



White Book of Best Corporate Philanthropy Practices

NOVEMBER 2023

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Partnerships 4 Giving – Strategic, Inclusive & Facilitated Corporate Philanthropy Project

EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG COLLABORATION, ASSOCIATION KONEKT AND AMCHAM NORTH MACEDONIA OPTED TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION THAT WILL PROVIDE POSITIVE EFFECT AND DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE PERSPECTIVES FOR CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY.

P4G's Strategic, Inclusive and Facilitated Corporate Philanthropy Project, following a call for best practices in strategic corporate philanthropy and the review procedure of the committee established for this purpose, AmCham member seven companies' best practices for Strategic Corporate have Philanthropy been selected, published in this Whitebook.

We congratulate the selected AmCham member companies for their commitment to strategic corporate philanthropy, as well as their altruistic and selfless actions.

Read the positive stories of our member companies that serve as role models to the business community in the field of corporate responsibility.

Empower Youth, Enrich Lives: Nurturing a Better Tomorrow

A STORY BY:

Cosmic Development is an international IT services support company with operational units in North Macedonia and Serbia that provides tailor-made solutions to clients worldwide. Working in a go-to industry for the youth, we have had the privilege to have young talent as the backbone of our company. Thanks to the individual approach, we have created loyal partnerships with our clients and attractive and engaging career options for our employees.

Cosmic Development, as an international company with talent units in Macedonia and Serbia, showcases how outsourcing high-quality expertise means attracting and keeping bright, skilled, and reliable employees. In an industry active in the Balkans for over two decades, the leading workforce is Gen Y and emerging Gen Z.



These people are young adults looking for more than just a job. Amidst competitive trends, companies must innovate to attract top talent. The fertile IT landscape provides an avenue for positive change and community engagement. Thus, our philanthropic focus revolves around helping impoverished families, youth-inclusive and educative initiatives, environmental responsibility, and promoting and supporting sports, especially young talents. Through lasting community investment, we foster a more compassionate society through education, inclusion, and employee-backed philanthropy.

This Practice as a Game-changer

Cosmic Development embraces philanthropy through employee-driven initiatives for substantial impact. The company's distinct approach has been fueled by employee dedication, transparency, and sustained positive influence since its inception. In a word, our employees are our greatest asset. Thus, even in our ways of giving back to the community, our strategy is firmly connected with the unique variety of practices exemplified through five comprehensive pillars:

- 1. Cosmic's Aid for Families in Need
- 2. Youth-Inclusive Initiatives
- 3. Environmental Responsibility
- 4. Employee-Backed Ideas
- 5. Sports Sponsorships

The chosen practice aligns with our core integrating with ethos. strategy our seamlessly. We echo our belief in holistic growth by promoting philanthropy and community engagement. This practice embodies our vision for a better world, reflecting better individuals. families. workplaces, and society. Through consistent in-house action. impactful change is achieved.

The Transformative Journey

Every journey starts by taking one step at a time, and the transformation happens when taking a step becomes a habit, and so does our philanthropic voyage:

1. Cosmic's Aid for Families in Need: Cosmic Development aims to amplify care and support to underprivileged families, aligning with the company's ethos of community upliftment. 2. Youth-Inclusive Initiatives: This strategic choice aligns with our goal to cultivate a generation equipped for positive change. The company actively contributes to inclusivity and empowerment by supporting diverse educational and social programs.

3. Environmental Responsibility: The company's environmental responsibility involves engaging in eco-friendly practices and initiatives, resonating with Cosmic Development's mission to nurture a sustainable future.

4. Employee-Backed Ideas: The company fosters a sense of ownership and shared growth by encouraging and backing employees' worthy ideas.

5. Sports Sponsorships: Through sports sponsorships, the company not only supports young talents but aligns with its strategy of cultivating a positive company culture.

To realize these strategic goals, the focused company on integrating philanthropy into its core identity. encouraging employees to be active contributors to positive change. Steps included fostering an environment of where employees could openness. freely express their ideas and take community-driven ownership of initiatives. Next, the company partnered with charitable organizations, educational institutions, and sports clubs to ensure the effective execution of its philanthropic endeavors.

Collaborative efforts allowed Cosmic Development to extend its impact beyond its immediate sphere and create lasting ripples in the community. With the five-pronged approach, the outcome is a well-rounded and impactful contribution to society, ranging from direct support for families in need to fostering environmental sustainability, youth empowerment, and unity through sports. In Cosmic essence, Development's corporate philanthropy strategy transcends traditional boundaries, aiming to create a better society by nurturing better individuals, families, workplaces, and communities.

Paving the Road towards Success

Cosmic Development's overarching strategy involves a phased approach to ensure the realization of each pillar's goals. In the short term (S), the focus is on immediate engagement and quick impact. The middleterm involves deeper collaboration with external stakeholders to expand initiatives' reach and effectiveness.

The long-term (L) phase envisions creating systems of sustainable practices and initiatives, ensuring lasting positive change.

Pillar 1 – Cosmic's Aid for Families in Need:

S: Identify the needs of local families in need through community engagement.

M: Collaborate with local NGOs to provide immediate relief through food, clothing, and basic necessities.

L: Establish a sustainable support system built together with local NGOs as a way to offer adequate aid in various formats.

Pillar 2 – Youth-Inclusive Initiatives:

S: Immediate support through various types of youth initiatives

M: Collaboration with schools and educational institutions for internships, workshops, and similar programs.

L: Incorporating regular practices into a system that will help youth to pursue their education further or enter the workforce

Pillar 3 – Environmental Responsibility:

S: Raise awareness and implement green programs within the company premises.

M: Partner with environmental organizations for tree planting actions, community clean-up events, and similar pro-environmental efforts.

L: Turn the eco-friendly practices into a lifestyle our employees will actively practice.

Pillar 4 – Employee-Backed Ideas:

S: Launch an internal platform for employees to submit innovative ideas for community projects.

M: Provide resources and mentorship to employees with approved projects, fostering their implementation.

L: Recognize and celebrate successful projects while continuously encouraging employee-driven initiatives.

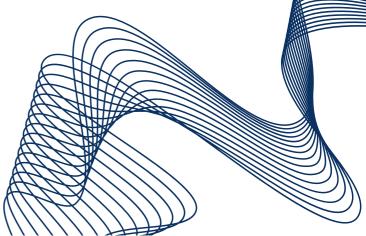
Pillar 5 – Sports Sponsorships:

S: Immediate assistance for sports event realization and brand visibility.

M: Assistance of young talents, fostering a sense of local pride and positive employee morale.

L: Strengthened community bonds, increased youth participation in sports, and a sustainable, positive company image.

With the phased approach to achieving each pillar's objectives, they are achieved through short-term (S), middle-term (M), and long-term (L) strategies. Here we explain further the Results (R)and Impact and Change (I&C) per pillar in the last 5 years:



With the phased approach to achieving each pillar's objectives, they are achieved through short-term (S), middle-term (M), and long-term (L) strategies. Here we explain further the Results (R)and Impact and Change (I&C) per pillar in the last 5 years:

Pillar 01

R: With over 120 employees taking part, we have managed to provide immediate help to over 230 beneficiaries – impoverished families and kids providing them the needed help at the needed time. Help was provided in the form of clothes, food, school supplies, computer equipment in regular actions. In the middle-term, we have established collaborations and partnerships with over 18 NGOs, organizations and institutions with whom we realized the giving actions. To name a few, we have partnered with SOS Children's Village, HERA, Ways2Help, Real Acts of Happiness, National Theatre – Bitola, among others. In the long run, we are going to establish a firm and continuous support system that will help us double our results in the next 5 years. So far, the company has distributed over 4000 euros worth of help for this cause and is actively equipping its employees to be involved themselves.

I&C: From providing immediate relief to beneficiaries, addressing their urgent needs, to strengthening the collaboration with NGOs we will have an increased community impact, reaching more and more families. Our ultimate goal is to equip underprivileged young people with bare necessities and means to improve their livelihoods, i.e., lasting positive change.

Pillar 02

R: We supported over 15 youth-including initiatives, 3 internship programs, all with total youth outreach of over 500+ beneficiaries. From the initiatives we want to mention, Global Tech For Good – online webinar (2020), the one-on-one mentoring of a talented kid, protegee of SOS Children's Village (2022) and our latest completed internship program with the Technical High School in Bitola (2023). We collaborated with the Secondary Schools and Faculties, the Municipality in Bitola and various organizations or more than 10 partners in total. The end result is through systematization of youth-inclusive initiatives to hit the mark of 80% of the youth to either pursue further education or enter the workforce.

I&C: Educated and inspired youth who are eager to thrive. With the provided practical programs, enhancing employability and career prospects. All in all, to build a more qualified workforce, driving economic growth and social development.

Pillar 03

R: We started small, supporting a handful of employees in their lifestyle to use bikes as a way of transport to work or to take climbing and walking challenges. Next, we organized cleaning actions – the one we want to point out is our action in 2022, when the employees brought their kids and gave a hands-on example to them by cleaning together a popular picnic spot on Tumbe Kafe. We supported afforestation efforts through equipment donation and now we are going to join a project in collaboration with the NGO (Prolocal) and the Municipality of Bitola among other partners for the promotion of using bicycles as a means of transportation throughout the central area of Bitola.

I&C: Supporting employees in taking green steps to a cleaner environment and creating the company's environmental footprint, by setting an example for others. Through the above we will reach a better local ecosystem and foster a sense of community responsibility. Last outcome is regular contribution to environmental sustainability, influencing wider behavioral change.

Pillar 04

R: On a lower scale we've always supported initiatives for help to families and kids' in need by our employees and as of 2022 when we donated 10 bags with food, hygiene products for the Infant Center in Bitola. Next, we have changed the prom experience of 53 impoverished girls (high-school graduates) with a gathered budget of 2,000 euros. Thus, we have introduced as a practice to choose and support at least one idea given by our employees since. Moving forward we will definitely go with a platform where our employees will be able to express more often their philanthropic ideas and hopefully we will be able to support more and more ideas each year.

I&C: Through encouraging employees' creativity and sense of contribution we are aiming to reach a cultivated culture of social responsibility, driving continuous positive impact.

Pillar 05

R: This is another practice that transformed from inside-out. Initially, we have always supported our employees to join sports challenges and endeavors. In 2022, we continued with support of actual sports events with young participants that needed support to take place. The most recent event that we backed is the 3rd Swimming Marathon in Prespa, organized by the Aqua Spirit Club – Ohrid. To date, our company put in almost 500 euros, and supported over 100 young pros and amateurs.

I&C: From getting enhanced brand visibility while promoting healthy activities to active contribution to a pool of skilled athletes, potentially leading to professional success. With our sports initiatives we aim to build stronger community bonds, fostering unity and well-being.

Further Action

At Cosmic Development, our employees are our greatest asset; everything starts and ends with them. All philanthropic actions are deeply integrated with how we operate and work daily. All of the aspects we mentioned are inspired and built to give our employees the means to give back to society. On the way, we have faced challenges, and these are the lessons that we learned:

Pillar 1: The phased approach, with shortterm relief, mid-term collaborations, and long-term system-building, allowed Cosmic to address immediate needs while establishing a foundation for sustainable change.

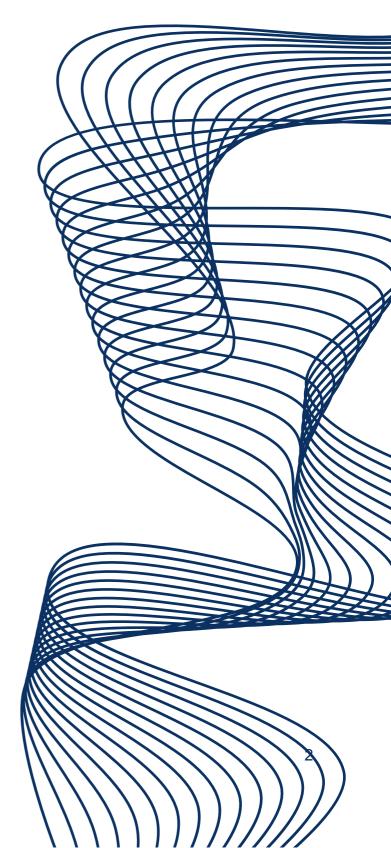
Pillar 2: Investing in youth initiatives and education proved to be a meaningful way to empower the next generation, contributing to a more skilled workforce, economic growth, and community development.

Pillar 3: Starting small and gradually expanding green initiatives, such as promoting biking and organizing clean-up

events showed that incremental steps can lead to significant environmental improvements while setting an example for others.

Pillar 4: Cosmic's practice of supporting employee-driven projects showcased that involving employees in philanthropic efforts not only enhances their engagement but also leads to creative and impactful community initiatives.

Pillar 5: Supporting sports events and young athletes contributed to both brand visibility and community cohesion, emphasizing the role of sports in promoting positive values. Lastly, for all causes, building partnerships with NGOs, organizations, schools, and institutions significantly expanded the scope and effectiveness of initiatives, demonstrating the power of collective action in making a broader impact.



Obstacles Overcome:

Limitations Faced: Overcoming limitations like the uncertainty of the COVID period and financial and resource constraints. However, our phased

approach allowed us to leverage partnerships and creative solutions to maximize impact.

- Community Engagement: Reaching broad community engagement might have been challenging, but Cosmic got greater participation and support over the years through sustained efforts.
- Environmental Mindset Shift: Encouraging employees to adopt green practices needed time to overcome inertia and inspire behavioral change, especially within a workplace context.
- Youth Engagement: Ensuring sustained engagement of youth in initiatives required adapting programs to their evolving needs and interests, which required ongoing innovation and flexibility.
- Sports Event Support: Helping sports events and young athletes demanded logistical coordination and overcoming administrative hurdles, demonstrating the importance of proactive planning.





By learning from these lessons and addressing the obstacles faced, Cosmic Development has continually refined its approach, enhanced its impact, and contributed positively to the community over the years. We look forward to setting an example of how any socially responsible company can rely more on its employees and, together with them, can take small steps that will make a lasting impact on the immediate community and society in a broader sense.

Improving the Quality of Public Healthcare

A STORY BY:



Komercijalna Banka AD Skopje is one of the leading banks in the Republic of North Macedonia, nationally and internationally recognized as a reliable and stable business partner in the field of commercial and investment banking. Our mission is to be a highly profitable institution, recognized as a leading, independent, private Macedonian bank, offering a universal range of services and enjoying a strong international reputation, professionally supported by a strong market-oriented, well-trained management and staff with the highest degree of expertise and integrity.

For more than 65 years, Komercijalna Banka AD Skopje has been proud of its brand, which means confidence, reliability, innovation and a strong domestic and international reputation. Komercijalna Banka AD Skopje offers a wide range of banking products and services: collecting deposits, approving loans to legal entities and individuals, services in domestic and international payment transactions, as well as activities such as mediation in the purchase and sale of foreign currencies, securities, forfeiture, financial counseling, credit insurance and more.



This Practice as a Game-changer

To be socially responsible during and after a global pandemic was imperative for Komercijalna Banka, and not just regular practice. The Bank's social responsibility in this period was focused on support of the public health system which took the biggest burden in the fight with the consequences of Covid-19 and the care for the citizens' health.

Our energy and assets were directed not only towards realization of the business plans and goals, but also towards maintaining the health of employees and our clients, which is by far the most valuable thing we have. The highest priority was to provide support for the Macedonian public health system and by that invest in the most important asset a society can have.

In Komercijalna Banka, we believe that responsibility, sustainability and humanity are the values that will contribute to overcoming of the current crises and for tracing a trajectory, new along which we will walk with new experiences and with many new challenges. The renowned magazine "Global Finance" awarded Komercijalna Banka AD Skopje a Certificate of Recognition for Distinguished Crisis Leadership in 2020. which came as a result of the maximum efforts engaged by the Bank to meet the needs and help its customers in conditions of the pandemic, to protect its employees and to provide support to the society.

The Transformative Journey

Protecting health and saving lives during a pandemic that eas unprecedented in recent history was the most difficult task for the public health system.

Providing urgent financial assistance and much needed medical

supplies by Komercijalna Banka meant chance for many citizens. At the same time, for the public health workers it meant help to preserve their health and to be able to take care of numerous patients more easily.

The donation of vehicles for emergency medical assistance was of great importance for providing urgent medical assistance and saving human lives. Outdated vehicles in the medical centers in Skopje, Negotino and Ohrid have been a longstanding problem and did not allow adequate and urgent care for patients. Komercijalna Banka is especially proud of its donation for complete of renovation the Department of Cardiology and Rheumatology at the Universitv Clinic for Children's Diseases because it means taking better care of children and helping them when they are going through serious and unpleasant moments in their lives.

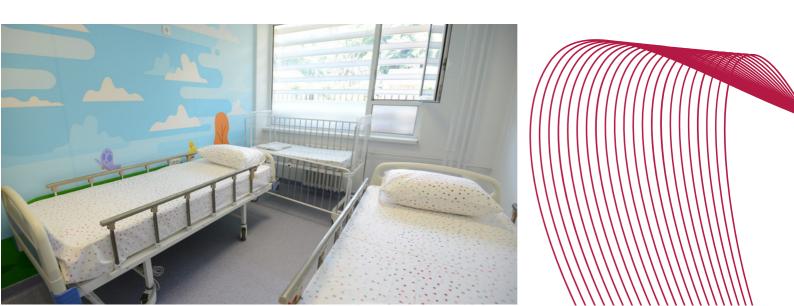
Komercijalna Banka completely renovated the Cardiology and Rheumatology Department of the Children's Hospital in with а donation worth MKD Skopje 5,000,000.00. The donation of vehicles for emergency medical assistance was of great importance for providing urgent medical assistance and saving human lives.

Paving the Road towards Success

The Bank's social responsibility starting from 2020 was focused on support of the public health system which took the biggest burden in the fight with the consequences of Covid-19 and the care for the citizens' health. Komercijalna Banka in 2020 donated two ambulances, 280 oxygen concentrators, noninvasive ventilation masks and 7,120 tests for Covid-19 in total amount of MKD 336,600 20,700,855.00 (about Euros), face MKD medical masks worth 1,198,750.00, provided financial support donation in the amount of MKD 6,150,000.00 for the needs of the Ministry of Health and additional MKD 8,220,000.00 for the employees at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Febrile Conditions Skopje and the Institute of Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia. The total support from the Bank for health workers in 2020 reached 590,000 Euros.

Additionally in 2021, the Bank donated a vehicle for emergency medical assistance to PHI Zdravstven dom Negotino, worth over MKD 2,000,000.00, and provided 30 oxygen flowmeters for oxygen support for public health institutions in the value of MKD 156,780.00.

Komercijalna Banka in 2022 contributed with another donation, this time in honor of marking the International Nurses Week by that expressed its gratitude and respect for their commitment and engagement in saving human lives in the fight against the Covid-19 virus. with its mission for Continuing significant improvement of the conditions in the public health system, in 2023, Komercijalna Banka completely and renovated the Cardiology Department of the Rheumatology Children's Hospital in Skopje with a worth MKD 5,000,000.00. donation Thanks to this donation from Komercijalna Banka, the Department of Cardiology and Rheumatology has received a completely new and modern interior design to meet the needs of medical staff. The patients and Department was completely renovated in record time with new beds, sanitary facilities, pantries and cupboards.



Objectives' Achievement

Humanity, compassion, solidarity and concern for the quality of life of all citizens is our permanent mission, in which we are guided by our motto that it is easier to achieve greater success together. (Полесно е заедно)

As a socially responsible company, we enable economy and society to prosper.

The Covid-19 pandemic has compelled us to rethink the way we conduct many things and to respond rapidly to ongoing developments. This situation has triggered another surge of interest in sustainability and Komercijalna Banka has responded with critical action in difficult times: good leadership.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 virus posed a serious threat to the health and lives of citizens, which exhausted medical resources and the strength of health professionals. With its urgent and significant donations, Komercijalna Banka aimed to make a new step and give significant support to the society in these exceptional moments for our country and the citizens. Our goal as a bank was to help the health authorities in coping with the consequences of the virus.

After coping with the pandemic, we continued with extraordinary contributions for public health in order to help improve the care for every patient – providing quality environment for the patient's stay and conditions for utmost care and attention by the medical staff. Our mission with these donations is to help the public health departments obtain new and



improved conditions that will help patients more easily accept medical treatment and give them the necessary energy and optimism to faster overcome all challenges.

The care are for better health of the citizens should be a top priority to any institution in society, and Komercijalna Banka, as а socially responsible remains true company, to its commitment to help public health so that we can reach a better society for everyone together and more easily.

Further Action

The care for better health of the citizens should be a top priority to any institution in society. The aid for better public health conditions should be continuous, timely and accessible to every citizen who needs it.

Responsibility, sustainability and humanity are the values that will contribute to overcoming every crises and to tracing a new trajectory, along which we will walk with new experiences and many new challenges. Stability, trust and commitment will help us a lot because they are the basis of everything we have achieved so far and what we strive for in the future.

In the meantime, many debates have been opened at global level as economic, social, health and political crises are being solved at the same time. But without a doubt, current inputs will lead to solutions in which sustainability will play the main role. And it would all be is unsustainable without devotion to personal, and corporate social responsibility.

There are 25 children treated on daily basis, or 4.620 children treated annually at the Department of Cardiology and Rheumatology of the University Clinic for Children's Diseases. For them and their families, the stay and treatment in this clinic means a big life challenge, and therefore any relief and improvement of treatment conditions is of great importance. Komercijalna Banka is especially proud that its contribution made it possible for the young patients to feel more comfortable and cheerful in the hospital rooms, as well as for the medical staff to perform their duties more easily and efficiently in the fight to improve children's health. Taking into account the state of public health and the importance of services for the health of citizens, which in the current multi-year economic crisis have serious difficulties in providing the necessary health services and treatments, Komercijalna Banka, as a proven supporter of public health, remains consistent with its strategy to contribute to further improvement of conditions in the public health system. According to the Bank's Corporate Strategy and the Social Responsibility Strategy 2022-2026, in the forthcoming period Komercijalna Banka plans donations for better public health system for all citizens, which will be realized based on the Bank's plans and the needs of state health institutions.



A World Full of Heart is a World Full of Opportunities

A STORY BY:





NLB Banka Skopje belongs to systemically significant banks and is the third largest bank in the country with a constant upward trend. NLB Banka Skopje is a commercial bank that performs all banking services for clients from the country and abroad. The Bank is a member of NLB Group, representing a kind of "economic ambassador" of Slovenia and one of the most successful Slovenian investments in North Macedonia.

Besides the successful operation, we at NLB strongly believe that it is important to be a responsible corporate citizen in the community in which we operate and from

there, caring for the common good is one of our highest priorities. Having the responsibility of shaping sustainable future and acting in accordance with well tailored NLB Methodology for CSR, the postulates of our responsible operation are the care of our employees and clients, environment, promotion of entrepreneurship, financial literacy and mentoring, support of sport, art and culture, protection of cultural heritage, community investment and of course corporate philantropy, in accordance with, and as a signatory of, the UN Principles for Responsible Banking.

We are especially proud on the tradition of support offered to socially useful organizations and institutions that bring positive changes and are a strong support in the local community. Working on the principle of transparent reporting on the projects we support and their implementation by the organizations, we have built a system with which we diligently monitor the progress and results of our investment in the community. And as we have a positive experience because through those organizations, we manage to realize our ideas for a better world, we will continue such support in the future. We believe that in that way we can contribute to improving the quality of life and raising the awareness of those in need of help. The story titled as "A world full of heart is a world full of opportunities" is precisely a story that, with all its elements, found its place more than anything else under the umbrella of community investments and philanthropy and strong support to organizations that make difference in the society.

Practice as a Game-changer

In NLB we do not say in vain that this region is our home. Here are our families, friends, co-workers, neighbors, sportsmen we root for, innkeepers who know how we take our coffee ... Here we can breathe with full lungs, create, experience ups and downs, weave ties. It is therefore only natural that we want to actively participate, influence, and improve the quality of life in our home – also by creating opportunities where they are lacking. Our world is namely much more beautiful and colorful when we stand by each other and **create new opportunities** – opportunities such as those that arise with our support.

The Transformative Journey

Aware that we cannot change the world for the better on our own, but **together** with kindhearted people and organizations who give their hearts, help every day, and thereby **create better footprints**, NLB decided together with them to improve **the quality of life in our home region**.

Paving the Road towards Success

As announced when the business results for the first quarter of this year were presented, the NLB Group decided to donate a total amount of EUR 1.35 million in all markets in our home region where it operates. The employees of the Group proposed almost 100 organisations and with the votes at the end selected more than 30 recipients, including various associations, humanitarian organisations and groups to which the funds will be allocated. In Macedonia, five nongovernmental organizations and institutions were officially presented with donations in the total value of 150,000 euros (30,000 euros for each).

The winners were selected by the employees of the Bank through an internal survey, recognized as organizations and institutions that bring positive changes and are a strong support in the local community. The recipients of the donations are: the Association for Cystic Fibrosis, the University Clinic for Gynecology and Obstetrics in Skopje, the National Network to end violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the Red Cross of the City of Skopje and the Association for Assistive Technology "Open the Windows".

Under the same cause NLB Group with donations in all markets where it operates ended last year. Then in Macedonia, NLB Banka Skopje with a donation of 50.000 euros in total and cheered the NY holidays to three organizations: University Clinic for Children's Diseases, the Center for Support of Persons with Disabilities "Prkos" and the Association for Cystic Fibrosis, whose patron the Bank is, from last year.

We are happy and proud that we have indiscriminately chosen institutions and organizations that are natural partners of citizens which operate in areas that only this sector can serve. The five organizations that received the donations earmarked the funds for socially useful projects that can make a difference.

For example, the Red Cross dedicated the funds for renovation of Solferino Education Center, which is the only facility where the vulnerable population can enjoy human rights, dignified visits and useful workshops organized by trained staff without compensation. Part of the funds are intended for organizing a workshop for psychological support of 60 people in the third age as well as a workshop for children and youth on the topic of "Bullying".

In the absence of aid and medicines from the Health Insurance Fund, the donated funds to the Cystic Fibrosis Association will be used for the purchase of: physical therapy equipment, inhalers and vitamins for the CF patients.

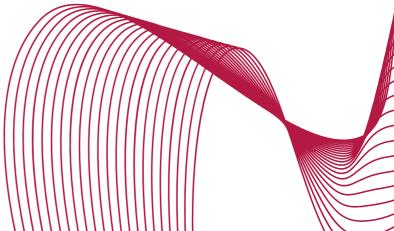
With the donated funds, the Association for Assistive Technology "Open the Windows" will support 12 users of the Center of AT and will equip two work units that include: all-inone computers with touch monitors, heightadjustable tables, accessible chairs, a projector and a laptop computers.

Having in mind that the preterm infants are especially at increased risk of morbidity and mortality because of the immaturity of their body systems, and the fact that there are many premature babies and insufficient incubators, the Clinic for gynecology and obstetrics will purchase an incubator.

The National Network to end violence against Women and Domestic Violence will intend the funds for the Women's Intervention Fund and Women's Support Centers. The donation will support women and girls - victims of gender-based and family violence who are financially insecure (unemployed, have low recipients of social incomes. assistance), as well as single mothers and women and girls at risk of homelessness in the process of their resocialization and temporary provision of funds and services to satisfy existential needs.







Objectives' Achievement

As one of our main objectives is improving the quality of life in the country we operate as a single Bank and in our home region as a Group and it is not surprising that have we put sustainability in its broadest sense at the heart of our business decisions and actions.

Our sustainability journey focuses on tackling environmental, social and governance

considerations, aiming to one goal – to empower us and our stakeholders for sustainable future.

And for us, there are no doubts. For us the path is clear. We constantly ask ourselves what kind of traces we leave behind. And that is the reason why in all actions we take, we strive to ensure a brighter, better future for the generations to come and we have incorporated of mindful this type thinking into the everyday operations and our employees.

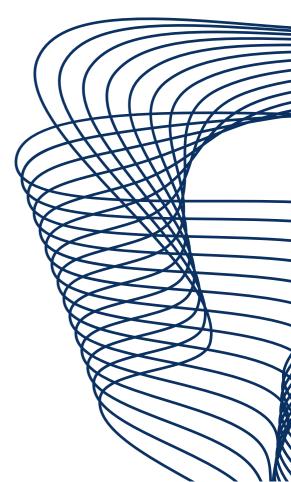
Simply, we strive to create better footprints for the generations to come.

"A powerful community is the one in which everyone contributes in the best way, and success comes when we join forces. Open the windows for 18 years assistive through technology works to give people with disabilities a path to education. quality which is the basis for quality inclusion in the community. A big thank NLB for to getting involved along the way joining and us to mutually improve the quality of life for our users." Margarita Gulevska. Open the windows.

"This donation is the largest we have received far. SO Through our both funds, assistance has been provided to more than 800 beneficiaries. and the amount received from NLB Bank will enable us to continue to fulfill our

mission and help as many women and children as possible to live life without а violence". Elena _ Dimushevska, National network to end violence against women and domestic violence.

"NLB Bank gave us support at a time when the hope for solidarity was slowly fading. Ever becoming since our patron, the Bank has helped many times and we are happy that that help continues and is non-selective. Cystic fibrosis awareness is on a higher level thanks to vou. _ Ivana Atanasovska, Association of cystic fibrosis.



Smart Packaging Waste Management



Pakomak is the oldest and largest PRO in terms of producers registered with their scheme and total packaging waste put on the market (approx. 42%). Pakomak is the only PRO that has consistently met the set national targets since the organization was established. The company is obliged to establish cooperation with local authorities for separate collection system by investing in bins, containers, collection points, trucks, recycling capacities and sharing/financing the costs for collection and transport. It is also obliged to increase public awareness among citizens about the necessity and benefits of separate collection and recycling. Activities of PROs are fully financed by fees paid by the registered producers (industry).





This Practice as a Game-changer

Pakomak in the last several years already has placed 1370 Igloo containers for separate packaging waste collection on the national level. The problems that Pakomak is facing every day, by collection of packaging waste from Igloo containers, is due to non-praecise information that we have in real time about their fullness with packaging waste on the one hand and on the other hand their positioning (location) in the municipalities across the country. The frequency of these problems is increasing daily with the increase of the number of placed containers on the entire territory of the Republic of North Macedonia. It often happens that specialized vehicles for emptying these containers visit containers that are partly full with packaging waste (they are half empty) or due to human error they do not visit some containers at all. As a result of this, we are facing with dissatisfied and discouraged citizens for the selection of packaging waste. in the Republic of North Macedonia 110.000 tons of packaging waste annually is generated, out of which approximately 31.900 tons is plastic (29%), 46.200 tons is paper (42%), 17.600 tons is glass (16%), 4.400 tons are aluminum and other ferometal (4%) and 9.900 tons are composite and wood (9%). Approximately more than 65.000 tons packaging waste on annual base are generated by households and should be collected in Igloo containers for separate collection of: plastic, metal, glass and paper, and in reverse vending machines for separate collection of: PET bottles and aluminum cans.

The Transformative Journey

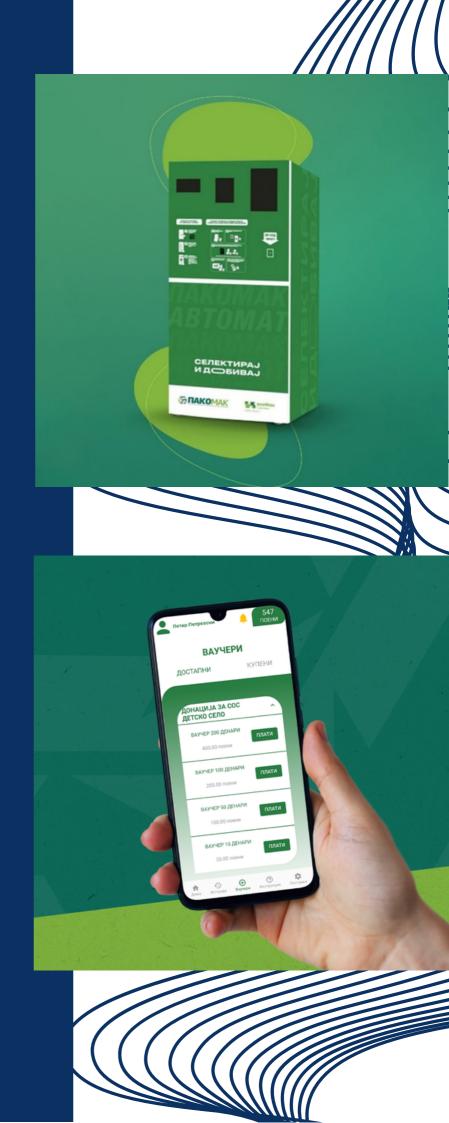
To motivate citizens who are not using Igloo containers for packaging waste collection, and to prevent littering Pakomak has developed SMART SYSTEM WITH RVM, where plastic PET bottles and aluminium cans can be exchanged against "Green Points" that are accredited to a user account accessed via smart phone application. These green points can be used to purchase goods or services from retailers and municipalities.

As an additional opportunity to include Pakomak in the corporate philanthropy, for citizens who recycle in return vending machines, we also provided them with an additional option to donate funds to SOS children's village, which are paid by Pakomak. Citizens who recycle in the return vending machines have the opportunity to donate to SOS children's village vouchers of 10 denars, 50 denars, 100 denars and 200 denars. The entire amount donated by users through the Ecomak application is paid by Pakomak to SOS children's village as a donation . In this way, Pakomak applies philanthropy as a practice in operations. With Ecomak application and digital technology, Pakomak has an overview of the value of the vouchers and the number of users who have chosen to donate funds to SOS children's village.

The plan of the company is in the next four years to place all the country over reverse vendina machines to be available for each citizen. Implementing this system in parallel with Igloo containers will improve collection of the packaging waste and decrease littering and pollution of our environment on one side and on the other side will create new jobs.

Paving the Road towards Success

Pakomak currently has installed 28 vending machines in markets and in the future it is planned to install 20-30 new vending machines per year that will be available to all citizens. Since the beginning of enabling the option of the Ecomak application for donating green points in SOS children's village, 13,390 denaps was donated from 161 users. The network of the **ECOMAK** users of application increases by 300 users per week.



At the moment Ecomak application is used by 15 236 users. Long-term planning will provide more opportunities for donating green points, such as in kindergartens,

municipalities, health centers in order to encourage citizens to philanthropy as a part of life habits.

Objectives' Achievement

Overall objective: Improved living conditions through smart, digitally traceable and transparent packaging waste management.

Outcome 1: Increased effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of packaging waste management system operated by Pakomak. Outcome 2: More citizens

and Municipalities engaged in recycling by making use of the smart packaging waste infrastructure.

Impact hypothesis: If the packaging waste management system is enhanced through the use of digital technologies and if awareness for the importance of separation recycling of and generated packaging waste amongst citizens and in particular youth is fostered, then more PW is collected in а more efficient manner, leading to less recyclable material ending up in landfills or in the nature and primary resources are conserved contributes which to better living conditions of the citizens.

Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency will directly increase the collected quantities of packaging waste and decrease the quantities of packaging waste that would end up in a landfill.

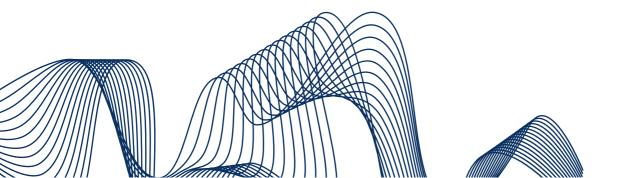
Communication and the continuous presence of smart infrastructure will educate all citizens to take care of their environment and also to transfer the knowledge to the younger generations.

Implementation of new smart system for packaging waste management will result with less waste disposed on land field, less air pollution and more satisfied citizens.

Further Action

In order to encourage citizens to donate green points for SOS children's village, social networks were of great help to us. With advertising on social networks, we reached the number of users of the Ecomak application of about 15,000 users. This is a way to change people's habits on philanthropy,

environmental awareness selection and of packaging waste for a healthy clean and environment. Digital communication is becoming a part of our everyday life. Pakomak is adapting to it with the introduction of the Smart Waste system, especially among the young population, where habits are now being created to have a better and higher quality life in the future.



Production of Alcoholfree Beverages with a Focus on Continuous Growth & Sustainable Development





A large part of Pivara Skopje's strategic approach is giving back to the community. After recognizing the high unemployment among young people, more than 50%, especially women from ethnic minorities as the most affected category, Pivara Skopje launched the "Skills for Success" training program in 2016 within the Youth Empowered platform. According to the World Bank analysis, the lack of specific knowledge and skills is the key reason young people, especially in these categories, cannot be employed. The goal was to make the program more accessible to a wider audience and have a bigger reach in the socially vulnerable groups. The knowledge and experience are transferred by the members of the management team of Pivara Skopje and other leading representatives of the business, experts from the academic community, public institutions, and renowned international organizations.



This Practice as a Game-changer

Part of the company strategy is special pillar Sustainable grow with our community, accelerating focus on Sustainability Agenda while engaging our people, customers & community. "Skills for success" program is a project that perfectly fits into the measures and efforts of the state institutions and the Government for further reduction of unemployment, especially among young training's purpose people. The is to encourage self-confidence and establish connections with relevant mentors. to encourage entrepreneurial culture and to motivate young people. Young people get opportunity improve the to their communication skills, learn how to conduct negotiations, create development plans, and manage projects, as well as effectively manage time and resources, and gain knowledge in the field of business operations, finance, and sales.

The Transformative Journey

The ultimate goal of Pivara Skopje through these trainings is to motivate and encourage young people to take their future into their own hands by enabling them to acquire skills that will help them get jobs or start their own business more easily.



The results we achieved and the ones we expect justify all our investments in this Program and motivate us to continue, together with our partners, to open new perspectives for the youth and jointly contribute to increasing employment and further development of the entrepreneurial culture in the country.

The "Skills for Success" program consists of trainings that are free of charge for the participants, i.e. all costs for their implementation are covered by Pivara Skopje, which represents our contribution and investment in better future of these young people and the country.

Through the live on-line trainings on ZOOM platform, physical trainings in Educational Center of Pivara Skopje and the additional trainings we organize across the country, we have made the Program available to all young people who want to invest in their knowledge and skills.

Two types of tactics were used to provide more young people to attend the training: (1) organization of trainings in many cities within the country; and 2) a digital hub was created and launched, enabling electronic access to all contents of the training.

There is also volunteer engagement of employees from all management levels and departments in the company as lecturers and mentors of trainings, as well as involvement of prominent public figures from the community as motivational speakers.

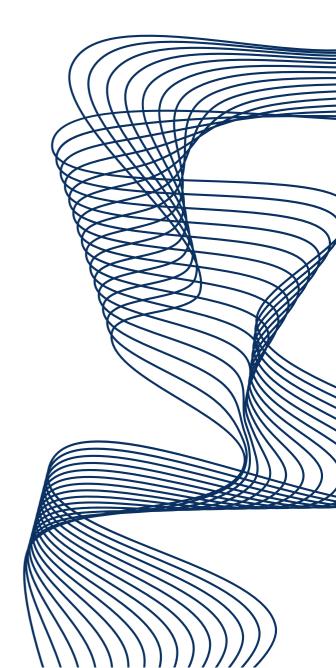
Paving the Road towards Success

The interest in the program holds a steady pace since the beginning, with a target of 1000 participants yearly. The lectures are being adapted to the current needs and situation, and that is why during the pandemic we offered online lectures as well via the Zoom platform. Now, the program has a hybrid model, offering both in-person and online lectures. Before the start of each edition, there is an online call for application on social media and polnacasa.mk, with a form that needs to be filled out. Then, the candidates are contacted one by one by a representative of our partners. This personal approach ensures high satisfaction rates among the audience. The long-term strategy is to make the program as useful as possible, by adding new modules and changing the structure of the existing ones, as well as incorporating sustainability trainings that are in line with our company goals.

Objectives' Achievement

The excellent results are proof of how successful this training is and how it contributes to supporting young people in their employment and opening their own business. More than 50% of the participants got a job or started their own business within a year of attending the The satisfaction of the training. participants from the training is huge, even 98% and the percentage of female participants is 75%. In the past years, up to today, as many as 7333 young people have gone through free of charge training.





Further Action

The transition from an in-person youth training program to an online format via the Zoom platform brought about a series of unforeseen obstacles that posed significant challenges to both organizers and participants. Initially designed to be a hands-on and interactive experience, the shift to virtual delivery due to the sudden pandemic onset demanded a complete overhaul of the program's structure, engagement strategies, and technological adaptation.

One of the primary obstacles was the loss of physical interaction and engagement. In the in-person setting, participants could readily interact with trainers and peers, fostering personal connections, active discussions, and team-building activities. The virtual transition necessitated the development of innovative ways to replicate this interpersonal dynamic, often leading to challenges in maintaining the same level of engagement and connection.

Through the expertise of the mentors, these obstacles were eliminated, and further relieved through the introduction of the hybrid attendance – both in person and on-line on Zoom. The satisfaction rate remained in the high-nineties percentage, and all participants said they would recommend the program to their friends.

The plans for the future include expanding and adapting the program curriculum to better fit the needs of the dynamic business world, and extending our cooperation with important stakeholders, thus attracting an even wider audience, and helping the community through creating a more capable workforce.

In essence, the launch of youth development programs by companies not only shapes the careers of young individuals but also contributes to the overall advancement of industries, economies, and societies. By investing in the development of the youth, companies secure a brighter future for themselves and the generations to come, solidifying their role as responsible and forwardthinking corporate citizens.



Together for a Hate Free Net: Youth Campaign



Foundation Telekom for Macedonia was founded in 2002, as one of the first corporate foundations. The focus of our work is digital inclusion, save internet and human centric technology. We use technology as a toll for better life and engage children and young people in tackling some of the biggest challenges facing their generation. We work on long-term projects, with strategic partnerships.

<u>Together for a Hate Free Net</u> is youth led safe internet initiative, created in partnership with UNICEF. The main goal of the initiative is to involve and teach young people how to fight for hate free net. We give them voice, knowledge and space to make a difference. Through intensive workshops and co-creation with professionals, they made a social media campaign.

This is more than community investment. It is our strategic commitment, because as a leader that is building digital society, we are taking a step beyond by assuming the ambitious task of working on the ethics of such digital future. As a leading telecommunications company, we equip people with the best the digital world has to offer, thereby creating millions of connections every day. But we want more and we are doing more. Not only are we expanding our network, we are also helping to make it a safe and tolerant space for everyone. We are not just enabling a more digital future but also one that is fairer, more sustainable, and more worth living for.

This Practice as a Game-changer

As leads а company that digital transformation, we feel that one of our most important responsibilities is to accompany this transformation. Not only do we provide the required network infrastructure and suitable products, we are committed to a net open-minded, that is welcoming and accessible for everyone, with room for different perspectives and opinions. For a network without hate, where people treat each other with respect.

This is our strategy, and a reason we started the initiative – Together for a Hate Free Net. But, we want to do a change, not only raise awareness of the problem. We wanted to make a step towards changing online behavior among young people. That is not an easy task, so we decide to:

- Make a partnership for a better impact partnership with UNICEF in order to improve engagement of the youth
- Involve young people directly in order to touch the target audience better (from youth to youth)

So, through co-creation workshops facilitated by communication, media literacy, child protection, technology professionals and multi-media content creators, children and young people learned how to deal with threats and how to create a campaign to raise the awareness of their peers and the general public.

Paving the Road Towards Success

Our goal was to reach as many young people as possible, to make a positive change, be loud, speak up, do this through the young people's voices and be present in media longer period of time. In order to this, we used many communication channels and tools, also announcing every step of the progress. This is a long-term project and was communicated in a period of 4 months. This initiative is consisted of 3 main phases:

1. Announcing of the partnership and open call. We started communication about the importance of safe internet and our intention to involve young people in creating a campaign. Open call was announced, inviting children and young people to join communication initiatives to address barriers that allow cyberbullying and hate speech to persist in social media.

2.Workshops – 30 children and young people participated in design thinking sessions and facilitated group work to conceptualize a campaign and develop messaging.

Т Фондација

Да го свртиме хејтот НаОПаКУ

Биди дел од работилници за борба против говорот на омраза.

for every child



During the workshops, young people learned more about cyberbullying, how to recognize and prevent it, they defined goals of the campaign, producing the other videos and communication materials. Guided through a design thinking process they defined target groups and developed campaign plan and product concepts. In the spirit of cocreation, the entire process is led by children and young people, guided by creative psychologists, and communication experts.

3.Campaign – On International Day for Countering Hate Speech, we started the youth campaign under the slogan "Bullying Bye Bye". The campaign includes over twenty social media videos. Some including messages such as "Words carry weight so choose them carefully" to shed light on the harmful effects of cyberbullying. Others include messages calling on young people themselves to not be bystanders and offer support if they witness cyberbullying. The campaign was ongoing on social media for 2 months.

Objectives' Achievement

There are 2 important KPI's that we achieved with this initiative.

#GoodMagenta label

This is Deutsche Telekom label, that demonstrate how we live up to our societal responsibilities. The label help to highlight our diverse commitment to society. #GoodMagenta, identifies projects, measures and initiatives with a positive contribution to social and societal challenges in the digital world.





For the initiative Together for a Free Net we were awarded Good Magenta, meaning that we have an extraordinary initiative dedicated to a tolerant and safer internet for everyone. With every labeled initiative, Deutsche Telekom openly commit to our promise to become a little better every day and to live up to responsibility toward the society.

To reach as many young people as possible

1.600 000 total PR reach, 49 announcements, 612455 – Social media reach (only Telekom profiles, this number will be doubled by UNICEF posts).

Further Action

When we started the strategy for the initiative, we knew the real challenges:

- Young people using internet and social media without ethics can lead to risks and unacceptable behavour (cyberbullying, hate speech, gender related negative attitudes and other forms of peer-to-peer violence)
- 88.3% of young people participate on social networks (<u>stat.gov.mk</u> p. 4; p.6) where most cyberviolence and cyber-bullying takes place (<u>Amnesty</u> p. 18, Table 2)
- 35% of youth have felt unsafe online more than one time (<u>U-Report</u> Q1) Mechanisms for protection in North Macedonia are scattered (<u>U-Report</u> Q6)
- Online violence can affect young people lives negatively, causing: isolation, fear, empower violent behavior, even self-harm (<u>enough.org</u> bullet #6)

But, having this in mind, we knew that we must find a solution to make not only another communication, but something that will have an impact, effect. So, we came to conclusion that we want to:

- Create youth lead workshop and campaign to empower positive behavior and protect young people online
- Content that will be created and spread through young people in order to touch the target audience better (from youth to youth)
- Partnership with UNICEF in order to improve engagement of the youth
- Include young people from different social surroundings (, different ethnicities and gender

We plan to continue this initiative in the future.

"All over the world, cyberbullying is an everyday reality of children and young people. Repeated hurtful behaviors aimed at scaring, angering, or shaming those who are targeted impacts their overall emotional well-being and mental health," said Patrizia DiGiovanni, UNICEF Representative. "I am proud to see how young people themselves have come together to speak up and use their creativity to promote being respectful and kind to their peers and to defend the victims."

25 Years of Giving Back to Community

A STORY BY:



NOVA International School is a coeducational day school that enrolls around 800 students from over 40 countries. It is an International Baccalaureate World Continuum school for students in grades PK-12.

Students at NOVA learn to look beyond academics. The Service as Action and the Creativity, Action, Service programs focus on autonomous learning by engaging in projects that contribute to community development, policy improvement and successful fund and awareness-raising initiatives. They learn to understand pressing social issues, identify the community's needs and engage with it to make positive changes.

Through action, inquiry and reflection, students develop skills for future academic success and life beyond school, hence our regular cooperation



with the NGOs. Our latest activities are 17 computer sets via Doniraj Kompjuter for a Kicevo primary school; funds and school supplies for the Dragomance village primary school and dormitory with Let's Spread Love; art materials for Ukrainian children with UNHCR, Christmas gifts for the SOS Children's Village; and funds and clothes for the Turkey and Siria earthquake victims.

Practice as a Game-changer

The International Baccalaureate curriculum sets specific student development standards entailing awareness of one's socioeconomic conditions and necessary social or environmental improvements. With NOVA's commitment to a full IB continuum school. we apply sustainable development principles in line with our mission: seek self and others, in hearts and minds unafraid of possibilities. We teach about sustainable development by educating students who contribute to the cleaning community by green areas. collecting waste and recycling, providing for those in need.

The roof solar plant and battery system satisfy 50% of our energy needs. We track outdoor and indoor air quality with specific monitoring mechanisms in line with our policies. Each indoor space has air purifiers to ensure clean air even during high outdoor pollution. We use reverse osmosis water fountains reducing water bottle purchases. We maintain ecological awareness with different types of waste bins on campus and electronic waste recycling. We don't use plastic cutlery, plates, cups. Our archives and files are digital to avoid bulk printing. We live our educational philosophy and practice it.

The Transformative Journey

Students reflect and self-assess their progress as part of the IB student portfolio. The IB program aims to develop internationally minded people who recognize common humanity and shared their guardianship of the planet, helping to create a better and more peaceful world. This is in line with our strategy for being an important stakeholder not only within our community but also in the wider context.

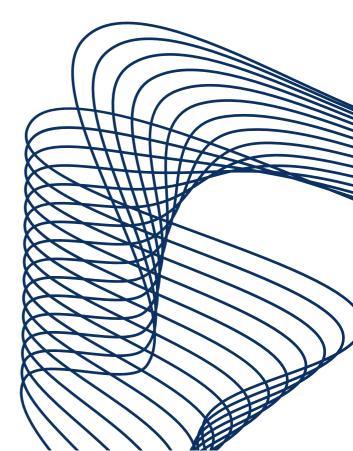
Our educational and philanthropic strategies coincide in the fact that we nurture our students' creative strengths in a life of passionate pursuits while enabling them to find their own sense of purpose. These learning standards and principles aim to prepare students for a life where they themselves design, cocreate, share and accomplish goals, launched into society equipped with skills to attain positive change for the good. These greater goals are embedded into the teaching methodology and students' assignments, actively and regularly taught throughout the curriculum. The steps are incorporated into individual classes presented by the Service as and Creativity, Action Action and Service programs for different grade levels depending on the students' age. As a subset or particular kind of action, service has always been a shared value of the IB community. IB learners strive to be caring members of the community and demonstrate personal а commitment to service and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and the environment. Thus, they provide educational workshops for Roma children, they gather food and for the homeless shelter clothes beneficiaries, they clean Vodno, the City Park and other public spaces in Skopje and its vicinity, they produce informative environmental videos and regularly collect plastic waste.

Paving the Road towards Success

Our journey started in 2006 when the International **Baccalaureate** Organization authorized NOVA to offer its Diploma Programme for 11th and 12th-grade students (i.e., 3rd and 4th year of high school). In 2022 we were authorized to implement the Middle Years Programme, for students from 6th to 10th grade. Lastly, in the spring of 2023, we were authorized to implement the Primary Years Program for students aged 3 to 12. These formal steps testify to our long-term goal and enable us to literally carry out our educational beliefs without interruptions and thoroughly as each grade level builds upon the acquired material and the overall school experience from the previous one. The well-rounded outcome is carrying and respectful individuals, prepared to get involved in various philanthropic projects, working both individually and collectively for the greater good. In order to achieve this, our faculty tirelessly works on integrating this educational aspect into their individual curricula, paying close attention to positive moral values and exemplary behavior. Our beliefs are intrinsic in each taught lesson and each action taken. Without exception, students, parents and staff are united by the outlined communal journey. We nurture a growth mindset, releasing individual potential put to work towards communal contribution, shaping a bettershared future as our credo is that diversity makes the whole greater than its parts. Becoming an IB continuum school was a carefully planned process where every school stakeholder contributed accordingly. Detailed planning, ensuring outlined external criteria, and providing the right environment for our students to thrive academically and socially emotionally has been a common goal for every staff member.

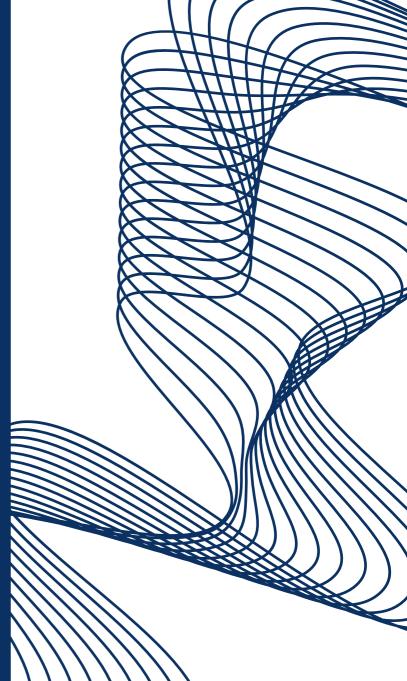
Objectives' Achievement

With the refurbished school building and dormitory in Dragomance, students there will be able to learn in an environment that meets 21st-century standards, greatly boosting student's personal growth and positively impacting the whole rural community. By providing Ukrainian children with art supplies and materials during the summer, we enabled them to have a summer distraction and a medium to express their emotions and states of mind, taking into consideration the conditions they left behind in their home country. By welcoming SOS Children Village protégés to our school's Winter Market celebration, we brought joy into their lives and integration with an international community by playing educational games with them. With the latest computer sets donated to a Kicevo primary school, we are allowing the less fortunate to access necessary technology for their continued learning. By being actively involved with the homeless people shelter, we assist in their continued efforts to provide basic service for those in need.



We contributed to the relief efforts following the Turkey and Syria earthquakes by collecting food, clothing and making a financial donation at the peak of the tragedy's aftermath. These are just but a few of the projects recently undertaken, and they serve as a further motivation for our entire community to continue to build and grow its community outreach, enriching our students' philanthropic mindset.

Moreover, we have saved more than 6 twenty-meter trees since January 2019 after installing our printing verification system that entails double-checks before printing materials. In addition, our installed solar system has avoided 200 tons of carbon dioxide and saved more than 300 trees since being installed. We expect this impact to further continue in the coming years.





Further Action

Our learned lessons are that we can achieve an even greater level of self-sustainability and philanthropic contribution with commitment and hard work. Our experiences have pointed us to situations that can be avoided in the future with a more effective management structure. Having a strong team united around a singular goal is one key factor to successful project execution. Incorporating our values and beliefs within our educational framework is our initial step, but getting everyone synchronized in achieving that goal is our upcoming challenge. Investing in green energy and adopting a partial circular economy model is another crucial step that needs everybody's consensus. We remain dedicated to communicating our vision for the future with all of our stakeholders and ensuring we have our community's full support and backing.

We're planning to further expand our IB's Service as Action and, Creativity Action and Service programs, to ensure they impact all students. This means they are embedded as part of the school's graduation expectations, and no student can complete the NOVA journey without having gone through these two critical steps. This ensures that the 100+ graduates that leave NOVA each school year are equipped with the know-how, not only necessary for a competitive college admissions process but also how to meaningfully contribute to their most immediate community and be a positive force for change. Lifelong skills that remain with our students long after their time at NOVA.

The school intends to continue serving as an exemplar of institutional responsibility by further reducing its carbon footprint, expanding its recycling practices, further raising awareness about the importance of reducing the impact of climate change, and publicly highlighting the fact that each of us is important enough in contributing to this seismic shift.

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About the Project:

Partnerships for Giving Project (P4G) is part of USAID North Macedonia's Local Works initiative, implemented by the Association Konekt, in partnership with the AmCham North Macedonia, the Economic Chamber of North-West Macedonia (ECNWM), the European Center for Non-Profit Law (ECNL) and Indigo.

This Project aims to increase engagement between community stakeholders through identification of needs and improvement of the nationally available infrastructure for philanthropy at all levels of the society.









European Center for Not-for-Profit Law

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