



Progress Report on SDG 5 — Gender Equality

1. Executive summary

UST-Yemen is committed to promoting gender equality (SDG 5) across its teaching, research, student support, policy and community programs. In 2023–2024 the university advanced women’s access to higher education through a dedicated **Female Branch** with expanded programmes, targeted scholarships (including competitive grants for Quran memorizers that include female candidates), women-focused academic and professional pathways, gender-relevant research, mental-health and wellbeing services, and public engagement events that address early marriage, maternal mental health and women’s empowerment. These activities are underpinned by institutional units, conferences and partnerships that increase female participation in education, build capacity, and support gender-sensitive public policy.

2. Institutional commitment & policy context

UST publicly frames women’s advancement as a strategic priority by maintaining a **Female Branch** (special campus/stream for female students) offering a wide range of majors and support services that foster academic and professional excellence for women. The university also publishes a women-focused portal summarising initiatives to increase female participation in research, training and leadership. These institutional measures demonstrate structural commitment to SDG 5 targets on equal access to education and women’s empowerment.

Across all campuses, **women represent a significant and growing portion of students, faculty, and administrative staff**, particularly within the health sciences, education, and pharmacy faculties.

Institutional policies that contribute to gender equality include:

- **Equal-opportunity admissions** for male and female students in all programs.
- **Gender-balanced recruitment** in academic and administrative posts where possible.

- **Encouragement of women’s participation in leadership roles**, such as department chairs and research coordinators.
- **Scholarship and mentoring initiatives** to support female students in STEM and health disciplines.

These practices reflect the integration of gender equality within the university’s governance and human-resource frameworks.

3. Learning & student experience — access, support and leadership

3.1 Access & enrolment

- UST operates a **Female Branch** that currently hosts numerous undergraduate programmes for women across 49 majors, creating safe and culturally appropriate access pathways for female students from Aden and other governorates. This dedicated structure helps reduce barriers to tertiary education for women in conservative and remote contexts.

3.2 Scholarships & targeted financial support

- Competitive scholarships (including the **Holy Quran Memorizers Scholarship**) accept both male and female applicants and have increased opportunities for women to access full study places; applicant pools in recent rounds reached both genders. These scholarships have been used strategically to widen female participation.

3.3 Student services and wellbeing for women

- UST’s student-support services include **psychological counselling, women-oriented guidance, and health awareness** activities (e.g., maternal and mental health awareness events) which address gender-specific wellbeing concerns. Mental-health campaigns and guidance tours in 2024 targeted students across faculties, supporting female students’ retention and academic success.

3.4 Leadership & extra-curricular development

- Through conferences, mentoring and vocational training UST creates leadership pathways for women—encouraging participation in research, entrepreneurship and community service. The university’s public communications highlight efforts to integrate female students into research projects and professional internships.

4. Research & innovation — evidence advancing gender equality (2023–2025)

UST researchers and affiliated journals produced gender-relevant studies during 2023–2025 that inform policy and practice in Yemen and the region. Selected research themes and outputs include:

- **Early marriage and adolescent girls:** empirical studies and reviews on knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding early marriage among female secondary-school students—directly relevant to SDG 5.3 (ending child, early and forced marriage).
- **Women’s mental health:** prevalence and severity of depression among adult women in Aden, offering evidence to design gender-sensitive mental-health services and counselling programs.
- **Family planning and reproductive health KAP studies:** research investigating family-planning knowledge and practice provides an evidence base for targeted interventions and health education for women
- **Gender in education and workforce studies:** UST journals and conference papers examine barriers to female participation in STEM and professional fields; these inform faculty policies and scholarship targeting.

Knowledge translation: UST research has been used to shape campus health promotion, counselling services, awareness campaigns and curricular modules that address gender-specific needs (e.g., reproductive health education, mental-health support for female students).

A. Research and academic outputs (from UST SDG Research Compilation 2024):

Year	Publication / Project	Relevance to SDG 5
2024	<i>Gender differences in health awareness among pharmacy students in Yemen</i>	Highlights disparities in knowledge and access, recommending inclusive educational interventions.
2024	<i>Perceptions of female participation in the Yemeni medical workforce</i>	Addresses barriers and motivations for women entering the healthcare sector.
2023–2025	UST research in education and STEM fields	Promotes women’s involvement in technology, engineering and science education through curriculum design and policy advocacy.

5. Enriching communities — outreach, advocacy and partnerships

5.1 Community awareness & public health activities

- UST’s health-and-community programmes include targeted campaigns on maternal health, family planning, mental health, and early-marriage prevention—engaging female students as volunteers and peer educators. The university’s public outreach leverages medical camps and workshops to reach women and girls in Aden and surrounding communities.

5.2 Partnerships that support women

- UST collaborates with local NGOs, health authorities and charitable foundations to increase services and scholarships for women (including programs that link education support with household welfare). The university’s women-focused portal documents partnerships that strengthen female access to training and research opportunities.

5.3 Conferences & capacity building

- The **Conference on Administrative Sciences and Sustainable Development** and the **Distance & E-Learning Conference** included sessions addressing gender, women’s entrepreneurship and the role of education in empowerment—providing forums for policy dialogue and capacity building for female academics and practitioners.

6. Performance indicators & 2024 results

Note: some figures below are drawn from public UST reports and event records; where internal registry data exist (e.g., exact female enrolment numbers, scholarship totals), those figures should be added for the final submission.

Indicator	2023 baseline	2024 result	Evidence / note
Female-only academic branch offering majors	1 branch	Active; 49 majors available for female students	UST Female Branch webpage.
Competitive scholarship applicants (male & female)	[-]	140 applicants to Quran memorizers scholarships (male & female)	UST scholarship announcement.

Indicator	2023 baseline	2024 result	Evidence / note
Gender-relevant research outputs (2023–2025)	[-]	10+ peer-reviewed articles on early marriage, women’s mental health, family planning (2023–2025)	UST journals & SDG_Research compendium. SDG_Research
Women participating as volunteers in community health/outreach events	[-]	Significant representation in medical camps and awareness outreach (2024)	UST outreach reports & camp statistics.
Mental-health events and support for female students	1–2 events	World Mental Health Day, guidance tours, counselling services expanded	UST events & counselling page.

7. Case studies (2024)

Case study 1 — Female Branch & Scholarships

- Objective: provide culturally appropriate access to higher education and targeted scholarships for women.
- Outcome: Female Branch offers broad programme choice and supports women with academic services and scholarships, including Quran memorizer competitive grants open to female applicants.

Case study 2 — Research informing policy on early marriage

- Objective: assess knowledge and practices around early marriage among female secondary students.
- Outcome: UST-affiliated research (2024–25) provides evidence for school-based awareness programs and community engagement to reduce early marriage prevalence. Findings were disseminated through UST journals and local outreach programs.

Case study 3 — Women’s mental health interventions

- Objective: address prevalence of depression and mental-health needs among women in Aden.

- Outcome: Publication of prevalence studies informed campus counselling programming and targeted awareness events (World Mental Health Day), improving access to female-sensitive psychological support.

8. Challenges & mitigations

Challenges

- **Cultural and social barriers** (early marriage, gender norms) limit some women's ability to enter or persist in higher education.
- **Limited longitudinal data** on the socio-economic outcomes of female graduates and scholarship recipients (employment, income changes).
- **Resource and safety constraints** in reaching remote female populations due to conflict and mobility restrictions.

Mitigations / planned actions

- Expand community outreach and school-based awareness programmes on early marriage and girls' education informed by UST research.
- Strengthen monitoring (graduate tracking) for female scholarship beneficiaries to capture longer-term empowerment outcomes.
- Scale distance-learning and blended programmes targeted at women in remote governorates to reduce mobility and safety barriers, using the Deanship of Electronic & Distance Learning.

9. 2025 priorities & targets

1. **Increase female enrolment and completion:** set an institutional target (e.g., +10% female enrolment in technical/engineering tracks by 2025) and publish disaggregated enrollment data.
2. **Scale women's scholarships:** expand the number/value of targeted scholarships for low-income female students and monitor post-graduation employment outcomes.
3. **Translate research into practice:** implement school-based pilots for early-marriage prevention informed by UST studies and evaluate impact.
4. **Expand female participation in research:** increase female co-authorship on SDG-related outputs and provide mentorship grants for early-career female researchers.

5. **Scale distance learning for women:** launch targeted campaigns and low-bandwidth modules for women in rural governorates to remove access barriers.

10. Conclusion

UST-Yemen demonstrates concrete, multi-dimensional progress towards SDG 5 through institutional structures (Female Branch), targeted scholarships, gender-relevant research, mental-health and wellbeing services, and community outreach that directly benefit women and girls. While socio-cultural and contextual challenges remain, UST's evidence-based approach—combining research, capacity building and accessible delivery modes such as distance learning—positions the university to scale impact on gender equality across Yemen.