

Focus Areas



Additional SDGs



# DHOFAR UNIVERSITY

## Sustainable Development Goals

### Progress Report

2022 - 2023

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## **FOREWORD**

It gives me great pleasure to present this “Progress Report” of Dhofar University (DU) on “Sustainable Development Goals” of the United Nations for the academic year 2022-23 to its stakeholders. This is the second such report published by DU.

The Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals, were first adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

All 191 UN Member Countries at that time, including the Sultanate of Oman, have agreed to try to achieve these goals by the year 2030. DU fully endorses the commitment of the Sultanate of Oman towards achieving these SDGs and strives to make contribution towards that.

Accordingly, one of the objectives set by DU in its Strategic Plan for 2021-31 is: “Adopt United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for the betterment of community.” For attaining this objective, a number of actions laid down in the supporting Operational Plan. Each action clearly specifies the person(s) responsible for its implementation and the evidence to be provided. All actions have well-defined Performance Indicators and specified targets to be achieved by June 2026

This report summarizes various facts and figures about the progress DU has made towards these SDGs during the year 2022-23. We strongly hope and want to carry forward the good work in the next year.

Prof. Amer Ali Rawas

Vice Chancellor

Dhofar University, Salalah

30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

## 1) INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. The 17 Goals are all interconnected, and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve them all by 2030.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

## 2) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The 17 SDGs are integrated - they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

<https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>



DU acknowledges that it is the beginning, and at present it may not be covering all the SDGs. In view of this, it has been decided to identify the "Focus Areas" where DU will concentrate in the initial years. Subsequently, over a period of time, every effort shall be made to cover all the SDG, at least the parts concerning the University.

### 3) ACHIEVEMENTS

- a) DU developed and implemented “SDG Policy” in Fall 2021-22. The policy lays down the basic framework as well as the procedure and guidelines for achieving the SDGs in the next five years.
- b) DU has developed and implement number of policies covering SDGs. These include: (1) Energy and Water Conservation Policy, (2) Transportation Policy, (3) Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Modern Slavery Policy, (4) Access to Lifelong Learning and Educational Resources Policy and (5) Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibilities Policy
- c) The QAD created awareness among faculty and staff about the Sustainable Development Goals of United Nations and the SDG Policy of DU as well as other of DU policies covering SDGs.
- d) ***It has been decided that DU shall focus on the selected seven SDGs also called “Focus SDGs” during the first three years of its Strategic Plan (2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24).*** A senior member of the staff has been assigned the responsibility for each of these 7 SDGs as shown in the following table.
- e) ***It is also decided that the remaining ten SDGs shall be taken up in the following two years of the Strategic Plan (2024-25 and 2025-26).*** As such, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for each of these 10 SDGs as shown in the following table. These designated staff members are required to explore the areas within these SDGs which may be concerning the University and where it can make some contribution.

SDG No.	Goal	Responsibility
1	No poverty	Prof. Amer Rawas (VC)
2	Zero hunger	Prof. Amer Rawas (VC)
3	Good health and well-being	Ms. Fatima Al Baraami (Director of Student Hostel Services)
4	Quality education	Dr. Syed Jamil (DVC)
5	Gender equality	Dr. Tareq Hosry (Dean DARSA)
6	Clean water and sanitation	Dr. Mahad Shamas (CE)
7	Affordable and clean energy	Dr. Sohaib Tahir (CE)

8	Decent work and economic growth	Dr. Mawih Kareem (Dean CCBA)
9	Industry, innovation and infrastructure	Prof. Muhammad Asif Gondal (Director DR)
10	Reduced inequalities	Dr. Khalid AL Mashikhi (Dean CAAS)
11	Sustainable cities and communities	Mr. Omar AL Shahri (Director of CSCEC)
12	Responsible consumption and production	Dr. Yasser Arab (CE)
13	Climate action	Dr. Paul Okonkwo (CE)
14	Life below water	Dr. Mazhar UL-Islam (CE)
15	Life on land	Dr. Abdel Rahman Kamel Al Qawasmi (CE)
16	Peace, justice, and strong institutions	Dr. Ahmed Elzein (Acting Dean CL)
17	Partnerships for the goals	Dr. Sanjay Ramteke (QA Consultant)

**Note:** The seven rows highlighted in green are the Focus SDGs.

- f) The persons responsible for each of the seven Focus SDGs have started incorporating the requirements of these SDGs in various DU activities in coordination with the concerned authorities at DU.
- g) DU has also started collaborating with peer HEIs, government organisations, private sector and NGOs in promoting and achieving these SDGs.
- h) DU encourages and provides incentives to its faculty, staff and students for publications on SDGs. The following table shows the aggregate number of publications of DU faculty, staff and students in the selected Focus Areas for the last three years (2020, 2021 and 2022).

SDG No.	Goal	No. of Publications
1	No poverty	2
4	Quality education	25
5	Gender equality	5
8	Decent work and economic growth	46
10	Reduced inequalities	9
16	Peace, justice, and strong institutions	7

## 4) PROGRESS TOWARDS SEVEN FOCUS SDGs

### SDG 1 - NO POVERTY

- a) Around 60% of the students at DU are either sponsored by the MoHERI or some other financing agency and are receiving financial aid to attend higher education.
- b) For self-financing students, who are in financial difficulty, there is a provision for deferred payment of tuition fees, which is dealt with by the Director of the Department of Financial Affairs (DFA). The percentage of self-financing students who availed this facility during the year is around 64%.
- c) DU has introduced a scheme to encourage outstanding students, especially from lower income group. Under this scheme, 50% concession in tuition fees is given to twelve students at the University every semester, which is based on their academic performance in the previous semester.
- d) DU Periodically review the amount of financial aid and scholarships provided to the students to ensure equitable distribution of funds to students in needs across the university colleges and FP. This is well communicated to students in advance.
- e) ***DU provides “Free Accommodation” for its girl students on the University campus.*** This is part of the “University’s Social Responsibility” and also for meant for encouraging the girl students in the region to go in for higher education. There is a provision for accommodating around 1500 students in the “Female Student Residency”.
- f) Department of Admission and Registration (DAR), in consultation with the VC, has started setting specific targets for admitting students from low-income families, which are reviewed and revised every year. ***The target for the year 2022-23 was 20% of the students admitted should be from this group.***
- g) DU is commitment to ensure successful completion of the academic program by the students from low-income families. As such, there is a “Learning Support Center” for providing additional academic support to these students through “Peer Tutoring” scheme.
- h) The University, through its “Centre for Entrepreneurship” provides support in arranging financial assistance for the local community in starting sustainable businesses. To begin with, It creates awareness about various schemes of the government and public or private sector organisations among the community members aspiring for starting a business. Subsequently it provides the necessary support in completing the necessary formalities for arranging financial assistance.

### GOAL 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION

- a) DU has a “Department of Education” in the College of Arts and Applied Sciences. The department offers a number of academic programs at Diploma, Bachelor and Masters level in the field of education. All these programs are designed in such a

way that the graduates of these programs are qualified to teach at primary school level. The following table shows the number of graduates in the field of education in the last three years.

Degree	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Diploma	0	0	0
Bachelor	4	8	51
Master	39	45	184
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>235</b>

b) DU has a “Community Service and Continuing Education Center” (CSCEC), which provides access to the educational resources of the University and the expertise of DU faculty to the community of the Dhofar Region at large. The activities of CSCEC mainly include:

- 1) educational and training programs to meet the needs of local community with active participation of private and public sector
- 2) certificate programs and customized training programs designed to meet the needs of individuals and organizations.
- 3) short-term courses for public and private sector employees.
- 4) holding educational events at the university that are open to general public.

The following table shows the activities of CSCEC in the last three years.

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>No. of Activities</b>	13	21	27

c) The Department of Admission and Registration (DAR) at DU is involved in promoting DU and its programs among prospective students. For that purpose, it maintains contact with high schools in the region and provides information about higher education in coordination with the College Deans, FP Director and Director of the Department of Public Relations and Information (DPRI). The department also participates in national and international educational exhibitions for promoting DU and its programs in collaboration with DPRI.

d) DU is the only University providing higher education up to Master’s level in the Governorate of Dhofar. Many students enrolling at DU are first generation students in higher education. In view of this, DU has a social obligation towards the local community. As such, DU:

- 1) creates awareness in the community about the importance of higher education in building the nation,



- 2) delivers high quality academic programs, which provide its students with ready employment and
  - 3) strives to ensure that majority of its students are provided financial support through MoHERI or some other financing agency.
- e) One of the objective set by DU in its SP for 2021-31 is, **“Develop DU into a leading university for higher education of students with disabilities in Oman.”** As such, DU has established a “Students with Disabilities Support Service Unit” to cater to the needs of Student with Disability (SWD). Through this unit DU:
- 1) promotes a culture of inclusiveness for SWD among DU community,
  - 2) equips faculty and staff with appropriate skills to cater to the needs of SWD,
  - 3) builds a pool of student volunteers for supporting SWD,
  - 4) provide adequate and appropriate facilities to meet the needs of SWD,
  - 5) establishes fruitful partnerships with public and private sector organisations to support SWD,
  - 6) widens the involvement of SWDSSU in the local community.
- f) DU provides adequate and culturally appropriate accommodation for its female students on the University campus. There is a provision for accommodating around 1000 students in the “Female Student Residency”. **DU does not charge any fees from its students for accommodation facilities.** This is part of the “University’s Social Responsibility” and also for encouraging the girls in the region to go in for higher education.
- g) in Fall 2022-23, DU developed and implemented **“Access to Lifelong Learning and Educational Resources Policy”** which outline the opportunities, facilities, organizations and procedural guidelines for providing access to lifelong learning opportunities to community members, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability or gender.

## **GOAL 5 - GENDER EQUALITY**

- a) As mentioned earlier under Goal-4, many students at DU are first generation students in higher education. This proportion is much higher for girl students.

DU strives to promote gender equality, while encouraging the female students, especially the first-generation students, to pursue higher education.

As such DU provides free accommodation to all female students on the University campus. The following table shows the number of students availing this facility in the last three years.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Number of female students in Ladies Hostel	540	755	785

- h) As per the “Proposed Labour Laws of Oman”, endorsed and adopted by DU, there is provision of **“Maternity Leave”** for 98 days and **“Paternity Leave”** for 7 days.
- i) DU celebrated women’s’ achievements and their role in advancing the Omani society on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022, which is the **“Omani Women’s Day”**. Other major activities to promote Gender equality included: (1) Workshop entitled Future Women Entrepreneurs, (2) Breast Cancer Awareness program and (3) Proud to be a Woman get-together.
- j) DU has started to measure and track the admission rate for female students so that necessary measures can be taken to further enhance it. Some of the measures taken by DU include internal and external scholarships, concession in fees, facility of deferred payment and free accommodation.
- k) DU takes numerous measures to ensure that the female students complete their academic program in normal stipulated time, which is three years for Diploma and Master Programs and six years for Bachelor Programs. This mainly include support through **“Learning Support Center”**.
- l) DU encourages female students to enroll for the academic programs where traditionally they are underrepresented. This is achieved through awareness programs for new students at the beginning of academic year, wherein Deans of all colleges give presentation. The University has also created booklets for various specialisations showing the career opportunities in those area.

## **GOAL 8 - DECENT WORK ON ECONOMIC GROWTH**

- a) DU follows a **“Policy of Non-discrimination”** while recruiting and promoting the staff. There is no discrimination on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, colour, religion, economic or social status, nationality etc., provided they are otherwise qualified. This non-discrimination policy is followed for **“Pay Scale Equality”** also and it is ensured that there are **“No Gender Pay Gaps”**.
- b) DU pays all its staff and faculty, both Omani and Expat, living (minimum) wage as per the local standards. DU also provides annual increment in salary to its existing staff, both Omani and expats, which helps it in motivating and retaining the deserving staff.
- c) DU has a recognised labour union known as **“Dhofar University Labour Union”** (DULU) in which most of the staff, including women and expats are members. This ensures that the employees have freedom of association and labour rights are protected. The DULU represents the University’s employees and takes up their demands to the management. It organizes activities and events that would enhance the union’s role in the University.
- d) DU ensures that the staff members are provided with adequate opportunities to raise their grievances. Accordingly, DU has a **“Staff Grievance Policy”** (SGP)

which gives details about: (1) types of grievances, (2) grievance-handling procedure, (3) appeal procedure and (4) necessary guidelines. The policy is made available to staff through e-mail, the DU website and DU Policy Manual.

DU also builds confidence among faculty and staff and ensures them that SGP is fair, impartial and equitable. It is also ensured that there is consistency, fairness, equity, transparency and promptness in dealing with staff grievances. The ultimate aim is to ensure that they work in a healthy work environment and contribute toward development of the University.

- e) Almost all employees of DU, both academic and non-academic are on secure contracts. Only newly recruited staff is on probation for 3 months, after that, if their work is satisfactory, they are given a secure contract.

The following table shows the number employees on secure contract in last three years as compared to the total employees.

Particulars	2019-20	2020-21	2022-23
No. of employees on secure contract	368	358	380
Total employees at DU	418	415	449
PC of employees on secure contract	88.0%	86.3%	84.63%

- f) **“Student Work Placement”** (SWP) is a formal requirement for most of the undergraduate programs at DU. It is a supervised and assessed work carried out by the students, with the approval of the College, in a business, industrial, social or other organisation.

DU perceives SWP as a valuable experience for students, which enhances their employment opportunities. It is known by different names in different programs, such as practicum internship, field internship, practical training or simply internship.

The following table shows the number of students taking SWP in last three years.

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total Number of Students (Head Count)	4378	4373	4358
Number of Students taking SWP	973	802	930
Proportion of students taking SWP	22.2%	18.3%	21.34

## **GOAL 10 - REDUCE INEQUALITIES**

- a) As mentioned earlier under Goal 4, DU is the only University providing higher education up to Master’s level in the Governorate of Dhofar. Many students enrolling at DU are first generation students in higher education. In view of this, DU has a social obligation towards the local community and is committed towards that.

As such, (1) DU creates awareness in the community about the importance of higher education in building the nation, (2) delivers high quality academic programs, which provide its students with ready employment and (3) strives to ensure that majority of its students are provided financial support through MoHERI or other financing agency.

- b) There is a significant number of students with disabilities studying at DU. As such, one of the objective set by DU in its SP for 2021-31 is, **“Develop DU into a leading university for higher education of students with disabilities in Oman.”**

DU has also established a **“Students with Disabilities Support Service Unit”** to cater to the needs of student with disability and there is a **“Student with Disability Policy”** to guide the activities of this unit. Through this unit DU:

- 1) promotes a culture of inclusiveness for SWD among DU community,
  - 2) equips faculty and staff with appropriate skills to cater to the needs of SWD,
  - 3) builds a pool of student volunteers for supporting SWD,
  - 4) provide adequate and appropriate facilities to meet the needs of SWD,
  - 5) establishes fruitful partnerships with public and private sector organisations to support SWD,
  - 6) widens the involvement of SWDSSU in the local community.
- c) DU has taken utmost care in designing its physical facilities to ensure that people with special needs are taken care of and they face no problems in moving from one place to another within the campus.

All DU buildings have ramps and handicap washrooms apart from separate well earmarked parking spaces. Also, all classrooms and labs are wheel-chair compliant for easy movement of such students.

- d) DU follows a **“Policy of Non-discrimination”** while admitting the new students. There is no discrimination on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, colour, religion, economic or social status, nationality etc., provided they are otherwise qualified for admission. The students are also protected from harassment.

- e) Around 55% of the students at DU are **“Female Students”**, 45% are **“First-Generation Students”** and 60% are receiving scholarship for various purposes, including those from **“Low Income Families”**. Also, there is a significant number of **“Students with Disabilities”** studying at DU.

DU considers all these groups as **“Underrepresented Groups”** and as such measures and tracks the application and admission rates for these groups of students over a period of time so that necessary measures can be taken to further enhance it. Some of the measures taken by DU include scholarships, concession in fees, facility of deferred payment and free accommodation.

- g) DU has a **“Women’s Mentoring Scheme”**, whereby new students in the Ladies Hostel are assigned a mentor, who is a senior student and preferably a roommate, who helps the mentees in adjusting to the new environment.

Likewise, as per Staff Induction Policy Section 9.2, new faculty and staff from underrepresented groups have an assigned mentor to provide the necessary help and guidance during their probation period and ensure their settlement in new job and work environment.

- h) DU has a **“Counseling Center”** staffed with qualified and experienced female counsellors. Through this center, DU ensures that its students from underrepresented groups have access to personal counseling facilities, as and when needed, which help them in solving their social, emotional or psychological problems.

### **GOAL 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**

- a) The **“University Council”** (UC) is the highest decision-making body of the University. As per DU Bylaws, it is composed of the Vice-Chancellor (VC) as chairperson and the Deputy VC, Deans and the Directors of the Foundation Program, Department of Research, Department of Postgraduate studies and the Department of Quality Assurance as members.

One faculty member from each of the four Colleges, nominated by the VC for a renewable period of three years and based on the suggestions of the College Deans, is also a member of the UC.

In addition, the President of the Student Advisory Council and the Directors of the Non-academic Departments concerned are also invited to the UC while any matter concerning them is being discussed.

- b) As per MoHERI guidelines, DU has a **“Student Advisory Council”**, consisting of seventeen representatives drawn from various colleges. The SAC is reconstituted with newly-elected members every year in September.

Dean DARSA ensures that all colleges are represented in SAC as per MoHERI guidelines and there are no vacant positions. DU encourages female students to be members of SAC and provides conducive environment for their involvement in SAC. DU also involves representative of Masters Programs students in SAC as invitee to take up their issues.

The SAC is used as a means of collecting feedback from students as well as informing them about the action taken regarding their feedback. DU holds regular meetings between the SAC and senior management of DU at least once every semester to discuss student satisfaction and their grievances. Student representatives in SAC are invited in various College (Department) committee meetings, wherever appropriate.

- c) DU has a **“University Advisory Council”** which includes representatives from industry, employers and community. The Council normally meets twice every year and provides a forum for interaction with industry and employers for their involvement in the planning process for the development of the University.

In line with University Advisory Council, DU has established **“College Advisory Councils”** in all its Colleges, which also include representatives from industry, employers and community. The boards normally meet twice every year and provides a forum for interaction with industry and employers for their involvement in the planning process, especially during program review and development of new academic programs.

- d) DU is registered as “Dhofar University Company (SAOC)” with the Ministry of Commerce and Industries in Oman. Accordingly, its financial books are audited by an External Auditor every year. These audited reports are published by DU.

The external auditors for 2022-23 were “Deloitte Company”, which is independent of the institution, its senior staff and members of the governing body.

DU also has an “Internal Audit Unit” that reports to the Board of Directors (BoD) and the VC. Their main role is to examine the internal procedures and control measures to ensure that all legal requirements, the University Bylaws and other rules and regulations are observed.

BoD also meets quarterly and monitors the actual expenses with the budgeted figures and approve quarterly unaudited financial statements.

- e) DU has developed and implemented an **“Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibilities Policy”** which provides the faculty with freedom in the classroom in a way that enhance learning and promote student creativity and intellectual development of students. It also entitles them to freedom in undertaking research and in the publication of research findings, in full adherence to ethical standards and acceptable practices of conducting and publishing research.

- f) DU staff provide Expert Advice to Government through participation in various workshops and conferences. The staff also participates in research activities for and in collaboration with government departments.

## **GOAL 17 - PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS**

- a) As mentioned earlier in Section 3-(e), DU has started collaborating with peer HEIs, government organisations, private sector and NGOs in promoting and achieving SDGs.

DU staff and students participated in the cross-sectoral conferences, seminars and workshops on SDGs to broaden their knowledge and help DU in implementing good practices of others. Some of these include:

- **“Oman Sustainability Week”** from 12-16 March 2023, which was aligned with Oman Vision 2040 and the Sultanate’s commitment to the United Nations SDGs. The event was hosted by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals in cooperation with Petroleum Development Oman .
  - **“Oman Environmental Sustainability Conference”** from 16-19 January 2023, under the patronage of the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth. The conference included events that focus on air pollution and climate change. The conference sought to promote research and innovation by setting up a Youth Equathon and opening the door to Omani students in various environmental fields in the creation of ideas for environmental projects on the topic of air pollution and climate change.
- b) DU staff regularly participates and provides inputs to the government in the development of SDG policy and strategies, their implementation and follow-up. Some of these include:
- The workshop organised by the **“Ministry of Economy”** in Muscat on 12-13 Sept 2022 on the preparation of second voluntary report on the progress made in achieving the SDGs, to be presented at a forum of the UN Economic and Social Council in New York in July 2023.
  - The Youth and Sustainable Development Conference held on 23-24 August 2023 and organized by the **“Ministry of Labour”** in Salalah, under the auspices of Sayyid Salim Musallam Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Human Resources Development. The conference aimed to identify issues related to Omani youth and their aspirations, as well as exchanging ideas and views.
- c) QAD created awareness among faculty and staff about United Nations SDGs and SDG Policy of DU.
- The Director of the Student Affairs and Dean DARSA conducted such awareness programs for students every semester.
- CSCEC also conducted numerous programs for local community to create awareness among them about SDGs.
- d) Furthermore, for creating awareness among students about SDGs, DU has started incorporating the SDG that could possibly be related to that particular course in the course syllabus distributed to the students.
- e) DU has specific “University (College) Requirement” courses and “College Elective” courses on sustainability. The students are encouraged to enroll in this course.

## 5) PROGRESS TOWARDS OTHER TEN SDGs

### GOAL 2 - ZERO HUNGER

- a) SDG-2 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU provides sustainable food choices for all on the campus, including vegetarian and vegan food. DU also provide healthy and affordable food choices for all on the campus.
- c) Catering and Garbage Collection Services at DU are outsourced. For reducing the food wastage, DU has put posters across all cafeterias and canteens urging the students to avoid food wastage.
- d) DU has started measuring the amount of food waste generated from food served within the university and keeps a record of that.
- e) It is observed that over the last few years even though the absolute quantity of food waste has increased because of increase in the number of student population, food waste per person has actually come down.

### GOAL 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- a) SDG-3 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU organises outreach programs and projects in the local community to promote and improve health and well-being including hygiene, nutrition, exercise, and other health and well-being related topics.
- c) DU organises various events, such as blood donation camps, health awareness programs, tree-planting etc. for the benefit of the community. DU also encourages the involvement of its students, faculty and staff in community services.
- d) DU provides its students with access to mental health support through the "Counseling Center". The Counselling Centre has both male and female counsellors to deal with male and female separately.
- e) Smoking is strictly prohibited within the University campus. Posters showing prohibition and also the consequences of smoking are placed in prominent places at the University. As per DU Bylaws Section 72-2-1 smoking inside the University Buildings is considered as non-academic violation.



## **GOAL 6 - CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**

- a) SDG-6 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU has started measuring the total volume of water used in the university. DU has also put posters across campus urging the students, faculty and staff to avoid wastage of water.
- c) It is observed that over the last few years, even though the consumption of water has increased because of increase in the number of student population, consumption of water per person has actually come down.
- d) DU provides free drinking water for students, staff and visitors
- e) DU has ***“Energy and Water Conservation Policy”***. The policy provides a framework for conservation of energy and water so as to reduce their consumption and gain control over their financial cost to the University.
- f) DU ensures that watering of campus plants and greenery occurs during the early morning or late evening. During windy and hot weather, watering is specifically scheduled at night to optimize water usage and minimize evaporation losses.
- g) Awareness programs about the importance of water conservation are conducted on a regular basis across the University. Also, considering the fact that Ladies Hostel is the biggest user of water, the Director of Hostel Services, through the hostel supervisors, ensures that the hostel students are aware of water conservation and contribute towards that.

## **GOAL 7 - AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY**

- a) SDG-7 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU ensures that all renovations of the existing buildings or construction of new buildings follow energy efficiency standards
- c) As mentioned earlier, DU has ***“Energy and Water Conservation Policy”***. The policy provides a framework for conservation of energy and water so as to reduce their consumption and gain control over their financial cost to the University.
- d) Technical Affairs Department at DU is proactive and ensure that periodic inspection and preventive maintenance of facilities is carried out.

- e) Energy conservation and water conservation is a moral responsibility of all staff, students and workers at DU. As such, any wastage of energy or water is brought to the notice of concerned authorities and is attended by them immediately. Details of emergency contact person are posted at all prominent places in DU premises.
- h) DU has put posters across campus urging the students, faculty and staff to avoid wastage of energy. On weekends and other holidays only minimum required lights are switched on. AC and other electrical equipment are switched on only if required. As such, it is observed that over the last few years, the consumption of energy has come down.
- f) Technical Affairs Department is exploring the possibilities of using solar energy. Also, priority is given to the use of natural light, wherever possible.
- g) Every year on March 23rd, DU takes part in **“Earth Day”** by observing an hour-long energy-saving initiative. For one hour, lights, unnecessary electrical devices, air conditioners, and computers are turned off.
- h) Awareness programs about the importance of energy conservation are conducted on a regular basis across the University. Also, the Director of Hostel Services, through the hostel supervisors, ensures that the hostel students are aware of energy conservation and contribute towards that.

## **GOAL 9 - INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- a) SDG-9 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU has implemented a **“Consultancy Policy”** to guide and manage consultancy activities by faculty and staff members effectively.
- c) DU promotes a supportive environment for consultancy services, encouraging faculty and staff to engage in providing expertise to industries, government organizations, and employers through platforms like ‘EJAAD.’
- d) DU collaborates closely with industry and business sectors, both private and public, to align its consultancy services with their needs and expectations.
- e) The university also promotes the expertise of its faculty to attract diverse consultancy projects, building visibility and engagement within relevant fields.
- f) Faculty members involved in consultancy activities valued at R.O. 2,000 or more, under DU affiliation, qualify for a reward of R.O. 300 and a Letter of Appreciation, presented during the Annual Research Day.

- g) A faculty in whose name a patent is registered (either nationally or internationally) while in the service of the University and with University affiliation shall be eligible for a cash reward of R.O. 500 and a Letter of Appreciation to be awarded on Annual research day.
- h) DU is making remarkable strides in research and innovation, with a secured international and national patent, alongside one international and one national patent application under review.

## **GOAL 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**

- a) SDG-11 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU library is open to the members of community in general (by special arrangement). It is open on all working days (Sunday to Thursday) from 7.30 am to 8:00 p.m., which ensures that the stakeholders have maximum access to learning resources.
- c) DU has a well-defined ***“Transportation Policy”***. As per this policy, students are advised to use public vehicles which involves mass transportation so as to reduce vehicular traffic inside the campus.

DU also strongly advises the students using private motor vehicles to have maximum car-pooling arrangements so as to reduce the congestion of vehicles in the campus.

- d) DU provides adequate and culturally appropriate accommodation for its female students on the University campus. There is a provision for accommodating around 1500 students in the ***“Female Student Residency”***.

DU does not charge any fees from its students for accommodation facilities. This is part of the ***“University’s Social Responsibility”*** and also for encouraging the girls in the region to go in for higher education.

- e) DU also arranges accommodation for students with disabilities and provides them the transportation facility.
- f) The Campus of DU is ***“Green University Campus”***, which combines nature and greenery with Omani traditional building. DU also focuses on ***“Energy and Water Conservation”*** by educating the students about climate change, environment protection and sustainability, and has policies to support these initiatives.

DU has developed and implemented ***“Energy and Water Conservation Policy”*** and ***“Transportation Policy”*** to support its initiative.

- a) The Departments of Chemical Engineering and Civil and Environmental Engineering are involved in research projects focused on converting waste into valuable products. This includes: utilization of industrial waste, food waste, and natural waste resources. The outcomes of these research activities will significantly contribute to achieving sustainable development and climate action goals.
- b) When old campus furniture is discarded, DU donates the usable items to families and individuals in need, thereby supporting the community and reducing waste.

## **GOAL 12 - RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**

- a) SDG-12 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU has a well-defined **“Biosafety Policy”**. This policy applies to all staff members, students and researchers engaged in approved research projects on University premises involving the use of bio-hazardous materials or generation of bio-hazardous waste.
- c) As per the Biosafety Policy, DU ensures that all research activities involving bio-hazardous materials are well-managed and controlled by providing comprehensible procedures and guidelines for approval of such research projects and for safe handling, storage, use and disposal of bio-hazardous material.
- d) The Department of Chemical Engineering is supporting several student projects focused on waste reduction and conversion into valuable bioproducts. These projects not only contribute to reducing the environmental impact of waste but also promote the development of sustainable research with economic feasibility.

## **GOAL 13 - CLIMATE ACTION**

- c) SDG-13 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- d) DU conducts awareness programs and organises campaigns for local community through CSCEC on climate change risks, its impacts, mitigation techniques, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
- e) All renovations of the existing buildings or construction of new buildings follow energy efficiency standards.
- f) DU is mostly using the energy generated through Fossil Fuel, as such the focus is on reducing the energy consumption.

- g) Energy and water conservation is moral responsibility of all stakeholders. Any wastage of energy or water is brought to the notice of concerned authorities and attended immediately.
- h) DU is exploring the possibilities of using solar energy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and priority is given to the use of natural light, wherever possible.
- i) Several courses related to renewable and green energy are offered at DU to enhance students' knowledge and equip them with the skills needed for future practices in green energy generation. These courses also focus on analyzing the significance of alternative energy sources and the impact of fossil fuels on environmental health and the economy.
- j) Faculty members are actively engaged in research related to green energy, specifically focusing on the conversion of renewable energy into valuable products and their economic impacts. This involvement is reflected in the numerous publications by the faculty members in this field
- k) The Departments of Chemical Engineering and Civil and Environmental Engineering are involved in research projects focused on converting waste into valuable products. This includes: utilization of industrial waste, food waste, and natural waste resources. The outcomes of these research activities will significantly contribute to achieving sustainable development and climate action goals.

#### **GOAL 14 - LIFE BELOW WATER**

- a) SDG-14 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.
- b) DU has made a small beginning. It has developed and implemented an action plan to reduce plastic waste on the campus.
- c) DU is placing significant emphasis on green energy production, waste recycling, and bioplastic generation. Several proposals are in progress that focus on utilizing various types of waste, including marine waste, to develop biodegradable bioplastics, with plans to incorporate these into student-based projects next year.
- d) Student projects have also been supported to promote water conservation and wastewater harvesting, aiming to reduce freshwater consumption and enable the recycling of wastewater.

#### **GOAL 15 - LIFE ON LAND**

- a) SDG-15 is one of the ten SDGs where DU is making only marginal contribution at present. Nevertheless, a senior member of the staff has already been assigned

the responsibility for this SDG. (Refer Section-3). He is required to explore the areas within this SDG which may be concerning DU and where it can make some contribution. DU intends to focus on these areas in next two years.

- b) As mentioned earlier under Goal 14, DU has developed and implemented an action plan to reduce plastic waste on the campus.
- c) As mentioned earlier under Goal 12, DU has a “Biosafety Policy”. This policy applies to all staff members, students and researchers engaged in approved research projects on University premises involving the use of bio-hazardous materials or generation of bio-hazardous waste.
- d) As per this policy, DU ensures that all research activities involving bio-hazardous materials are well-managed and controlled by providing comprehensible procedures and guidelines for approval of such research projects and for safe handling, storage, use and disposal of bio-hazardous material.

## 6) FUTURE PLANS

- a) Every year, DU plans to widen the coverage of SDG, especially other ten SDGs, and ensure that by the end of first half of the current Strategic Plan (2021-26) the University has made reasonably good progress on all SDGs.
- b) DU has plans to increase the capacity of “Female Student Residency” so as to accommodate maximum number of female students. This is already a part of infrastructure development plan.

In the meantime, DU management has decided to take buildings on rent in the nearby areas, if necessary, to accommodate additional female students.

- c) DU plans to increase the proportion of female in academic staff and also in administrative positions.
- d) DU also plans to recruit in its staff persons with Disabilities
- e) DU proposes to organise outreach programs and projects in the local community to promote and improve health and well-being.
- f) Greater emphasis to be given on reducing water wastage and electricity wastage through rigorous implementation of Energy and Water Conservation Policy.
- g) Further strengthening and widening the collaborations of DU with local NGOs to tackle the SDGs.
- h) Expanding the educational outreach activities beyond campus, especially in the schools in the region
- i) Enhancing the interaction between students union and DU management
- j) Increasing participation in policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments
- k) Further strengthening the activities of “Incubator Project” in the “Centre for Entrepreneurship” for the larger benefit of local community.
- l) Continue to encourage female students to enroll for the academic programs where traditionally they are underrepresented.
- m) DU is planning to establish a “**Centre for Sustainability**” in the near future. The proposal has already been discussed at various levels within the colleges and the university, and it is expected that the plan will be approved implemented in the coming years.
- n) There is a plan to apply for the establishment of a “**UNESCO Chair**” related to sustainable development and waste recycling to bioproducts and biofuels. Research teams are actively working on this proposal, which is expected to be submitted to the relevant authorities next year.

This initiative will significantly contribute to achieving the objectives of responsible consumption, production, and sustainable development as specified in SDG-12.

- o) DU is placing significant emphasis on green energy production, waste recycling, and bioplastic generation. Several proposals are in progress that focus on utilizing various types of waste, including marine waste, to develop biodegradable bioplastics, with plans to incorporate these into student-based projects next year.
- p) The Technical Affairs Department is exploring the possibility of installing a smart lighting system, ensuring optimized energy usage in campus buildings.



