

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Yunus Center for Social Business and Sustainability (YCSBS) at Epoka University serves as a hub for promoting research, education, and practical initiatives in the fields of social business and sustainability. Established to translate knowledge into actionable solutions, the Center focuses on raising awareness, building capacities, and fostering collaboration among students, faculty, and external partners. YCSBS aims to address real-world social and environmental challenges through evidence-based research, student engagement, and partnerships with organizations and communities. These objectives outline the Center's objectives, priorities, and practical actions, emphasizing initiatives that can be implemented with existing university resources, volunteer contributions, and in-kind support, ensuring meaningful impact without reliance on additional funding.

Objective 1 **Low-Cost Research and Knowledge Production**

Goal:

Establish YCSBS as a credible center using faculty expertise, student research, and open-access tools.

- Use existing faculty and student projects to produce research papers and case studies.
- Focus on desk research, surveys, and interviews, avoiding expensive fieldwork.
- Publish outputs on open-access platforms and university channels.
- Leverage partnerships with international hubs for joint papers without funding dependency.

Success Metrics:

- 3-5 publications per year using internal resources.
- Research outputs referenced in local or regional discussions.

Objective 2 **Education and Student Engagement**

Goal:

Engage students and faculty using existing academic structures.

- Add social business topics to existing courses as guest lectures or mini-modules.
- Launch a student-led Social Business Club or Lab using free meeting spaces and online collaboration tools.
- Encourage volunteer-led projects in the community with zero budget (e.g., awareness campaigns, case study research).
- Mentorship using faculty guidance and alumni volunteers, no paid mentors needed.

Success Metrics:

- Number of students participating in projects, clubs, or modules.
- Successful student-led initiatives (events, research, small campaigns).

Objective 3

Partnerships and Collaboration

Goal:

Build practical collaborations without requiring university funding.

- Formalize informal collaborations with NGOs, small businesses, and alumni who can offer in-kind support (venues, guidance, data).
- Co-host webinars and virtual events using free online tools (Zoom, Teams, YouTube).
- Engage in joint research or volunteer programs with partners that cover their own costs.

Success Metrics:

- Number of collaborative projects/events.
- Engagement from external partners without university funding.

Objective 4

Policy Influence and Advocacy

Goal:

Make YCSBS a reference point using research and low-cost outreach.

- Publish policy briefs and insights on the center's website and social media.
- Organize small-scale roundtables using existing classrooms or online platforms.
- Contribute to discussions in public forums and social media groups.

Success Metrics:

- Number of briefs or public contributions per year.
- Invitations to participate in policy discussions or advisory groups.

Objective 5

Operational Sustainability

Goal:

Run the center entirely with internal resources.

- Use existing university office space, computers, and faculty time.
- Engage students as volunteers or interns for research, event management, and social media.
- Track activities using free project management tools (Trello, Google Workspace, Notion).
- Conduct bi-annual review meetings with faculty and student volunteers to plan next steps.

Success Metrics:

- All activities delivered without external funding.
- Volunteer and faculty engagement maintained.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Research: number of papers and case studies published using internal resources.
- Student Engagement: student participation in clubs, projects, and modules.

- Partnerships: number of low-cost collaborations and joint activities.
- Policy Influence: contributions to public discussions, policy briefs published online.
- Operational Sustainability: all activities completed without budget dependency.

Risk Management

- Low motivation due to no funding: Use recognition (certificates, visibility, networking opportunities) and academic credit for students.
- Limited output: Focus on small, high-quality projects instead of large initiatives.
- Engagement drop: Keep activities light, flexible, and rewarding, emphasize networking and learning.