

*Better research, better policy, better reform*

**CESD** | CENTER FOR ECONOMIC  
& SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Global Think-Tank*

## **CESD STRATEGIC PLAN**

**for the period(2021-2025)**

**Center for Economic and Social Development**

**(CESD) Caspian Plaza, 3rd Block, 14th floor**

**J.Jabbarli str. 44,**

**Baku, Azerbaijan**

**Phone: (99412)**

**5943665**

**Fax: (99412) 5943665**

**Email:**

**info@cesd.az**

**URL:**

**www.cesd.az**

**Baku, 2020**

---

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Executive

Summary

Organizational

Description

Mission, Vision  
and Values

Goals and

Strategies

Appendices

A - Action Planning (objectives, responsibilities

and time lines)B - Description of Strategic Planning

Process Used

C - Strategic Analysis Data (External Analysis, Internal Analysis &

List of Issues)D – Financial Sustainability

---

**This Policy was approved by the CESD Board on December, 25, 2020 at the on-line meeting and approved by Dr. Vugar Bayramov, the Chairman of the center.**

## **Executive Summary**

Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD) is one of the leading think tanks in Azerbaijan. CESD has its vision statement and goals in the short and long-term. The center determines its objectives in reaching those goals through implementing certain activities envisaged in the plan. The plan was formalized to regulate CESD's activities, to reach its goals and to maintain the center's performance. The plan indicated concrete activities and strategies as well. All activities of the center are to be implemented based on the strategic plan.

## **Organizational Description**

**Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD)** was established in 2005 for the purpose of promoting research into contemporary economic and social problems. The Center aims at organizing and promoting theoretical and practical research in the economic and social development problems (i), providing policy advice to the Government of Azerbaijan (ii), contributing to the national capacity building and raising public awareness of socio-economic issues (iii), fostering cooperation between the public, private, NGO sector, and educational institutions in addressing and resolving economic problems (iv) and assisting sustainable development, gender development, reducing poverty, achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and economic and social reforms (v).

The Center was established with initiatives of some distinguished economists, mostly who have received degrees from Western Universities.

CESD holds regular seminars, conference and workshops on social and economic topics. The Center exchanges research papers with several research institutions abroad.

CESD has achieved successes by establishing an international network of academic contacts and promoting coordinated research programs. The Center's work involved studies of social sphere reforms, WTO accession; poverty reduction; MDGs and many other topics related to Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) as well as to other transition countries.

### **Areas of Concentration:**

- *Macroeconomic Policy*
- *Diversification of the National Economy*
- *Energy Diversification policy*
- *Economic and Social Repercussions of Covid-19*
- *Peace-Building Process between Armenia and Azerbaijan*
- *Gender Development*
- *Competitiveness of the Azerbaijan Economy and Economic Growth.*
- *Social Sphere*
- *Public Sector Reform*
- *Financial System, Taxation and Fiscal Policy,*
- *Energy, Telecommunications, Transport*
- *EU Accession. Regional Cooperation. Foreign Economic Relations.*

## Structure of CESD

<b>INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BOARDS</b>	
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	
<b>Macroeconomic Policy and State Budget Research Group</b>	<b>Competitiveness of the Azerbaijan Economy and Economic Growth Research Group</b>
<b>Gender Development Group</b>	<b>Energy, Telecommunications, Transport, Trade Liberalization Research Group</b>
<b>Social Sphere and Public Sector Reform Research Group</b>	<b>Economic Education Research Group</b>
<b>Local Financing and Municipality Budget Research Group</b>	<b>Public Relations Office</b>
<b>Financial System, Taxation and Fiscal Policy Research Group</b>	<b>Administrative Office</b>

### **Main Responsibilities and Activities of the CESD Groups**

**Macroeconomic Policy and State Budget Research Group** - The group is charge in conducting research, carrying out projects and preparing policy recommendations on macroeconomic policy and state budget. The group is closely working with the government bodies as well as international financial organizations to develop recommendations' packet. Studies done by the group are widely discussed among financial market participants, academics and senior officials, and their results are broadly reported by the media.

**Gender Development Group-** **The Group are doing research on gender issues. Since** One of priorities of the Centre is to protect social and economic as well as gender rights, fight with corruption and enhance transparency. Centre is only member from Azerbaijan in the ATHENA-Advance Thematic Network in Activities in Women's Studies in Europe. The group has closely relations with international gender institutions, think tanks and State Committee on Gender and Children Development of Azerbaijan Republic. The Group has had many presentations on gender development issues in distinguished international conferences.

**Competitiveness of the Azerbaijan Economy and Economic Growth Research Group-** The group particularly focuses on the Azerbaijan Economy and does wide range researches for increasing competitiveness and promoting economic growth. The group is working in cooperation with the government bodies and holding round-table discussions and workshops with experts. In addition, the group conducts research on diversification of the economy breeding grounds for useful information for academicians as well as policy policymakers.

**Social Sphere and Public Sector Reform Research Group-** The group is conducting comprehensive researches on social sphere and public sector. One of the main tasks of the group is to assist to achieve MDGs in Azerbaijan. In order to obtain this task the group has prepared and developed several policy recommendations packets and completed studies. The

group works in the cooperation with certain government bodies to promote reforms in public sector and promote social development.

**Energy, Telecommunications, Transport, Trade Liberalization Research Group-** The group conducts wide range research on energy, telecommunications, transport and trade liberalizations sectors. Oil contracts, pipelines as well as transparency in oil sector are researched by the group. The group has already prepared policy recommendations packet to assist Azerbaijan's accession to the WTO. On the other hand, along the new tendencies in South Caucasus region, the group's working capacity enhanced following the liberation of the occupied territories that accelerates the integration of the region and opens up a new avenue for trade, wider economic links and cooperation between regions, countries as well as continents.

**Economic and Social Education Research Group-** The group is charge in promoting economic and social education. Economic and social education is supported among educators, state officials, NGOs, Mass-Media representatives, students and etc. The center holds annual workshops on economic and social education.

**Poverty Reduction and Economic Development Group-** The main purpose of establishing this group is to assist poverty reduction and obtaining of economic development. The group is doing studies and carrying out projects to promote PRSP principles and goals. The group is working along with international organization, government bodies, NGOs and other institutions to achieve MDGs in terms of poverty reduction. Moreover, the group is in charge of developing commendable tools and mechanisms to combat negative consequences of covid-19 and formulates policy recommendations to assist pandemic affected population.

**Local Financing and Municipality Budget Research Group-** The group is doing research and carrying out projects to assist local economic and social development. Development of local budget work is one of priorities of the group.

**Financial System, Taxation and Fiscal Policy Research Group –** The group supports reforms in fiscal system. Enhancing transparency in fiscal system is main task of the group. The group is carrying out studies to make fiscal system more flexible to apply international standards in this sector.

**Administrative Office-** The office is charge in all administrative activities, such as promoting the center's public relations, solving office problems and etc.

---

## **Mission Statement**

Eradication of inequality, promotion and further development of economic and social reforms, enhancing of transparency by supporting civil society development.

## **Vision Statement**

Equal Socio-Economic Rights and, No Poverty and OR increase engagement of the public in decision making

## **Values Statement**

### ***We believe that:***

Equal Socio-Economic Rights and Transparent System provides more opportunity for society

Every person is equal to realize his/her socio-economic right

***We value that:***

Promoting sense of ownership among community members and public participation in community development are essential for the society's sustainable development.

Fighting Corruption and Promoting an Effectiveness in Public Economic and Social Reforms are fundamental terms to achieve MDGs goals;

Increasing Awareness and Public Participation including Community Development are essential for Sustainable Development;

We value high-quality applied research and professional learning projects that represent strategic partnerships with governmental agencies, and various sectors of the civil society as essential for the society's sustainable development.

## **Goals and Strategies**

The main goals and strategies of CESD include supporting sustainable development and enhancing transparency. In order to achieve those goals the center is organizing and promoting theoretical and practical research in the economic and social development spheres (i), providing policy advice to the Government of Azerbaijan (ii), contributing to the national capacity building and raising public awareness of socio-economic issues (iii), fostering cooperation between the public, private, NGO sector, and educational institutions in addressing and resolving economic problems (iv) and assisting sustainable development, gender development, reducing poverty, achieving Millennium Development Goals and economic and social reforms (v).

CESD is dedicated to the following principles and values:

1. Conducting high-quality applied research, demonstration, evaluation, and professional learning projects that represent strategic partnerships with governmental agencies, international organizations, foundations, think tanks, mass-medias and other public and private sector entities.
2. Enhancing the awareness, appreciation, and promotion of equity and diversity in all aspects in our activities.
3. Supporting the idea that elimination of inequality is key for sustainable development.
4. Systematically collecting evidence-both qualitative and quantitative in character-to inform each of our studies, networks, and products.
5. Providing high quality professional learning and research opportunities for all interested scholars.

## **SHORT-RANGE GOALS**

### ***Goal 1. Increasing international relations.***

Strategy 1. Increasing relations with global associations which support elimination of inequality, such as IDEAs, CIVICUS.

Strategy 2. Member of ENTO, CASID

Strategy 3. Increasing relations with international donor organizations such as NED, Novib, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, UNDP

Strategy 4. Increasing number of paper presentations in international conferences

Strategy 5. Carrying out exchange programs, internship programs and study tours.

### ***Goal 2. Strengthening of CESD capacity;***

Strategy 1. Setting up of bigger external board.

Strategy 2. Increasing CESD's research capacity with engaging more scholars and experts.

Strategy 3. Strengthening PR of CESD

### ***Goal 3. Decreasing of donor dependency***

Strategy 1. Increasing relations with business structures regarding economic and social researches.

Strategy 2. Promoting of participation in regional and global research programs as local partner.

### ***Goal 4. Increasing relations with SCOs and Government Bodies***

Strategy 1. Holding better cooperation opportunities with SCOs and Government Bodies.

Strategy 2. Cooperating with the GoA regarding to implementation of policy papers produced by CESD

### ***Goal 5. Increasing regional activities.***

Strategy 1. Strengthening relations with local communities including municipalities.

Strategy 2. Setting up local offices in many regions of Azerbaijan.

### ***Goal 6. Promoting Gender Economics.***

Strategy 1. Supporting women's participation in decision-making process

Strategy 2. Producing of policy papers on correlation gender equality and socio-economic growth.

## **LONG-RANGE GOALS**

### **Goal 1. Assisting of elimination of inequality**

*Strategy 1. Increasing awareness. Holding workshops, round-table discussions, seminars as well as conferences to increase awareness in public including senior levels.*

*Strategy2. Developing implications. Increasing cooperation with international organizations, such as CIVICUS, IDEAs, PASOS and etc., to concentrate activities to minimize inequality by holding study tours, international conferences, exchange programs and etc.*

*Strategy3. Developing recommendations. Producing and submitting to the government recommendations regarding to the elimination of inequality.*

### **Goal 2. Promotion of economic and social reforms**

*Strategy1. Propagandizing of impacts of current economic and social reforms and stating essentiality of realizing of reforms.*

*Strategy2. Analyzing of effects of completed socio-economic reforms and producing policy papers for improvement.*

### **Goal 3. Enhancing Transparency and Promoting Public Participation**

*Strategy 1. Increasing awareness on transparency and assisting building institutions to achieve sustainable transparency.*

*Strategy 2. Finding out and applying new tools and instruments to promote public participation.*

*Strategy 3. Developing and applying public participation promotion models in Azerbaijan and holding media campaign on transparency and public participation.*

### **Goal 4. Fighting Corruption and Promoting an Effective in Public Economic and Social Decisions**

*Strategy 1. Holding anti-corruption campaign in the mass-media and workshops in different regions of Azerbaijan*

*Strategy 2. Setting up anti-corruption pledge in government bodies, produce policy papers on fighting with corruption.*

### **Goal 5. Supporting of achieving MDGs in Azerbaijan**

*Strategy 1. Analyzing of implementation process of MDGs in Azerbaijan and list of implications from foreign experience*

*Strategy 2. Increasing awareness on MDGs and the implementation process itself*

## **Goal 6. Promoting of sustainable development**

*Strategy 1. Preparing and developing econometric models to promote sustainable development in Azerbaijan*

*Strategy 2. Supporting regional development to achieve sustainable development in the greatest sense*

## **GOAL 7. Post-war development policy**

*Preparing and development of applicable models for the restoration of the liberated territories*

*Preparation of the investment policy recommendations that can yield higher returns in the territories*

## **Goal 8. Play a role in increasing of the international reputation of Azerbaijan**

*Strategy 1: Conduct research on the economic potential of Azerbaijan. Participate in international conferences with relevant research papers.*

*Strategy 2: Sign memorandum of understanding with different research institutes and think-tanks around the world.*

---

## **Appendix C - Strategic Analysis Data -- External Analysis**

From our external analysis, we identified the following trends and how they might affect our nonprofit:

**Political trends:** Although political pressure on NGOs as well as think tanks has been decreasing recently, political trends can not be positively evaluated. The problem is still one of the main obstacles to civil society institutions' development. CESD does not support any political ideas or parties, the center's aim is only promoting sustainable eco-social development.

**Economic trends:** One of the main negative aspects of NGOs development is donor dependency. Because of lack of domestic resources or sources, civil society organizations depend on external financial resources. Azerbaijan's recent economic development, however, can be a positive incentive to use domestic sources in the near future.

**Societal trends:** Azerbaijani society has not played a key role in the development, yet. CESD feels that it can support societal development in Azerbaijan by supporting collective actions

## **Appendix C - Strategic Analysis Data -- Internal Analysis**

**From our internal analysis (our SWOT analysis), we identified the following factors:**

**Strengths of the organization:** Having strong capacity, good international relations, sufficient

experience in both government and non-government sectors and engaging well-known experts  
CESD is able to actively participate in solving identified problems.

**Weaknesses of the organization:** Lack of high financial resources, facing problems while working with some local donors who are not interested in transparent cooperation. In general, weak formal and informal institutions existing in the country.

**Opportunities for the organization:** By focusing on existing institutions, on mass-media and holding round-table as well as seminars and conferences, CESD has opportunity to achieve its goals and strategies. By Establishing international network, CESD has opportunity to get more support from international community to solve domestic and universal problems.

**Threats facing the organization:** The need to improve good relations between governmental and civil society organizations (CSOs).

**Organizational strengths:** Reserving gender balance, using good organizational governance principles and applying transparent financial and management activities CESD has strengths to bolster its capacity.

## Appendix C - Strategic Analysis Data -- Listing of Strategic Issues

Key issues that our organization must address through use of this strategic plan include:

- Engorged activities of the center by regulating its current and strategic management;
- Establishment of Quality Assurance System to improve Center's products and services;
- Enhanced center's relations with international organizations and as well as local ones to strengthen think tank community;
- Increased of CESD's activities and quality of its work by amplifying facilities and technical opportunities;
- Maintained of center's expert bank by raising wages;
- Arranging a base for a long-term operation of the Centre via the provision of its Financial Sustainability.

## Appendix D –Financial Sustainability (Euro)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>REVENUE: USD</b>					
<i>Local grants</i>	85000	97 000	100 000	105 000	110 000
<i>International grants</i>	800 000	820 000	835 000	850 000	870 000
<i>Other financial sources</i>	30 000	35 000	40 000	45 000	50 000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	915 000	952 000	975 000	1000 000	1030 000