SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL

4

QUALITY EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA

Sustainability Progress Report 2025

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

SDG 4: Quality Education

---

1. Executive Summary

Quality education is central to sustainable development, enabling individuals to acquire the knowledge, competencies, values, and capabilities necessary to contribute meaningfully to society. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. In higher education, this commitment extends beyond access to university admission. It encompasses academic quality assurance, relevant professional skills, research excellence, student welfare, safe learning environments, international academic cooperation, and opportunities for intellectual and personal development.

During 2025, the University of Dhaka undertook a range of academic, administrative, financial, infrastructural, and collaborative initiatives that contributed to different dimensions of SDG 4. These initiatives included strengthening institutional quality assurance, introducing professional communication training, recognizing academic and research excellence, expanding scholarship and financial assistance programmes, improving student accessibility and welfare, establishing institutional safeguarding mechanisms, and pursuing major investments in academic and residential infrastructure.

The university also strengthened its international academic engagement through meetings, proposed exchange arrangements, research collaborations, specialist lectures, and participation in international knowledge-sharing platforms. Its achievements in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2026 and Interdisciplinary Science Rankings 2026 provided additional recognition of its academic and research performance.

Several initiatives demonstrated the university's commitment to making higher education more inclusive. These included financial assistance for economically disadvantaged students, dedicated support for a visually impaired student, scholarships for female students, and plans for additional female residential accommodation. At the same time, the establishment of committees addressing sexual harassment, bullying, and ragging represented important institutional steps towards safer and more supportive learning environments.

This report presents the university's documented contributions to SDG 4 during the 2025 calendar year, organized around the relevant UN targets. The available activity-level documentation is concentrated primarily in 2025. Accordingly, the report does not assume that undocumented activities took place during the first half of the year. It also distinguishes between completed interventions, ongoing initiatives, and projects that received approval or entered preparatory stages during the reporting period.

2. Institutional Commitment and Strategic Alignment with SDG 4

The University of Dhaka's contribution to SDG 4 is reflected in its institutional efforts to improve academic governance, promote research excellence, expand educational opportunities, strengthen student support systems, and establish an enabling environment for learning.

The university's initiatives during 2025 corresponded with several SDG 4 targets:

- **Target 4.3:** Equal access for women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education.
- **Target 4.4:** Increasing the number of young people and adults with relevant skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.
- **Target 4.5:** Eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.
- **Target 4.7:** Ensuring that learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, global citizenship, human rights, and environmental responsibility.
- **Target 4.a:** Building and upgrading educational facilities that are inclusive, safe, non-violent, and effective learning environments.
- **Target 4.b:** Expanding scholarship opportunities for higher education, particularly for students from developing countries and disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **Target 4.c:** Increasing the supply of qualified teachers through international cooperation and capacity-building opportunities.

Institutional quality assurance, academic recognition, financial assistance, student welfare, international partnerships, and infrastructure development collectively contributed to these objectives. The initiatives discussed in the following sections demonstrate how the university translated these commitments into academic and institutional activities during 2025.

3. Academic Quality Assurance, Governance and Institutional Recognition

3.1 Strengthening Institutional Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is essential to maintaining academic standards, improving teaching and learning, and ensuring that higher education institutions remain responsive to changing educational and professional requirements.

An important milestone was the **First National IQAC Conference**, organized by the Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) on 13 November 2025. The conference, titled *"Progress of Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Experience of IQAC Leadership in Various Universities of Bangladesh,"* brought together representatives and academic leaders from public and private universities. Held at the Professor Abdul Matin Chaudhury Virtual Classroom and the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, the event provided a platform for exchanging institutional experiences, discussing quality assurance practices, and examining approaches to improving higher education standards.

On 18 December 2025, IQAC also launched its official Facebook portal to improve the visibility of departmental research achievements, academic milestones, and national and international recognition. This initiative provides an additional communication channel for sharing institutional academic accomplishments with the wider university community.

Together, these activities reflect efforts to strengthen quality assurance culture and promote greater institutional transparency and knowledge exchange.

3.2 Academic and Research Excellence Recognition

Recognizing academic performance and research contributions is an important part of fostering a culture of excellence within higher education. During 2025, several faculties and departments organized award ceremonies and distributed research incentives, scholarships, and academic distinctions.

The Faculty of Science Dean's Award ceremony, held on 13 November 2025, recognized **76 students from eight departments and one institute** for their academic performance during the 2021, 2022, and 2023 examination cycles. The faculty also recognized 10 academic staff members for their research books and scholarly publications. In addition, **38 faculty members received financial incentives** for publishing original research in high-impact Q1 and Q2 journals.

On 20 November 2025, the Faculty of Pharmacy organized its Dean's Award and Research Honors ceremony. Six Bachelor of Professional Pharmacy students received Dean's Awards, while seven faculty researchers were recognized for their research contributions between 2023 and 2025. The ceremony also included two Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Society Gold Medals, two Novelist Sardar Jayenuddin Gold Medals, financial grants for eight students through the Badrunnesa Gafur Memorial Trust Fund, and scholarships for 16 high-performing students across the four professional academic years.

Other departmental initiatives further demonstrated the breadth of academic recognition across the university:

- The Department of Islamic History and Culture celebrated its 75th anniversary on 13 November 2025. Its Alumni Association distributed **84 student scholarships**, including 75 special anniversary scholarships, and recognized MPhil and PhD graduates, academically successful children of alumni, and first-position graduates.
- The Department of Arabic inaugurated the renovated Shamsul Ulama Abu Nasr Waheed Lecture Hall and the Professor A.N.M. Abdul Mannan Khan Seminar Library. The facilities were funded by departmental alumni. A total of 34 students received stipends through departmental trust funds.
- The Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management awarded 10 Henna Alam Scholarships to first-year students during its 18th anniversary celebration.
- The Department of Physics awarded the Hamim Khan Memorial Award, amounting to Tk 1,47,360, to Falguni Biswas for achieving the highest CGPA among graduating female students in the B.Sc. (Honours) examinations.
- The Department of Economics recognized Lubaba Binte Halim through the Shah AAMS Kibria Memorial Trust Fund for securing the highest CGPA in the BSS (Honours) examinations.

These initiatives provided recognition and financial incentives for academic achievement while encouraging research productivity among faculty members and students.

3.3 International Academic Recognition

The University of Dhaka achieved notable milestones in international university rankings during the reporting period.

In the **Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026**, published on 9 October 2025, the university advanced 200 positions from the previous year's 1001–1200 band to the **801–1000 global ranking band**, maintaining its position among the leading universities in Bangladesh.

A further achievement came through the **Times Higher Education Interdisciplinary Science Rankings 2026**, published on 20 November 2025. The university secured **52nd position globally among 911 institutions from 94 countries**, ranking first in South Asia and leading the 12 participating Bangladeshi universities.

These rankings provide external recognition of the university's performance across areas such as teaching, research environment, research quality, international outlook, industry engagement, and interdisciplinary research. They also offer useful benchmarks for continued institutional improvement.

4. Equitable Access, Scholarships and Student Financial Support

4.1 Expanding Financial Access to Higher Education

Economic barriers can affect students' ability to access higher education, continue their studies, and achieve their academic potential. The University of Dhaka's scholarship and trust fund programmes provide different forms of financial assistance to students based on academic merit, financial need, research engagement, and other eligibility criteria.

During 2025, several faculties and departments distributed scholarships and stipends through institutional, alumni-supported, and externally financed trust funds.

Among the notable initiatives were:

- **Sumitomo Corporation Scholarship:** On 9 October 2025, ten undergraduate students from the 2022–2023 academic year were selected for annual scholarship stipends. The scholarships are renewable for up to three years, subject to academic performance and conduct.
- **Muhammad Shah Alam Law Scholarship:** On 14 August 2025, 50 underprivileged first-year students of the Department of Law received Tk 10,000 each.
- **Satirtha Forum Trust Fund Scholarship:** On 11 December 2025, six B.S. (Honours) students of the Department of Political Science received grants of Tk 12,000 each.
- **Professor Dr. Golam M. Mathbor Trust Fund:** Six first-year students of the Institute of Social Welfare and Research were selected for ongoing academic stipends.

- **Henna Alam Scholarships:** Ten first-year students of the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management received scholarships.
- **Arabic Department Trust Funds:** Thirty-four students received stipends through the AGM Kutubul Islam Nomani Trust Fund and Khondokar Md. Habibullah Trust Fund.
- **Veteran Freedom Fighter Amena Zaman Memorial Trust Fund:** Eight Physics students received Tk 15,000 each.
- **Alhaj Shamsuddin Hafiz and Taiba Begum Trust Fund:** Two students of Educational Psychology received monthly stipends of Tk 200 for one year.
- **Ashraf Dola Memorial Trust Fund:** Four Pharmacy students received Tk 18,000 each.
- **Rabeya Mobarak Memorial Scholarships:** Students of the Department of Soil, Water and Environment received monthly grants of Tk 500.
- **Professor Dr. S.H. Mahmud Trust Fund:** Eight Psychology students received monthly stipends of Tk 1,000 for one year.
- **Abdul Aziz Chowdhury Scholarships:** Two students of Library and Information Science received monthly stipends of Tk 600 for one year.
- **Dr. Syed Nurul Alam Memorial Scholarships:** Two Biochemistry students received monthly stipends of Tk 1,000 for one year.
- **Dr. Motiur Rahman Memorial Grants:** Five Biochemistry students received financial assistance, with grants of Tk 15,000 for M.S. students and Tk 5,000 for B.S. students.

These programmes demonstrate the role of departmental trust funds, alumni contributions, and external partners in supporting student access and academic continuity.

4.2 Supporting Research and Postgraduate Education

Financial support for postgraduate research contributes to the development of advanced knowledge and strengthens the research capacity of higher education institutions.

On 9 October 2025, the Bilqis-Mahbub Trust Fund provided research grants of Tk 24,000 each to three MPhil research scholars in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology.

On 13 November 2025, the Darul Irfan Research Institute, in collaboration with the Department of World Religions and Culture, distributed a total of **Tk 5.8 lakh in research grants and scholarships to 18 scholars**. The beneficiaries included two PhD researchers, one MPhil researcher, two MA monograph students, and 13 general students. The support was provided through the Syed Delawar Hossain Maizbhandari and Syed Emdadul Haq Maizbhandari Research Funds.

These initiatives support the continuation of postgraduate research and provide financial assistance to scholars at different stages of academic development.

4.3 Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

Inclusive higher education requires institutional mechanisms that address the specific financial and accessibility needs of students with disabilities.

An important initiative was the approval of an annual stipend of **Tk 60,000** for Abdullah Al Naim, a visually impaired first-year student of the Department of Political Science. Approved on 9 October 2025, the assistance is structured as a monthly stipend of Tk 5,000.

The initiative represents a targeted effort to reduce financial barriers for a student with a disability and support continued participation in higher education. It also reflects the relevance of SDG Target 4.5, which calls for equal access to education for vulnerable groups.

4.4 Female Student Scholarships and Recognition

Several initiatives during the reporting period specifically supported female students and recognized their academic and co-curricular achievements.

On 13 November 2025, Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall distributed stipends to **63 female students**, comprising one Gold Medal recipient, 15 merit scholarship recipients, 40 general scholarship recipients, and eight students recognized for co-curricular excellence.

The Hamim Khan Memorial Award in Physics, presented to Falguni Biswas, also recognized outstanding academic performance among graduating female students.

These interventions contributed to the university's broader efforts to promote gender equity and support women's participation and achievement in higher education.

5. Gender Equity, Female Student Accommodation and Student Welfare

5.1 Expanding Female Residential Accommodation

Access to safe and adequate residential facilities is an important consideration for students pursuing higher education, particularly those who relocate from outside Dhaka.

A major development during 2025 was the advancement of the proposed **Bangladesh-China Maitree Hall project**, intended to expand female student accommodation at the University of Dhaka.

The project has an estimated investment of **Tk 244 crore**, financed through Chinese Government grant assistance, and is designed to accommodate approximately **1,500 female residential students**.

Chinese authorities formally confirmed approval of the project on 9 October 2025. On 18 December 2025, Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen, Vice-Chancellor, and DUCSU representatives participated in a joint site inspection.

Physical construction was scheduled to commence in early 2026. Therefore, the project represents an approved and preparatory infrastructure commitment during the 2025 reporting period rather than a completed residential facility.

5.2 Institutional Recognition of Female Student Leadership

On 17 July 2025, the university declared 14 July as **July Female Student Day**, intended to recognize the leadership and contributions of female students during the July uprising. The day was proposed for integration into the university's permanent academic calendar.

This declaration represents institutional recognition of women's participation in student leadership and public life, extending the university's commitment to gender equality beyond access to academic opportunities.

5.3 Hall-Level Welfare and Accessibility Support

Student welfare initiatives also included practical interventions in residential facilities.

On 11 December 2025, Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall received an automated sanitary napkin vending machine provided by the DU Alumni Association. The initiative supports access to menstrual hygiene products within the residential environment. On 13 November 2025, the same hall installed refrigerators across five residential floors, alongside additional refrigerators for administrative and dining facilities. These facilities were intended to improve residents' access to basic storage infrastructure. At Kabi Jasim Uddin Hall, wheelchairs were procured and made available for students who were injured or unwell. The intervention supports mobility and accessibility within the residential environment.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how student welfare infrastructure can contribute to more inclusive and supportive conditions for higher education.

6. Safe, Inclusive and Resilient Learning Environments

6.1 Institutional Safeguarding Against Harassment, Bullying and Ragging

A safe learning environment is fundamental to educational participation, student well-being, and academic performance. In 2025, the University of Dhaka took institutional steps to strengthen its response to sexual harassment, bullying, and ragging.

On 9 October 2025, two university-level oversight committees were established:

1. **Investigation Committee on Sexual Harassment**, chaired by Professor Dr. Upama Kabir, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology.
2. **Anti-Bullying and Anti-Ragging Committee**, chaired by Professor Dr. Shahnaz Huda of the Department of Law.

The university also issued administrative directives requiring Faculty Deans, Hall Provosts, Hostel Wardens, Department Chairpersons, Institute Directors, and the Proctor to install dedicated complaint boxes in their respective units.

The prescribed procedures included weekly collection of complaints and transmission to the relevant committee conveners. Departments were also instructed to organize orientation

sessions and awareness programmes for faculty members and incoming students regarding the legal consequences of ragging and harassment.

These measures were complemented by awareness activities, including the Faculty of Fine Arts' 10 July 2025 campaign under the message *"Ragging is a Punishable Offense."*

The establishment of committees, reporting channels, and awareness requirements represents an important institutional framework for promoting accountability and safer educational spaces.

6.2 Student Support and Administrative Accessibility

Improving access to university services is another component of an inclusive educational environment.

On 14 August 2025, the university's Central Information Center, under the Public Relations Office, introduced a service modernization initiative. The initiative included the integration of two student service coordinators, installation of suggestion boxes, and the introduction of dedicated email and WhatsApp helplines.

The initiative was intended to improve communication and access to administrative services, particularly for students seeking assistance with transcript and certificate processing and other institutional services.

These arrangements contribute to a more responsive administrative environment and provide additional channels through which students can communicate their concerns.

6.3 Earthquake Resilience and Structural Safety

The physical safety of educational facilities is essential for maintaining continuity in teaching, learning, and residential life. Following regional seismic events, the university undertook structural assessments and targeted rehabilitation work across residential halls.

Expert sub-committees from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), in coordination with the DU Engineering Office, conducted structural evaluations of residential halls and developed short-, medium-, and long-term rehabilitation plans.

By 11 December 2025, documented repair progress included:

- **Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall:** 112 of 175 student rooms had been fully repaired. Additional ferro-cement plastering was underway across rooms, balcony ceilings, drop walls, parapet walls, bathrooms, mosque areas, dining roofs, and reading room ceilings.
- **Surja Sen Hall:** 96 of 141 student rooms had been fully repaired across several floors, alongside work on balcony and corridor ceilings, canteens, and washrooms.
- **Muktijoddha Ziaur Rahman Hall:** Thirteen rooms had been repaired, seven rooms had been fully painted, and ferro-cement casting had been completed across 32 rooms on the fourth floor, in addition to rehabilitation work in other common areas.

These interventions represent important steps towards improving the structural safety and resilience of residential facilities.

6.4 Campus Infrastructure Development

The university also secured approval for a major infrastructure development initiative. On 20 November 2025, the Ministry of Education approved an initial Annual Development Program allocation of **Tk 60 crore** for the DU Further Development Project, which has an estimated total cost of **Tk 2,841 crore** and an implementation period of 2025–2030.

The project's proposed scope includes:

- Six multi-storey academic buildings.
- Four female residential halls with a planned capacity of 2,600 students.
- Five male residential halls with a planned capacity of 5,100 students.
- Residential quarters for house tutors across nine halls.
- Two residential towers for teachers and officers.
- Five administrative and utility facilities.
- Renovation and beautification of four water bodies.
- Service-line improvements, one sports field, and two public toilets.
- Campus-wide drainage and waste management systems.

The project has the potential to address infrastructure constraints, improve the learning environment, and expand residential capacity. However, the proposed facilities should be treated as planned development outputs until their construction and operational status can be verified.

7. Skills Development, Employability and Digital Competencies

7.1 Professional Communication Skills Programme

Preparing graduates for employment requires more than disciplinary knowledge. Communication, collaboration, presentation, digital interaction, and problem-solving competencies are also important for successful participation in the professional environment.

To address these needs, the Industry Collaboration and Employment Committee (ICEC), in partnership with the Student Promotion and Support Unit (SPSU) and IQAC, introduced a specialized certificate course titled **Effective Professional Communication**.

The programme was structurally rolled out on 13 November and formally inaugurated on 20 November 2025. Its first batch enrolled **50 selected students** from fourth-year undergraduate and Master's-level programmes across academic departments.

The curriculum includes:

- Professional oral and written communication.
- Digital platform interactions.
- Corporate email etiquette.

- CV and résumé preparation.
- Cover letter drafting.
- Public presentation techniques.
- Group collaboration.
- Structured problem-solving.

The course represents a direct institutional contribution to SDG Target 4.4 by linking higher education with practical skills required for employment and professional development.

7.2 Student Skill Development and Career-Oriented Learning

The consolidated activity record also identifies a student skill development and capacity-building workshop organized by the DU Research Society on 17 July 2025. Such activities provide opportunities for students to develop competencies beyond conventional classroom instruction.

On 11 December 2025, the Department of Information Science and Library Management organized a career-oriented guest lecture featuring former American Library Association President Professor Emily Drabinski. The event focused on future career opportunities in the Library and Information Science field.

Additionally, the International Library Conference on AI Technologies in Librarianship, recorded on 18 December 2025, provided another platform for discussing the relationship between emerging technologies and professional practice.

These activities demonstrate the importance of connecting academic learning with changing professional requirements and technological developments.

7.3 Innovation, Artificial Intelligence and Technological Skills

The university's academic activities also addressed the growing importance of artificial intelligence and technological innovation.

The consolidated activity record identifies **VisionX: AI-Powered National Innovation Challenge**, organized by the Department of Computer Science and Engineering on 20 November 2025. The initiative was aligned with the development of technological and innovation-related competencies.

The university also hosted lectures and seminars addressing artificial intelligence in education, healthcare, and information services. These included the Kansai University lecture on *"Learning Assessment in the Age of AI"* on 14 August, and international lectures on AI and machine learning in biomedicine and strategies for coexisting with AI in December.

Collectively, these activities contributed to discussions on digital transformation, emerging technologies, and the competencies required for future academic and professional environments.

8. International Academic Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange

8.1 Strengthening International University Partnerships

International academic cooperation contributes to higher education quality through faculty and student mobility, joint research, knowledge exchange, and exposure to international academic practices.

During 2025, the University of Dhaka engaged with several international universities and development partners to explore opportunities for academic collaboration.

Notable engagements included:

- **Peking University, China (14 August 2025):** The Vice-Chancellor met with the university's Vice-President to discuss potential collaboration in science, technology, environmental studies, language, and culture. Discussions included possible faculty, student, and cultural exchange arrangements, alongside academic lectures by Professor Wu Jiewei and Professor Dr. Wang Yu.
- **Kansai University, Japan (14 August 2025):** The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) met with Emeritus Professors to explore student and faculty exchange opportunities. The visit also included a lecture at the Institute of Education and Research titled *"Learning Assessment in the Age of AI."*
- **North Eastern Hill University, India (17 July 2025):** The Vice-Chancellor met with Professor Dr. Moses Naga, reaching a consensus to pursue a Memorandum of Understanding for reciprocal mobility involving researchers, faculty members, and students.
- **Central Queensland University, Australia (18 December 2025):** Discussions with Professor Dr. Olav Muurlink covered potential joint research programmes on coastal disaster management and early childhood education, as well as professional training workshops for early-career faculty.
- **British Council (18 December 2025):** Discussions addressed possible joint research ventures, international co-publishing in peer-reviewed journals, and faculty capacity-building initiatives.

These engagements indicate the university's efforts to strengthen its international academic network and explore opportunities for collaborative research and institutional development.

8.2 International Development and Technical Cooperation

The university also engaged with international development organizations and diplomatic missions to explore technical capacity-building and academic cooperation.

On 17 July 2025, university representatives held strategic discussions with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) regarding potential capacity-building projects for young scholars. The proposed areas included artificial intelligence, renewable energy, financial technology, environmental engineering, and climate science.

On 9 October 2025, representatives of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) met with university leadership to discuss the possible establishment of an ISESCO Chair at the University of Dhaka.

Other engagements included:

- Discussions with the Pakistan High Commission on 10 July 2025 regarding higher education cooperation, Bengali language diploma courses for foreign diplomats, and expansion of the computer laboratory previously established in the Department of Urdu.
- Discussions with the Italian Embassy on 18 September 2025 concerning the expansion of Italian language programmes at the Institute of Modern Languages and the recruitment of native Italian instructors.

These engagements provide opportunities for future institutional cooperation, specialized academic development, and international knowledge exchange.

8.3 International Lectures and Academic Capacity Building

Hosting international scholars and academic leaders provides students and faculty members with access to specialized knowledge and diverse academic perspectives.

On 18 December 2025, Professor Dr. Javed Mostafa, Dean of the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto, delivered an IQAC lecture titled *"AI and Machine-Learning Approaches for Improving Biomedicine and Healthcare."*

On the same date, Professor Dr. Sam Oh of Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea, delivered a lecture at the Department of Information Science and Library Management titled *"Toward Beneficial AI: Strategies for Coexisting with AI."*

These lectures provided opportunities to engage with contemporary developments in artificial intelligence and their implications for research, professional practice, and society.

9. Research, Conferences and Interdisciplinary Knowledge Dissemination

9.1 Interdisciplinary Research and Academic Conferences

The University of Dhaka's contribution to quality education also includes facilitating academic dialogue, research dissemination, and interdisciplinary knowledge exchange.

On 13 November 2025, the Department of Urdu organized a two-day international conference titled *"Awakening Philosophy in Iqbal and Nazrul's Philosophy."* The conference brought together scholars from 18 countries and featured 18 academic sessions with **133 research papers**.

On 11 December 2025, the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought, in collaboration with the Department of World Religions and Culture, the International Institute of Islamic Thought, and the Fairfax Institute, organized a four-day Winter School on Islamic Thought. The programme

brought together **70 scholars and students from 30 public and private universities** across Bangladesh, providing a platform for interdisciplinary academic exchange.

The Department of International Relations also organized two research seminars on 11 December 2025 under the UGC Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation (HEAT) Project. The seminars addressed Bangladesh's foreign policy responses to globalization-related challenges in national security, climate change, and labour migration.

9.2 Scientific Research and Specialized Academic Seminars

Several faculties, departments, and institutes organized research-oriented events and technical seminars during the year.

Examples included:

- A seminar on Microbial Fuel Cell Technology organized by the Energy Institute on 10 July 2025.
- A technical seminar on SCAPS-1D solar cell technology on 14 August 2025.
- International Microorganism Day 2025, organized by the Department of Microbiology in collaboration with the Bangladesh Society of Microbiologists and icddr,b on 18 September 2025.
- A High-Resolution Mass Spectrometry seminar at the Centre for Advanced Research in Sciences (CARS) on 13 November 2025.
- A knowledge dissemination workshop on the 16-year journey of EnDev, organized by the Institute of Energy on 13 November 2025.
- A specialized symposium on healthcare and material science, organized by the Faculties of Pharmacy and Engineering and Technology on 18 September 2025, focusing on strengthening industry-academia partnerships.

These events supported the exchange of research findings, exposure to emerging scientific and technological developments, and engagement between academic institutions and external stakeholders.

9.3 Industry-Academia Collaboration

Connecting university education with industry is important for improving the relevance of academic programmes and preparing graduates for employment.

The healthcare and material science symposium held on 18 September 2025 represented an example of this approach. By bringing together academic faculties and pharmaceutical industry stakeholders, the event provided a platform for discussing collaboration between research institutions and industry.

Such engagements can contribute to identifying research priorities, strengthening professional competencies, and developing pathways for translating academic research into practical applications.

10. Education for Sustainable Development, Global Citizenship and Environmental Responsibility

SDG Target 4.7 emphasizes the importance of education that promotes sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity.

During 2025, several University of Dhaka activities reflected these dimensions.

10.1 Environmental Awareness and Sustainable Campus Practices

On 11 December 2025, the university's Arboriculture Center, DUCSU, Green Future Foundation, and Environment Parliament organized a campaign at Mall Chatwar under the banner **"Stop Burning Fallen Leaves."** The initiative promoted alternatives to burning fallen leaves and aimed to reduce smoke and pollution on campus.

Kabi Jasim Uddin Hall also introduced a leaf collection programme through which fallen organic matter was collected and converted into compost for campus plants.

On 18 December 2025, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change presented a special honour to the Vice-Chancellor in recognition of the university's institutional prohibition of fireworks, firecrackers, and sky lanterns during December celebrations. The recognition highlighted the university's contribution to reducing air and noise pollution and protecting campus wildlife.

These initiatives illustrate how environmental management activities can also serve as practical learning opportunities and reinforce environmental responsibility within the university community.

10.2 Cultural Diversity and International Understanding

The university's international academic and cultural activities also contributed to the promotion of intercultural understanding and global citizenship.

The International Conference on Iqbal and Nazrul, which involved scholars from 18 countries, provided an international platform for discussing cultural and philosophical traditions.

The Winter School on Islamic Thought brought together participants from 30 universities, creating opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange of perspectives.

Engagements with international universities and diplomatic missions, as well as language-related initiatives involving Italian, Urdu, and Bengali, further reflected the university's role in promoting cultural exchange and international understanding.

10.3 Civic Engagement and Democratic Participation

The university's 2025 activity record also includes the DUCSU and Hall Union elections held in September 2025. The consolidated activity record notes the election process on 9 September, involving eight centres and 810 booths, followed by town hall debates on 11 September.

These activities provide opportunities for student participation in representative processes, debate, leadership development, and democratic engagement.

The record also identifies a humanitarian contribution by the Masters of Professional Banking Alumni Association under the Department of Banking and Insurance. On 13 November 2025, the association handed over financial assistance to the Palestinian Ambassador in Dhaka to support war-affected children in Gaza.

These activities demonstrate how higher education institutions can contribute to civic awareness, international solidarity, and a broader understanding of social responsibility.

11. Consolidated SDG 4 Progress and Institutional Contributions

The initiatives documented during 2025 demonstrate the University of Dhaka's contributions across multiple dimensions of quality education.

SDG 4 Target	Major documented contributions during 2025
Target 4.3 – Access to quality tertiary education	National IQAC Conference; academic awards; research recognition; international academic lectures; interdisciplinary conferences; international university engagements.
Target 4.4 – Skills for employment and entrepreneurship	Effective Professional Communication certificate course for 50 students; student skill development activities; AI and technology-focused seminars; industry-academia symposium; career-oriented guest lectures.
Target 4.5 – Gender equality and inclusion	Female student scholarships; support for a visually impaired student; female residential accommodation project preparation; sanitary napkin vending machine; recognition of female student leadership.
Target 4.7 – Education for sustainable development and global citizenship	Environmental awareness and composting initiatives; cultural and international academic conferences; civic engagement activities; humanitarian assistance; international knowledge exchange.
Target 4.a – Safe and inclusive learning environments	Anti-harassment and anti-ragging committees; complaint box directives; student service helplines; earthquake-related structural rehabilitation; accessibility and residential welfare interventions.
Target 4.b – Scholarships for higher education	Sumitomo Corporation Scholarship; departmental trust fund stipends; merit and need-based awards; postgraduate research grants; disability-related financial assistance.

Target 4.c – Qualified educators and international cooperation	International academic engagements; JICA capacity-building discussions; British Council collaboration discussions; international guest lectures; research and faculty development exchanges.

11.1 Selected Quantitative Highlights

The following figures represent selected documented outputs rather than a complete institutional count of all SDG 4 activities during 2025.

Area	Selected documented achievement
International university ranking	801–1000 band in THE World University Rankings 2026; 52nd globally in THE Interdisciplinary Science Rankings 2026
Academic recognition	76 students recognized by the Faculty of Science
Research incentives	38 Faculty of Science academics received Q1/Q2 publication incentives
Professional skills development	50 students enrolled in the first batch of Effective Professional Communication
Departmental scholarships	84 scholarships distributed during the Department of Islamic History and Culture's 75th anniversary
Female student support	63 female students received stipends from Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall
Disability inclusion	Annual stipend of Tk 60,000 approved for a visually impaired student
Postgraduate research support	Tk 5.8 lakh in grants and scholarships distributed to 18 scholars through Darul Irfan Research Institute
International academic exchange	Winter School involving 70 scholars and students from 30 universities
International research dissemination	Iqbal and Nazrul conference involving scholars from 18 countries and 133 research papers
Residential infrastructure	Bangladesh-China Maitree Hall project designed for 1,500 female students
Campus development	DU Further Development Project estimated at Tk 2,841 crore, with an initial ADP allocation of Tk 60 crore

These figures highlight the scale and diversity of the documented interventions. They should not be interpreted as a comprehensive count of all beneficiaries, scholarships, academic events, or infrastructure improvements undertaken by the university.

12. Institutional Impact on SDG 4

University of Dhaka's contribution to SDG 4 during 2025 extended across academic quality, equitable access, professional skills, research capacity, student welfare, and institutional development.

First, the university strengthened its academic quality assurance environment through the National IQAC Conference, faculty-level recognition programmes, research incentives, and

international ranking achievements. These initiatives support institutional benchmarking and encourage continuous improvement in teaching and research.

Second, the university continued to use scholarships, trust funds, and targeted financial assistance to address economic barriers to higher education. Support for female students and a visually impaired student further demonstrates the importance of targeted inclusion mechanisms.

Third, the introduction of professional communication training and the organization of technology-oriented seminars indicate an effort to connect academic learning with emerging employment requirements. These initiatives are particularly relevant as graduate employability increasingly depends on communication, digital, analytical, and problem-solving competencies.

Fourth, the establishment of safeguarding committees and complaint mechanisms represents an important step towards strengthening institutional accountability and student protection. Structural rehabilitation and planned campus development also demonstrate recognition of the relationship between physical infrastructure, safety, and educational quality.

Finally, international academic engagements and interdisciplinary conferences expanded opportunities for knowledge exchange and research collaboration. Such activities can strengthen the university's academic network and contribute to its long-term research and teaching capacity.

13. Conclusion

The University of Dhaka's documented activities during 2025 demonstrate a broad institutional contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 4. Through academic quality assurance, recognition of research and academic excellence, financial assistance, professional skills development, international cooperation, and investment in safer and more inclusive learning environments, the university continued to advance important dimensions of quality higher education.

The expansion of scholarship opportunities, targeted assistance for disadvantaged students, recognition of female student achievement, and proposed residential infrastructure demonstrate the importance placed on equitable access. Meanwhile, institutional safeguarding mechanisms, structural rehabilitation, and student service improvements reflect efforts to strengthen the conditions in which education takes place.

The university's international academic engagements, interdisciplinary research platforms, and achievements in global rankings further highlight its ambition to strengthen its academic and research standing.

Moving forward, the central priority should be to translate these institutional initiatives into measurable improvements in educational access, learning quality, student progression, employability, research performance, and inclusion. A more systematic monitoring and reporting framework will be essential to assess progress, identify gaps, and ensure that the university's commitment to quality education produces sustainable benefits for its students and the wider society.

Through continued investment in academic excellence, equitable opportunities, student welfare, and international knowledge exchange, the University of Dhaka can further strengthen its role in advancing SDG 4 and contributing to the broader sustainable development agenda.