

The role of university functions in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Ferhat Abbas University

Yacine LAKIKZA *¹

**¹University Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi of Bordj Bou Arreridj, Algeria,
yacine.lakikza@univ-bba. dz**

Received :23/04/2025

Accepted :27/06/2025

Published:30/06/2025

Abstract :

The purpose of this study is to clarify the university's role and responsibilities in accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. Ferhat Abbas University is the subject of the case study. A descriptive method was used to accomplish this. The primary conclusions were that Ferhat Abbas University is focused on attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the implementation of the "Socially Responsible University" initiative and has achieved various SDGs with certain limitations. Given these findings, we offer a series of suggestions that may improve Ferhat Abbas University's and Algerian universities' overall chances of achieving the SDGs.

Keywords : University Functions, Sustainable Development, Barriers, Ferhat Abbas University.

JEL Classification Codes M14 ;I23 ;P28.

1. Introduction:

As one of the most significant issues confronting the modern world, sustainable development has received particular attention from numerous nations and international organizations. One of the most significant state institutions, the university works to make the idea of sustainable development a reality through its educational, scientific, and volunteer programs.

By laying out a number of initiatives, Algeria's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has attempted to implement a plan targeted at accomplishing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Among these are: Updating the higher education quality reference by incorporating university social responsibility and sustainable development standards. Requesting that Algerian universities prepare the "Socially Responsible University" project in a way that reflects a vision, mission, and objectives aligned with the desired sustainable development strategy objectives.

1.1 Research Problem:

Through its many educational, scientific and volunteer endeavors, the Algerian university is one of the most significant governmental organizations working to attain sustainable development. In order to accomplish this, Ferhat Abbas University-Setif 1 prepared a strategy called the "Socially Responsible University Project 2018/2022." As a result, the primary question of our research was: **To what extent do the functions of Ferhat Abbas University contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the framework of adopting a socially responsible university model?**

This main question includes the following sub-questions:

- What is the relationship between university functions and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What are the main components of Ferhat Abbas University's plan to meet the Sustainable Development Goals of 2030?
- What are the primary barriers preventing Ferhat Abbas University from accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals of the year 2030?

1.2. Study Hypotheses:

- University functions significantly contribute to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- The elements targeted by the Ferhat Abbas University strategy significantly contribute to achieving its functions for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- There are a number of obstacles that hinder the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals by Ferhat Abbas University.

1.3. Study Objectives:

- Highlighting the university's contributions to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals;
- Elucidating Ferhat Abbas University's efforts to achieve the goals;
- identifying the barriers to Ferhat Abbas University's attainment of the 2030 SDGs;
- presenting recommendations that assist decision-makers at Algerian universities in general and

The role of university functions in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Ferhat Abbas University

Ferhat Abbas University in particular in accomplishing the 2030 SDGs.

1.4. Study Methodology:

The descriptive method, which focuses on examining the phenomenon as it occurs in reality, characterizing it by gathering data about it, and analyzing it to draw conclusions and offer suggestions, was used because it was appropriate given the nature of the research and the goals to be accomplished from this study.

2. The concept of sustainable development:

The idea of sustainable development has attracted the interest of numerous scholars and professionals. When the United Nations established a global commission on development and the environment in 1987, Norwegian Prime Minister Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland served as its chair. Brundtland defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Boussaâ & Bouhous, 2019, p. 69). This was the first time it was formally addressed. "Not bequeathing the next generations anything specific, but providing them with everything necessary to ensure a standard of living no less quality than the level we enjoy, and to look forward to the generations that will follow from the same perspective" is how economist Robert Solow defines sustainable development " (Al-Akhdar & Al-Ibrahimi, March 25, 2019, p. 75).

Four categories of development concepts have been established by the World Resources Institute (Hamad Mukhalaf, 2020, p. 374):

- Its economic idea is that industrialized nations should use less energy and resources, while developing nations should make the most of their natural resources in order to improve living conditions and end poverty;
- its social idea is to stabilize population growth and increase access to health and education services;
- its environmental idea is to protect natural resources, water resources, and land and avoid exploitation for housing;
- and its technological idea is to encourage people to use clean energy that doesn't harm the environment.

Considering the aforementioned, sustainable development can be defined as "the continuous fulfillment of various human needs, while preserving the environment and its natural resources, and without harming the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

3. Sustainable Development Goals:

Every nation recognized that there were significant crises that came with the process of attaining progress, chief among them being the disturbance of the ecology. To accomplish the following objectives, the 2030 plan was adopted: (United Nations Sustainable Development Group, 2020, p. 14) ;

1. Removing Poverty;
2. Ensuring Food Security And Promoting Environmentally Friendly Farming Practices;
3. Well-Being And Health;
4. Excellent Schooling;
5. Equality Of Gender;

6. Sanitation And Clean Water;
7. Inexpensive, Clean Energy;
- 8 Good Effort And Economic Expansion;
9. . Infrastructure, Industry, And Innovation;
10. Lowering Disparities;
11. Local Communities And Sustainable Cities;
12. Ensuring That Patterns Of Manufacturing Are Sustainable;
13. Addressing The Effects Of Climate Change;
14. . Preserving The Seas, Oceans, And Marine Resources And Making Sensible Use Of Them;
15. Preservation Of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Management Of Forests, Prevention Of Desertification, Prevention Of Land Degradation, And Prevention Of The Loss Of Biodiversity
16. Justice, Peace, And The Creation Of Responsible And Efficient Institutions;
17. partnership agreement to accomplish the objectives.

4. University Functions:

As listed below (reggad, 2016, p. 30), the university provides two kinds of services to the community that help it grow and prosper: direct and indirect services for the university in community service;

4.1. Indirect service to the university:

Providing high-quality research and instructional programs that address community needs is an indirect service to the university.

4.2. Direct Community Service (The University's Direct Contribution to Community Service):

Through engagement with the external community, the university hopes to deepen and improve its relationship with it, viewing it as an essential component of its mission and helping to further it. It also gives academics and students the chance to share their work and research findings with the community and acts as a reference framework that the community can consult for guidance.

5. The relationship between university functions and sustainable development:

The university's functions contribute to achieving sustainable development, and we can illustrate this as follows:

5.1. The Relationship Between the Teaching Function and Sustainable Development:

Several objective elements can be used to adapt university education to the principles of sustainable development. These elements can be summed up as follows:

- Including sustainable development as a core subject taught at the basic education department level (common core) aims to increase students' awareness of the effects of human activity on the environment. This helps to create a culture of sustainable development, which helps them make positive decisions that align with the context of sustainable development, and why not turn them into environmental advocates.
- The inclusion of the Sustainable Development specialization in all university faculties aims to deepen students' training in the field of linking their specialized knowledge to sustainable development, i.e., enabling students to use their prior knowledge in their specializations to serve sustainable development, such as green accounting and green marketing.

The role of university functions in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Ferhat Abbas University

5.2. The Relationship Between the Function of Scientific Research and Sustainable Development:

The function of scientific research helps achieve sustainable development by providing a set of elements, including:

- Directing scientific research towards issues and topics of high economic and social value related to sustainable development;
- Directing research towards innovation and renewal and linking it to sustainable development;
- Conduct research centers and laboratories concerned with sustainable development, especially in the fields of food security, energy security, health, and education.

5.3. The Relationship Between Community Service Function and Sustainable Development:

According to (Hajeem Al-Taie & Al-Abadi, 2008, p. 87), The university can contribute to community service to achieve sustainable development by:

- Offering scientific consultations and conducting various studies for the benefit of social and economic institutions and providing the necessary facilities;
- Offering lifelong education to those who want to improve their academic and intellectual achievements;
- Preserving the fruits of human thought and protecting human heritage;
- Promoting globally agreed-upon values, the most important of which are peace, justice, equality, solidarity, and human rights;
- Promoting globally agreed-upon values, the most important of which are: peace, justice, equality, solidarity, and human rights;
- Offering the community qualified and specialized frameworks. Based on the analysis above, it is evident that the university's operations help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 2030

6. Ferhat Abbas University-Setif 1: The Socially Responsible University Project 2018/2022

Founded in 1978, Ferhat Abbas University-Setif 1 is a significant development engine, particularly in its region, because of its ongoing efforts, particularly in recent years, to improve its ties with the social and economic environment. Beginning in 2015, the institution was interested in using quality benchmarking criteria to produce high-quality outcomes for the community. Numerous flaws were found in Ferhat Abbas University's 2017 self-assessment report and 2018 external expertise report, particularly with regard to the institution's connection to sustainable development. Senior management of the institution created a project named "Strategic Elements for Sustainable Development and a Socially Responsible University" with this perspective in mind. The following strategy framework serves as the foundation for this initiative (Ferhat Abbas University, 2018):

6.1. Education and development compatibility:

According to this idea, the university concentrated on coordinating the roles of teaching and scientific research with the economic activity patterns that are prevalent in the area where the university is situated, rather than on training for the sake of training.

To materialize this element, economic and social actors and local institutions were involved in proposing vocational training offers and contributing to the preparation of their content, and students were enabled to conduct field internships at the level of its workshops, in order to ensure

the quality of training and increase the chances of employment of graduates..

6.2. Typical scientific specializations include:

This refers to the establishment of a joint specialization that integrates at least two disciplines in order to share knowledge and information and produce new goods that boost economic institutions' competitiveness, foster innovation and creativity, and create new, appealing, and practical jobs for the labor market. At the level of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, we list health economics and transportation economics as two of these fields, but we are not the only ones.

6.3. Participation of Stakeholders:

In order to create value for the institution, this idea aims to allow all internal stakeholders, including instructors, staff, and students, to participate and offer their expertise in their domains. Professors and students from the Faculty of Architecture were instrumental in expanding the University of Setif 1's pole in this regard. Their exceptional designs were praised by the university's management and specialists.

6.4. Sustainable Development:

This principle highlights the necessity of including the institution with the worldwide movements advocating for environmental preservation and sustainable development. As a result, the university ought to help achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in addition to making recommendations.

Through the "Experimental Farm," the university has made a contribution in this regard by putting forward a number of projects pertaining to the preservation of regional natural resources, such as wastewater treatment and reuse, enhancing urban sanitation, preserving and enhancing the quality of agricultural soils, preserving and enhancing regional flora and fauna, and preserving and enhancing landscapes.

6.5. Graduates' employability:

This idea suggests two ways to improve graduates' employability and help them integrate into the workforce:

- Establishing collaborations with socio-economic institutions to facilitate internships for students;
- In order for the university to effectively support local institutions and economic actors in their development activities, it was suggested that the "Experimental Farm" project, which has been in place since 2001, be expanded in light of the university's internal and external environment diagnosis (swot analysis).

This was made possible by the university's use of its training and scientific research capabilities in support of development initiatives, and the farm's services extended outside of Setif State. The following trainings are offered at the experimental farm:

- The following specialties are included in the realm of agricultural robotics: software engineering and networks for flow optimization;
- Chemistry-related topics include plastics, fertilizers, both natural and chemical fertilizers, and the recovery of household and industrial waste;
- Agricultural automation, pumps, solar, thermal, and wind energy are all areas of automation, electronics, optics, and mechanics;

The role of university functions in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Ferhat Abbas University

- Water purification, resource conservation, urban planning, landscaping, and ecology are all areas of ecology and architecture;
- In the field of health: Animal health, nutrition and food;
- Rural Economy, Agricultural Marketing, Agricultural Accounting, Agricultural Food Economics, and Agricultural Trade are all areas of economics, trade, and management.

6.6. Establishing structures to accompany the implementation of the University of Ferhat Abbas's "Socially Responsible University" strategy:

To improve the university's relationship with the economic and social environment and to integrate the university in the development of the economy and society, a number of structures have been established. The most significant of these are the following (Ferhat Abbas University, 2018):

- Entrepreneurship House:

In order to foster students' creativity and encourage them to start their own businesses, it was formed at the university under the terms of an agreement with the National Agency for Support and Employment of Youth:

- Promoting and raising awareness of the entrepreneurship culture by planning study days throughout the university's faculties;
- Ensuring that entrepreneurship is taught to students as a standard of lectures and guided work;
- Setting up a contest to determine which project is the best ;
- Ensuring that students who have ideas for entrepreneurship projects are supported.

- Office for Connecting the University and Institutions:

On the one hand, this arrangement links the university with social and economic organizations to make it easier for students to complete internships. However, it also gives firms access to qualified research professors who can handle a range of problems that impede the successful execution of their missions by suggesting relevant solutions.

- Technology and Innovation Support Center:

The organization was established in accordance with a contract with the National Institute of Industrial Property, and its goal is to raise awareness among researchers of the significance of submitting novel product concepts and utilizing patents to value their work. In addition to helping candidates commercialize their inventions, the organization supports their creative ideas, guarantees their training, and assists them in creating a safe account to file for a patent under the global patent system.

- Center for Science - Business Sector:

One of the primary interests of the university administration is the convergence of the business sector and the university. In order to promote scientific and technical research and increase the university's openness to its social and economic surroundings, the Science-Business Center was founded to bring together academics and business leaders. In exchange, the owners of the institutions gain new ideas that give them a competitive edge. These meetings are designed to give research professors the chance to showcase their interests and scientific and technological expertise to managers of institutions in their respective fields.

- Ferhat Abbas University's Professional Integration Observatory:

In order to create reports that help students choose their majors and modify training programs to meet the demands of the job market, the University Observatory specializes in surveying university graduates two years after they graduate.

7. The challenges Ferhat Abbas University faces in accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

in this section, we will attempt to review the most significant research that tackles the challenges Ferhat Abbas University faces in accomplishing the SDGs.

7-1. The university's relationship with its economic and social environment is limited by a number of factors, according to a study by (lakikza & reggad, 2021). These include:

- Poor marketing of the university's outputs, which has not drawn the business sector to the university in a desirable way and has forced them to hire outside experts;
- Due to the low hourly wage and lack of benefits, experts are not incentivized to assist with students' training;
- Most of the agreements between the university and social and economic institutions are not activated (simply ink on paper), which leads to the low quality of training.

7.2. The University of Setifl's relationship with its socio-economic environment is weakened or hampered by a number of factors, the most significant of which were listed in a study (reggad & bouima, The impact of marketing communications on the quality of the university's relationship with its economic environment, 2020):

- A culture of marketing the university's services is lacking;
- The inability to regularly survey employers about their level of satisfaction with university services so that improvements can be made;
- The absence of incentives for long-term interactions with the university.

7.3. Study (zerara, 2022): The study identified the primary barriers to professional integration for Setifl University graduates, with the following being the most significant:

- The absence of vocational integration research units;
- The absence of external environment participation in training and the non-implementation of signed agreements;
- The proliferation of a culture of reliance and reliance on the state to provide jobs, rather than educating graduates who can create jobs rather than seek them out.

It is evident from the aforementioned findings that there are several barriers preventing Ferhat Abbas University from accomplishing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The role of university functions in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: A case study of Ferhat Abbas University

8. Conclusion:

Based on the aforementioned, it can be concluded that universities must be oriented toward accomplishing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals because they are worthy of consideration and implementation, serve as a roadmap that can be worked on both now and in the future, and the university is a significant and useful instrument for doing so. The findings of this investigation were as follows:

- If the fundamentals of each function are followed and connected to sustainable development, the university's functions towards accomplishing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals can be activated effectively ;
- Ferhat Abbas University's approach, known as the Socially Responsible University Project 2018/2022, allows it to accomplish part of the 2030 SDGs ;
- The ability of Ferhat Abbas University to accomplish the SDGs is hampered by a number of internal and external factors.

Given the findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- Promoting a sustainable development culture within the university by making sustainable development a core subject taught at the basic education department level in all university faculties (common trunk) so that all students can gain from the instruction;
- Research professors are encouraged to construct sustainable development research projects and their work is valued;
- To accomplish the objectives of sustainable development both now and in the future, the university and its faculties should incorporate a sustainable development unit into their organizational structure;
- To promote the university's products and improve its relationships with other institutions, a marketing unit was added to the university's and its faculties' organizational structure;
- Establishing research units on vocational integration with experts from a range of fields, including sociology, educational sciences, economic sciences, and statistics;
- The need that all universities implement the quality reference, and that they foster competition among themselves to do so by providing excellence.

9. References:

1. Books :

- Hajeem Al-Taie, Y., & Al-Abadi, H. F. (2008). Total Quality Management in Higher Education, Dar Al-Warraq Amman, Jordan.
- reggad, s. (2016). Implementing a Quality Assurance System in Higher Education Institutions: Its Challenges and Prospects. Algeria, Ferhat Abbas University, noor publishing, London.

2. Theses:

- zerara, s. (2022). Evaluation of Higher Education System Reforms through Professional Integration: A Case Study of Setif1 University , Setif1 University, Algeria.

3. Journal article :

- Boussaâ, M., & Bouhous, N. (2019). The Role of the University in Realizing Sustainable Development. Chaa' Journal of Economic Studies, 69-86.
- Hamad Mukhalaf, W. (2020). Obstacles to Sustainable Development in Developing Countries: The Case of Iraq. Iraqi University Journal, 374-392.
- lakikza, y., & reggad, s. (2021). The importance of applying the standards of the field of relationship with the economic and social environment of the National Reference for Quality Assurance (RNAQES) in improving the quality of services of Algerian higher education institutions. Journal of Research and Development Studies, 43-55.

4. Seminar article:

- & Al-Ibrahimi, N. (March 25, 2019). Analyzing the Effective Role of the University in Achieving Sustainable Development. Development of Arab Educational Systems (pp. 75-122). Lebanon: Center for Scientific Research Generation:: Conference Proceedings Book Series.
- reggad, s., & bouima, a. (2020). The impact of marketing communications on the quality of the university's relationship with its economic environment. The outstanding performance of organizations and governance (pp. 289-298). algeria: Kasdi Merbah university.

5. Internet websites:

- Ferhat Abbas University. (2018). *Ferhat Abbas University*. Consulted on 02 05, 2025, sur <https://www.univ-setif.dz/> .
- United Nations Sustainable Development Group. (2020). *Reference Guide on the Sustainable Development Agenda UNSDG.UN*. consulted on 02 04, 2025, sur https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/unsdg-sdg-primer-report-ar_july6%281%29.pdf: UNSDG.UN.ORG