

## Summary of the analysis on the corporate volunteering in Serbia

November 2009

Local partner Smart Kolektiv from Belgrade prepared the analysis on corporate volunteering within the project *Our town* focused on development of corporate volunteering in Serbia.

The goals of these analyses were: to identify the companies which are organising and supporting their employees in corporate volunteering activities, to present the basic information about the types of the activities, fields of volunteering and ways how the companies organise volunteering activities.

The analysis was done from the questionnaires which were sent to 31 companies. 16 of them sent the filled questionnaires back. 11 companies which sent the questionnaire back are from Serbian Business Leaders Forum and 5 are not<sup>1</sup>.

It consisted of 22 questions related to the corporate volunteering. The first part of the analysis is a theoretical framework. In this section analysis describes the general types of corporate volunteering: group activities/action days, pro-bono services, secondment and time bank.

### Conclusions from the analysis

Analysis showed that corporate volunteering in Serbia is increasing in the sense that companies support and organize corporate volunteering activities. According to the report from Database of CSR case studies: *Analysis and recommendations prepared by Deputy Prime Minister's Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation team and Serbia Investment and Export Promotion Agency* 25 companies have programs for employees' engagement in the communities. That is a huge increase if we compare it to the same research from 2007 where just 2 companies had volunteering programs.

Volunteering activities increase awareness on corporate volunteering, between the companies, between the civil society organizations and the public. Manual activities (action days) are the most popular types of volunteering between the employees in Serbia. Mentoring is one of the types of volunteering which companies are interested in. 8 companies do not have mentoring in their companies, whilst 7 of them have mentoring<sup>2</sup>.

Most of the companies do not have long-term volunteering programs as well as the policy and procedures which regulate corporate volunteering. Companies' PR or HR sections are usually in charge of organizing volunteering activities. Topics or target groups which are corporate volunteers interested in are: ecology, children, orphans, elderly and youth. In numbers: 9 companies would focus on ecology issues, 8 companies would support orphans and people with disabilities and 7 companies would help children.

Companies usually organize volunteering activities with partner organizations or institutions. 16 companies listed 25 organizations which they collaborate with within the volunteering

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<sup>1</sup>Companies members of BLF :Erste Bank a.d. Novi Sad, Holcim (Srbija) d.o.o., Societe Generale Srbija, KPMG d.o.o. Beograd, 5. British American Tobacco, Droga Kolinska, Državna lutrija Srbije, VIP mobile,US Steel, Coca-Cola Hellenic, Duvanska industrija Niš/Philip Morris; non BLF members: AD CARNEX Industrija mesa, Telenor, Eurobank EFG ad Beograd, Zdravlje Actavis, Comtrade Group (Spinnaker New Technologies)

<sup>2</sup> 4 companies which are not BLF members and 3 members of BLF

activities. In the questionnaire companies had the opportunity to describe their volunteering engagement and 12 of them did so.

Most of the companies think that volunteering has positive influence on employees. On the other side they do not recognize the influence which volunteering has on their business and image of their company. According to the companies, they recognized that volunteering influenced their employees most in the area of team spirit and least, in producing good results at work.

## **Recommendations**

According to the analysis further promotion and the education about corporate volunteering concept is needed. It is crucial to explain to the companies the business case so they can see the value of corporate volunteering.

Companies should create strategy documents for volunteering and they should define the policies and procedures for volunteering.

It is important to present to Serbian business sector the different types of corporate volunteering. Mentoring is a very flexible way for all employees to volunteer and it can be valuable for various groups of beneficiaries.

Organizations promoting the concept of corporate volunteerism (such as Pontis Foundation or Smart Kolektiv) should point out to firms which target groups and relevant community problems are forgotten.

The idea of the volunteer clubs should be promoted so the employees start to organize and implement volunteering activities.

According to the analysis it is essential that companies monitor the process of implementation and evaluation of volunteering. In this way companies would be able to measure the influence of volunteering activities on employees, on the community and on the company more easily and to properly influence further development of volunteering activities based on findings.