goals.

In summary, both the UAE government and Al Ain University foster sustainable development through policies, projects, and educational initiatives. By advancing resource-efficient urban models and promoting environmental awareness, they support the creation of sustainable cities and communities aligned with SDG 11.

Impact and Outcomes

AAU's comprehensive approach to sustainability literacy over 2019–2024 has yielded measurable impacts. The integration of sustainability into curricula is broad-based – with dozens of courses and hundreds of students each year gaining sustainability-related knowledgegreen.aau.ac.ae. Meanwhile, extracurricular programs have reached a wide audience: the ~32 annual sustainability events involve significant student and staff participation, building a culture of environmental responsibility on campusgreen.aau.ac.ae. AAU's efforts have also been recognized externally. The university attained a **5th place ranking in the UAE** (and 228th in Asia) in the **QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2024**, underscoring its role in advancing sustainability in higher educationaau.ac.ae. AAU likewise achieved high standings in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings – including a top-11 global rank in SDG 4 (Quality Education) – reflecting excellence in education for sustainable developmentaau.ac.ae. Equally important, AAU's community initiatives (like workshops and partnerships) have extended sustainability literacy to countless stakeholders outside the university. In summary, over the past five years AAU's Al Ain campus has embedded sustainability into teaching, engaged its community through training and clubs, and fostered outreach programs – resulting in a more sustainability-aware student body and contributing to the UAE's broader SDG education efforts.