



SDG Week: 'Think Locally, Act Globally'



**INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO**

IUS SDG WEEK PROMOTIONAL POSTER



This is the promotional poster of the IUS SDG Week *"Think Globally, Act Locally"* event, which have been organized at the International University of Sarajevo (IUS) from December 4 - 8, 2023.

During this week, a series of events took place, from practical workshops and lectures by eminent experts on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to various student activities and exhibitions.

The event was planned and organized by the IUS SDG Executive Committee.

SDG THROUGH YOUR EYES

**IUS STUDENTS PHOTO CONTEST
EXHIBITION**



During the IUS SDG WEEK *"Think Globally, Act Locally"* initiative, the International University of Sarajevo (IUS) showcased an impressive display of student photography on December 8, 2023. The exhibition, titled *"SDG Through Your Eyes,"* featured a curated selection of the finest student entries from a photo contest.

The exhibition aimed to enlighten and mobilize the youth, fostering a sense of social duty towards environmental conservation and overall sustainable development. The students explored a range of subjects, viewpoints, and inspirations drawn from their experiences, offering a photographic narrative of Bosnia and Herzegovina that demonstrated their consciousness of their surroundings and their readiness to be proactive participants in forthcoming transformations.

"The young photographers, with their powerful and thought-provoking images, have illustrated that they are the potential, the force, and the future of our society," commented Assistant Professor Roman Sulejmanpašić, from Visual Arts Program. *"They need our encouragement and support. We look forward to more opportunities for our students to express themselves creatively and artistically on challenges posed by sustainability. We are grateful to all the students who participated in this important endeavor."*

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Integration of SDGs in

- Student engagement
- Whole institution approach

SDG focus

- Goal 4 - Quality education
- Goal 13 - Climate action
- Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

What did we do?

The goal of IUS SDG Week *"Think Globally, Act Locally"* event was for our University to be **a platform for exchange of information and experiences on SDG with a focus on local actions and cooperation**. We invited main actors in the implementation of the SDGs in Bosnia and Hercegovina, from representatives of the local government, international organizations that finance local SDG projects, to business sector and environmental activists, to hold a lecture, and inform our students and employees about their successes. In addition to raising awareness about the SDGs among students and employees, our goal was to promote the University's current SDG activities to external stakeholders and connect them with our academics. *„We need to turn to local community and connect all in small SDG actions. With small but sure steps together, we can achieve a lot!"* said the representative of the SDG Committee, which organized this event.

What were the benefits and outcomes?

1. Benefit: **Awareness raised of the SDGs among IUS students and employees**
Outcome: Greater interest and participation of students in SDG activities in the future
2. Benefit: **Better connection and engagement with local actors of SDG activities.**
Outcome: Consideration of new perspectives for cooperation
3. Benefit: **Involvement in socially responsible activities to encourage the local community to join forces with the aim of joint implementation in SDG.**
Outcome: Better perception of the university for new students, who enrol in IUS, and affirmation of the university as a leader university in SDG.

What barriers or challenges did you encounter in embedding this aspect of the SDGs into your work and how did you overcome them?

1. Barrier: **Attendance at events.**
It was difficult to rise interest among the younger generation in SDG topics and generally in new global challenges (generally, it is difficult to move people out of their comfort zone). We wanted to live up to our expectations especially because, through our contacts, we invited people from various spheres of society, business sector, NGOs, Education, Legal and Governmental Institutions, etc. and we wanted to present the University SDG activities in the best light.
Overcome: We asked the professors, who are members of the SDG Committee, to invite their students to respond to the event through their networks and contacts with students. Also, we sent an email to all employees, that SDG WEEK will be held at the University.

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At the end, we are very satisfied with the attendance of the audience at the events.

2. **Barrier: Budget for SDG activities.**

We did not have enough budget for the organization of the IUS SDG WEEK, because as a private University, we still do not allocate enough financial resources for SDG activities at the University level.

Overcome: We overcame this situation in such a way that we convinced the management to secure a small budget. Our argument was that the SDG is part of the strategy of our university 2022-2026 (one of the 8 principles) and that these activities are part of the implementation of the Strategy.

3. **Barrier: Sudden cancellation of lecturers' arrival**

Since there is no institution dealing with SDG at the state level, we addressed the main actors in the implementation of the SDGs in our country, namely United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Swedish Embassy and German Development Cooperation (GIZ). They responded positively to our invitation to hold a lecture on SDG topic. However, due to the sudden cancellation of some participants at the event, we had to update the agenda at the last minute and adapt it to the new situation.

Overcome: We insisted and were persistent that the lecturers (SDG experts) who did not attend SDG WEEK still come to IUS afterwards and share their sustainable experiences with our students and staff. So, in April 2024 we organized two lectures on Earth Day occasion.

Here are the links of the events organized on the Earth Day celebration:

[IUS Hosts Inspiring Earth Day Events Emphasizing Sustainable Development](#)

[IUS Earth Day Photo Contest 2024 - "NATURALLY" – launching the photo contest "Naturally"](#)

[Capturing Nature's Beauty: IUS Students Shine in 'Naturally' Photo Competition – exhibition of the best photo of "Naturally"](#)

What are your conclusions and recommendations for others?

- Despite the challenges we've faced, we take great pride in our accomplishments. Our university stands out as the sole institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina to have initiated such activities. Regardless of all the obstacles mentioned above, we are very satisfied with the work done. We are the only university in Bosnia and Herzegovina that organized this type of activities. We also consider ourselves to be leader in SDG activities in BiH. For several years (from 2018) we have been part of the THE Impact Ranking and the only in BiH (until this year).
- To facilitate the hosting of SDG-centric events and to maintain the annual tradition of the IUS SDG WEEK, we strategically included these events in our EU project applications, ensuring they are eligible for funding.
- Start with small steps and connect with local stakeholders who are involved in sustainable and environment activities.
- Even without a large budget allocated, if you have great enthusiasts and perseverant people in your team, we can achieve a lot for our sustainable future. Budget isn't the cornerstone of success, but you need positive people and noble actions.

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Web link to further information:

GENERAL INFORMATION ON SDG ACTIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY – [SDG AT IUS](#)

LINKS RELATED TO THIS PARTICULAR CASE STUDY (IUS SDG WEEK):

1. [IUS SDG WEEK 2023](#)
2. [IUS SDG WEEK AGENDA](#)
3. [SDG Week at IUS - Think Globally, Act Locally](#)
4. [Empowering Green Transitions: IUS SDG Week Lecture on Sustainable Practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
5. [Recyclomat – A Tale of Environmental Success in Sarajevo](#)
6. [IUS SDG Week: Human Rights Day 2023](#)
7. [IUS SDG Week: 75th Anniversary of UDHR and Human Rights Day 2023](#)
8. [Student photo contest: "SDG Through Your Eyes"](#)
9. [IUS Integrates SDGs into Curriculum for a Socially Responsible and Healthy Future](#)