



**RESPONSIBLE  
BUSINESS  
FORUM**

**BETTER BUSINESS  
FOR BETTER SOCIETY**

**Executive office:**

Smart kolektiv, Svetozara Markovića 42a  
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**UN GLOBAL COMPACT**

**COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)**



**RESPONSIBLE  
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FORUM SERBIA**

**Period covered by this Communication on Engagement**

From: January 1, 2014 To: January 1, 2016



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**Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Executive Director**

January 15, 2016

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that Responsible Business Forum reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, 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 of 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 ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Neven Marinović  
Executive Director



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## Part II. Description of Actions

### 1. Dialogue and promotion of CSR and corporate sustainability

Responsible Business Forum has organized, alone, and in the corporation with Smart Kolektiv, few events in order to promote dialogue on topics relevant to CSR and sustainable development.

- **Social Innovation Forum** – is the biggest annual event on social enterprises in Serbia. In 2015, the existing policy on social enterprises were presented as well as the possibilities for corporation between social enterprises and the business sector, different programs of support, successful social enterprises and innovative practices in this sector.
- **Sustainable Communities Forum** – is annual event. In 2015, conference participants discussed about the trends in financing non-profit initiatives and social economy, the way that impact funds work, venture philanthropy and crowd funding. The topics also included corporate philanthropy and the non-financial measures that are present in corporate sector and the ways to implement them in the goal of supporting civil society and community initiatives.
- **Multi-stakeholder Panel** – First Panel was held in March 2014 and it focused on the current state of CRS in Serbia. Second Panel was held in November 2015, and its discussion focused on the role of business in creating work force for innovative and inclusive market, the importance of entrepreneurship as a solution to ever growing unemployment, as well as the necessary changes in the formal and informal education in order to create skills which are needed for the economic growth.
- **CSR Forum** –The CSR Forum is the Responsible Business Forum’s annual international conference, started in 2010, and brings together the representatives of all the sectors of society, enabling insight into the most current trends in the field of CSR and the exchange of experiences and ideas, and establishing cross-sector dialogue. For the business sector leaders, the CSR Forum provides a unique opportunity to define their views on sustainable business in accord with high representatives of companies and organizations, thereby influencing policies and decision makers, in order to create a more enabling environment for the development of sustainable business practices in Serbia.

RBF Serbia has realized three important surveys in the past two years.

- **Responsible Business Forum Member’s Contribution to the society** – Is an annual analysis implemented by the Forum. Launched in 2012 research on members’ investment in socially responsible activities. It measures business’s support to the local community development, working environment, environmental protection and good market practices.



- **Top Managers Perspectives on CRS in Serbia**– is a survey through which business decision makers, as most relevant actors, provided their views on the current state and the future of corporate social responsibility in Serbia.
  - RBF has through its communication channels (email base, website and social networks) promoted and forwarded invitations and information from the Serbian Global Compact Secretariat.
- 2. Provide their expertise and/or the voice of their members to Global Compact working groups and special initiatives**

A representative of the Responsible Business Forum has been present at the meeting of Serbia's local Global Compact group and events. We have also joined the working group for the promotion of the Global Goals and have spoken about the sustainable development goals on the Panel at the annual meeting of Global Compact in Serbia.

**3. Engaging members in collective action efforts on Global Compact-related issues**

Through different initiatives and programs of the RBF Serbia, its member companies have had a chance to take part in collective action efforts on Global Compact-related issues.

- **Our Belgrade** - is a traditional annual volunteering day on which employees from the Forum's member companies volunteer in the community. The activities vary from beautification of school yards, planting flowers in the homes for elderly, cooking food for homeless, to spending time and organizing creative workshops with children with disabilities, children without parental care and elderly.
- **Academy of Business Skills** –RBF has launched Academy of Business Skills, a program of lectures, consultations and mentorships for organizations and social enterprises. Academy enables companies to engage their employees willing to donate their knowledge and skills to organizations and social enterprises and thus, become a part of the business professionals' volunteer community. The program facilitates the transfer of business knowledge and skills towards organizations, with a goal to make them more efficient, sustainable and visible.
- **My New Year's Resolution for Better Society** – is an action organized with the aim to promote Global Goals. The action initial began on the 6<sup>th</sup> annual CSR Forum, held in December 2015. The action then continued on the public spaces in the capital city of Serbia, Belgrade. The focus of the action was photographing fellow citizens with the boards on which were printed different New Year's Resolution which are not only useful for them personally but to the society as a whole as well. The action was inspired by the Global Goal for sustainable development and aims to promote the goals on the local level by bringing them closer to citizens and simplifying them in order for citizens to see that they can contribute to solving important world issues.
- **European CSR Manifesto** – RBF Serbia's members have shown readiness to implement the goals of the European Manifesto on the local level and contribute to the sustainable future. They also



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participated in the Enterprise 2020 Summit held in Brussels in November 2015 at which European Pact for Youth was launched.

### Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

#### Dialogue and promotion of CSR and corporate sustainability

- **Social Innovation Forum** is a part of a broader initiative of promotion and inciting cross-sector cooperation and development of sustainable and innovative civil society in Serbia. the SIF helped come to the conclusion that social enterprises in Serbia need systemic support from the state, suitable environment for development which includes promotion of social entrepreneurship, improvement of the legal framework, financing, enabling access to the market as well as the support with professional development and research.
- **Sustainable Communities Forum** – this international conference has gathered representatives from business, public, civil society and other sector and managed to start a dialogue on sustainable and innovative mechanisms of support to the local community.
- **Multi-stakeholder Panel** –this panel gathered around thirty leaders from the key sectors – CEOs of big companies in Serbia, relevant representatives of the Serbian government, CSOs representatives who are active in promotion of entrepreneurship, as well as the representatives of the diplomatic missions to Serbia. Panel represents a beginning in the promotions and concrete actions on this issue.
- **CSR Forum** – The CSR Forum is the most relevant event of its kind in the country. At this conference, established in 2010, some of the leading world experts in the field of CSR were featured as speakers, including Lord Michael Hastings, David Haley, Mallen Baker, Henk Kinds, Graham Baxter, Geoffrey Mazullo, and many others. The CSR Forum is also given its innovative character by the Partnership Fair, where social enterprises and CSOs successfully represent their cooperation proposals to the private sector.
- **Responsible Business Forum Member's Contribution to the society** – This annual analysis promotes CSR activities and help companies that what to improve their CSR activates a rich source of information and a great reference. Results for 2014 show that RBF member companies have invested more than 10,3 million euros in CSR activities in Serbia. The survey also showed that the RBF members are ever more involved in: **stakeholders engagement** – they engage consumers, business partners and employees in the implementation of CSR projects; **increasing nonmonetary contributions** – resulting in higher overall contributions to the community, despite the crises; **perceiving employees as**



**companies' values ambassadors** – apart from having working environment and employee engagement in their focus, they also make it possible for the employees to invest their time and skills in the favor of the community; **building partnerships** – with organizations and institutions that have the expertise and specific knowledge about social topics, thus creating synergic effects of joint projects implementation; **CSR reporting** – measuring impacts of CSR programs and reporting to stakeholders are growing practice and they prove that companies perceive this topic vigorously.

- **Top Managers Perspectives on CRS in Serbia**—Responsible Business Forum has conducted a series of surveys aiming to provide insight into, and improve the environment for CSR development in Serbia. One of the outstanding publications represents the study on Top managers' perspectives on CSR. Through the first survey of a kind in Serbia business decision makers, as most relevant actors, provided their views on the current state and the future of corporate social responsibility in Serbia. The results represent summarized views of the key people in the business sector regarding sustainability, as well as their expectations from other social actors, the most common approaches to CSR in companies operating in Serbia and topics recognized as a priority for business engagement. We appreciate the fact that the business community in Serbia shows great maturity in perceiving CSR which, according to their sentiment depicts integral part of business strategy and is deeply embedded in companies' values. Business leaders regard CSR as a way to make their impacts on the society more positive and to reduce negative impacts, while following their core business purposes. The research shows that **92% of directors** consider that the integration of a CSR strategy brings a better position to the company in negotiating with investors, creditors and future partners. The research also shows that despite disadvantageous socioeconomic surroundings, business leaders believe that corporate social responsibility remains of great importance.
- **Our Belgrade** - Volunteering actions that RBF organized in the past years (in Belgrade, Niš and Gornji Milanovac) gathered more than 2500 employees from 30 companies, and directly influenced on quality of life of more than 7000 citizens from vulnerable social groups. Alongside action days, mobilizing large numbers of employees, the RBF also stimulates individual volunteering, wherein employees donate their knowledge and skills to different target groups through business mentorships, consulting services, and trainings. We are proud of the fact that almost every larger company in Serbia today fosters the employee volunteering culture, while many companies have developed volunteering programs. Since 2011, the Forum presents the Corporate Volunteering Award, aiming to recognize and reward at the national level companies that have the best corporate volunteering practices.
- **Academy of Business Skills** – At its very beginning program has shown excellent results in developing capacities of the involved organizations. So far, one hundred representatives from social enterprises and civil society organizations from different parts of Serbia have participated in four workshops held by RBF member companies' employees who have through this program donated 45 work hours.



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- **My New Year's Resolution for Better Society** – In this action almost 300 citizens have decided to make a New Year's Resolution which will be useful to them personally and to the society as a whole. Many of them have decided to travel and study more, to love more and to smile more often. Nine citizens have decided to plant a tree this year and another nine to start volunteering. Three people will house a pet and many will ride their bicycles more often, walk to work, save water and energy and recycle. Among the popular decisions were the ones to read more, think on their own and speak out loudly on important issues. Citizens also decided to take care of each other better, to do good, not to turn their head from important social issues and to give more.
- **European CSR Manifesto** – At the annual conference CSR Forum we have launched European CSR Manifesto on the local level and 20 member companies publicly committed on working on the goals of the Manifesto in the next five years.