



# NOAKHALI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

Noakhali - 3814, Bangladesh.

## SDG PROGRESS REPORT 2024

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



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Noakhali - 3814, Bangladesh.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## Comprehensive Report: SDG 5 - Gender Equality

### Noakhali Science and Technology University

December 2024

#### Introduction

Noakhali Science and Technology University (NSTU) is fundamentally committed to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. We believe that rigorous, evidence-based research is crucial for identifying systemic barriers, informing effective policy, and driving meaningful change.

Our 2024 contribution demonstrates this commitment through a two-pillar strategy:

1. **Research and Innovation:** Focusing on advancing reproductive health, enhancing economic empowerment, and addressing systemic vulnerabilities.
2. **Operations and Community Engagement:** Ensuring equitable access and support for women on campus through policies, dedicated services, and measurable progress.

This report outlines our key 2024 accomplishments in support of the targets of SDG 5.

### Pillar 1: Research for Gender Equality

Our 2024 research provides actionable insights on health, economics, and systemic barriers.



#### Advancing Reproductive Health

Published a meta-analysis on contraceptive use and linked coastal salinity to miscarriage and unintended pregnancy.



#### Enhancing Economic Empowerment

Analyzing macroeconomic factors, like tourism, to identify and foster sectors with high potential for female job creation.



#### Addressing Systemic Barriers

Informing gender-responsive environmental policy by showing women's greater willingness to mitigate microplastic pollution.

### Pillar 1: Progress through Research and Innovation

Our 2024 research portfolio provides actionable insights to advance gender equality in Bangladesh and beyond, focusing on three core pillars.

#### Section 1.1: Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (Target 5.6)

A cornerstone of gender equality is ensuring women's autonomy and access to healthcare. Our 2024 studies provide critical data for policymakers on this front.

- **Informing National Health Policy:** The systematic review and meta-analysis by Hossain, S.M.R. et al. ("Contraceptive uses among married women in Bangladesh") provides a comprehensive overview of family planning practices. This research is vital for identifying gaps in access and empowering women to make informed reproductive choices.
- **Linking Climate Vulnerability to Women's Health:** The study by Hossain, S.M.R. et al. ("Association between the salinity level with miscarriage...") establishes a data-driven link

between environmental degradation and women's reproductive health. This research provides irrefutable evidence that climate action (SDG 13) is also a gender equality imperative (SDG 5).

## Section 1.2: Enhancing Women's Economic Empowerment (Target 5.5)

We are actively researching the macroeconomic factors that influence women's ability to participate fully and equally in economic life.

- **Identifying Pathways for Women's Employment:** The research by Rahman, M.H. et al. ("Effects of tourism and other macroeconomic variables on women's employment...") analyzes the impact of key economic sectors on female employment. This work helps governments identify and foster sectors with high potential for female job creation, contributing directly to Target 5.5.

## Section 1.3: Addressing Systemic Barriers and Intersectional Vulnerabilities

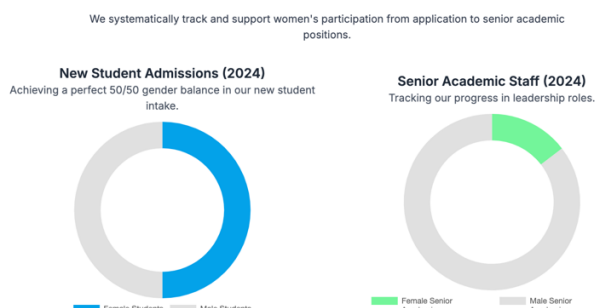
Our 2024 research has also tackled complex, systemic barriers, including harmful norms and gender-blind policymaking.

- **Challenging Harmful Gender Norms (Target 5.2):** The study on "Suicide attempts and depression... among the male child sexual abuse survivors..." (Siddik, M.A.B. et al.) contributes to a more holistic understanding of gender-based violence (GBV) and the patriarchal norms that perpetuate it.
- **Informing Gender-Responsive Environmental Policy (Target 5.c):** The work by Al-Masud, A. et al. ("A new approach from public behavioral attitudes... towards microplastics") provides the evidence base for creating inclusive environmental policy. The study reveals that women exhibit greater willingness to mitigate microplastic emissions, a key insight for designing gender-responsive campaigns that empower women as agents of change.

## Pillar 2: Progress through University Operations and Community Engagement

NSTU's operational strategy translates our research commitment into measurable outcomes and a supportive campus environment for all.

### Pillar 2: Operations – Women's Participation (2024 Data)



### Female Graduates by Subject (2024)

Comparing female (blue) and male (green) graduates in key fields.



## Section 2.1: Women's Participation and Graduation (2024 Data)

We systematically track women's participation from application to graduation.

- **Student Admission:** In 2024, **731 new female students** enrolled, comprising exactly **50%** of the total 1,462 new students.

- **Graduation Rates:** In 2024, **393 female students graduated** from STEM and Arts/Humanities/Social Sciences programs.
  - **STEM:** 242 female graduates (out of 791).
  - **Arts & Humanities / Social Sciences:** 151 female graduates (out of 306).
- **Senior Academic Staff:** **7 out of 48** senior academic staff (14.6%) are female, a key metric we are working to improve.

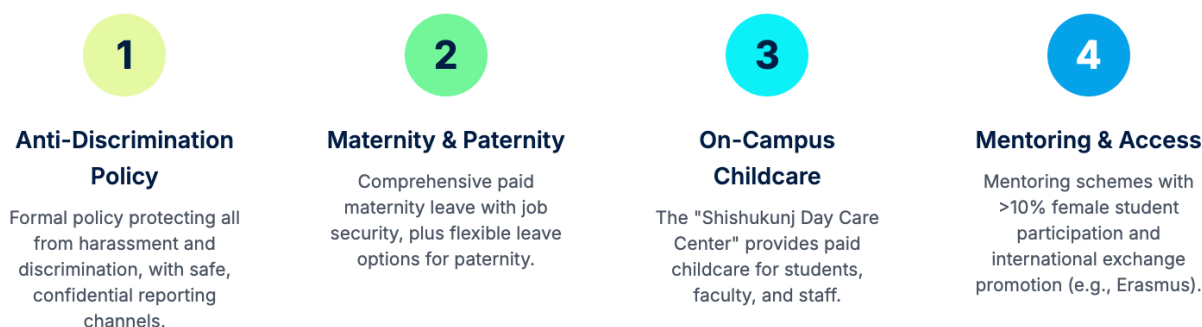
## Section 2.2: Policy on Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

NSTU enforces a comprehensive "Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy" that forms the foundation of our commitment to equality. This policy:

- **Prohibits Discrimination:** Bans any unequal treatment based on protected characteristics, including gender, religion, ethnicity, or disability.
- **Prohibits Harassment:** Strictly forbids sexual harassment, bullying, and any conduct that creates a hostile environment.
- **Guarantees Protection:** Includes a specific clause (Section 10) to protect whistleblowers and complainants from any form of retaliation, ensuring people can report violations safely.
- **Provides Clear Channels:** Offers multiple reporting channels, including the Proctor's Office and anonymous complaint boxes, to ensure all reports are handled confidentially and impartially.

## Pillar 2: Operations – Support for Women's Progress

We provide the critical infrastructure to ensure all women on campus can thrive.



## Section 2.3: Supporting Women's Progress and Well-being

We have implemented a range of specific measures to support women's participation and success.

- **Maternity and Paternity Leave:** We have a comprehensive paid maternity leave policy (Leave Regulations, Section 5) ensuring job security. We also support shared parental responsibilities by allowing flexible use of existing leave for paternity.
- **On-Campus Childcare:** NSTU provides paid childcare for students, faculty, and staff through the **Shishukunj Day Care Center**, enabling parents to continue their academic and professional activities.

- **Mentoring and Access Schemes:** We provide structured mentoring, scholarships, and guidance, with over 10% of female students participating in these schemes. We also recognize and award women's contributions on International Women's Day.
- **Encouraging Applications:** NSTU actively encourages women to apply in underrepresented fields and promotes female participation in international opportunities, such as the Erasmus Mobility Program.

## Conclusion

Noakhali Science and Technology University's 2024 contribution to SDG 5 demonstrates a holistic approach. Our research is identifying systemic barriers and informing policy on women's health, economic empowerment, and environmental rights. Operationally, we have achieved a 50% female intake for new students and provide the critical infrastructure—such as anti-discrimination policies, childcare, and maternity leave—that empowers women. This combined strategy of evidence-based research and practical support underscores our deep commitment to achieving gender equality.

## Appendix: SDG 5 Targeting 2024 Publications Referenced

1. Hossain, S.M.R., Akter, T., Mohsin, M., Chowdhury, P.B., Khudri, M.M. (2024). Contraceptive uses among married women in Bangladesh: a systematic review and meta-analyses. *Journal of Health Population and Nutrition*.
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