

**COMMUNICATION OF ENGAGEMENT (COE)
ACRA
2017-2018**

Milan, 11.12.2018

Statement of Continued Support

Dear Mr. Secretary General,
Dear Stakeholders,

I am pleased to communicate our renewed commitment toward the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

We join to the present letter our Communication on Engagement (COE) 2017-2018 that describes our organization's efforts to support the implementation of the ten principles and to engage with the Global Compact.

Sincerely yours,



Nicola Morganti
President

COE**Description of Actions**

December 2016 – November 2018

Introduction

In December 2016 ACRA joined the United Nations Global Compact, the largest strategic corporate citizenship initiative in the world. The choice to join the Global Compact was driven by our objective to develop virtuous partnerships with the private sector in full compliance with the universal principles of human rights.

ACRA seeks cooperation with businesses and has joined the United Nations Global Compact to become part of a process where the profit and non-profit sectors increasingly join their efforts, while ensuring respect for human rights and the dignity of people.

ACRA aims to jointly build with companies a path of collaboration that leads to the application of innovative social responsibility processes. We offer different ways of collaboration relating to the internal and external network of the company, the possibilities of promotion, the internationalization of its business, a greater awareness related to its production chain. Through the skills and know-how within the company, through the communication of values, tools and networks, companies can engage employees, suppliers and customers in promoting sustainable initiatives.

ACRA offers as well to companies the opportunity to jointly design projects in the field and in a synergistic manner, providing companies with the skills acquired in fifty years of fieldwork in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

A paradigm for collaborating beyond the boundaries between profit and non-profit is the Creation of Shared Value (CSV). Shared Value is a management strategy in which companies find business opportunities in social problems. The Shared Value model encourages a positive change in society, the environment, the finance and all those directly and indirectly involved in a business. The guiding principle of this theory is that economic success must not take place at the expense of society or the environment and the creation of a positive impact on society and the environment can also occur without disadvantages for profit.

Engagement with companies in Global Compact related issues 2017-2018

Main issues addressed within the period:

Human Rights

Principle 1 - Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights;

Labour

Principle 6 - Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

Principle 9 - Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Activities on Renewable energy and rural electrification

SDG 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Energy is now universally considered as an instrumental right, an enabling factor to guarantee access to other fundamental rights such as water and food and to ensure human development. In line with the initiative SE4All and the SDG 7, since 2006 ACRA promotes **the production and use of renewable energy** to increase access to electricity, particularly in rural areas.

ACRA promotes access to electricity through decentralized "off grid" solutions using renewable sources, especially in rural areas by encouraging public and private investment in the renewable energy sector with the active involvement of the communities.

We are also promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of biodiversity in all our programs by providing incentives for the conservation of resources that are essential for the production of water, food and energy (NEXUS approach).

In all our interventions we work according to a multi-stakeholders approach with the active involvement of institutions, governments and populations (human empowerment) in territorial planning and management, in environmental protection, in the safeguarding of biodiversity, in waste management.

Building on its experiences, ACRA has joined the Power4All campaign, convinced that "Decentralized renewable energy is the faster path to power for all"¹.

ACRA is also member of the Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE)² an international business association with 150 members that promotes a sustainable decentralized renewable energy industry, activating markets for affordable energy services, and

¹ <https://www.powerforall.org/>

² <https://www.ruralelec.org/>

creating local jobs and inclusive economies. We participate in international conferences organized by the Alliance for Rural Electrification and in sectoral meetings organized at national level in the countries where we operate, in order to promote a "bottom-up" dialogue on project policies and methods and to establish relationships with various private sector companies working in the field of renewable energy for rural electrification.

In 2016 ACRA began cooperating with Enel Green Power (EGP) in Tanzania in order to organize a "full-immersion" experience in the local rural environment for EGP staff, in view of the development of mini solar networks for the electrification of villages.

In 2017 ACRA's commitment to renewable energy for rural electrification has been enriched with a new mandate: ACRA has carried out a feasibility study together with ENEL Green Power (EGP) in Tanzania. Some villages have been identified where there is a potential for the installation of solar micro-grids for their electrification with the direct involvement of the communities. This represents a recognition of ACRA's skills in the sector and, at the same time, represents an important step in the direction of collaborating with private sector companies.

In 2018 we have carried out a feasibility study in Ethiopia, again with EGP, in order to identify relevant agro-pastoral activities that could be supported in the surrounding area of a solar farm that will produce 100 MW. Proposed interventions should benefit local communities in the targeted region. The study aimed at identifying how the NEXUS water, energy and food can be activated or enhanced through productive use of energy, starting from the potential agro-business opportunities existing in the socio-economic and environmental context, and considering the energy availability from the solar main project.

Measurement of Outcomes

- ✓ Partnership developed with ENEL Green Power for promoting access to renewable energy in Tanzania (2017)
- ✓ Partnership with EGP in order to identify relevant agro-pastoral activities that could be supported in the surrounding area of a solar farm in Ethiopia
- ✓ Promoting community involvement in rural electrification through participation of the Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE) events (annual meetings, workshops, enterprise matchmaking forums)

For more information: <http://www.acra.it/energy&environment>

Activities on Social Enterprise Development

SDG 8 - Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

In order to face the challenges of sustainability and lasting impact and in keeping aligned with the guidelines emerged from the Social Enterprise World Forum organized in 2015, in 2016 we have organized the first **Social Enterprise Boat Camp**; it was the first boot

camp for social entrepreneurship organized on a ship and addressed to entrepreneurs, social innovators and international cooperation operators interested in approaching a business culture that combines environmental and economic sustainability and social impact.

In partnership with the ENEL as a strategic partner and the Cooperative Group CGM and with OPES Impact Fund as organizing partner, the **Social Enterprise Boat Camp**, was held on a ship plying the route Civitavecchia - Barcelona. The Social Enterprise Boat Camp - an international event gathering more than 350 participants from 20 countries aboard a ship in the open sea - offered participants the opportunity for intense training and co-creation activities, with world-class mentors and speakers, as well as an unusual setting to exchange ideas with different actors engaged in social entrepreneurship and in the search for inclusive and sustainable economic solutions.

Following the successful first edition in 2016, the Social Enterprise Boatcamp has been replicated in 2017 offering intensive working sessions on the creation and strengthening of enterprises that promote **inclusive business models** and redraw the economy of migration.



The **2017 Social Enterprise Boatcamp** has been an ambitious journey of transformation, with disruptive innovators and social entrepreneurs coming from migrant and local communities, with the aim of celebrating talents, skills, dreams of both refugees and migrants in their host countries as well as in countries of origin and to create a shared value.

The migration challenge is undoubtedly perceived as one of the greatest of our times. The Boat Camp was not intended to investigate the complexities of this challenge and the dynamics of the migration flows, with its myriad of underlying causes and roots, but instead, while shaping **inclusive business training sessions**, has focused on the role played by social business in successfully dealing with this challenge.

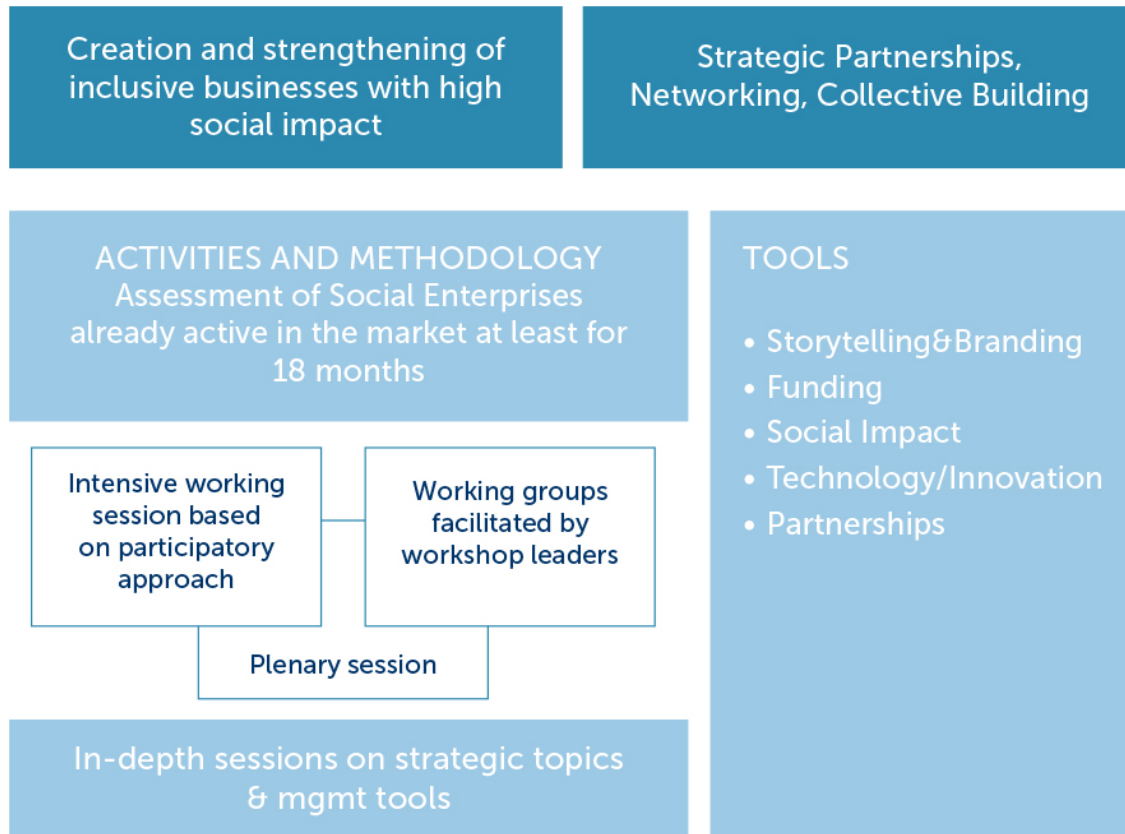
Underlying questions were:

- How can refugees and migrants unleash their potential and find a decent work in the receiving countries?
- How the local communities can get engaged and benefit by the “diversity dividend” ?

- How a new and more inclusive economy can be built?
- In what way, to what extent, and how much are social enterprises dealing with the solution of these problems?

The overall training aimed at providing soft and hard skills to the participants, while exposing them to constructive and engaging talks with the leading players in the space of innovation addressing the migration challenge.

Boatcamp Goals and Tools



Along the route Civitavecchia – Barcelona, the Social Enterprise Boat Camp has been an opportunity to draw and consolidate **business initiatives with high social impact**, in the belief that there are real opportunities to fuel the financial sustainability and, above all, the **dignity, equality and justice**. The selected case studies were mainly social enterprises that are founded, managed or benefit from the contribution of residents and migrants and dealing with social problems related to migration flows.

Measurement of Outcomes

- ✓ 372 participants involved (2017)
- Among which:
 - ✓ 12 knowledge advisors
 - ✓ 16 workshop leaders
 - ✓ 60 social entrepreneurs speakers
 - ✓ 8 journalists

PARTNERSHIPS	
Strategic partner	ENEL
Organizational partner	OPES Impact Fund; Ashoka;
Strategic and financial support	Fondazione CRT; Compagnia di San Paolo; Fondazione CARIPLO
Technical support	European Social Innovation Competition, project of the European Commission
Contributors	African Rising; British Council; Generali – Human safety Net; UBI Banca; Afrilanthropy;
Patronage	AICS (Agenzia Italiana di Cooperazione)
Collaboration	Universitat Pompeu Fabra – Barcelona;
Scientific partners	Fondazione Leone Moressa; Teresia – Politechnic of Milan
Knowledge partner	Techsoup Italia
Technical partner	Grimaldi Lines

For more information: www.boatcamp2017.org

Participation to Global Compact events

- ✓ UNGC Welcome Meeting 2018 - 8 February 2018
- ✓ Webinar on COE - 6 July 2018

For more information on ACRA engagement toward the SDGs see our Social Reports on: http://www.acra.it/annual_reports