جامعة بيروت العربية
BEIRUT ARAB UNIVERSITY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS







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Beirut Arab University
SDG 2 Zero Hunger

University and Community Alignment Report | Lebanon

Evidence review updated 19 October 2026

Understanding the goal

SDG 2 brings together access to sufficient food, improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture. A university can contribute through professional nutrition education, food-safety research, community assessment and agricultural innovation. Targets 2.1 and 2.2 concern food access and malnutrition; targets 2.3 and 2.4 concern productive, sustainable food systems. These dimensions are connected, but education about healthy eating does not by itself demonstrate that food insecurity has been eliminated.

Evidence: United Nations SDG 2 targets

BAU's contribution

BAU's strongest documented contribution combines Nutrition and Dietetics teaching, a clinical nutrition service, supervised community activities and research into food quality and sustainable production. Its work reaches children in care, nursery professionals and international learners. Staff and student research also explores locally relevant plants and digital crop management, providing a basis for improving food systems beyond the campus.

Relevant UN targets	Focus of this report
2.1 and 2.2	Nutrition assessment and safe food education
2.3	Skills and research supporting agricultural livelihoods
2.4	Resource-efficient production and dietary diversity

Students staff and community

Students develop nutrition, food-safety and agricultural knowledge through study and supervised projects. Academic staff lead teaching, clinical learning and research. Technical and administrative employees support laboratories, appointments and outreach. Community care organisations and professional partners provide practical settings in which food and nutrition knowledge can be applied.

Evidence approach: dated activities and research from 2021–2026 are prioritised. Standing services are identified as such; policies and agreements have no date cutoff. Original links accompany the evidence. The final page proposes improvements and does not claim they are already implemented.

Nutrition learning and services within the university

Preparing nutrition professionals

BAU offers a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics. The programme provides a formal route for students to develop professional knowledge in human nutrition and dietetics. Its value for SDG 2 lies in preparing graduates who can assess nutritional needs and support appropriate care in clinical and community settings.

Evidence: BAU Nutrition and Dietetics degree

Food security involves more than supplying calories. Food must be suitable, safe and accessible, and people may require support to use it effectively. A university nutrition programme can help connect these concerns through supervised assessment and communication. Students should learn to consider affordability and cultural preferences when proposing dietary changes, especially when working with households or organisations with limited budgets.

A clinical platform for learning and assessment

BAU's Clinic for Nutritional and Weight Management publishes metabolic and nutritional assessment, lifestyle support and dietary guidance for chronic conditions. It also provides supervised practical experience for Nutrition and Dietetics students and a setting for clinical research. Its fee conditions should be distinguished from activities explicitly described as free.

Evidence: BAU Clinic for Nutritional and Weight Management

This creates a relationship between teaching and service: a patient receives professional attention while a student learns to assess needs under supervision. The educational contribution becomes stronger when cases consider undernutrition, dietary quality and food affordability alongside weight-related conditions. Different nutritional problems require different responses, and a general wellness activity should not be presented as a hunger-relief programme.

Food safety is part of the academic capacity

The Food Microbiology course covers foodborne pathogens, preservation, spoilage, fermentation and methods for detecting microorganisms. The Food Manufacturing course examines processing, hygienic design, cleaning, good manufacturing practices and storage and distribution. These are directly relevant to keeping food safe along the production chain.

Evidence: BAU Food Microbiology course | BAU Food Manufacturing course

Academic staff provide the scientific and supervisory expertise; students can apply it in laboratories and placements. Administrative and laboratory teams support the conditions for safe practical work. This division of responsibilities helps turn a broad sustainability goal into skills that can be used in food businesses, healthcare and community organisations.

Community nutrition and professional outreach

Children in care and nutrition education

BAU Nutrition and Dietetics students assessed growth patterns and developed menus at Dar Al-Zahraa orphanage in April 2024. The activity applied professional knowledge to children's daily food provision and included dietary education for technical institute students.

Evidence: BAU nutritional assessment at Dar Al Zahraa

For an organisation caring for children, a useful contribution includes menus that can actually be prepared with available resources, a way to identify children needing further assessment and a follow-up arrangement. These considerations explain why a supervised community activity can support SDG 2 without being a food-distribution campaign. Recording whether the organisation used the menus would strengthen the evidence of practical change.

Healthy Starts for nursery professionals in 2025

On 10 November 2025, BAU's Nutrition and Dietetics and Nursing departments organised Healthy Starts with the Syndicate of Nursery Owners. Representatives from more than 250 nurseries attended. Sessions addressed nutrition, safe preparation and storage, children's health monitoring and care practices. The reported figure concerns nurseries represented, rather than a verified total of individual participants.

Evidence: BAU Healthy Starts childcare nutrition day

Working through childcare providers can extend university knowledge to many families. The route is indirect: BAU trains or informs professionals, who can then improve their own practice. To demonstrate that wider effect, follow-up could ask what procedures changed, which staff received further training and whether the information was understandable and usable.

Sharing sustainable dietary knowledge internationally

On 8 April 2022, BAU's Leila Itani delivered Sustainable Healthy Dietary Patterns as part of the University of Pavia's SDG course series. The contribution linked nutrition, lifestyle and wellbeing with sustainable diets, taking BAU expertise to an international education setting.

Evidence: BAU sustainable dietary patterns contribution in 2022

The community contribution is therefore educational and service-based as well as agricultural. Students translate scientific concepts into menus and explanations, staff ensure accuracy, and external organisations identify practical needs. This approach can be strengthened through continuity and evaluation of changed practices rather than attendance figures alone.

Research supporting nutrition and sustainable production

Understanding nutritional vulnerability

A 2024 Nutrients study with a BAU-affiliated coauthor examined low vitamin B12 levels and inadequate dietary intake among Lebanese adults in a food-insecurity context. The study connects nutritional assessment with access to animal-based foods. Its cross-sectional findings support identification of a nutritional concern; they do not establish that a BAU intervention changed population nutrition.

Evidence: Original 2024 Lebanese vitamin B12 and food insecurity study

Local food knowledge and dietary diversity

Research led by BAU's Safaa Baydoun, published online in January 2023 in a 2022 Frontiers volume, examined wild leafy vegetables used in Lebanese food traditions. Partners included the Shouf Biosphere Reserve and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The study documents a resource relevant to dietary diversity and sustainable food systems, while identifying further nutritional and safety research needs.

Evidence: BAU led wild leafy vegetables and traditional food study

Local food knowledge can inform education about diversity and conservation, provided that traditional use is not treated as proof of safety for every person or preparation. The research contribution is the documentation and examination of knowledge. Turning it into a food recommendation or production programme requires appropriate scientific and practical assessment.

Students develop an agricultural technology concept

CropSync, published in 2024 by a BAU engineering lecturer and student coauthors, combines AI, sensors and crop information to support precision agriculture. The paper describes crop-recommendation and disease-detection models. It presents a technological development directed at efficient resource use; measured gains on farms require field validation.

Evidence: BAU staff and student CropSync research published 2024

The RCED project directory also describes the herbal garden as an educational and research resource and sets out objectives for oregano cultivation and beekeeping. Current facility descriptions and project objectives should be read according to their stated status, without turning proposed areas or hive numbers into confirmed annual production.

Evidence: BAU RCED project and herbal garden directory

These examples connect food science, community knowledge and engineering. They give BAU opportunities to work with producers and food-service organisations on specific problems. The most useful translation would pair a scientific output with a testable application, such as a safer process, an appropriate menu or a resource-efficient cultivation method.

Priorities for strengthening the contribution to SDG 2

BAU can build on its nutrition and food-science capacity by connecting student wellbeing, community partnerships and research applications. The following priorities are recommendations that would help demonstrate whether activities improve access to safe, suitable food and sustained nutritional support.

Assess needs before selecting the response

A confidential student food-needs assessment could identify difficulties with meal access, dietary quality and the cost of appropriate food. The response should follow the findings: referral to financial support, practical nutrition advice or a carefully designed meal-support arrangement may serve different needs. Screening should protect privacy and avoid making participation a public label of disadvantage.

Area	Suggested evidence of progress
Student nutrition	Food-needs assessment and completed support referrals
Community care	Use of reviewed menus and follow-up assessments
Food safety	Provider practice changes after training
Agricultural research	Independent field tests and producer feedback

Follow professional outreach through to practice

Nursery education could be supported by concise checklists, accessible teaching materials and a later assessment of food-handling practices. Community placements could agree objectives with the host organisation at the start and report whether those objectives were met. Children’s health data should remain confidential and be used only within appropriate care and research arrangements.

For research, BAU could prioritise joint trials with food businesses, care organisations or farmers. A project should document what was tested, under what conditions and with what limitations. A promising laboratory result or digital model becomes more useful when its costs, maintenance requirements and suitability for local users are understood.

The university’s contribution to Zero Hunger is strongest when scientific learning improves real decisions about food and nutrition. Its documented teaching, community assessment and research already provide several routes. Evidence of continuing access, safer practice and effective application would make the connection with SDG 2 clearer and more measurable.