JOSÉ RIZAL UNIVERSITY

SDG 1 – NO TO POVERTY

Institutional Accomplishment Report | 2026

José Rizal University (JRU) reaffirms its commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty**)** by promoting equitable access to education, financial inclusion, and sustainable economic opportunities. Through scholarships, financial assistance, and student support programs, the University helps reduce educational barriers experienced by poor and low-income families, empowering deserving students to pursue academic success and improve their future economic prospects.

Beyond the campus, JRU advances poverty reduction through community-based livelihood programs, entrepreneurship initiatives, nutritional assistance, and employment partnerships. These collective efforts support SDG Targets 1.2 and 1.4, reflecting the University's commitment to reducing economic inequalities, strengthening community resilience, and creating meaningful opportunities for sustainable development. Through education, empowerment, and collaboration, JRU continues to transform opportunities into pathways toward a more inclusive and poverty-resilient society.

1. Institutional Commitment to Poverty Reduction

José Rizal University (JRU) recognizes that education, financial inclusion, and sustainable employment are essential pathways toward reducing poverty and improving quality of life. Guided by its commitment to social responsibility and inclusive development, the University implements institutional programs that address financial barriers to education, strengthen livelihood opportunities, promote economic participation, and support vulnerable communities.

In alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty)**,** JRU advances poverty reduction through scholarships and financial assistance, community-based entrepreneurship, nutritional support, career development, and employment partnerships.

These initiatives support SDG Target 1.2, which seeks to reduce poverty in all its dimensions, and Target 1.4**,** which promotes equal access to economic resources and essential services. They also complement SDG 4 (Quality Education)**,** SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**,** and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)**.**

Through coordinated institutional efforts and strategic partnerships, JRU aims to empower economically disadvantaged students and community beneficiaries with opportunities to improve their educational attainment, strengthen economic resilience, and pursue sustainable livelihoods.

2. Expanding Financial Assistance and Equitable Access to Education

JRU continues to demonstrate its commitment to educational accessibility by providing scholarships and financial assistance to deserving Filipino students from poor and low-income families. These programs help reduce the financial burden associated with higher education and support students in pursuing their academic aspirations despite limited economic resources.

The University's financial assistance initiatives include the PD 451 Scholarship, Student Assistance Program, JRU Alumni Association Scholarships, Student Assistantship opportunities, E. Del Fonso Memorial Scholarship, Zerillo Scholarship, and other partner-funded grants. Depending on program eligibility and provisions, assistance may include tuition discounts, educational fee support, stipends, and book allowances.

Under the PD 451 Scholarship Program, JRU provided 100% tuition discounts to 35 financially disadvantaged students in the second semester of SY 2024–2025 and 36 students in the first semester of SY 2025–2026, representing a 2.86% increase in scholarship beneficiaries.

The broader financial assistance records also indicate an increase from 58 to 60 beneficiaries across the reported periods, subject to final validation of the consolidated institutional data.

These initiatives reflect JRU's continuing efforts to make higher education more accessible, reduce educational inequalities, and support the academic progress of students experiencing financial hardship.

By investing in educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged students, JRU contributes to SDG Target 1.2 (Poverty Reduction) **and** SDG Target 4.3 (Equal Access to Affordable and Quality Tertiary Education)**.**

3. Supporting Degree Completion and Educational Mobility

Beyond providing access to education, JRU recognizes the importance of helping financially disadvantaged students remain enrolled and successfully complete their academic programs.

In SY 2025–2026, the University supported 36 PD 451 scholars, of whom six successfully graduated in June 2026, representing 16.67% of the scholarship beneficiaries. The remaining 30 students continued their studies across the first to third year levels.

These results demonstrate the contribution of scholarship assistance to educational continuity and degree completion. While the University has not established a separate graduation target specifically for students belonging to the bottom 20% of household income, its scholarship programs provide important support to students facing economic disadvantages.

The continued implementation of financial assistance programs reflects JRU's commitment to promoting educational inclusion and creating pathways toward improved employment prospects and economic mobility.

4. Scholarship Impact Story: From Financial Hardship to Professional Achievement

The impact of JRU's scholarship initiatives is reflected in the experience of Kevin D. Aseo, a Bachelor of Science in Criminology graduate who worked as a taho vendor while pursuing his college education.

Coming from a poor family with limited economic resources, Kevin faced significant financial challenges. Despite his family's low income, he persevered in his studies while working to support his daily needs and educational expenses.

Recognizing his determination, JRU granted him the PD 451 Scholarship from SY 2020–2021 to SY 2022–2023**,** helping ease his financial burden and supporting his pursuit of a college degree. Through perseverance and educational assistance, Kevin successfully completed his Bachelor of Science in Criminology and passed the Criminology Licensure Examination in February 2024**.**

He subsequently secured employment at the Mandaluyong College of Science and Technology, where he performs responsibilities related to criminology laboratory operations, campus monitoring, and student formation. He also aspires to pursue graduate studies.

Kevin's journey illustrates how scholarship assistance can help financially disadvantaged students overcome educational barriers, attain professional qualifications, and access employment opportunities.

His achievement demonstrates the complementary contributions of SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) in advancing educational equity and economic inclusion.

5. **Empowering Communities Through Skills Development and Sustainable Livelihoods**

Recognizing that poverty reduction requires opportunities for income generation and economic participation, JRU extends its institutional initiatives beyond the campus through community-based livelihood and entrepreneurship programs. Through its outreach initiatives in Harapin ang Bukas and Bagong Silang, the University provides practical livelihood training to community beneficiaries, including skills development in producing dishwashing liquid and peanut butter. These activities aim to equip participants with practical competencies that may support small-scale entrepreneurship and supplemental household income.

Complementing these initiatives, Tindahan ni Rizal provides a platform for community entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products, connecting beneficiaries with potential customers and encouraging continued participation in livelihood activities. Reported monitoring results indicate that 60% of Harapin ang Bukas participants and 53% of Bagong Silang participants continued their livelihood activities, demonstrating encouraging levels of participation and livelihood continuity.

These findings suggest that the initiatives have helped beneficiaries apply acquired skills beyond their initial training. Further monitoring of production, sales, and household income will help establish their long-term economic impact.

Through Husaypreneurship and Tindahan ni Rizal, JRU supports SDG Target 1.2 (Poverty Reduction) and complements SDG Target 8.3**,** which promotes entrepreneurship, productive activities, and the growth of small enterprises.

6. **Addressing Nutritional Vulnerability and Supporting Community Well-Being**

Poverty affects not only household income but also access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, and essential resources. Recognizing these interconnected challenges, JRU supports community-based programs that address the immediate needs of vulnerable populations.

In partnership with Barangay Daang Bakal, Mandaluyong City, the University implemented the *"Pinggang Makulay: Sapat na Nutrisyon Para sa Malusog na Kinabukasan ng Lahat"* Feeding Program.

Through the Community Development Office and participating academic and administrative units, the initiative provided nutritious meals to 10 vulnerable beneficiaries, including malnourished children, high-risk pregnant women, senior citizens, and children with disabilities.

The program aimed to improve access to essential nutrition and support the health and well-being of individuals experiencing nutritional vulnerability.

Reported observations indicated improvements in beneficiaries' weight and overall well-being, although further documentation is needed to establish the extent and sustainability of these outcomes.

By addressing immediate nutritional needs, the program contributes to the broader objectives of SDG 1 (No Poverty), particularly Target 1.4 concerning access to basic services, while directly complementing SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being)**.**

7. **Connecting Education to Employment and Sustainable Economic Opportunities**

JRU recognizes that access to meaningful employment is an important pathway toward financial independence, economic security, and poverty reduction.

On October 27, 2025, the University received recognition from the Department of Labor and Employment–National Capital Region (DOLE-NCR) as the first accredited Job Placement Office (JPO) in Mandaluyong City.

This institutional milestone strengthened JRU's role in connecting students, graduates, and job seekers with employment information, career development resources, and potential employment opportunities.

Through collaboration with DOLE-NCR and the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) of Mandaluyong City, JRU supports career guidance, job placement initiatives, labor market information dissemination, and workforce development activities.

The University's anticipated participation in the NCR JPO policy-making committee also presents opportunities to contribute to discussions on regional employment strategies and workforce development priorities.

These efforts complement the University's career development and employability initiatives by helping bridge the transition from education to employment.

Through government collaboration and employment advocacy, JRU supports SDG 1 (No Poverty) **and** SDG Target 8.5**,** which promotes productive employment and decent work for all.

Institutional Monitoring and Impact Assessment

To strengthen accountability and demonstrate measurable contributions to poverty reduction, JRU shall enhance the systematic documentation, monitoring, and evaluation of its SDG 1 initiatives.

Institutional monitoring shall prioritize scholarship coverage, financial assistance provided, student retention and graduation outcomes, livelihood participation, income-generating activities, community beneficiaries served, employment referrals, and graduate employment outcomes.

Data gathered from concerned University offices and external partners shall support evidence-based assessment, identification of service gaps, program enhancement, and strategic resource allocation.

Particular attention shall be given to validating beneficiary counts, assessing the economic circumstances of scholarship recipients, monitoring livelihood sustainability, and evaluating the longer-term outcomes of educational and employment assistance.

Through an integrated Annual SDG 1 Accomplishment and Impact Report, JRU aims to strengthen institutional accountability, improve the sustainability of its poverty reduction initiatives, and provide reliable evidence for institutional sustainability assessments.

Recommendations:

To further advance its commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty)**,** José Rizal University (JRU) is encouraged to strengthen and expand its institutional initiatives that promote educational accessibility, economic inclusion, and sustainable livelihoods. The following strategic actions are recommended:

1. **Expand Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs.** Strengthen partnerships with alumni, private organizations, and institutional donors to increase financial assistance opportunities for deserving students from poor and low-income families, particularly those at risk of discontinuing their education due to financial difficulties.

2. **Strengthen Student Retention and Degree Completion Support.** Establish systematic monitoring of financially disadvantaged scholars to assess academic progress, retention, graduation rates, and financial challenges, ensuring timely interventions that support successful degree completion.
3. **Enhance Community Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Programs.** Expand initiatives such as *Husaypreneurship* and *Tindahan ni Rizal* by providing continuous skills training, financial literacy, product development, and market access opportunities to help community beneficiaries establish sustainable sources of income.
4. **Promote Employment and Economic Inclusion.** Maximize the services of the Rizalian Career Center and strengthen partnerships with DOLE, PESO, and industry stakeholders to expand internship opportunities, job placement assistance, employability training, and employment pathways for students, graduates, and disadvantaged job seekers.
5. **Institutionalize SDG 1 Monitoring and Impact Assessment.** Develop a centralized reporting system that documents scholarship beneficiaries, financial assistance provided, graduation outcomes, livelihood participation, employment placement, and measurable economic improvements among beneficiaries. Establish annual performance targets and evaluate program effectiveness to support evidence-based planning and sustainability reporting.

Through these strategic initiatives, JRU can move beyond providing immediate financial assistance toward creating sustainable pathways out of poverty**.** By integrating education, economic empowerment, employment opportunities, and measurable institutional outcomes, the University can strengthen its contribution to SDG Targets 1.2 and 1.4**,** while fostering a more inclusive, economically resilient, and socially responsible Rizalian community.

Conclusion: Empowering Lives and Building Pathways Out of Poverty

José Rizal University demonstrates its commitment to SDG 1: No Poverty by integrating educational assistance, community livelihood development, nutritional support, and employment advocacy into its institutional priorities.

From helping financially disadvantaged students complete their education to equipping community beneficiaries with entrepreneurial skills and connecting graduates with employment opportunities, JRU contributes to addressing economic barriers and promoting social mobility.

Moving forward, the University shall strengthen financial assistance programs, expand community livelihood partnerships, enhance employment opportunities, and establish more comprehensive monitoring of measurable outcomes. Expand access to education, strengthen sustainable livelihoods, create pathways to decent employment, and ensure that vulnerable individuals are not left behind.

Through sustained collaboration, evidence-based planning, and meaningful community engagement, JRU reaffirms its commitment to transforming educational opportunities into economic empowerment and contributing to a more inclusive, equitable, and poverty-resilient society.