
Sustainable Development Report

2024-2022

Al-Zahraa University for Women

Department of Studies and Planning

Sustainable Development Unit

About the University

Al-Zahraa University for Women, established in 2018 under Ministerial Order No. T H A/K 21890, is recognised as the first of its kind private, specialised University for women in Iraq. Distinguished by its female academic staff across specialised fields, the University is committed to advancing higher education through innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Since its establishment, the University has built a modern infrastructure and aligned itself with global scientific and technological developments. It currently comprises four faculties:

- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Health and Medical Technologies
- Faculty of Pharmacy
- Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

In line with its strategic vision, the University plans to expand further by establishing additional faculties that respond to future labour market demands.

It bears noting that the University is dedicated to preparing highly qualified female graduates with competitive skills to excel in both local and international markets. It further integrates academic learning with practical applications while promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. The University also serves as an incubator for

pioneering projects and research teams that address real-world challenges and provide solutions to societal needs.

Furthermore, the University emphasises active engagement in the global market, transforming research outputs and projects into funding opportunities that contribute to enhanced productivity and the promotion of sustainable development within an interactive international environment.

The Significance of Sustainable Development at the University

Al-Zahraa University for Women strives to achieve a sustainable developmental vision by adopting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The University is committed to integrating environmental, social, and economic principles into all of its activities. It further recognises education as the foundation for raising environmental awareness and for developing innovative solutions to address global challenges such as climate change and environmental sustainability.

Through effective strategies, the University organises a wide range of initiatives aimed at creating a green and sustainable environment from reducing its carbon footprint to promoting scientific research in renewable energy, recycling, and the preservation of natural resources.

The University ensures the implementation of sustainability objectives across all aspects of academic life. This includes improving green infrastructure, adopting sustainable practices on campus, and providing students with opportunities to participate in innovative environmental projects, thereby building an academic community that embraces sustainability in all its dimensions.

To further strengthen this vision, the University has established a dedicated Sustainability Unit, entrusted with developing a comprehensive action plan that targets true sustainability across all sectors of campus life. This unit is tasked with identifying environmental, social, and economic priorities, and with designing initiatives and policies that reduce environmental impacts and promote efficient use of natural resources. Its motto is:

" Al-Zahraa University: Towards a Sustainable Future"

The First Objective

Key Achievements

1 – Tuition Reduction

The University has introduced substantial reductions in tuition fees, particularly benefiting orphaned students, those from low-income families, and high-achieving students. Over the past four years, a total of 3,422 students out of 4,240 have benefited from these reductions.

2 – Encouraging Academic Excellence

Al-Zahraa University (p) launched a scholarship initiative offering tuition reductions for students who achieve high academic grades, with discounts reaching up to 50%. This initiative reflects the University's commitment to fostering excellence and motivating students to pursue their educational journey with dedication (Appendix 1,2).

Merit-Based Discounts:

GPA 95 and above → 50% reduction

GPA 90 and above → 30% reduction

3 – Qur'an Memorization Competition

This project aims to encourage students to memorize the Holy Qur'an by providing sustainable educational incentives that inspire creativity and excellence (Appendix 3). Tuition reductions were allocated as rewards, based on the number of parts memorized, ensuring broader opportunities for continuous learning:

Memorization of 6 parts → 20% reduction

Memorization of 12 parts → 40% reduction

Memorization of 18 parts → 60% reduction

Memorization of 24 parts → 80% reduction

Memorization of the entire Qur'an → 100% reduction

4 – The Benevolent Loan Fund Initiative for Female Students

This is one of the innovative initiatives designed to support female students in completing their education.

The main goal is to enable students to pursue higher education without financial challenges standing in their way.

Through this, the initiative works to improve access to education for women, helping reduce social and economic gaps, while also strengthening their ability to achieve financial independence and contribute to community development.

Success Story

The university succeeded in reducing tuition fees to support its students, with the total amount reaching 7,510,000,000 IQD.

The Second Objective

1- The Annual Al-Arbaeen Forum

Al-Zahraa University for Women has organised a series of academic and humanitarian forums during Al-Arbaeen Pilgrimage, incorporating cultural, health, and medical activities:

1. The First Forum: concentrated on providing academic and research services during Al-Arbaeen Pilgrimage. It further addressed topics such as the role of female academics in Al-Hussaini's service, as well as offering medical support and first aid. In addition,

research and media workshops were organised to enhance women's participation in the Pilgrimage.

2. The Second Forum: It included academic and medical activities aimed at raising pilgrims' awareness of health prevention and first aid. It also featured awareness lectures on the role of women in Al-Hussaini Renaissance and the promotion of women's solidarity with humanitarian causes.

3. The Third Forum: Consisted of academic and cultural lectures on Karbala Uprising and its impact on the contemporary world. It also involved a medical unit and an artificial intelligence station, which offered simple programming activities for children with certificates awarded to outstanding participants, and the installation of practical AI applications for adults to assist in daily life. Educational brochures were also distributed to pilgrims to raise awareness of the artificial intelligence significance in serving society, alongside awareness campaigns emphasising the avoidance of food and drink waste.

2- Scientific Research

- Scientific studies have been conducted at the University and published in journals indexed in the global Scopus database, concentrating on developing innovative solutions in the field of food security (Appendix 4).
- The University has also achieved an advanced ranking in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for the Sustainable Development Goals, reflecting its commitment to strengthening scientific research and contributing to the achievement of food security.
- These achievements demonstrate the University's dedication to advancing research and its active contribution to promoting food security, in line with second objective of the Sustainable Development objectives.

3- Voluntary Work

- Al-Zahraa University for Women provides financial and moral support to its students, including the distribution of food baskets during Ramadan and the provision of financial assistance to underprivileged families during Eid Al-Fitr.
- The administrative and academic staff, along with the students, actively participate in donation campaigns for poor families and those with limited income. In addition, the University reduces dormitory fees to support students in completing their studies (Appendix 5).
- As part and parcel of its social responsibility, the Student Activities Directorate, under the supervision Prof. Dr. Zainab Al-Mulla Al-Sultani, the University President, organized a voluntary initiative to distribute Eid clothing to orphaned and needy children on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr, with the participation of administrative staff, faculty, and students (Appendix 6).
- To strengthen social bonds among female students and in a Ramadan atmosphere of warmth and blessing, the University, in coordination with the hospitality services of Imam Hussein Holy Shrine, organized an Iftar banquet for the dormitory students of Al-Zahraa University for Women (Appendix 7).

The Third Objective

1 – Scientific Research

The university has achieved significant milestones through the publication of numerous research papers in prestigious Scopus-indexed journals. These studies contribute innovative solutions aimed at improving public health and enhancing individual well-being. The research focuses on topics such as disease prevention, access to sustainable healthcare, mental health and psychological support, as well as the development of health policies that enhance quality of life for all.

Such scholarly work forms a cornerstone in advancing sustainable development by improving healthcare systems and fostering a healthier environment that benefits both local and global communities (Appendix 8).

2 – Education and Training

The university is committed to strengthening students' practical skills in the fields of pharmacy, health sciences, and medical technologies by enabling them to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings. Training also offers students the opportunity to interact directly with patients and gain a deeper understanding of hospital work environments.

This hands-on experience helps build professional competencies, increases employability after graduation, and equips students to meet practical challenges. Furthermore, it enriches scientific research in the healthcare field (Appendices 9, 10, 11).

3 – Collaboration with Government Agencies and Health Organizations

“Barakat al-Anwar al-Muhammadiya” Campaign

A group of students conducted a voluntary visit to Al-Warith International Oncology Center, affiliated with the Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain. The visit included engaging with child patients through recreational activities and presenting gifts, which helped bring joy to their

faces and reflected the university's commitment to a spirit of giving and sustainable community engagement (Appendices 12, 13).

Humanitarian Visit to the Children's Teaching Hospital

Another group of students organized a humanitarian volunteer visit to the Children's Teaching Hospital. The initiative aimed at providing moral support to sick children and their families, bringing smiles to their faces, and distributing gifts, toys, and flowers to the hospitalized children (Appendix 14).

4 – Promoting Health Awareness

The university places strong emphasis on raising health awareness among its students and faculty members, with particular focus on breast cancer. As a women's university, it strives to deliver impactful awareness programs designed to enhance understanding of this disease.

Through initiatives such as the Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, organized in collaboration with the Breast Cancer Center at Sayida Khadija Hospital, the university provides accurate information on the causes of the disease, methods of prevention, and the vital importance of early detection.

These initiatives not only empower students but also foster a culture of preventive health, reflecting the university's commitment to building a healthy and sustainable academic community (Appendices 15, 16, 17).

"To raise awareness about the risks of breast cancer"

- An awareness seminar was held under the slogan "We are all with you because you are our other half" about breast cancer, its methods of diagnosis, and ways of prevention. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Haider Al-Tamimi from the Breast Cancer Center affiliated with the Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain. He discussed the different types of examinations and the best methods for early detection.

This seminar comes as part of a series of activities organized by the university in October to raise awareness about breast cancer. It reflects the university's keenness to promote health awareness among female students, thereby enhancing their role in society and strengthening their academic and professional lives. Attachment 18.

As part of the university's commitment to enhancing the psychological well-being of its students, the Psychological Counseling and Educational Guidance Division, in cooperation with the Family Counseling Center of Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf Governorate, organized a counseling lecture entitled "Secrets of Happiness and Success", attended by a number of students from the Department of Radiology and Physical Therapy. This initiative contributes to strengthening the students' psychological well-being, thereby improving the learning environment and enhancing their academic and personal success, attachment 19.

5 – Medical Clinic

A medical clinic was inaugurated within the university premises, aiming to provide a variety of health services to faculty members and students. The clinic offers prompt treatments and medical support in case of emergencies that may occur on campus. The establishment of the clinic was warmly welcomed, as it represents a significant addition to enhancing the health and well-being of the university community, thereby contributing to a safe, healthy, and sustainable learning environment.

6 – Measures to Develop the Academic Health System and Promote Sustainability in Educational Health Institutions

Conduct studies related to national health security.

Establish specialized medical colleges and departments.

Equip laboratories with the latest devices required for student training in medical colleges.

Introduce new academic programs and update curricula according to internationally recognized standards to advance health institutions that have faced significant challenges in the country for decades.

Provide students and researchers with the latest scientific resources and journals from reputable global publishers.

Establish specialized electronic libraries for professions directly related to individual health and well-being.

Actively contribute to addressing health crises, epidemics, or pandemics through research and experimentation, supporting researchers with specialized staff and providing all necessary scientific materials, devices, and equipment.

Regularly qualify and maintain laboratories to achieve quality standards.

Train and engage staff in professional development and human resource enhancement programs.

Success Story

54% of the university's research published in Scopus-indexed journals focuses on Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being.

The Fourth Objective

1. Membership in the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)

Al-Zahraa University for Women has achieved a distinguished international academic milestone by obtaining membership in the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) program. This program includes more than 1,500 academic institutions from 120 countries worldwide and aims to foster academic and research collaboration among universities and educational institutions.

This membership represents a significant step forward in enhancing the quality of education and research at Al-Zahraa University, while also opening up new horizons for cooperation with international academic institutions. It further contributes to the exchange of expertise and the strengthening of the University's position both locally and globally.

2. Scientific Research

Al-Zahraa University for Women supports scientific research by providing financial grants to encourage research projects, thereby helping researchers in covering research and

publication costs. The University also offers logistical support and facilities such as advanced laboratories, in addition to academic guidance and the promotion of local and international research collaboration, as evidenced by the Scopus database link (Annex 20), which documents the achievements of the University's researchers.

The total amount of financial incentives allocated reached 105,000,000 IQD, which significantly contributes to helping researchers cover research and publication expenses.

3. Al-Zahraa Centre for Medical and Pharmaceutical Sciences Research

The University is home to a centre dedicated to supporting innovations and scientific research in the medical field, leveraging both Iraqi and international human resources. The centre collaborates with governmental, private, and academic institutions, both locally and globally, providing specialised consultancy and studies. It also supervises the research of postgraduate students, thereby enhancing its position among global research centres.

4. Laboratories

- Al-Zahraa University for Women has achieved a significant milestone in the development of its laboratories, transforming them into sustainable environments in line with the latest international and local standards. Besides, quality management systems have been implemented in the laboratories in accordance with relevant specifications for their respective specialisations, which has contributed to improving their performance and ensuring the accuracy of experimental and diagnostic results.
- Additionally, both educational and research laboratories have received accreditation from prestigious national and international bodies, further enhancing the University's academic and scientific reputation. Furthermore, a sustainable system has been established for performance monitoring and evaluation, which aids in identifying areas of weakness and adopting strategies for continuous improvement.
- The University has also implemented a range of measures, such as lab equipment coding in line with ministerial systems, the design of instructional and warning labels, routine laboratory inspections, staff training in laboratory practices, and the development of maintenance and calibration programs to ensure precise operations. The laboratories have been categorised into educational, research, and service laboratories, and classified according to physical, chemical, biological, and general specialisations, reflecting the University's commitment to quality and innovation within the academic environment.

5. Conferences

. The First International Conference of the Pharmacy Faculty:

The conference witnessed wide participation from both local and international researchers, providing a platform for exchanging the latest scientific research in the field of pharmacy. The event contributed to advancing this field and strengthening scientific cooperation among academics (Appendix 21).

• The Second International Conference on Health and Medical Specialisations:

Held under the motto “Sustainable Health Innovations” on 23 December 2023, the conference aimed to showcase innovations in medical diagnosis and treatment, with a strong emphasis on promoting scientific research in health technologies to meet evolving needs. The conference recommended fostering medical culture and

strengthening academic exchange among universities to enhance knowledge and innovation in this field (Appendix 22).

- **The First International Conference:**

Held under the motto “The Arab Contribution to Enriching Theoretical and Applied Sciences”, this conference was organized by the Faculty of Education in cooperation with the University of Mosul and the University of Milan (Appendix 23).

6. Al-Zahraa Journal for Health and Medical Sciences

An international peer-reviewed journal that publishes research articles and reviews in the fields of life sciences and medicine. The journal aims to strengthen the link between laboratory research and clinical applications, while highlighting recent developments in diagnosis and treatment.

It also serves as a valuable resource for researchers and professionals in the medical field, fostering collaboration and the exchange of ideas in health sciences. The editorial team is committed to ensuring scientific integrity and high quality in all published articles, and encourages submissions that contribute to the advancement of medical sciences.

The journal welcomes contributions from both Arab and international scholars, inviting them to take part in its scientific mission.

Al-Zahraa Journal for Health and Medical Sciences Listed on the Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals (IASJ) Platform of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research:

7- The Bologna Process

Al-Zahraa University for Women is considered one of the pioneering universities in implementing the Bologna Process in higher education, a framework designed to upgrade the quality of education by standardising academic criteria among international universities.

In 2024, the University was honoured by the Minister of Higher Education in recognition of its efforts in adopting this process. The implementation of the Bologna Process focuses on improving educational quality, enabling students to transfer between global universities and receive a distinguished education.

The Engineering Faculty at the University is working to provide engineering education aligned with international standards, thereby qualifying engineering cadres capable of meeting the needs of both the local and international labour markets (Attachment 24).

Success Story

Achieving advanced positions in the international rankings accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research marks a remarkable accomplishment, the first of its kind in the history of the University since its establishment.

The Fifth Objective

Al-Zahraa University for Women stands as a distinguished model in supporting women's empowerment and enhancing their role in society. The university is deeply committed to fulfilling the fifth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."

As a women's university, Al-Zahraa places empowerment at the heart of its vision and strategic objectives, working to expand opportunities for women in higher education and to provide an academic environment that encourages them to realize their full potential.

Through its diverse academic programs, research opportunities, and community-based initiatives, the university contributes to developing students' leadership and intellectual skills, equipping them to make meaningful contributions in the fields of work, politics, and economics. Equally, the university emphasizes the teaching of values such as equality and social justice while fostering a culture of collaboration and solidarity among women across all domains.

1 – Mishkat Al-Noor Competition

This competition aims to inspire creativity among students and enhance their artistic talents. It further seeks to motivate students to refine their skills and prepare them to enter

the labor market. The university honored the top three winners of the painting contest, celebrating their innovation and artistic achievement.

2 – Participation in the First Women’s Marketing Exhibition

Through the “Al-’Afaf Complex Division” initiative “We Work to Achieve, Then Rise,” the university supported students in showcasing their products at women’s marketing fairs. This initiative helps students develop entrepreneurial projects and prepares them for effective participation in the labor market.

3 – Women’s Handmade Creativity Market Project

This project is dedicated to nurturing handcrafted talents, involving skilled students in preparing for Al-Zahraa University’s internal festivals while also giving them the chance to display and sell their handmade works. The initiative provides both financial support and a platform for launching small-scale student projects, fostering their growth and sustainability.

4 – Fatat Al_Zahra’ Was Here Project

As part of the “Fatat Al_Zahra’ Was Here” initiative, aimed at economically empowering women, the Women’s Affairs Division launched the production of eco-friendly candles. These candles are crafted from natural soy and release pleasant natural scents when lit, offering a healthier and safer alternative to traditional candles that often contain chemicals linked to allergies and illnesses. Beyond their health benefits, these candles contribute to reducing environmental pollution, reflecting the project’s dual commitment to sustainability and consumer well-being.

5 – Honoring the University President

The Governor of Karbala, Engineer Nassif Jassem Al-Khattabi, honored the President of Al-Zahraa University for Women, Prof. Dr. Zainab Al-Mulla Al-Sultani, during the “Karbala Day” celebrations dedicated to recognizing distinguished women who have contributed to strengthening the role of women in society. The honor came as an appreciation of Dr. Al-Sultani’s efforts in improving the academic reality, supporting women in education and

culture, and for her prominent presence in both local and international forums concerned with women's empowerment. Governor Al-Khattabi praised her role in providing an inspiring educational environment and enhancing scientific research. For her part, Dr. Al-Sultani expressed her gratitude for the recognition and reaffirmed her commitment to continue supporting women in education and serving the community.

6 – Panel Discussion: “Developing the Right Mindset and Achieving Goals”

The session was presented by the President of the Women's Empowerment Foundation in London and targeted all categories of students and staff. The discussion explored how to cultivate positive and progressive thinking to achieve desired goals, as well as the importance of psychological empowerment and taking the first steps toward building successful projects. To economically empower women, the initiative highlighted talented female students as examples of those with successful projects.

7 – Financial Support

As part of its efforts to support students and enhance their economic capabilities, Al-Zahraa University provides financial assistance and supplies the necessary materials to start small projects that help them achieve financial independence. This support aims to enable students to launch their own projects in various fields, thereby increasing their opportunities in the job market and encouraging innovation and creativity. This initiative reflects the university's commitment to providing a supportive educational environment that fulfills students' ambitions and helps develop their entrepreneurial skills.

8 – Participation of “Fatat Al-Zahraa Was Here” Students in the “Qudurat” Radio Program

This program is presented by Al-Kafeel Women's Radio, affiliated with the Al-Abbas Holy Shrine. It focused on interviews highlighting success stories of students, administrative staff, and faculty members at Al-Zahraa University. The episodes emphasized the challenges women face and how to overcome them to achieve their goals, reflecting the program's commitment to supporting women's empowerment and motivating them toward success.

9 – Green Education between Islamic Foundations and the Western Model

The Center for Continuing Education, in collaboration with the Women's Affairs Division, organized a scientific workshop titled “Green Education between Islamic Foundations and

the Western Model” on Wednesday, 11/9/2024, at the Al-Kawthar Center for Continuing Education. The workshop was presented by Prof. Dr. Amjad Hameed Fadhil and Asst. Prof. Ala’a Abdul-Kadhim Al-Kreiti. It focused on presenting global environmental challenges and proposed solutions through academic curricula and university programs that teach sustainable practices.

Success Story

The Women’s Affairs Division achieved first place among five private universities, being recognized as the best division in implementing ministerial directives.

The Sixth Objective

Building Management System (BMS)

We attach details of Al-Zahraa University’s systems that are operated through the Building Management System (BMS), which has contributed to a 40% reduction in electricity consumption. The system regulates temperature settings and shuts down systems according to predefined schedules, with cooling systems disabled during official holidays.

It can be accessed remotely from any location via mobile phone or computer, enabling continuous monitoring, prolonging equipment lifespan, and ensuring regular maintenance, thereby further reducing energy consumption.

The BMS is a computerised system designed to monitor and control mechanical and electrical equipment within buildings, such as lighting, ventilation, heating, cooling, and fire safety systems. It consists of both software and hardware components that execute commands from the central processor to manage different building systems, with the primary aim of enhancing the efficiency of energy and resource consumption.

- The BMS is mainly utilised in large buildings to manage the internal environment by regulating temperature, humidity, and carbon dioxide levels. It can also optimise energy use related to lighting, heating, and cooling, achieving reductions in energy consumption of up to 70% in certain cases.

- The (BMS) consists of three main components:

1. Field devices, which provide data to the system.

2. Software, which analyses the data and generates commands.

3. Engineering controllers, which execute these commands through the building's equipment and devices.

- The system collects data from field devices, analyses it, and then issues commands to control the various building systems. This process enhances operational efficiency, conserves energy, reduces costs, and ensures regular equipment maintenance.

- Systems such as the BMS are considered fundamental for achieving sustainability in building management, as they contribute to reducing resource consumption and preserving the environment.

BMS Schematics

- Central heating and cooling units.
- Pumps of various types.
- Fans are auxiliary units for heating and cooling systems.
- Lighting systems across different parts of the building.
- Firefighting, fire protection, and emergency systems.
- Electrical systems.
- Security and alarm systems.
- Smoke and dust control systems.
- Water management systems, including both hot and cold water.

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- Irrigation systems for gardens.

Advantages of the BMS

- The BMS plays a major role in energy conservation, with the capacity to control all building systems, resulting in energy savings of up to 40%.
- It saves significant time and effort by automatically issuing commands and monitoring performance, while also substantially reducing the rate of system malfunctions.
- The BMS offers advanced fire detection capabilities, identifying risks before escalation. It can also manage minor fires to minimise damage or extinguish them entirely. Furthermore, it enables control of the building's surveillance and camera systems, thereby enhancing overall safety and security.

The Eighth Objective

1. Initiative for Employing Al-Zahra University Graduates

The university established a Department of Career Preparation and Employment to connect college graduates with the labor market and offer suitable job opportunities within its affiliated institutions. The department focuses on empowering graduates by equipping them with tools and opportunities that ensure their success after graduation. Special attention is given to monitoring employment in fields aligned with their specializations, collecting periodic surveys to ensure workplace satisfaction, and providing continuous support, all of which contribute to enhancing their professional experience and increasing their chances for career advancement.

The Ninth Objective

1-University Infrastructure:

Our university greatly emphasized on sustainable infrastructure by adopting environmentally friendly standards in building design, using renewable energy technologies, and managing resources efficiently. We also strive to reduce the carbon footprint through energy-saving lighting systems, water recycling, and enhancing green spaces within the campus. These efforts aim to create a sustainable educational

environment that keeps pace with global developments in resource conservation for future generations.

Our university aims to develop its infrastructure sustainably through the implementation of modern expansion projects that meet the needs of students and faculty members. This expansion includes the creation of advanced educational facilities, integrated research spaces, and buildings equipped with the latest technologies, while considering sustainability standards and energy efficiency. This expansion aims to enhance the academic environment and improve the learning experience on campus.

2- Sustainable Energy Research: Supporting research related to the development of renewable energy technologies such as solar and wind power, which can be applied in large-scale industrial projects.

The Tenth Objective

1. Non-Discrimination

Our University is committed to empowering persons with disabilities, as demonstrated by the appointment of a highly competent academic staff member to an administrative position. This step affirms our dedication to supporting excellence, and to fostering an inclusive and sustainable academic environment.

2 • Encouraging Community Engagement

The University has organised several festivals and events dedicated to this group, most notably the Third Annual Festival for Persons of Determination, held in collaboration with

Noor Imam Al-Hussein Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Al-Sibtayn Academy for Developmental Disorders and Autism, and Al-Siraj Association. The festival featured theatrical performances, handicrafts, and poetry recitals presented by visually impaired participants of various ages, to promote their inclusion in society and benefit from their talents across different fields.

Al-Zahraa University for Women hosted the “Able to Differ” festival in its third edition under the auspices of Imam Hussein Holy Shrine, that aims to support and assistance for people with determination and individuals with disabilities, and provide the necessary support to integrate them into society. For more details, you can watch the following report:

Noor Imam Hussein institute (PBUH) for the blind and visually impaired at the second annual festival for the empowerment of people with determination, that held within the cultural week activities on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the establishment of Al-Zahraa University. The institute included many of events and activities that highlighted on the role of the blind in educational and academic aspect, The highlight of the exhibition was the display that included essential tools relied upon by the visually impaired in their studies, such as the typewriter, their specialized sports equipment, Braille reading books, and tools for learning to read and write, reflecting the university's efforts to support and empower this group and enhance their educational sustainability.

“The Third Annual Festival for People of Determination” Education Faculty/English Language Department and Special Education Department the third annual festival for people determination. The festival came in collaboration with Noor Imam Hussein institute (PBUH) for the blind and visually impaired, Al-Siraj institute, Al-Sabtain Academy for Developmental Disorders and Autism in Am Abiha Hall in the university, the festival aims to support for the people of determination, those with special needs, and to enhance their effective integration in the society through providing support and assistance for this important group.

Al-Zahraa University organized its first festival for the determination of the special needs, attended by a large number of guests, administrative and teaching staff, and female students, the festival coincides with the International Day for this occasion, and all relevant departments participated in organizing the events over three days. The English Language department and the Arabic department in the Faculty of Education, in cooperation with the

Continuous Education Department and female students from the departments, contributed to reviving the festival's activities, that reflect the university's support for integrating this important group in society.

The University continues its commitment at supporting the determination through sending its female students to train on how to handle with this distinguished group, and providing educational environment suitable for them. In a distinguished step, the university hosted a female student from the preparatory stage to try the university atmosphere, with the aim of enhancing the hope of people of determination and emphasizing that an education is accessible for them in Al-Zahraa University. This initiative contributes to renewing trust and enhancing the participation of this group in academic and social life, by providing the support and collaboration to empower them to succeed. These initiatives reflect the university's commitment to providing unlimited support to champions with determination, granting them the opportunity to show their scientific, cultural, and social talents in the academic community, and offering all means to empower and integrate them into society.

- Female students' visits to elderly care homes, through delegations representing the University, further strengthen awareness of the significance of supporting vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as senior citizens, thereby contributing to the reduction of social exclusion and the promotion of equity.

The Twelfth Objective

Al-Zahra University for Women adopts digital systems to enhance both environmental and educational sustainability. As part of its commitment to sustainable development and digital transformation, the university has implemented advanced systems that improve document management and elevate the quality of education. One such initiative is the adoption of an electronic archiving system, aimed at reducing paper consumption and enabling quick, efficient access to information. This contributes to a more streamlined university work environment while minimizing the environmental impact associated with paper use.

The University also provides a modern system for online lectures, enabling students to follow their courses remotely through interactive educational platforms. This system represents an important step towards enhancing the flexibility of learning, as it allows students to engage with the educational content more efficiently, in addition to reducing

the need for printed materials.

These initiatives fall within the University's ongoing efforts to promote academic sustainability and support environmental responsibility, contributing to the reduction of environmental waste and achieving greater educational efficiency through the use of modern technology.

The Seventeenth Objective

Agreements and Partnerships

Al-Zahraa University seeks to strengthen academic and research collaboration through the establishment of partnerships with both local and international universities. These agreements encompass academic exchange programs, joint research, cultural activities, and internship opportunities. Such initiatives contribute to enhancing the University's reputation and broadening its influence within the global academic community.

<https://sustainability.alzahraa.edu.iq/>

Questions Highlighting Universities' Role in Sustainable Development and Community Engagement During the Consultative Session with Universities

- Does the university provide educational opportunities for all social groups, including persons with disabilities?

Yes. The university has hosted a high school student with disabilities to experience campus life, with the aim of inspiring hope among individuals with special needs and affirming that education is fully accessible to them at Al-Zahraa University for Women.

- How does the university contribute to achieving the goal of "Quality Education" through the development of academic curricula and training programs?

Yes, and this has been addressed above under objective 4.

- What measures does the university take to ensure that all students receive high-quality education, regardless of their social or economic background?

The university is committed to offering equal learning opportunities for all students by reducing tuition fees and supporting scientific research and academic staff.

- How does the university ensure that its programs align with international educational standards, and how does it contribute to improving learning outcomes?

The university ensures alignment through local and international curricula that follow accreditation standards recognized globally, guaranteeing that its academic programs meet international benchmarks in higher education.

- How does the university promote gender equality on campus?

As an institution dedicated exclusively to women, Al-Zahraa University for Women plays a significant role in fulfilling Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which focuses on gender equality. The university provides a supportive educational environment designed specifically for women, offering equal access to higher education and opportunities to develop leadership skills. It also contributes to women's empowerment and enhances their effective participation in society and the labor market, thereby advancing gender equality and sustainable development.

_ Does the university participate in initiatives to increase women's representation in the fields of science and technology

Yes, the university strives to prioritize women in assuming administrative positions within Faculties and scientific departments, as well as training them.

_ What are the procedures that the universities

followed to achieve academic and research partnerships and collaboration with other universities and with public and external sector institutions

yes, this is done through signing partnership agreements, as mentioned above under Goal 17.

_ How are sustainability principles achieved in buildings and infrastructure

Sustainability principles are applied in buildings and infrastructure through modern expansions that integrate smart technologies, such as the Building Management System (BMS), which helps improve energy efficiency and reduce resource consumption. This system also enhances the provision of a sustainable and integrated learning environment by effectively monitoring and managing the building's various systems.

_ Community services aimed at promoting energy conservation and the shift toward renewable energy sources.

_ Sustainable technological incubators... sustainable initiatives.

_ How is digital transformation being utilised

_ Procedures in the field of community awareness.

_ Do you have green environmental practices?

_ Do universities have practices that support people with special needs?

_ Do you have a platform for sustainable development data?

Yes, and here is the link.

<https://sustainability.alzahraa.edu.iq/>

This document were translated by Zahra' Ala', Zahra' Salman, and Fatima Hassan