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# Group Community Engagement Policy

## Our commitment to society

**Establishing the new possible** is our purpose. It is our promise to make a positive impact in the world: from developing sustainable solutions and practices, to building a diverse and inclusive future, Bekaert is determined to create value for all stakeholders.

Bekaert's ambition is to **be the leading partner for shaping the way we live and move**, and to always do this in a way that is safe, smart, and sustainable.

As expressed in our purpose and ambition, our responsibility as a company extends beyond our own organization and includes a commitment to all stakeholders, including the communities we are part of.

Our commitment to the communities is threefold:

We act with integrity in our dialogues with community stakeholders and foster effective communication to **build long-term community trust**.

We want to leave a positive and inspiring legacy in the world and stimulate our teams in more than 40 countries to initiate actions to **give back to the community**. We advocate and fund initiatives that make a positive difference to people's lives and that help improve the social and environmental conditions in the communities where we are active.

True to our values, we promote and apply **responsible business practices** in our community relations and engagement activities.

## Building community trust

We want to be a ‘good neighbor’ in the communities where we operate. We act with integrity in our dialogues with community stakeholders and foster effective communication. Our aim is to build long-term community trust.

Bekaert provides **transparent and timely information** about its operations, decisions, and events that might have an impact on the local community and environment. This information sharing may occur in different forms and through various channels:

- Corporate publications
- Local stakeholder information briefings
- Individual meetings and feedback forms

Bekaert actively participates in **community dialogues** to understand local stakeholder concerns and expectations. This outside-in information gathering can be initiated by local stakeholders, multi-stakeholder forums, or the company itself. Local communities can be represented by, e.g., local governments, organizations, neighbors, minority groups, indigenous people. Such dialogues can be organized through:

- Hosting community delegations
- Inviting community stakeholders to company events
- Company participation to community events
- Company participation to multi-stakeholder events and advisory panels
- Community stakeholder surveys

Bekaert is **mindful and professional** when communicating any news, events, or other type of information that includes specific information about a certain community. This applies to:

- Bekaert’s corporate publications
- Statements made to press and media
- The company’s social media posts

## Giving back to the community

We want to leave a positive and inspiring legacy in the world and stimulate our teams in more than 40 countries to initiate actions to give back to the community.

We advocate and fund meaningful initiatives that make a positive difference to people's lives and that help improve the social and environmental conditions in the communities where we are active.

To maximize the impact of our initiatives, we promote:

- The **active engagement** of Bekaert employees, external stakeholders, and beneficiaries in the programs we support
- Initiatives in the following **priority areas**:
  - Education
  - Diversity & Inclusion
  - Environment
- United by our values, we also support humanitarian initiatives that provide **emergency relief** to people in communities affected by natural or other disasters.

### Active engagement

Community engagement is more than donating a monetary contribution. We promote the active engagement of Bekaert teams, external stakeholders, and end-beneficiaries in the programs we support. This helps creating awareness and enthusiasm among all participants, which will increase the impact of our support actions even more.

As a target, each Bekaert location organizes **at least one community engagement activity per year**. This can take different forms: either by inviting community stakeholders to participate in a Bekaert event, and/or by active participation of Bekaert employees in an event organized by the community or a recognized charity organization.

### Education-related projects

We believe that **education** is the backbone of society and therefore support programs that enhance access to school education and talent development. Some examples:

- Engagement of local schools in Bekaert events and programs, eg, H&S week, You Know Watt programs, environmental clean-up events
- School event or student event sponsoring and participation
- Donations in-kind to schools, offered by the company or collected through employee initiatives
- Voluntary teaching hours on relevant sustainability matters
- Sponsoring master/PhD theses in subjects relevant to Bekaert

### Programs with focus on diversity and inclusion

Our attention for **diversity & inclusion** extends beyond our responsibility as an employer: we support programs that help break down the social and economic barriers of girls, women, people with a disability, and underserved population groups. Some examples:

- Micro-financing projects helping women, less abled people and unprivileged community groups develop skills that enhance their independence and empowerment and/or coach them in starting up a business
- Participation in sports events with fundraising for a social institution or charity organization
- Voluntary administration and IT support to elderly people, refugee communities, and families not connected to online public services
- Team building events oriented on building infrastructure (eg playground) for schools or orphanages
- Engagement of sheltered workshops or other forms of inclusive workplaces as preferred suppliers for outsourced services like garden maintenance and packaging activities.

### Environmental programs

We initiate and support community programs that have a positive impact on the **environment** and help preserve nature. Some examples:

- Events with community stakeholders (school, fire brigade, local youth movement group, local nature preservation organization) in river/riverbed/playground clean-up activities
- Tree planting initiatives on own grounds and/or community grounds
- Recycling and reuse programs (together with neighboring industrial and community organizations)
- Corporate programs such as events organized by River Cleanup and OffshoreWind4Kids

### Disaster relief

United by our values, we also support humanitarian initiatives that provide **emergency relief** to people in need.

- Bekaert may support first-line help and social relief in case of disasters, including natural disasters and the consequences of military conflict. The company will in this respect usually focus on disaster relief for communities where we are active.
- On a local scale, Bekaert stimulates first-line help including voluntary support and donations by the local teams.
- Bekaert also considers corporate donations to enable emergency relief on a larger scale.

## Other initiatives

Initiatives that are not covered above may be very meaningful and culturally important to the local communities and are therefore not by definition excluded. However, in making choices as a company, Bekaert does actively promote the listed priority areas as these are strongly interrelated with our company's key sustainability themes.

In no case should initiatives be supported on behalf of Bekaert that conflict with the responsible practices as referred-to below.

## Responsible practices

We promote and apply **responsible and sustainable business practices** in our community relations and engagement programs.

- We do not support political institutions and adopt a neutral position with respect to political issues. We do not offer donations or other forms of contributions to political parties, political campaigns and events, or organizations associated with political institutions.
- We only consider support to charitable organizations that are non-discriminatory in their policies and practices with regards to physical or mental abilities, gender, gender identity and/or expression, race, age, sexual orientation, ethnic origin and/or religion.
- Compliant to the Bekaert Code of Conduct and the Bekaert Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy, we avoid any situation of conflict of interests in selecting and funding community engagement initiatives and beneficiaries.

Conflict of interest situations might, for instance, occur when the initiator or approver of the initiative is personally related to the beneficiary/the event organizer, and/or when the initiative is connected to or suggested by business partners (customers, suppliers) or government officials.

- Our support actions are funded, approved, and monitored in line with Bekaert internal governance rules.