



UNIVERSITY  
OF  
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ANNUAL  
REPORT:  
SDG REPORT

10 REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES

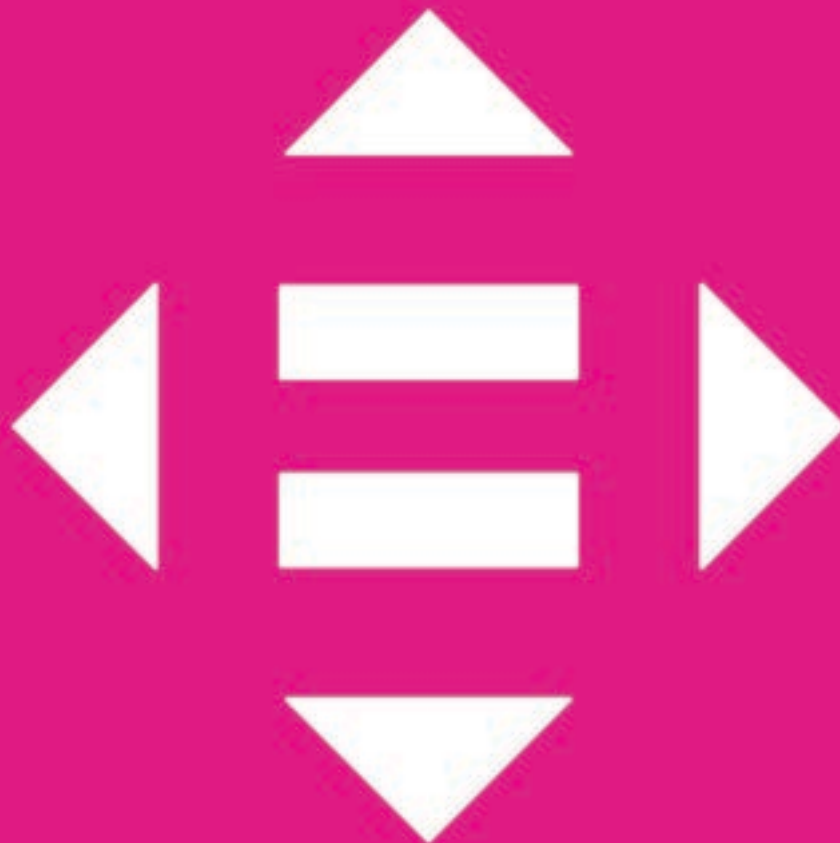


SDG 10: REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES

Our Future  
Reimagined

**UJ SDG REPORT 2023**  
**SDG 10: REDUCED**  
**INEQUALITIES**

**10** **REDUCED**  
**INEQUALITIES**



# Report on the University of Johannesburg's Contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 10

## SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

### OVERVIEW: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the University of Johannesburg's (UJ) contributions to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 10 (SDG 10) on Reduced Inequalities during the 2023 academic year. UJ has made substantial contributions to the achievement of SDG 10. Through a multi-faceted approach that spans education, research, community engagement, and policy development, UJ has actively worked towards reducing inequalities related to gender, socio-economic status, race, and access to higher education. In 2023, UJ continued to build on its legacy of social transformation by implementing initiatives that target marginalised and underrepresented communities, both on and off campus.

Key initiatives during the year focused on increasing access to education for disadvantaged groups, improving the participation of women in leadership roles, providing financial aid and support for students from low-income backgrounds, and promoting racial and gender equity across its academic and professional environments. Additionally, UJ's community outreach programmes, particularly those focused on educational development

and mentorship, have been integral to reducing inequalities in the surrounding areas.

This report provides an overview of UJ's contribution to SDG 10, with a detailed look at the specific activities and programmes implemented in 2023 to promote inclusion, empower marginalised groups, and ensure equal opportunities for all members of the university community. The report emphasises how UJ has integrated social justice, equality, and transformation into its strategic goals, creating pathways for a more equitable society.

## INTRODUCTION

Inequality is a critical barrier to achieving sustainable development, and addressing it is key to realising many of the broader United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 10 seeks to reduce inequalities both within and among countries by promoting policies and practices that ensure inclusivity and equitable access to opportunities. The University of Johannesburg (UJ) has been actively working to reduce these inequalities, recognising its role in promoting educational access, social mobility, and equity for all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, gender, or race.

In 2023, UJ's approach to SDG 10 remained focused on removing barriers to education and empowering marginalised groups. Central to this effort were programmes designed to increase access to higher education for students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as initiatives aimed at fostering inclusivity and social justice across the university. By prioritising diversity and inclusion, community engagement, and financial accessibility, UJ has taken concrete steps towards breaking down the barriers that perpetuate inequality.

This report outlines UJ's key initiatives to address inequalities, detailing how the university has responded to the challenges posed by gender and socio-economic disparities, ensuring that all students have the tools and resources necessary to succeed in their educational and professional pursuits. Furthermore, it highlights the university's contributions to broader societal transformation, including its role in promoting inclusive education, gender parity, and racial equality.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

UJ's contributions to SDG 10 are reflected in a variety of university-wide initiatives that span academic programmes, research efforts, student support services, community outreach, and policy development. These initiatives aim to dismantle the systemic inequalities that limit opportunities for disadvantaged groups and foster a more inclusive and just society.

### ***1. Improving Access to Education***

A key element of UJ's work in reducing inequalities is increasing access to education for students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2023, UJ continued to provide a wide range of financial aid programmes designed to support students from low-income households. These programmes include scholarships, bursaries, and targeted financial assistance for students in need. Through these initiatives, UJ ensured that students who might otherwise have been unable to afford university education had access to the resources required to pursue their studies.

The university also continued its work through the UJ Access Programme (UJAP), which provides alternative entry pathways for students who did not meet the traditional entry requirements. UJAP offers preparatory courses and bridging programmes, equipping students with the foundational knowledge and skills needed to succeed in higher education. This initiative, which has been running for several years, is instrumental in providing opportunities for students from underrepresented communities to gain access to university-level education. In 2023, UJAP saw a significant increase in student enrollment, with hundreds of students successfully completing the programme and transitioning into degree programmes.

Another important initiative to increase access was UJ's expansion of outreach programmes that target high school students in rural and underprivileged areas. These programmes include mentorship, career guidance, and academic workshops aimed at preparing students for the demands of university education. By directly engaging with communities that face barriers to higher education, UJ is helping to create pathways for students to access and succeed in tertiary education.

## ***2. Financial Aid and Support for Disadvantaged Students***

In 2023, UJ reinforced its commitment to supporting students from marginalised socio-economic backgrounds by expanding its financial aid initiatives. The university allocated additional resources to ensure that no student had to leave the university due to financial constraints. UJ's Financial Aid Office provides scholarships, loans, and bursaries specifically targeted at students from disadvantaged backgrounds. These resources are critical in ensuring that students who face financial challenges are not excluded from pursuing their studies at UJ.

The UJ Student Funding office also worked closely with external partners, including the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), to provide additional funding options to students from low-income families. This collaborative effort ensured that more students had access to the financial resources necessary to cover tuition fees, accommodation, textbooks, and other academic expenses. By removing financial barriers, UJ is creating an environment in which students from all walks of life can pursue their academic and professional dreams.



### ***3. Promoting Gender Equality***

Gender inequality continues to be a significant issue, both in higher education and in society at large. In 2023, UJ implemented several initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality and empowering women to take on leadership roles. UJ's Women's Forum remained an important platform for the promotion of gender parity, hosting discussions, workshops, and networking events for women students, staff, and faculty members. One of the key initiatives in 2023 was the Women's Leadership Development Programme, which was designed to equip female students with the leadership skills and confidence needed to excel in their professional lives.

Additionally, UJ continued to support gender-focused research through its Gender Studies programme, which examines issues of gender-based violence, women's rights, and social justice. This research has not only contributed to the academic field but has also informed UJ's internal policies and practices aimed at promoting gender equality across the university. Through these efforts, UJ is actively working to ensure that women have equal opportunities for advancement, both within the university and in the wider society.

### ***4. Racial Inclusivity and Social Justice***

UJ has long been at the forefront of efforts to promote racial inclusivity and social justice within South Africa. As part of its commitment to transformation, UJ has continued to focus on increasing racial diversity and improving racial equity across all levels of the university. In 2023, UJ strengthened its work in this area by expanding initiatives aimed at supporting students from historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The UJ Transformation Unit has worked to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for all students, particularly those from black and coloured communities. This has included initiatives aimed at increasing representation in both academic programmes and university leadership. UJ's Student Representative Council (SRC) remains an important platform for addressing issues of race and inclusion, providing students with the opportunity to voice their concerns and contribute to the ongoing transformation of the university.

Additionally, UJ has continued its partnership with local NGOs and government bodies to promote racial reconciliation and social justice through various community-based programmes. These programmes focus on addressing the legacy of apartheid and ensuring that all South Africans have equal opportunities for education, employment, and social mobility.

## ***5. Community Engagement and Social Impact***

UJ's community engagement programmes are central to its efforts to reduce inequalities in the surrounding areas. In 2023, UJ launched several projects aimed at providing educational and economic opportunities to underserved communities in Johannesburg. One notable initiative was the Ikamva Youth Programme, which provides after-school tutoring, career guidance, and mentorship to high school students in underprivileged communities. Through this programme, UJ is directly contributing to reducing inequalities in access to quality education and providing students with the tools and resources to succeed academically.

Furthermore, UJ's community development initiatives focus on addressing critical social issues such as housing, healthcare, and economic empowerment. In collaboration with local municipalities, UJ has worked to improve living conditions in informal settlements through the provision of clean water, sanitation facilities, and sustainable housing solutions. These projects align with UJ's broader commitment to improving the quality of life for marginalized communities and addressing the socio-economic disparities that contribute to inequality.

## **CONCLUSION**

The University of Johannesburg has made significant strides in contributing to SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities in 2023. Through its financial aid programmes, gender equality initiatives, racial inclusivity efforts, and community outreach projects, UJ has actively worked to reduce inequalities both within the university and in the surrounding communities.

UJ's approach to reducing inequalities is grounded in its mission to create an inclusive, diverse, and socially just environment for all students, staff, and faculty. By continuing to invest in initiatives that promote access to education, social mobility, gender empowerment, and racial inclusivity, UJ is playing a leading role in shaping a more equitable and inclusive society.

Looking ahead, UJ remains committed to expanding its efforts to reduce inequalities, both within the university and across South Africa. Through its continued focus on education, social justice, and community engagement, UJ will continue to be a driving force in creating a more just and equal society for all.



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