



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2025

SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND
WELLBEING



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SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Applied Science University (Bahrain) – SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being (2018–2025)

Applied Science University (ASU) in Bahrain has demonstrated a strong commitment to **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being** over the past several years. This report highlights ASU's initiatives and evidence of impact in five key areas: Student & Staff Health Services, Health Education & Awareness, Community Outreach, Physical Well-being, and Pandemic Response.

Student and Staff Health Services

♦ On-Campus Medical Clinic

ASU provides on-site healthcare through a dedicated **Medical Clinic/Health Center** staffed by professional nurses. The campus health center is open during university hours to serve immediate medical needs of students and employees [1]. According to an external quality review, the clinic is **fully integrated on campus and equipped** with medical devices and medicines, staffed by one full-time nurse (with additional part-time nursing support) to handle first aid and routine care [2]. This ensures prompt medical attention for minor injuries or illnesses and referral guidance for advanced care.

♦ Counseling and Mental Health Services

ASU's **Student Counselling Office** offers comprehensive mental health and well-being support. Professional counselors provide **individual psychological counseling**, social counseling, and group therapy sessions for students coping with personal or academic issues [3]. Preventive counseling programs are in place to **raise awareness and prevent adaptive problems** – whether psychological, health-related, or social – before they escalate [3]. These services, which are confidential and inclusive, are available to all students, and staff can also access guidance as needed. The counseling office's objectives include monitoring students' academic and personal well-being and intervening early to address any issues [3]. Notably, ASU also accommodates **students with special needs** (e.g. physical disabilities, autism, chronic illness) by offering tailored support and counseling, while ensuring campus facilities (like wheelchair access) are available for them [3].

- Educational Counseling: Aimed at monitoring students' academic progress and addressing any problems that may hinder their academic achievement.

- **Social Counseling:** Aimed at building positive social attitudes among university students and addressing specific cases.
- **Psychological Counseling:** Aimed at providing necessary psychological assistance and counseling to students in need.
- **Preventive Counseling:** Aimed at raising students' awareness and preventing them from encountering adaptive problems, whether psychological, health-related, or social, while maintaining their positive personal qualities.
- **Group Counseling Services:** Provided to students with similar goals, interests, and issues. These students have the opportunity to develop self-confidence, communication skills, social interaction, and responsibility.

♦ Preventive Health & Wellness Checks

ASU emphasizes preventive health measures for its community. The on-campus clinic routinely handles **basic health screenings and first aid**, and the University organizes periodic health campaigns (in partnership with healthcare providers) to encourage **wellness checks**. For example, ASU has hosted events like free medical camps in collaboration with local clinics where students and staff could get health risk assessments (blood pressure, blood sugar, etc.) and professional consultations. Additionally, all incoming students undergo medical clearance as per national higher-education requirements, and the university clinic facilitates **vaccination awareness** (e.g. seasonal flu shots or COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic) in line with Ministry of Health guidelines. These efforts ensure early detection of health issues and promote a culture of preventive care on campus.

♦ Mental Well-being Programs

Beyond one-on-one counseling, ASU regularly arranges **well-being programs for students and employees**. Workshops on stress management, time management, and teamwork are offered to nurture soft skills and mental resilience. (For instance, the Student Counselling Office ran a workshop titled *“Working in Team Spirit”* to build students' cooperative skills and positive social interactions.) The university also marks occasions like **World Mental Health Day** with campaigns to reduce stigma and encourage those in need to seek help. *Evidence:* ASU's sustainability records note that the university **organizes mental health workshops and awareness lectures addressing various aspects of mental health** for its community [4]. These sessions often feature qualified counselors or guest experts and provide educational materials on managing anxiety, depression, and academic stress. By integrating mental wellness into campus life, ASU ensures that both students and staff have access to the support needed for their emotional and psychological well-being.

Health Education and Awareness

♦ Health & Wellness Campaigns

ASU actively promotes health awareness through campus-wide events and campaigns. One flagship initiative is the **Annual Health Day** for students *and* staff, which features organized exercise sessions, health exhibitions, and wellness activities [2]. During this event, participants engage in fitness challenges, receive health tips, and interact with healthcare providers – fostering a culture of healthy living within the university. Photographic evidence from recent years shows ASU staff and students taking part in group exercise routines as part of this Health Day [2].

♦ Workshops and Seminars

The university frequently hosts **health-related workshops, seminars, and guest lectures** to educate its community. ASU Bahrain's sustainability records highlight that the university **organizes awareness lectures covering various mental health topics** (stress management, emotional intelligence, etc.), often led by counselors or visiting health professionals [4]. Likewise, seminars on physical health – such as nutrition, first aid training, or disease prevention – have been part of student development programs. Through these interactive sessions, students and staff gain practical knowledge on maintaining a healthy lifestyle and supporting others' well-being.

♦ Awareness Events (SDG Outreach)



ASU leverages international health observances to spread awareness on campus. Notably, in April 2019, ASU hosted a large public **World Autism Awareness Day** event titled “*You Are Not Alone*” [5]. Under the patronage of a prominent national figure (the Chairman of the Shura Council) and in collaboration with the International Organization for Child Protection, this

event educated attendees about autism spectrum disorder and the experiences of autistic children [5]. The University President affirmed the purpose was *“to raise awareness of autism among all groups of society”* and to recognize the challenges faced by affected children and their families [5]. The program included speeches, a student-performed play, a short film (“My Story”) about a child with autism, and an exhibition involving local **health and social centers** [5]. Such events demonstrate ASU’s commitment to health education not only for its own students but for the broader community.

◆ Informational Resources & Training

ASU also provides ongoing health information through brochures, digital media, and training opportunities. The university’s **Health & Safety Handbook** and Student Handbook include guidelines on personal health (e.g. campus smoking regulations, emergency contacts, etc.) and encourage healthy practices [6] [7]. New students and staff receive orientation on available health services and are advised on wellness resources. For example, orientation programs routinely feature briefings from the medical clinic and counseling unit, ensuring newcomers know where to turn for health issues [2]. By embedding health awareness in its publications and trainings, ASU reinforces knowledge of well-being best practices year-round.

- HEC requirements state that both the Health Clinic and supervisor for Health and Safety prepare periodic reports which are submitted to the Facilities Management Committee. The reports highlight measures taken, development and improvement of mechanisms. Pictures show staff engaging in organised exercises and the annual health day for staff and students.
- During COVID, ASU has implemented national guidelines. All teaching operations moved online with part-time attendance on campus for staff. The University President chairs a COVID-19 Committee. There is a section of the ASU website which provides information on the COVID committee and membership, FAQs, links to guidelines, media, and phone numbers and links in relation to online student services. An action from minutes provided was to update the website with a COVID section.

Community Outreach and Partnerships

- ◆ Public Health Services and Screenings



ASU extends its health initiatives beyond campus by organizing events that serve the public. A prime example is the **blood donation campaign** titled “*A Drop of Blood Equals Life*” hosted on campus in May 2024 [8]. Under the patronage of the University President and Board of Trustees Chairman, ASU collaborated with **major healthcare institutions** – including King Hamad University Hospital, Ibn Al Nafees Hospital, Al Arrayed Eye Center, and the Home Health Care Centre – to set up a blood donation drive open to students, staff, and community members [8]. This well-attended campaign enabled volunteer donors from the university and the public to contribute lifesaving blood supplies, and it doubled as a health screening opportunity (with medical staff present to check donors’ vitals and eligibility). The successful multi-institution participation highlights ASU’s role as a community hub for health services.

- ◆ Volunteering in Local Health Initiatives

ASU encourages its students and staff to **volunteer in national health campaigns** and community service. University volunteers have participated in events such as charity health camps, awareness walks, and clinic visits. For instance, ASU students assisted in organizing the above-mentioned autism awareness day, working alongside external organizations to host children with autism and their families on campus [5]. Similarly, during on-campus health campaigns (like free screening days or vaccination drives), student volunteers and staff from the **Community Engagement Office** help with logistics, registration, and public outreach. This hands-on involvement not only provides valuable service to society but also instills a sense of social responsibility in ASU’s students. Social and health centers, and participants from the local community took part in the exhibition that was held during the event. A group of ASU students also participated in the exhibition by presenting artworks related to autism. At the end of the celebration, Professor Ghassan Aouad and Manager of the Regional Office of the International Organization for Child Protection in the Kingdom of Bahrain Mr Salman Al-Subaie, honored all the participating bodies and the voluntary organizational committees, which clearly contributed to the success of the event.



◆ Partnerships with Health Authorities

To amplify its impact, ASU partners with governmental and non-governmental health bodies in Bahrain. The university aligns closely with the Ministry of Health's public health objectives and has collaborated indirectly through initiatives (e.g. complying with national vaccination campaigns and awareness programs). While ASU does not have a medical college, it has supported Ministry-led drives by hosting awareness sessions on campus (such as anti-drug campaigns or healthy lifestyle promotions in coordination with health officials). Moreover, ASU often invites **Ministry of Health representatives and medical experts** to speak at campus events or sit on panels for health seminars, ensuring accurate information and strengthening town-and-gown relationships. In the autism awareness ceremony, for example, ASU's President publicly thanked the Ministry of Education and other authorities for efforts to integrate special-needs individuals in schools and universities [5] – reflecting the university's cooperative spirit with national institutions on well-being initiatives. Through such partnerships, ASU leverages broader expertise and demonstrates its commitment to Bahrain's health and social development goals.



◆ Community Health Education

ASU opens its doors to the community for health education programs. Public workshops on topics like first aid, disease prevention, and mental health (often held in collaboration with

NGOs or healthcare providers) have taken place at ASU's facilities. The **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** is one such occasion where ASU engages the public: In October 2024, ASU marked Pink October by hosting an event called "*Stronger Together*" in conjunction with **Breast Cancer Awareness Month and World Mental Health Day**, under the patronage of the University President [9]. This event featured awareness lectures on breast cancer early detection and mental health support, and was organized by the Student Affairs and Community Engagement teams. It brought together students, faculty, health professionals, and survivors in a show of solidarity and education. By merging physical health (cancer awareness) with mental health in one program, ASU demonstrated a holistic approach to community well-being. *(The "Stronger Together" awareness event took place on 14 October under Professor Hatem Masri's patronage, emphasizing the university's commitment to health action and education asu.edu.bh.)* Such outreach programs significantly contribute to raising health literacy in the wider community.



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OCTOBER

Celebrating Stronger Together Event in Conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Mental Health Day

Physical Well-being (Fitness and Infrastructure)

◆ Sports and Fitness Facilities

SU's campus infrastructure has been designed to promote physical activity among students and staff. The university's **new purpose-built campus** (inaugurated in 2016 in East Al-Ekir) includes extensive sports amenities. There are **outdoor courts for tennis, handball, volleyball, basketball, and badminton**, providing ample opportunities for team sports and exercise [7]. Additionally, ASU houses an **indoor games area** equipped with recreational facilities like table tennis, billiards, foosball, and video game consoles for leisure and fitness breaks [7]. A large multi-purpose gymnasium space is available for indoor sports and group

workouts. These facilities are accessible to all students and staff, encouraging the campus community to engage in regular physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

◆ Campus Design for Wellness

The campus layout includes **green spaces and walking areas** that further support well-being. A landscaped front yard and open courtyards are part of the campus, offering spots for walking, jogging, or relaxation between classes [7]. The environment is maintained to be clean, safe, and conducive to wellness – for example, ASU enforces a smoke-free indoor policy and provides plenty of natural lighting and ventilation in buildings, contributing to a healthy study and work atmosphere [6]. These design elements align with the idea that a healthy environment underpins the overall well-being of the university community.

◆ Recreational Programs and Sports Events

To make full use of its facilities, ASU organizes various **sports programs and recreation activities** throughout the year. The university has sports teams and clubs – ASU’s football team notably won a national universities championship in 2019, reflecting strong support for student athletics [5]. Every year, ASU celebrates an **annual Sports Day**, joining the national initiative to promote fitness. During **Bahrain Sports Day 2024**, ASU actively participated in the kingdom-wide festivities at Bahrain Bay: the Acting President of ASU, Professor Hatem Masri, affirmed the university’s belief in *“supporting and energizing young careers in sports”* and was *“proud to be a part of it”* [10]. ASU’s leadership and students took part in public sports activities alongside other organizations, underlining the importance of an active lifestyle. On campus, the Student Affairs department also hosts intramural sports competitions, fitness challenges, and “open gym” hours to get more people involved. Such programs ensure that physical well-being is integrated into campus life, offering stress relief, team-building, and improved health outcomes for students and staff alike.



Lulu Group Regional Director Juzer Rupawala, second from right, with his team

Beyond financial institutions, educational institutions like the Applied Science University of Bahrain (ASU) also actively participated in this event. “We firmly believe in supporting and energizing young careers in sports,” said Professor Hatem Masri, Acting President of ASU

◆ Healthy Lifestyle Infrastructure

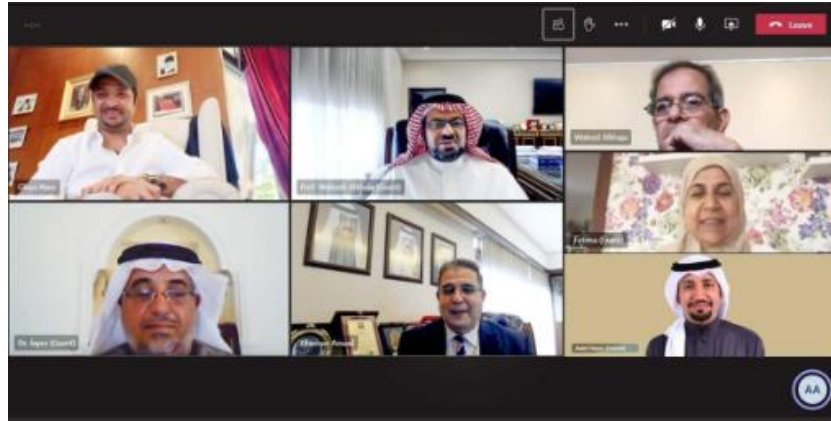


In support of daily healthy habits, ASU provides amenities like on-site dining with healthy food options and hydration stations. The campus cafeteria offers nutritious meal choices (including salads and fruit), and the presence of a **campus mini-market** ensures access to healthy snacks and necessities [2]. The university has also facilitated a partnership with a nearby fitness center for any activities not on campus (for example, swimming or specialized gym equipment), giving the ASU community discounted access to those facilities [11]. Overall, by investing in sports infrastructure and wellness programs, ASU creates an environment where physical well-being is both accessible and encouraged for all.

Pandemic Response (COVID-19 Measures)

◆ Health Protocols and Campus Safety

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ASU took rigorous measures to safeguard health while ensuring continuity of education. The university swiftly implemented **national public health guidelines** issued by Bahrain's authorities [2]. This included enforcing mask mandates, social distancing in any on-campus activities, regular disinfection of facilities, and health screenings at entry points when campus was accessible. All large gatherings were suspended in favor of virtual events, and travel or exchange programs were put on hold to limit virus spread. ASU's Board of Trustees formally commended the university leadership for the comprehensive **precautionary measures** taken to combat COVID-19 [12], underscoring that ASU's response aligned with national efforts to protect the community.



The Board of Trustees holds its meeting through virtual communication technology and commends the university's measures in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic

◆ Transition to Online Learning

In early 2020, ASU pivoted to fully **online teaching and learning** to maintain academic progress while protecting well-being. Classes, assessments, and student services moved to virtual platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Moodle LMS) almost immediately [2]. According to ASU's quality review, *"all teaching operations moved online"* with only minimal essential staff presence on campus [2]. The University provided technical support and training to faculty and students for e-learning tools, ensuring that education quality remained high during lockdowns. This swift adaptation not only kept students safe at home but also mitigated stress by providing stability and support in an uncertain time.

◆ COVID-19 Committee and Communication

ASU established a dedicated **COVID-19 Committee**, chaired by the University President, to coordinate its pandemic response [2]. This high-level committee met regularly to review the evolving situation and make decisions on campus operations, health protocols, and academic policies. ASU created a special **COVID-19 information section on its website** to keep the university community informed [2]. This webpage (and linked portal) provided up-to-date announcements on campus guidelines, public health instructions, FAQ for students, and emergency contact numbers. It also listed the members of the COVID-19 committee and summarized their decisions, ensuring transparency. An action item from committee meeting minutes was promptly implemented: updating the website to include all relevant COVID-19 resources for easy access by students and staff [2]. This clear communication channel was crucial for disseminating information about testing availability, class scheduling changes, and support services (like counseling moving online) during the pandemic.

◆ Health Services and Support During Pandemic

Throughout the pandemic, ASU's health and counseling services remained available (mostly via remote or on-call arrangements). The university's nurse-staffed clinic provided guidance on COVID-19 symptoms, isolation protocols, and facilitated any needed referrals for testing or treatment. In coordination with national efforts, ASU encouraged its students and employees to register for vaccination on the government portal and even organized awareness sessions about vaccine safety. The Student Counselling Office intensified its mental health outreach, recognizing the heightened anxiety and challenges of lockdown; counselors offered virtual counseling appointments and shared "COVID-19 wellness tips" to help students cope with stress and maintain well-being. ASU also took steps to ease pandemic-related burdens academically and financially – for example, implementing flexible grading options and offering tuition payment plans or aid for those economically affected [13]. These measures complemented the health initiatives to ensure holistic support.

◆ Collaboration with National Health Authorities

ASU closely cooperated with Bahrain's national COVID-19 taskforces and health authorities. The university strictly adhered to and disseminated all directives from the Ministry of Health – such as social distancing norms, contact tracing requirements, and quarantine rules – demonstrating institutional responsibility. Moreover, ASU's facilities management and Health & Safety unit prepared **periodic reports on COVID-19 measures** which were submitted to national bodies as required [2]. The university community's compliance was high, contributing to the safety of not just the campus but also the wider public. In terms of academics, ASU's swift move online was reviewed by the national higher education regulator and found to be in full compliance with quality standards [2]. By working hand-in-hand with government guidelines and proactively contributing to the pandemic response, ASU played its part in the nation's collective effort to overcome the crisis.

In summary, **Applied Science University Bahrain's contributions to SDG 3 are substantial and well-documented**. The university has built a supportive health infrastructure – from clinics and counseling services on campus to sports and fitness facilities – and has actively fostered a culture of well-being through education, outreach, and community partnerships. Whether by providing daily health services, educating about critical health issues, engaging in community health drives, promoting physical fitness, or protecting its community during a pandemic, ASU has shown clear alignment with the goal of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all ages. These sustained efforts over the last 5–7 years are evidenced by the initiatives and outcomes highlighted above, underscoring ASU's role as a leader in advancing **Good Health and Well-being** in the realm of higher education [7] [8].

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