



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS • UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL

2

Zero Hunger

2



ZERO HUNGER

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition — and promote sustainable agriculture across our community.

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*Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger · Evidence Submission,
Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2026.*

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2.1 University commitment to Zero Hunger

How is Shatt Al-Arab University working to end hunger, secure access to nutritious food, and promote sustainable agriculture?

How Shatt Al-Arab University delivers SDG 2

A four-step approach



Figure 1. A four-step delivery approach.

SDG 2 framework at Shatt Al-Arab University

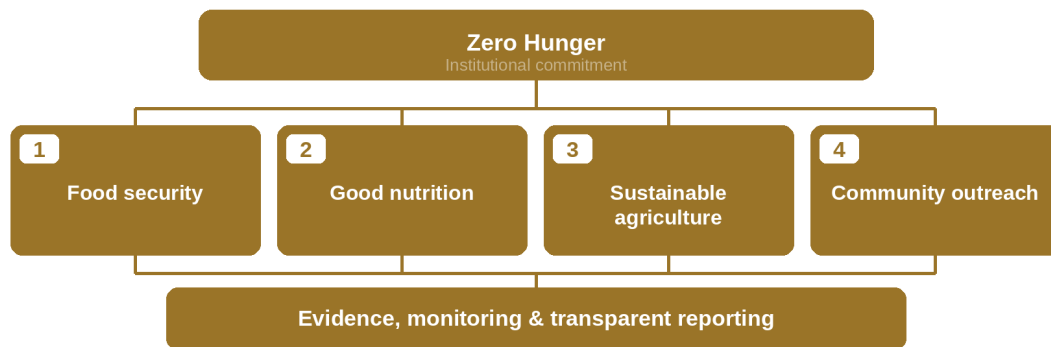


Figure 2. Institutional framework and reporting.

Shatt Al-Arab University College treats Zero Hunger as a shared institutional responsibility that runs through teaching, research, and direct community service. On 5 October 2022 the College opened this work to educators with a workshop titled “Building the Zero Hunger Generation: Resources for Educators”, which examined what it would take to drive the number of hungry people towards zero and translated Sustainable Development Goal 2 into practical action for the classroom and the campus.

The workshop framed the mission around four connected pillars — food security, good nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and the eradication of poverty. The sections that follow set out how the College has acted on each of them.

2.1.1 Food security and good nutrition

Food security begins with reliable, daily access to healthy food, distributed fairly so that no member of the community is left hungry. Alongside availability, the College places equal weight on good nutrition: ensuring that people receive the nutrients a healthy life requires, while encouraging responsible, environmentally conscious eating habits that narrow the gap between those who consume more than they need and those who go without.

2.1.2 Sustainable agriculture

Producing enough food without exhausting the natural world depends on the sustainable use of fields, forests, oceans, and other resources, managed in ways that protect ecosystems and sustain both human and animal life. The College has put this principle into practice on its own grounds, treating the campus as a working example of environmentally responsible cultivation through the following steps:

- It invested IQD 2,010,000 in a range of plant seedlings and flowers to expand the cultivated green areas across the campus.
- It signed a formal contract with an agricultural-services office, allocating IQD 4,800,000 to develop and maintain the university's green spaces.

2.1.3 Tackling poverty as a driver of hunger

Poverty remains one of the principal causes of malnutrition, even where food is physically available. When families cannot afford a healthy diet,

they become far more vulnerable to illness, and a healthy life proves inseparable from social and economic progress.

Acting on this link, Shatt Al-Arab University established the “Poor Family Fund” to provide tuition reductions and full waivers for low-income students, and contributed IQD 5,000,000 to a youth-entrepreneurship project that helps young people launch small businesses and strengthen the local economy. Between 2022 and 2025, a total of 874 students received tuition reductions on grounds of financial hardship, distributed by academic year and stage as shown below.

Study Stage	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	Total
First Stage	22	243	245	510
Second Stage	10	35	226	271
Third Stage	2	12	28	42
Fourth Stage	—	2	49	51
Total	34	292	548	874

The College has also worked with humanitarian NGOs to channel support to families living below the poverty line, extending the reach of this assistance well beyond the campus.





2.2 Ending all forms of malnutrition

Target 2.2 — ending every form of malnutrition, with particular attention to children, pregnant women, and other vulnerable groups.

Ending hunger is among the foremost global commitments pursued by the United Nations through the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 2 sets out to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture, while Target 2.2 focuses specifically on eliminating every form of malnutrition among the most vulnerable groups, especially children and pregnant women.

The target calls for everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. It places particular emphasis on reducing stunting and wasting in children under five and on correcting deficiencies in essential nutrients. It also points to the need to strengthen food systems and raise nutritional awareness and education, helping to build healthier, more sustainable societies that meet today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

2.2.1 Causes of stunting and wasting

Stunting and wasting are two of the clearest signs of malnutrition. Although their causes frequently overlap, each has its own distinct drivers.

Stunting — impaired growth and low height for age caused by chronic malnutrition — is commonly linked to:

- prolonged inadequate nutrition, especially shortages of protein and essential nutrients such as iron and zinc;
- poor maternal nutrition during pregnancy, which affects the developing fetus;
- inadequate or improper breastfeeding practices;
- repeated infections such as diarrhoea and other illnesses;
- poverty and a lack of dietary diversity;
- weak healthcare and poor sanitation.

Wasting — low weight for height caused by acute malnutrition — tends to stem from:

- a sudden or severe drop in food intake;
- acute illnesses, particularly diarrhoea and infections;
- loss of appetite during illness;
- emergencies and crises such as conflict or extreme poverty.

Several factors feed both conditions at once: limited nutritional awareness within families, restricted access to healthcare, the absence of clean water and proper sanitation, and the instability that accompanies poverty.

2.2.2 An integrated response to malnutrition

Reducing stunting and wasting calls for sustained, coordinated action rather than isolated, one-off measures. No single intervention is sufficient; progress depends on a set of complementary steps that work together across several levels.

At the nutritional level:

- providing a balanced diet that includes protein (eggs, milk, and legumes), vitamins, and minerals;

- supporting exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, followed by appropriate complementary foods;
- supplying nutritional supplements, such as iron and vitamin A, where they are needed.

At the healthcare level:

- ensuring routine vaccination to protect children from disease;
- treating diarrhoea and infections promptly, since they accelerate weight loss;
- monitoring children's growth regularly at health centres.

At the environmental level:

- providing clean, safe drinking water;
- improving hygiene and sanitation systems to prevent disease.

At the family and maternal level:

- ensuring sound maternal nutrition during pregnancy;
- raising awareness of how to prepare healthy meals for children;
- spacing pregnancies to allow proper child development.

At the community and national level:

- supporting food-security programmes within the Sustainable Development Goals;
- improving access to healthcare and education services;
- reducing poverty and keeping nutritious food affordable.

2.3 The university's role and initiatives

Because it brings together education, research, and community service, Shatt Al-Arab University College is well placed to act against malnutrition in Basra. The initiatives below turn that position into practical, continuing programmes rather than single events.

2.3.1 Community programmes and initiatives

- 1. Community awareness programmes** — awareness campaigns in schools and kindergartens on healthy nutrition, together with

workshops for mothers on breastfeeding and on preparing low-cost healthy meals, with health students taking part as part of their practical training.

2. **Free clinics and screening** — free medical days that measure children’s weight, height, and growth indicators, detect stunting and wasting early, and offer nutritional counselling to families.
3. **Research and field studies** — surveys across Basra to gauge how widespread the problem is, studies of local causes such as poverty, dietary habits, and low awareness, and the publication of findings to inform policymakers.
4. **Food-support initiatives** — campaigns such as “A Healthy Meal for Every Child”, the distribution of food baskets and simple school meals, and collaboration with organisations such as UNICEF and local institutions.
5. **Student training through service learning** — service-learning placements that train nursing, pharmacy, and nutrition students to assess nutritional status and deliver real, community-based health education.
6. **Digital awareness campaigns** — educational content on platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, including short videos on child nutrition and the common mistakes that lead to malnutrition.
7. **Local partnerships** — sustained collaboration with schools, health centres, and civil-society organisations to advance Sustainable Development Goal 2.



2.3.2 A university centre for nutrition and child health

Building on these activities, the College proposes a dedicated “University Centre for Nutrition and Child Health” that would bring screening, awareness, research, and training together under one roof, giving the university’s contribution to Zero Hunger a permanent institutional home.

2.4 Nutrition across vulnerable life stages

Meeting nutritional needs is not limited to young children. Several groups passing through critical life stages — adolescents, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and the elderly — are especially exposed to malnutrition and its serious health consequences.

For adolescents, good nutrition underpins physical and mental development and helps prevent anaemia and micronutrient deficiencies, laying the foundation for healthy adulthood and, in time, for maternal health. Pregnant women need a balanced diet rich in vitamins and minerals such as iron and folic acid to support fetal development and lower the risk of preterm birth or low birth weight. Breastfeeding mothers require adequate nutrition to maintain the quality of breast milk and to meet their infant’s needs during the first months of life.

Elderly people face different challenges, including reduced appetite and impaired nutrient absorption, which leave them vulnerable to malnutrition; they benefit from nutrient-dense, easily digestible meals that help preserve their health and independence. Providing integrated nutritional education and healthcare for all of these groups improves quality of life and reduces nutrition-related illness, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals' vision of a healthy and sustainable society.

Research contributions (Scopus-indexed publications)

Shatt Al-Arab University's research is indexed in Scopus and mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by Elsevier - the same data source the THE Impact Rankings use for their research metric. The university currently records 179 documents from 59 authors (Scopus ID 60109790; last updated May 2026). The chart below shows how this output is distributed across the goals.



Figure. Scopus-indexed publications by SDG (data source: Scopus).

The following publications are mapped to SDG 2 in the Elsevier/Scopus SDG dataset (2 documents):

#	Publication title	Source & year
1	Optimising soybean seed classification through ensemble deep learning: a novel computational approach Nemer, Z.N., Jiyad, M.A., Abdulsamad, A.M., Harfash, E.J.	African Journal of Applied Research, 2026

#	Publication title	Source & year
2	Intelligent drone-based IoT technology for smart agriculture system <i>Al-Shareeda, M.A., Manickam, S., Saare, M.A.</i>	Int. Conf. on Data Science and Intelligent Computing (ICDSIC), 2022