

SDG10

REDUCED INEQUALITIES

REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES



REDUCED INEQUALITIES

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Key Highlights (2025-2026)

- **18 SDG 10-related** research publications addressing health, educational, economic, and social inequalities
- **Dedicated Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)** framework established
- **3 institutional policies** promoting equity, disability inclusion, accessibility, and protection from harassment
- More than **60% of students receive financial assistance**, supporting equitable access to higher education
- **60+ schools** nationwide engaged through educational partnership agreements
- **Up to 60%** tuition support available to students from partner schools
- 1 patented assistive technology innovation (INVERTICA) developed to support individuals with hearing and speech impairments
- **75 Primary Health Care Satellite Units** supported through national health partnerships
- **230+ frontline healthcare** professionals trained and approximately 1,000 healthcare workers reached across Lebanon
- **All 8 Lebanese governorates** reached through health, education, and community development initiatives
- Think Pink reached **50 women**, while additional breast cancer awareness and prevention initiatives increased total outreach to more than **200 women.**
- Multiple outreach initiatives supporting children, older adults, persons with disabilities, inmates, refugees, displaced populations, and disadvantaged communities
- **A Campus Family Support Plan** launched to promote gender equality, family-friendly policies, and inclusive institutional practices
- National representation at the **79th World Health Assembly**, advocating equitable access to healthcare and pain management
- National leadership in equity and inclusion through participation in policy and governance bodies

Introduction

The University of Balamand advances SDG 10 by promoting equitable access to education, fostering inclusive and respectful learning environments, supporting persons with disabilities and vulnerable populations, expanding financial aid opportunities, strengthening family-support policies, and conducting research that addresses social, economic, educational, and health inequalities. Through an integrated approach combining policy, outreach, education, and research, the University contributes to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

18 SDG 10-related research publications addressing health, educational, economic, and social inequalities

CREATING A CULTURE OF RESPECT

The University of Balamand has implemented new measures to promote equality, prevent sexual harassment, and ensure accessibility for students with disabilities, supported by a newly established entity dedicated to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

- **EDI Policy**

  The University of Balamand is committed to creating a teaching, learning, and working environment that is free from sexual harassment and misconduct. This policy emphasizes the importance of human dignity and equity, and aims to foster a climate of professionalism, trust, and personal well-being among all stakeholders.

3 institutional policies promoting equity, disability inclusion, accessibility, and protection from harassment

- **Sexual Harassment Policy**

  This policy ensures that the University maintains an environment free from sexual harassment and misconduct. It upholds the values of human dignity and equity, promoting a professional and trustworthy atmosphere for all stakeholders, and supporting personal well-being.

- **Admission of Students with Disability Policy**

  The University of Balamand is dedicated to providing an inclusive environment for students with disabilities. This policy outlines the university's commitment to ensuring equal access to educational opportunities and support services for all students, fostering an environment of respect and inclusion.

Dedicated Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) framework established

- **University Policies Portal**
  Central repository providing access to the University's policies, complaint forms, and governance documents related to EDI, disability inclusion, and harassment prevention.

  ***For more details visit** the University's policies*

These policies support SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

RESEARCH ON REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Over the past two years, the University of Balamand contributed to **SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)** through high impact research addressing social, economic, educational, and health inequalities affecting vulnerable and marginalized populations.

In a large Lebanese collaborative study, researchers used US NIH data to examine racial and ethnic disparities in health literacy, perceived health status, and access to healthcare among heart transplant patients [1]. In a Denmark-Lebanon study, healthcare access and chronic disease management were assessed among Syrian refugees [2].

In collaboration with researchers from Ireland, UOB members of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) further explored barriers faced by older adults in accessing primary healthcare services [3,4]. Challenges affecting the implementation of equitable health policies and economic evaluation frameworks were addressed by a team from UOB and the Netherlands [5].

While UOB researchers addressed barriers to care for vulnerable and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, requiring cancer treatment and palliative care, in underserved areas of Lebanon [6,7]. Additional research addressed public health inequalities through investigations of environmental and chemical exposures affecting reproductive health [8] and strategies to address vaccine hesitancy and improve immunization coverage in crisis-affected regions [9].

The University also contributed to understanding the economic and social dimensions of inequality. Research examined the effects of financial insecurity on mental and physical health during Lebanon’s economic crisis [10], while other studies explored women's resilience and empowerment through entrepreneurship [11] and the important role of women engineers in advancing sustainable development and social inclusion [12]. Educational inequalities

were addressed through research on culturally responsive teaching, identity affirmation, and inclusive learning environments that enhance outcomes for diverse student populations [13], as well as studies promoting sustainability and global citizenship competencies in higher education [14].

Beyond health and education, research examined broader structural and economic factors influencing inequalities. Studies investigated the impact of geopolitical and economic uncertainty on international trade and economic opportunities [15], sustainable pathways for industry development in emerging economies [16], and governance challenges associated with innovation-driven business ecosystems [17].

Additional work explored circular economy policies and alternative approaches to measuring standards of living that support more equitable and sustainable development outcomes [18].

Collectively, these publications contribute to advancing social inclusion, improving equitable access to healthcare and education, supporting gender empowerment, strengthening opportunities for vulnerable communities, and informing policies that promote inclusive and sustainable development. Through this body of research, the University of Balamand continues to support evidence-based solutions that address inequalities and contribute to achieving SDG 10.

SDG10 Publications

[1] Al Chaar, S., Yakdan, S., El Masri, D., ... Al Akoum, M., Salameh, P. (2026). Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Health Literacy, Perception of Health Status, and Access to Healthcare Among Heart Transplant Patients of the National Institutes of Health All of Us Research Program. Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.

[2] Al-Rousan, T., Naja, W., Wejse, C.M., ... Kadri, N., Eiset, A.H. (2025). Hypertension in Syrian refugees: prevalence, awareness, and access to care in Denmark and Lebanon. Frontiers in Public Health.

[3] Dableh, S., Frazer, K., Azar, M., Hamadeh, R., Kroll, T. (2025). Barriers and enablers to primary health care center access for older people in Lebanon: A qualitative inquiry. PLOS ONE.

[4] Dableh, S., Frazer, K., Azar, M., Kroll, T. (2025). The Experience of Accessing Primary Healthcare Centres in a Lebanese Community: Perspectives of Older People, Family Members and Service Providers. Health Expectations.

[5] Daccache, C., Hiligsmann, M., Evers, S.M.A.A., Rizk, R., Karam, R. (2025). Barriers to and facilitators of implementing the Lebanese Health Economic Evaluation Guideline: An initial exploration. Expert Review of Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research.

[6] Darwich, M.J., Ksair, D., Adra, Z., ... Nasr, R., Dassouki, Z. (2026). Cancer Patterns and Barriers to Care Among Socioeconomically Vulnerable Populations in Tripoli: A Descriptive Study from a Local NGO. Diseases.

[7] Demachkieh, F., Kassab, A., Darwich, M., ... Nahas, N., Dassouki, Z. (2026). Awareness and knowledge of palliative care in Tripoli, Lebanon: A cross-sectional study in a disadvantaged population. Palliative Care and Social Practice.

[8] Fares, K.S., Abi-Tayeh, G.H., Whaibeh, E.R., ... Matar, Y.M., Mrad, M.A. (2025). The influence of environmental and chemical exposures on fertility in the Eastern Mediterranean region: A narrative review. International Journal of Reproductive BioMedicine.

[9] Nasr, R., Swaidan, E., Hachem, S., ... Abdel Rahman, A., H Alami, N. (2025). Immunization safety monitoring: addressing vaccine hesitancy and enhancing coverage in crisis-affected regions—insights from Lebanon, Ukraine, and Sudan. Therapeutic Advances in Vaccines and Immunotherapy.

[10] Nehme, A., Moussa, S., Fekih-Romdhane Md PhD, F., ... Obeid, S., Haddad, G. (2025). The mediating role of depression in the association between perceived financial wellbeing and somatization: a study in the context of Lebanon's financial crisis. International Journal of Environmental Health Research.

[11] Kuran, O., Khabbaz, L. (2025). Women entrepreneurs in challenging contexts: the role of purpose and coping strategies in building resilience. Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies.

[12] Nakad, M., Charif, H., Gardelle, L., Abboud, R.J. (2025). Empowering sustainability: Can women engineers play a key role in achieving a sustainable future? Sustainable Futures.

[13] Zeng, Y., Isleem, H.F., Tejani, G.G., Jahami, A., Alnowibet, K.A. (2025). Examining the impact of culturally responsive teaching and identity affirmation on student outcomes: A mixed-methods study in diverse educational settings. International Journal of Educational Development.

[14] Nakad, M., Gardelle, L., Abboud, R.J. (2026). Advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 in Engineering Education: Faculty Members' Perspectives from the Lebanese Context. Sustainability (Switzerland).

[15] Boustani, N.M., Dib, L. (2026). Oil Price Uncertainty and the Asymmetric Effects of Geopolitical Acts and Threats on China's Electrical Machinery and Equipment Exports. Economies.

[16] Khatib, M., Al Sayed, J. (2026). Pathways to sustainable aviation in emerging economies: A case study of the airline industry in Lebanon. Research in Transportation Business and Management.

[17] Kuran, O., Khabbaz, L., Choueifaty, C.E. (2026). Innovation–Fraud amplification in technology-driven firms: Ecosystem-level drivers of corporate misconduct. Journal of Economic Criminology.

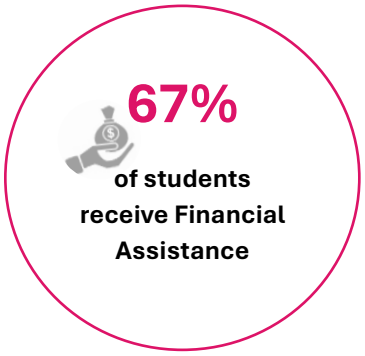
[18] Ölçekciler, F., Knio, M.S.E.D., Khoury, G.B., ... Houmani, H.A., Jaafar, B.Y. (2025). Beyond GDP: Innovative Circular Economy Policies for Rethinking Standards of Living. Innovative Policy Making for the Shift to Circular Economy.

This body of research supports SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

EXPANDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Financial Aid and Educational Access

As part of its commitment to reducing inequalities and ensuring equitable access to higher education, the University of Balamand provides extensive financial support to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Currently, more than 60% of enrolled students receive some form of financial assistance, helping to reduce financial barriers to university education.To support students and their families during Lebanon's ongoing economic challenges, the University has established partnerships with numerous public institutions, professional associations, and community organizations. These include the Lebanese Army, Lebanese Air Force, Lebanese Navy, General Security, State Security, the Bar Association, members of the judiciary, the Greek Community, and the Associations of Dentists and Pharmacists. In addition, the Financial Aid Office manages cooperation agreements with more than 60 public and private schools across Lebanon, providing tuition discounts for graduating students and scholarship opportunities for high-performing applicants.



Reported impact:

- More than 60% of students receive financial assistance.
- Partnerships established with multiple public and professional institutions.
- Agreements in place with more than 60 schools nationwide.
- Expanded access to higher education for students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

This initiative supports SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 4 (Quality Education).

1 patented assistive technology innovation (INVERTICA) developed to support individuals with hearing and speech impairments

Educational Partnership with Private Schools in Iklim El Kharroub

The Municipality of Daraya, Chouf District, hosted an educational meeting bringing together representatives from the University of Balamand and eight private schools from the Iklim El Kharroub region. A cooperation agreement was signed between the university and the participating schools, which include Al Chark School, Iklim Secondary School, Arcadia School, Jannat Al Talaba School, Beit Al Hikma School, Lycée Pascal (Aanout and Barja branches), and Lycée Al Kubra. The agreement aims to strengthen cooperation between schools and universities and to support students in their academic journey. It also seeks to support students in smoothly transitioning to higher education within a supportive learning environment. As part of the agreement, the University of Balamand announced special tuition discounts, of up to 60%, for students from the participating schools. The initiative reflects a shared commitment to enhancing educational opportunities and supporting students in pursuing higher education in a more accessible and encouraging academic environment. This initiative supports SDG 10 and 4.

Up to 60%

tuition support available to students from partner schools



ACCESSIBILITY, DISABILITY INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

UOB Student Honored for Achievement at the Deaflympics

The University celebrated the achievement of Ms. Sara Saliba, a deaf student and athlete who was recognized nationally as the first Arab Taekwondo athlete to qualify for the Deaflympics. Her achievement reflects the University's commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and equal opportunities for students with disabilities. This supports SDGs 10, 3, and 5.



INVERTICA: Assistive Technology Innovation

The University secured a patent for INVERTICA, an intelligent assistive technology designed to support individuals with hearing and speech impairments. The innovation reflects the University's commitment to reducing inequalities through accessible and inclusive technological solutions. This supports SDGs 10, 9, and 3.



Inclusive Education InitiativesThe Department of Education organized a seminar on inclusive education, bringing together educators, parents, childcare professionals, and specialists to strengthen support systems for learners with special needs and promote inclusive educational practices. This supports SDG 10 and 4.



Campus Family Support Plan

The University of Balamand (UOB) has officially launched its Campus Family Support Plan, a strategic initiative aimed at promoting equity, inclusion, and institutional sustainability throughout its university community, across all UOB campuses. Initially developed under the project "Supporting Women on Board of Syndicates, Universities, and Board of Organizations", implemented by the Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB) in partnership with the British Embassy, the plan has been designed to address gender inequalities within academic and professional environments. Under the leadership of Dr. Elias Warrak, President of UOB, the initiative has since evolved into a broader institutional framework that supports all members of the UOB community, including students, staff, and faculty. It integrates strategic planning with the implementation of pro-women policies, while also promoting sensitization and capacity-building across campus. The plan emphasizes inclusive budgeting and is supported by ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure measurable impact. In parallel, it encourages academic development through enhanced support for research and teaching. The Campus Family Support Plan is expected to contribute significantly to student succes s, improve staff well-being and productivity, and foster a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. It also supports institutional sustainability, strengthens recruitment and retention efforts, and aims to elevate the university's academic standing and rankings. In addition to policy reforms, the plan introduces a range of support services including childcare and elderly care initiatives, comprehensive academic and financial support, health and wellness programs, and flexible work and study arrangements.

A Campus Family Support Plan launched to promote gender equality, family-friendly policies, and inclusive institutional practices

As part of the ongoing efforts surrounding the launch of the Campus Family Support Plan, UOB also hosted a collaborative roundtable on November 14, 2025 at UOB Dekwaneh Campus, dedicated to advancing gender equality and addressing women's needs on campus.



The event brought together representatives from the Lebanese American University (LAU), the Modern University for Business and Science (MUBS), Saint Joseph University of Beirut

(USJ), as well as the Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB). Discussions focused on strengthening strategic planning for gender equality, enhancing pro-women policies, and promoting inclusive governance across higher-education institutions. Participants emphasized the importance of awareness-raising, sensitization, and capacity-building initiatives, along with inclusive budgeting and continuous monitoring to ensure long-term impact. University of Balamand | News Details



The roundtable also explored opportunities for research collaboration and the exchange of best practices, reflecting a shared commitment to fostering supportive, equitable, and forward-looking academic environments throughout Lebanon's higher education sector.

This initiative reflects UOB's continued commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive academic environment that empowers its entire community.

In support of SDGs 10, 5, 4, 3, and 8.





Celebrating Women and Leadership

Student organizations hosted events highlighting women-led businesses, female role models, and leadership experiences that encourage equal participation, empowerment, and opportunity for all members of society.

This supports SDGs 5, 10 and 4.



National Leadership in Equity and Inclusion

Through her appointment to the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS-L), Dr. Dima Issa, Chairperson of the Mass Media and Communication Department at UOB, contributes to national discussions on gender-sensitive policies, inclusive governance, and equitable participation in research and higher education, extending UOB's commitment to equity and inclusion beyond the university community.

This supports SDGs 10, 5 and 16.

National leadership in equity and inclusion through participation in policy and governance bodies

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES: Intergenerational Engagement, Community Outreach, and Experiential Learning.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (DoCE)

DoCE supports SDG 10 by ensuring that health, education, and community development interventions reached vulnerable and underserved populations throughout Lebanon. Through nationwide initiatives spanning all eight governorates, the Department improved equitable access to health information, immunization services, and community-based support. Specific efforts included technical support to programs serving Palestinian communities, community engagement activities targeting displaced populations, and capacity-building initiatives that strengthened local frontline services.

By bringing resources and expertise to diverse geographical areas and vulnerable groups, DoCE helped reduce disparities in access to information and essential services.This supports SDGs 10, 3, 4 and 17.

Corporate Social responsibility at “Dar Al Zahraa” Orphanage

The Business Connections Club organized activities and support initiatives for children at Dar Al Zahraa Orphanage, reinforcing student engagement in social responsibility and community service.

This supports SDGs 10, 4 and 16.



Community Engagement and Social Support Initiatives

The University continues to support vulnerable populations through community outreach initiatives involving children, elderly persons, individuals with disabilities, inmates, and disadvantaged communities.



Through the Saint John of Damascus Institute of Theology, students conducted structured visits to rehabilitation centers, elderly care homes, social institutions, and correctional facilities.



These activities promoted social inclusion thru overcoming social isolation, psychosocial support, community service and outreach, meaningful intergenerational dialogue and exchange, and compassionate care for underserved populations; while providing students with practical exposure to senior welfare services, emotional intelligence training, and community-based social responsibility. This supports SDGs 10, 3, 4 and 16



Community Fair

The University's annual Community Fair connected students with non-governmental organizations working across social development, disability support, humanitarian aid, education, and community development.



The initiative encouraged volunteerism, civic engagement, and participation in activities supporting vulnerable groups throughout Lebanon.This supports SDGs 10, 4 and 17.









Hamilat El Tib Visit

Through a visit to Hamilat El Tib, the business connection club engaged with elderly residents through social and recreational activities, fostering meaningful intergenerational connections.



The initiative helped reduce social isolation among senior citizens while promoting inclusion, empathy, and community solidarity, reflecting UOB's commitment to supporting vulnerable groups and strengthening social cohesion.

This supports SDGs 10, 3 and 1

PROMOTING DIALOGUE, SOCIAL COHESION AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES

Student Leaders Retreat

The Student Leaders Retreat promoted ethical leadership, diversity, inclusion, civic responsibility, and community impact.



Students from multiple campuses developed initiatives addressing social challenges while engaging in discussions on leadership, equity, and inclusive practices.





The retreat encouraged students to design initiatives addressing social inequalities, inclusion, community engagement, and equitable opportunities within society. This supports SDGs 10, 4 and 16.

Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue

The University continued promoting intercultural understanding, social cohesion, and peaceful coexistence through lectures, seminars, and academic initiatives organized by the Saint John of Damascus Institute of Theology and the Christian-Muslim Studies Center. Activities included the lecture “Witnesses and Martyrs in Anatolia”, which examined the historical experiences of marginalized communities and encouraged reflection on human dignity, coexistence, and mutual respect, as well as conferences and international engagements focused on Christian-Muslim dialogue, peacebuilding, citizenship, and social inclusion.

Through these activities, the University fostered dialogue, mutual understanding, and respect among diverse communities.



This supports SDGs 10, 16 and 17.





Youth Dialogue and Civic Engagement

The Department of Political Science and International Affairs organized the fourth edition of its Dialogue Project with students from the American University in Cairo.

Discussions focused on youth movements, inequality, civic participation, governance challenges, and political inclusion across the Arab region. This supports SDGs 10, 16 and 4.



Justice, Human Rights and Social Reform

Through its “27-Minute” Lecture Series, the University hosted discussions on prison reform, human rights, social justice, and freedom of expression, encouraging critical engagement with issues affecting equality and inclusion in Lebanon.



This supports SDGs 10 and 16.







Health Equity

Reducing Health Inequalities and Expanding Access to Essential Services

The University of Balamand contributes to reducing inequalities in access to healthcare through national partnerships and community-based health initiatives targeting vulnerable and underserved populations.

230+ frontline healthcare professionals trained and approximately 1,000 healthcare workers reached across Lebanon

Through collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and other stakeholders, UOB supported the establishment of **75 Primary Health Care Satellite Units** across Lebanon, expanding access to essential healthcare services for vulnerable, displaced, and conflict-affected communities. In parallel, the University strengthened healthcare capacity by training **more than 230 frontline healthcare professionals** and reaching approximately **1,000 healthcare workers across all eight Lebanese governorates**, helping reduce geographic disparities in healthcare delivery and improving access to quality services.

UOB further promotes health equity through community outreach initiatives that remove barriers to preventive healthcare and health information. Activities included free health awareness campaigns, breast cancer prevention and early-detection programs reaching more than **200 women**; open community health days providing free screenings and consultations; and counseling services that supported students with disabilities, health conditions, learning difficulties, and personal circumstances through individualized accommodations. Collectively, these initiatives contribute to reducing health inequalities, expanding access to essential services, and supporting the well-being of disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. [All these intiatives are better elaborated in the SDG3 report 25-26].

All 8 Lebanese governorates reached through health, education, and community development initiatives

This supports SDGs 3, 10 and 17.

Think Pink

The Nursing Student Society organized the Think Pink Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, promoting awareness of breast cancer, and the importance of early detection. Through this initiative, participants received valuable information on prevention, screening, and early detection techniques for breast cancer, thus contributing to greater health awareness within the community.

By providing free awareness and prevention information to women, the initiative contributes to reducing health inequalities through improved access to preventive healthcare knowledge and early-detection resources. This supports SDGs 3, 5 and 10. Reported impact: 50 women attended the workshop.



For more details about the workshop

Dr. Huda Abu-Saad Huijer Represents Lebanon at the 79th World Health Assembly

Dr. Huda Abu-Saad Huijer, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Balamand, participated as part of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health delegation at the 79th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. The Assembly brings together global health leaders and member states to address key international public health priorities, and to strengthen global cooperation in healthcare.

During a side event organized by the International Association for the Study of Pain titled "Pain in Global Health – Strengthening Coordinated Action for Equitable Access to Effective Pain Care" Dr. Huijer delivered a speech on behalf of the Lebanese Minister of Public Health. In her remarks, she emphasized that pain management is both a clinical and public health priority requiring stronger integration into healthcare systems and alignment with World Health Organization frameworks.

Dr. Huijer highlighted Lebanon's commitment to improving access to essential pain medications, strengthening healthcare professionals' capacity in pain assessment and management, and integrating pain care into national health strategies.

National representation at the **79th World Health Assembly** advocating equitable access to healthcare and pain management



She also reaffirmed Lebanon's readiness to collaborate with the World Health Organization, the International Association for the Study of Pain, and



member states to advance equitable access to effective pain care worldwide.

Through participation in the World Health Assembly, UOB contributed to international dialogue on equitable access to healthcare services and effective pain management.

This initiative supports SDGs 3, 10 and 17.

Promoting Inclusion, Representation, and Social Cohesion Through the Arts

The Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA) contributes to SDG 10 by empowering students to explore themes of identity, diversity, marginalization, resilience, social justice, and inclusion through film and creative expression. During 2025-2026, student-produced films were selected and recognized at national and international film festivals including the Beirut Shorts Festival, Festival du Film Libanais de France, Arab Short Film Festival, Cabriolet Film Festival, Rabat International Author Film Festival, and the NDU International Film Festival. Through stories addressing family relationships, survival, personal identity, social challenges, and human experiences, these productions foster dialogue, empathy, cultural representation, and greater understanding of diverse communities.

In addition, ALBA promoted inclusive cultural engagement through free public access to film screenings, discussions, and interdisciplinary dialogues such as the Cinema Club and the panel discussion "What Cinema, Here and Now?", which brought together emerging Lebanese filmmakers, students, educators, and cultural stakeholders to discuss the role of cinema in representing diverse voices and contemporary social issues. These initiatives expanded public access to culture, encouraged participation in creative industries, and strengthened social inclusion through artistic expression.

Inclusion shapes ALBA’s Interior Architecture projects and its own practice. In 2025, twenty students and three faculty members designed a day centre for people with autism with the NGO VIO. With the Office of Student Affairs, the section put in place accommodations for four neurodivergent students, supporting their well-being and academic success.

ALBA's Graphic Arts and Advertising section supports students with special needs throughout their education to graduation. Since 2025, three bachelor's students, one with a cognitive disability and two with diagnosed mental-health conditions, have been integrated and

followed individually so that they can complete their degrees.

The ALBA's Institute of Urbanism, thru its tactical urbanism studio responds directly to Lebanon's wartime displacement. In 2025, a student project proposing to turn Beirut's landmark "The Egg" building into a temporary shelter for people displaced by the war, with modular housing, essential services and community spaces designed in a participatory way, won first prize in the Art-Humanity competition and was exhibited at the museum of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva.

By amplifying diverse voices and creating platforms for underrepresented perspectives, these activities contribute to reducing social and cultural barriers and promoting inclusive participation in public discourse.This supports SDGs 10, 4, 11 and 16.

ALBA Reported impact:

- Multiple student films selected and awarded at national and international film festivals.
- Free public film screenings and discussions organized throughout the academic year.
- More than 60 participants engaged in public dialogue on cinema, culture, and representation.
- International design and cultural initiatives promoting intercultural dialogue and collaboration.

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	CONTRIBUTION TO REDUCED INEQUALITIES	IMPACT
STUDENT FILMS	ALBA student films were selected and recognized at the Beirut Shorts Festival, Arab Short Film Festival, Cabriolet Film Festival, Festival du Film Libanais de France, Rabat International Author Film Festival, and NDU International Film Festival. Several films received awards and special mentions.	Through storytelling and artistic expression, student filmmakers explored themes of identity, belonging, resilience, family dynamics, social challenges, and diverse lived experiences, promoting empathy, representation, and understanding across communities.	18 student film selections and screenings at national and international festivals, with multiple awards and recognitions.
CINEMA CLUB	Twice-monthly free public screenings of Lebanese films followed by open discussions and critical dialogue. Students also gain experience curating film programs.	Expands public access to culture and creates inclusive spaces for dialogue on social issues, cultural diversity, and representation.	Regular free public screenings; 32 participants reported.
PANEL DISCUSSION	Public discussion held at the Sursock Museum with film educators, industry professionals, and cultural organizations.	Encouraged dialogue on representation, diversity, inclusion, and the role of cinema in reflecting contemporary social realities and amplifying diverse voices.	62 participants engaged in public dialogue and knowledge exchange.
UNFOLD GLOBAL	Participation in the international UNFOLD design initiative hosted by Domus Academy and institutions from the Cumulus Network. Student work was exhibited during Milan Design Week.	Fostered intercultural collaboration, critical dialogue, and cross-cultural understanding through design projects addressing contemporary social and global challenges.	International student participation and exhibition of work at Milan Design Week.

Conclusion

Through evidence-based research, equitable access to higher education, disability-inclusive policies, health equity programs, community engagement initiatives, and support for vulnerable populations, the University of Balamand continues to reduce social, economic, educational, and health disparities. By fostering inclusion across institutional governance, education, healthcare, and community development, UOB advances SDG-10 while contributing to SDG-3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG-4 (Quality Education), SDG-5 (Gender Equality), SDG-16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and SDG-17 (Partnerships for the Goals).