

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)



YAŞAR UNIVERSITY

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: 08 December 2015

To: 08 December 2017

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Rector of the Yaşar University

08 December 2017

To our stakeholders,

I am pleased to confirm that Yaşar University reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like our University. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Dr. M. Cemali DİNÇER

Part II. Description of Actions and Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

INTRODUCTION

Yaşar University has been a devoted follower and disseminator of the UN Global Compact principles as an institution itself and an academic organization since participating in. Being a university established as a part of a foundation, Yaşar University serves public interests and community by not only abiding by the principles but also doing research, developing academic interest and teaching the young and elder generations on these principles.

Yaşar University since its foundation has been committed to follow ethical norms and social responsibility which are also embedded in the motto of the University as “Science, Unity, Success” reflected in the strategic planning priorities in the form of adhering responsibility for public good and human first approaches linked to scientific attitude, innovation and internationalization. Thus, UN Global Compact principles related to the human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption just overlap with the founding and governing principles of the Yaşar University as an institution.

Yaşar University has been an active participant of the UN Global Compact both at the local and international levels since signing in. Yaşar University has been represented in all annual meetings of the UN Global Compact Network Turkey since its participation as well as its representatives took part in selected activities including meetings and workshops organised by the Turkish Network. Yaşar University contributed to the international activities of UN Global Compact particularly the Business for Peace (B4P) Annual Events convened in Istanbul (2014) and New York (2015) as well as followed the finalisation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN Headquarters in New York as part of the global stakeholders in the form of non-governmental organizations.

Being an academic institution gives Yaşar University a broad spectrum of opportunities to contribute the UN Global Compact Principles and the UN Sustainable Development Goals by disseminating information, teaching and developing projects about social responsibility and SDGs as well as getting in cooperation with various stakeholders at the city, region and international levels. Especially in the SDGs’ fields of eradicating poverty, ensuring gender equality, creating means for affordable and clean energy, reducing inequities, contributing to climate action processes, helping transformation of urban environments into sustainable cities with communities, working for peace, justice and strong institutions, especially paving the way for improvement of industry, innovation and infrastructure, and needless to mention providing quality education. Yaşar University as an institution and as a source of science and fine academic studies with a quality academic faculty and administrative staff has the potential to contribute in all above-mentioned areas of the SDGs.

Yaşar University has already started its contribution to the SDGs in the fields of education, social responsibility, life-long learning, energy efficiency and work place security and health. Yaşar University is also in the process of revising its strategic plan and has been working on further incorporating the values associated with the UN Global Compact Principles and including the SDGs as reference points to the future operations of the university.

STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT PRINCIPLES AT THE YAŞAR UNIVERSITY

DESCRIPTIONS OF ACTIONS AND MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

HUMAN RIGHTS

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: Make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Sustainable development has increasingly been an important part of the contemporary world since it has been brought to the attention of various international and local actors and individuals primarily by the United Nations and its agencies. As stated by one of the institutions at the initial phases of the development of the idea and the SDGs, "It is increasingly recognized that human rights are essential to achieve sustainable development. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) served as a proxy for certain economic and social rights but ignored other important human rights linkages. By contrast, human rights principles and standards are now strongly reflected in an ambitious new global development framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" [<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/MDG/Pages/The2030Agenda.aspx> (accessed at: 28.09.2017)].

In this regard, Yaşar University prioritizes these principles and for the purpose to attract attention of students as well as its faculty to these important universal goals; the University initiates the following actions via education and improvement of institutional capabilities and infrastructure within GC principles.

1. Education Activities at the Yaşar University

Having good quality education is one of the fundamental features necessary to improve individual people's lives and contribute to the sustainability of development in general. Despite observing a progress towards increasing access to education at all levels and improvement enrolment rates in schools, particularly for women and girls, as well as overall advancing basic literacy skills in the recent years throughout the world in general, there is still a need achieving universal education goals and there is also always a room for improvement in the skill sets of the university students within higher education systems.

In order to contribute to the improvement of overall intellectual progress of the public and its students Yaşar University takes the following actions:

1.1. Department of Culture of Science and Foundation Courses Program

Yaşar University has established a specific department that has interdisciplinary features and provides teaching and training to improve theoretical understanding of scientific theories and their practical implementations for the students of Yaşar University. In the program applied in Department of Culture of Science, existing learning necessities that obtained from necessity analysis made about current demands of various business and industry sectors, institutions, companies that can employ Yaşar University graduates and universal scientific values are worked on to be brought together in the most useful way for the students' careers and personal intellectual progress.

The overall programme and the courses are developed by the Department of Culture of Science include "Yaşar University Common Compulsory Foundation Courses" which aim to provide specific information about various intellectual perspectives and, improve the necessary ability, skill, attitude, interest, habits, and the social responsibility.

Universities are high quality living spaces where modern and civilized life-style are also learned along with the scientific knowledge. In this context, Yaşar University has started learning domains study to reflect every need that arise in the real life to instruction schedules and proficiency of graduates, which is ,

different from the “specialized” or “elective” courses that students opt to take within the frame of undergraduate or associate degree programs but at the same time they are in harmony and coordination with various different academic programmes offered at the university.

Since 2010, except from the courses that Turkish “Council of Higher Education” makes it “obligatory” to take or the courses that are “elective” as part of the curricula in various teaching programs, Yaşar University provides courses to its students which are gathered under the name of “Foundation Courses Program” and offers some courses that adapt the methods and principles of science and gain awareness about philosophy and art as well as practice of social responsibility. The Department of Culture of Science provides courses for the students of all departments and vocational school programs with the topics of Design Culture, Project Management, Research and Methodology, Human Sciences, Ethic and Aesthetics.

Starting with 2012-2013 academic year, in accordance with the aims of intensification and using the physical facilities more productively, it is decided to continue to the courses by using the facilities of Open and Distance Learning. Within this framework, studies and courses are re-designed by supporting them with online activities and are started to be provided via e.yasar.edu.tr learning environment under the coordination of “Center for Open and Distance Learning” in the university.

Yaşar University gives these courses in English consistent with the universal educational standards and foundation courses are offered under three main categories; “Human Sciences”, “Culture” and “Social Responsibility”.

The courses under the program Yaşar University Foundation Courses Program (TDP) are as follows:

- I. Human Sciences
 - a. UFND010A / Behavioural Sciences
 - b. UFND010B / Semiology and Semantics
 - c. UFND010C / History and Philosophy of Science
 - d. UFND010D / Technology and Society
 - e. UFND010E / Philosophy and Logic
 - f. UFND010F / Technology and Entrepreneurship
- II. UFND020 / Research Culture
- III. UFND030 / Design Culture
- IV. UFND040 / Aesthetic Culture
- V. UFND050 / Ethic Culture
- VI. UFND060 / Project Culture

Selected Projects of the classes are as follows:

- UbiCamp – Integrated Solution to Virtual Mobility Barriers
- DTLC – Open Digital Teaching, Learning and Collaborating Platform

2. Social Responsibility Programs at the Yaşar University

Social Responsibility has been evolving to be one of the significant aspects of business life, international investment and development. In order to guide its students to this, Yaşar University founded Social Responsibility Community, offers a specific course on Social Responsibility under the Foundation Courses Program and Yaşar University Radio Station broadcasted a program on Social Responsibility.

2.1. Social Responsibility Course (UFND 070)

UFND 070 is the Social Responsibility Course provides students with the team building skills to solve real-life problems outside the campus, through combining their accumulated knowledge and expertise in the art and science disciplines, as well as through building on the individual study areas of expertise of the other group members. While working towards achieving a common goal, the project will raise awareness of the relevance of civil society and its impact on real life and people's attitude towards the environment. Social Responsibility has been devised as a product of Yaşar University's institutional scientific identity assertions. It envisages in this assertion that academic and administrative staff, students and graduates, all adopt these values for a "consciousness towards the social environment". This is an institution based course, in which the basic principles of social responsibility, as well as the methodology needed to apply the philosophical basis of these principles, are taught.

Learning outcomes of the courses are:

- To construct projects with the aid of designed project management documentation
- To develop project proposal
- To manage the defined phases of projects
- To explain principles of principles of social responsibility
- To apply the philosophical basis of social responsibility principles

2.2. Social Responsibility Community of Yaşar University

Students with an aim to organize social responsibility events established the community and the University aims to disseminate social responsibility among students and encourage them to engage in related projects as follows:

- Toy Studio
- "Game is Our Business" Project
- Orientation Days
- "Turkish Sign Language" Studio

2.3. Yaşar University Radio Station Program on Social Responsibility

Yaşar University Radio Station RadYu started a new program in the spring of 2016, with the name "Fairness in the Campus". The program has been broadcasted every Thursday with an aim to spread the latest developments on social responsibility, social entrepreneurship and volunteering not only in İzmir but also all over the World; raising awareness on social projects and using the potential of Yaşar University for future contributions in the field of social responsibility.

3. Accessible University

For the purpose of minimizing limitations which affect academic and social life of academic and administrative personnel and students in the campus, Yaşar University founded Disabled Student Unit.

3.1. Disabled Students Unit

The Disabled Students Unit aims to make arrangements in order to create an accessible university by meeting the needs of disabled students who are registered to higher education programs while their education continues, identify obstacles they may encounter and measures to be taken against them. The unit focuses on solving problems related to campus infrastructure and daily lives of disabled students and personnel by preparing special course/work materials and learning/working environment which is

essential for equal access. The Unit is composed of academic and administrative advisors and students and university employees with disabilities. They meet every month in order to elaborate on problems and prospective solutions, and prepare reports on various topics. The Unit has been working on to reach all disabled personnel and students through various means of communication as well as ensuring an all accessible university and campus wide awareness of the matters related to disabilities.

4. Life-Long Learning

“Life-long learning is the voluntary act of earning thought out life. Discover the benefits of learning of a learning mind set for personal and professional development.”

[<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/lifelong-learning.html> (accessed at: 29.09.2017)].

Yaşar University contributes to these aims by founded Yaşar University Continuing Education Center.

4.1. Yaşar University Continuing Education Center

Yaşar University Continuing Education Center (YUCEC) was established to meet the needs of lifelong learning, in-service training and personal training. The centre organizes educational programs, courses, seminars and conferences for the public, private sector, international institutions, establishments and individual requirements. Its mission is to provide participants with new information and skills by integrating theory and practice, procure cooperation with national and international establishments by organizing social activities. The center organizes certificate courses on career planning, personal development and foreign language thus contributing to individuals’ education and introduction to business life. Additionally, seminars and conferences are organized on various subjects aimed at those who wish to improve themselves, institutions and establishments.

In service work through which the center has specialized in the fields of continuing learning and making development a lifestyle, maintaining Yaşar University quality and standards is its essential principle. YUCEC gives skill and expertise providing career development educational and certificate programs as follows:

- Working individuals who wish to improve themselves in a certain field,
- Those who wish to get a different and appealing job offer,
- Those who wish to learn a foreign language or improve language skills,
- Those who did not have the opportunity of a university education.

YUCEC operates from Selçuk Yaşar Campus with teaching staff composed of experienced specialists from the distinguished academic staff of Yaşar University and business life. YUCEC is also a member of EUCEN (European University Continuing Education Network).

Besides organizing social events and seminars; YUCEC develops education programmes such as:

- Applied Human Resources Certificate Program
- Project Cycle Management (Applied) Certificate Program
- Pilates Mat work and Yoga – Personal Trainer Certificate
- Family and Student Coaching Certificate Program

ENVIRONMENT

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

Principle 9: Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

“Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Sustainable energy is opportunity – it transforms lives, economies and the planet.” [http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/ (accessed at: 29.09.2017)]. In order to create a sustainable campus, Yaşar University prioritizes renovation and development projects. In this manner while re-designing and constructing of new buildings, the University takes into account the energy saving systems.

Yaşar University became the first university in Turkey to get the Energy Management Certificate (TS-EN-ISO 50001) in 2011. Energy Productivity and Management Coordination Board was established within the University in December 2014, which meets every month to evaluate and improve the energy policy, infrastructure and savings while the technical infrastructure team meet each week. Yaşar University is committed to continuously improving energy performance in all activities with an awareness of carrying the responsibility for the energy management system. In order to achieve the above-mentioned objective, the university make every effort to:

- Reduce energy and water usage in all campus activities;
- Raise awareness about energy efficiency in the university by continuously organizing trainings/seminars;
- Define energy consumption targets and constantly monitor and report the results;
- Perform regular energy efficiency audits for defining energy efficiency improvement areas;
- Follow up updated legal statutes related to energy and water usage, and meet their requirements;
- Include energy performance improvements in the design stages of projects;
- Purchase and effectively utilize energy-efficient products and services.

Energy Efficiency and Management Student Club

The Energy Efficiency and Management Community is established in 2015 to raise awareness on the issue by the interested undergraduate and graduate students of Yaşar University. The community has been working for reaching out to university students in and outside the campus to disseminate information concerning energy efficiency. As part of its activities the club organized a conference with the title, “The Road to Sustainable Development: Energy Efficiency” at the Yaşar University campus on 29 December 2015. Students active as part of this club continue to initiate activities and campaigns in the field of energy efficiency and management issues.

LABOUR

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

“Economic growth alone is not enough to ensure equity, social progress and to eradicate poverty. All employees around the world should have decent working conditions”.

<https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/social/labour> (accessed at: 29.09.2017). Yaşar University gives the utmost importance to local employment law and international labour law. For the University ensuring employee’s rights and providing safe working environment are main priorities within the framework of institutional labour policies and practice.

Workplace Security and Health Unit

As part of the efforts to ensure safety and wellbeing of the employed at Yaşar University Workplace Security and Health Unit is founded by the university administration. This unit aims to optimize working conditions and technological tools suited to sanitary requirements for the purpose of supporting social, physiologic and physical conditions of the people who work for the Yaşar University. This unit puts “human factor” at the core of their actions and tries to establish conscience of security culture in order to prevent undesirable events, which may threaten health and security of personnel and students.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Yaşar University has been founded on the principles of high academic and business ethics, and always been a committed supporter of universal anti-corruption norms and ideals associated with good governance. Yaşar University’s operations, books and governance are constantly audited by the Turkish Higher Education Council and independent auditing institutions.