



SUSTAINABILITY 2023-2024

COMMUNICATION ON
ENGAGEMENT (COE)





8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

RESEARCH ABOUT SDG8

Over the past two years, researchers have published significant studies that align with Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. These studies include investigations into the water-energy nexus in Lebanon, bioethanol production, and environmental risks of natural water sources, which contribute to sustainable economic practices. Research on the interconnectedness of cryptocurrency and FinTech and factors influencing cryptocurrency adoption supports economic growth and innovation. Social and economic studies on rural women's entrepreneurship, employee retention in the hospitality sector, and the economic impact of tourism highlight efforts to create a productive employment opportunities. Additionally, studies on UAVs in smart agriculture, resource sharing in Lebanese libraries, the impact of green roofs on urban runoff, sustainability of cracked concrete, service life prediction for reinforced concrete, and presenteeism management in Lebanese organizations contribute to sustainable infrastructure and decent work environments.

1. Assaf, A., Demir, E., & Mokni, K. (2024). **Exploring connectedness among cryptocurrency, technology communication, and FinTech through dynamic and fractal analysis.** Finance Research Letters.
2. Assaf, J.C., Mortada, Z., Rezzoug, S.A., Debs, E., & Louka, N. (2024). **Comparative Review on the Production and Purification of Bioethanol from Biomass: A Focus on Corn.** Processes. Open access.
3. Bassil, C., Harb, G., & Al Daia, R. (2023). **The economic impact of tourism at regional level: A systematic literature review.** Tourism Review International.
4. Chalhoub, C., & Farah, I. (2024). **Resource sharing in Lebanese libraries in times of unprecedented disruptions.** Information Discovery and Delivery.
5. El-Chaarani, H., El-Abiad, Z., El Nemar, S., & Sakka, G. (2024). **Factors affecting the adoption of cryptocurrencies for financial transactions.** EuroMed Journal of Business.
6. Fayssal, N., Al Tawil, L., Danageuzian, H.R., Dargham, S.A., & Romanos, J. (2024). **Navigating the water-energy nexus amidst the Lebanese economic crisis.** Aqua Water Infrastructure, Ecosystems and Society. Open access.
7. Frangieh, C., Saba, M., Karmaoui, D., & Lafhaj, Z. (2023). **Sustainability and durability of cracked concrete with geopolymers binder.** In E3S Web of Conferences. Open access.

8. Karam, K., Mansour, A., Khaldi, M.R., Clement, B., & Ammad, M. (2024). **A Survey for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Smart Agriculture: Types and Modelling Perspectives.** In IEEE Advanced Information Technology, Electronic and Automation Control Conference (IAEAC).
9. Khatib, M., Hleihel, J., Arai, W., Skienhe, H., & Mortada, H. (2024). **Evaluating the environmental risks of natural water sources in the Alkalaa municipal community area - South Lebanon.** Water Supply. Open access.
10. Kuran, O., & Khabbaz, L. (2024). **Stakeholder dynamics in rural Lebanese women's entrepreneurship.** Journal of Enterprising Communities.
11. Marín, C., El Bachawati, M., & Pérez, G. (2023). **The impact of green roofs on urban runoff quality: A review.** Urban Forestry and Urban Greening. Open access.
12. Semaan, N.M. (2023). **A Novel Service Life Prediction for Reinforced Concrete Infrastructure Systems.** In RILEM Bookseries.
13. Serhan, C., Nasr, N., Cheikh, G., & Nachar, G. (2024). **Retaining young employees in the hospitality and tourism sector: the role of workplace context and management practices.** EuroMed Journal of Business.
14. Shantha Kumari, K.G., Jaheer Mukthar, K.P., & El Rahhani, G.N. (2024). **Green Finance in India: Driving Sustainable Development and Economic Growth.** In Studies in Systems, Decision and Control.
15. Shebaya, M. (2024). **Presenteeism Management for Sustainable Business: An Exploratory Study in Lebanese Organizations.** In W. Bakhit & S. El Nemar (Eds.). (2025), Navigating Business Through Essential Sustainable Strategies. IGI Global. Accepted/Forthcoming October 2024. DOI.

SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL CAREER AND INTERNSHIP FAIR

The Career Services Center organized its Annual Career and Internship Fair for two consecutive years. This event provided an excellent opportunity for students and alumni to interact with recruiters, explore available internships and job opportunities, and stay updated on the latest market trends.

Across both years, more than 60 multinational and national companies and non-governmental organizations participated. The fair facilitated discussions between companies and students regarding their expectations and employability prospects in Lebanon and the wider region, across various fields of study. Additionally, the giveaways were eco-friendly, with first-year attendees receiving plants and second-year attendees receiving local products.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN UOB AND IZDIHAR

The University of Balamand (UOB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Izdihar, a community organization in Tripoli, to enhance youth development and capacity-building. This partnership, endorsed by UOB President Dr. Elias Warrak, Izdihar Founder Mr. Mosbah El-Ahdab, and Dr. Elie Karam, Dean of Issam Fares Faculty of Technology at UOB, aims to improve the academic standing of disadvantaged youth through continuous education programs. These programs will equip youth with essential skills to improve their life conditions and contribute to community development. The collaboration focuses on addressing the living and social conditions in Lebanon, particularly in Tripoli. As part of this initiative, UOB will enroll twelve students, funded by Izdihar, into a special education program. This program will implement projects in agriculture and food, water and renewable energy, and green smart buildings.



The ongoing economic crisis has deepened poverty, preventing families from providing proper education, which leads to significant skill gaps.

To address this, Izdihar and the University of Balamand, with funding from a European philanthropist, developed a special education program. This program aims to equip Tripoli's youth with essential skills, including:

- Basic computer and information management, drawing, and simulation skills.
- Basic financial and accounting skills.
- Proficient conversational and professional English.
- Technical skills in arts and crafts, such as mobile app development, network installation, and PCB design.

This initiative seeks to empower young people with the skills needed to secure employment and achieve economic stability.

MOU WITH THE ECONOMIC EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

The University of Balamand UOB signed an MOU with the Economic Emergency Committee on UOB campus- Akkar, fostering educational development. The signing ceremony was attended by Dr. Elie Karam Dean of the Issam Fares Faculty of Technology at UOB, Dr. Khaled Aitani President of the Economic Emergency Committee, Aboud Maraab Head of the Dreib Al- Awsat Union of Municipalities, Omar Al-Hayek Head of the Naher Al-Astwan Union of Municipalities, Roni Al-Hajj Head of the Jumma Union of Municipalities, Dr. Mohammed Khedrini Director of Abdullah Al-Rassi Governmental Hospital, Dr. Mohammed Ali, Dr. Nora Al-Mar'abi, Counselor Khalid Mohammed Al-Zu'bi, as well as UOB directors, educators, association presidents, and others.



TALK ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The School of Tourism and Hotel Management (THM) at the University of Balamand welcomed Mr. Fouad Sayegh, founder and owner of SWIZORE located in Kaftoun (el Koura), for a talk focused on sustainability in the hospitality industry on the 15th of October 2024. During his presentation, Mr. Sayegh discussed eco-friendly practices, sustainable lifestyle, indoor/outdoor green living solutions, and the principles of ecotourism. Mr. Sayegh's insights sparked inspiration among attendees to advocate for sustainable practices within their communities and future careers in the hospitality sector.



CAREER SERVICES CENTER INITIATIVES

The Career Services Center promotes sustainability through experiential learning opportunities, such as internships and volunteer work with organizations focused on environmental conservation. They host recruitment seminars and workshops that emphasize the importance of sustainability in career development, fostering a sense of corporate social responsibility among students. The center collaborates with sustainable organizations, providing students with valuable networking and job placement opportunities. Additionally, the center offers career coaching and mentoring to guide students towards careers in sustainability-focused fields, helping them develop relevant skills and highlight their sustainability efforts in their CVs and employability profiles.



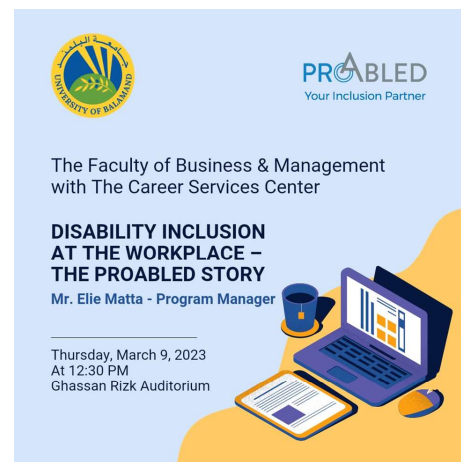
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISIS

The Faculty of Business and Management, along with the Career Services Center, hosted a panel discussion on "Entrepreneurship in Times of Crisis." Moderated by Maria Aouad from Injaz Lebanon, the panel featured experts Dalia Nassar, Nour Atallah, Emile Mouawad, and Kinda Hamoui. They discussed navigating business challenges during economic downturns, identifying successful business ideas, adapting to changing consumer needs, securing startup funding, and the importance of resilience and resourcefulness. The event emphasized strategies for fostering innovation and sustaining economic growth during crises, aligning with goals of decent work, economic growth, and industry innovation.



SEMINAR ON DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

The Career Services Center and the Faculty of Business and Management organized a seminar on disability inclusion in the workplace in collaboration with the ProAbleD NGO. This event underscored the critical importance of integrating individuals with disabilities into the workforce, particularly those who have the skills and capacities to contribute meaningfully to their roles.



UNIVERSITY OF BALAMAND CLUBS' ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING SDG 8

Various clubs at the University of Balamand have organized activities that align with SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. These include workshops on CV writing, cybersecurity, and LinkedIn training, as well as seminars on money management, time management, and professional communications. Additionally, there are interactive activities like the Aspen Hysis Competition and field trips such as the InMind.Ai visit. These initiatives aim to enhance students' employability and professional skills, contributing to economic growth and decent work opportunities.

Activity Title	Activity Type	Club Name
CV writing Workshop	Workshops	Robotics
Cyber security workshop	Workshops	Developers
Money Management Workshop	Seminars	Business Connections
The Economic situation inLebanon: What's next	Seminars	Business Connections
Time Management	Seminars	IEEE
CV writing Workshop	Workshops	Consulting x CareerServices
Professional communications for engineers	Seminars	IEEE
Medical School Mock Interview	Workshops	Premed
Aspen Hysis Competition	Gatherings and Interactive Activities	SSCHE
Berytech tech talk	Seminar and Conferences	Astronomy
InMind.Ai Field trip	Field trip	IEEE
LinkedIn Training Session	Workshops	Business