

# TOGETHER TOWARDS CHANGE

Strategic Plan  
The Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation

2013 – 2015

ENG



**Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation**

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# 1 - SUMMARY

The vision of the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation is Serbia as a society in which citizens take responsibility and understand the power of unity in solving personal and social problems on a social, economic, educational and spiritual level.

The mission of the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation is to contribute to the development of an equal, tolerant and unified Serbian society.

The Foundation is dedicated to the care and economic empowerment of refugees and displaced persons and to improving the status of children and youth by creating an environment that promotes healthy growth and development. The Foundation seeks to foster community spirit and solidarity in the society through philanthropy, advocacy and volunteerism.

## **The Foundation's values are:**

- Solidarity
- Tolerance
- Responsibility
- Activism
- Cooperation and Adaptability
- Respect for Diversity

Taking into account the context in which the identified problems and fewer resources being made available to civil society organizations (CSOs) in dealing with vulnerable groups, the Foundation wants to serve as a potential catalyst for future social change in these areas. Over the next three years the Foundation has defined the following objectives:

- Provision of permanent housing solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently living in Collective Centers throughout Serbia through a gradual closing of these centers along with a comprehensive process of providing permanent housing solutions, economic empowerment and psychological support to refugees and displaced persons.
- Improving conditions for children and youth, through financial assistance to vulnerable families and educational institutions, as well as promoting positive values among young people and improving their lives in different areas of personal and professional development (security, health, education, culture, employment and activism).
- Contribution to the development of social awareness and philanthropic giving in Serbia, as well as, promoting solidarity and civic activism.
- Improving the organization and methods of work in the areas of human resources, awarding donations (grants), public relations and financial stability.

The Foundation seeks to bring together a wide range of partners and relevant stakeholders as their key partners in bringing about these changes: the country's citizens, businesses and corporate partners, foundations and CSOs dealing with the same or similar issues, Serbian citizens and associations abroad, donors and government institutions.

## **The Foundation will use the following methods:**

- Direct implementation of programs and projects
- Direct implementation of projects in collaboration with partners
- Allocation of funds to other organizations engaged in the same work areas
- Allocations of funds to families

The Foundation work is mainly focused in the territory of the Republic of Serbia but it also supports activities at the regional level.

## **2 - THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE FOUNDATION**

### **2.1 Context**

Serbia's transition into a democratic and modern society following the social changes in 2000 is characterized by its slow but continuous shift towards social and economic reforms. The democratization of Serbia and progress towards EU integration, as well as its transition to a market economy are the most important features of the changes in Serbia in the past decade. Although this process has proceeded more slowly than in other Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) countries and the Balkans, during the past decade Serbia has made considerable economic progress and achieved political stability along with concrete steps forward in the EU integration process, opening up to the world and other countries in the region.

Despite the progress achieved, Serbia is still faced with issues such as unresolved borders, corruption and human rights issues and incomplete judicial reform. Although Serbia is continuing its efforts in addressing these issues, the economic crisis and all related problems in the last couple of years, once again came to the fore.

The global economic crisis has significantly halted Serbia's economic development and even caused its regression: the unemployment rate is continuously increasing and the latest data now shows 25.5% unemployment rate, which has placed Serbia at the top of Europe's unemployment rating list. The number of poor, which had halved in the period of 2000-2007, has once again increased; according to the latest data, 700,000 people in Serbia are living below the poverty line.

Such unfavorable economic conditions are inevitably affecting the position of marginalized groups and those who are most vulnerable: the poor, the elderly, the disabled, single parents, children without parents, refugees and displaced persons, etc.. Children and young people in general also suffer the negative consequences of a deteriorating economy: insufficient funds for education, health care and prevention and lack of employment opportunities are pushing them to the margins of society. Not only do marginalized groups become most vulnerable to poverty and unemployment, but their rights and opportunities slowly diminish.

Many CSOs are making efforts to prevent the further deterioration of the situation - although not in a position to influence the economic situation, their work focuses on providing relief to the most vulnerable groups in society, in addition to promoting respect for the rights of all citizens. CSOs, however, are also faced with a number of problems mostly relating to low levels of support from the public and financial stability. These two problems are related: CSOs are heavily dependent on support from foreign donors, which can lead to less direct interaction with citizens and their problems while at the same time, foreign donors are pulling out, while citizens still lack sufficient confidence in the work of CSOs in order to support them financially. All this negatively affects the financial situation of CSOs and hence their less able to support the most vulnerable people.

### **2.2 The History of the Foundation**

The Humanitarian Organization Divac (abbreviation in Serbian: HOD) was founded by Ana and Vlade Divac after their move back to Serbia as a natural extension of their humanitarian efforts which began in the U.S. The HOD was established in 2007 as an independent, nonprofit organization with the common goal of providing aid to civilians, especially refugees with practical solutions to their vital and existential problems with special emphasis on resolving their housing issues. The Foundation's success, the trust it has earned among citizens and the development of numerous humanitarian projects influenced the decision to reregister the HOD as Fund "Ana and Vlade Divac" (2009), and due to changes in the legal framework into "The Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation" (2011).

Ana and Vlade Divac have raised over 20 million dollars through philanthropic efforts of the Humanitarian Organization Divac in the U.S. and the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation in Serbia, for humanitarian aid and educational programs in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United States, Indonesia, Ethiopia and China.

**These are some of the projects and programs we are most proud of:**

- The “You Can Too!” Campaign has provided homes and financial assistance for over 491 refugee families and IDPs through the reconstruction of donated rural houses, donations of building materials, and the construction of new and prefabricated “Social Housing in a Protected Environment”. The campaign also provides economic and social empowerment to refugees and IDPs in addition to developing specific work opportunities and income-generating activities.
- The “Big Heart” Project through which 15 playgrounds were renovated in state kindergartens in Serbia.
- The “Game Begins” Project which enabled the renovation of 4 sports courts in the City of Belgrade.
- Project “Shared Values of Serbia’s Youth” which promotes positive values among young people.

**Our regional and international projects include:**

- Establishing computer-training centers in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina helped reunite many student separated by war through its computer training curriculum.
- Construction of new homes for children and their parents in Indonesia.
- Delivery of emergency supplies of diapers, water and food to victims of Hurricane Katrina in the United States.
- Providing financial aid to the “Concordia International School” in Shanghai and the development of a water supply system in villages in Yunnan Province, China.

The Foundation has also established a social enterprise which sells various products, where income from sales go towards supporting new and existing projects as part of the Foundation’s financial sustainability plan.

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**Charity work and over 20 years of humanitarian initiatives have earned the Divac family numerous awards and recognitions, to name a few:**

- United Nations Goodwill Ambassador - Vlade Divac is named a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for “Sports against Drugs”.
  - Member of the “World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame”– In June 2008 at the induction ceremony in the American City of Boise, Idaho, Vlade Divac officially enters the “World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame”. The World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame selects individuals and organizations from amateur and professional sports fields that are world-class in athletic ability and have strong records of humanitarian achievements.
  - Award for the most humanitarian act in 2008 – for the “You Can Too” campaign - shares Humanitarian Organization Divac ‘You can do it’, was chosen by the people.
  - Awarded a Gold Medal for the “Let’s All Help” campaign as the best socially responsible campaign in September 2012.
  - Woman of the Year Award 2012 was given to Ana Divac for her socially responsible work achievements.
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## **3 - STRATEGIC ORIENTATION IN THE PERIOD FROM 2013 TO 2015**

### **3.1 The Foundation's Role**

The Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation – which was originally set up with the idea of helping with the integration of refugees and displaced persons - has earned great respect and trust primarily due to the transparency of its work and the concrete results achieved through its projects.

Taking into account the context in which the identified problems and fewer resources being made available to civil society organizations (CSOs) in dealing with vulnerable groups - the Foundation began to expand its work in support of other marginalized socially vulnerable groups and young people as well as encouraging the development of both individual and corporate philanthropy.

**Therefore, the Foundation strives to become a catalyst for social change in order to:**

- Enable full socio-economic integration of refugees and IDPs,
- Create a better and healthier environment for children and youth in Serbia,
- Increase awareness and support for socially vulnerable groups.

**The Foundation seeks to bring together a wide range of partners and relevant stakeholders as their key partners in bringing about changes:**

- The country's citizens,
- Businesses and corporate partners,
- Other foundations and CSOs dealing with the same or similar issues,
- Serbian citizens and associations abroad,
- Donors,
- Government institutions.

**The Foundation will use the following methods:**

- Direct implementation of programs and projects,
- Direct implementation of projects in collaboration with partners,
- Allocation of funds to other organizations engaged in the same work areas,
- Allocations of funds to families.

The Foundation work is mainly focused in the territory of the Republic of Serbia but it also supports activities at the regional level. The Foundation also invests resources and work with the diaspora abroad.

### **3.2 Vision and Mission**

The vision of the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation is Serbia as a society in which citizens take responsibility and understand the power of unity in solving personal and social problems on a social, economic, educational and spiritual level.

The mission of the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation is to contribute to the development of a equal, tolerant and unified Serbian society. The Foundation is dedicated to the care and economic empowerment of refugees and displaced persons and to improving the status of children and youth by creating an environment that promotes healthy growth and development. The Foundation seeks to foster community spirit and solidarity in the society through philanthropic efforts, advocacy and volunteerism.

### **3.3 Values and principles**

#### **The Foundation is dedicated to the following values:**

- Solidarity,
- Tolerance,
- Responsibility,
- Activism,
- Cooperation and Flexibility,
- Respect and Diversity.

#### **Work principles:**

- **Transparency** - Transparency is the key principle of the Foundation. The Foundation is committed to transparency in all areas of work, both within the organization among its employees, and the public at large, regarding the operation and the results achieved. The Foundation places great emphasis on its financial transparency, in order to maintain trust among the public and stakeholders. Therefore, data on the activities, results and financial operations of the Foundation are available to the public through mailing lists, web sites and annual reports.
- **Equal opportunities** - the Foundation provides access to all citizens of Serbia, regardless of geographic location, ethnic and religious affiliation, language, and other personal characteristics.
- **Efficiency** - Foundation strives on efficient distribution of resources in order to achieve maximum impact with minimum resources. The principle of efficiency is therefore applied both during project implementation of projects and cost management. Foundation salaries and operating costs are kept to a minimum necessary for efficient operation in accordance with the standards outlined for the non-profit sector.
- **Effectiveness** - The Foundation places great importance on achieving clear and concrete results in the areas of work. The Foundation is developing performance monitoring tools in order to measure project results.
- **Professionalism** – The Foundation's approach to work in all areas of its operation is based on the principles of professionalism and respect. Foundation employees are committed to fulfilling their commitment to these principles.



## 4 - STRATEGIC AREAS

The strategic plan provides four main strategic areas of work in the period over the next three years. Three of these are related to program areas, and the fourth is dedicated to organizational development.

### 4.1 Support to Refugees and Displaced Persons

This strategic area includes providing assistance, economic empowerment and psychological support to refugees and IDPs with a primary focus on resolving housing issues.

#### **Why do we deal with this problem?**

Despite the successes attained by the state, international organizations, as well as those of domestic and foreign civil organizations, Serbia remains a country with the largest number of refugees and IDPs in Europe. 2,173 refugees and IDPs with unresolved housing issues still reside in 20 Collective Centers throughout Serbia. They live in poor conditions, without income or employment or any legitimate means of achieving financial security. They feel abandoned and forgotten, without hope or confidence that their situation can improve and that they will see better times.

#### **What we want to achieve?**

The Foundation's goal is to provide permanent housing solutions for refugees and IDPs currently living in Collective Centers throughout Serbia through a gradual closing of these centers along with a comprehensive process of providing permanent housing solutions, economic empowerment and psychological support to refugees and displaced persons.

#### **How do we plan to achieve this?**

The Foundation plans to work to achieve this goal by implementing the programs in three areas - housing for refugees and displaced persons, assistance in employment and economic empowerment and support for social integration of refugees and displaced persons. This comprehensive program dedicated to addressing the "You Can Too" campaign issues is being implemented in cooperation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Commissioner for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia.

#### **The "You Can Too" campaign includes all three aspects of the problem:**

1. Assisting governmental institutions in ensuring permanent housing solutions and the gradual closing of Collective Centers;
2. Economic empowerment through professional development and employment training programs, career counseling and financial support for new business ventures and income-generating activities; and
3. Psychological support for family social integration.

The "You Can Too" campaign is implemented through a variety of projects providing different solutions and opportunities aimed at meeting the specific needs of each and every family:

1. The "Village Houses" project, which facilitates the purchase, reconstruction and distribution of rural houses has proven to be the most successful and economically viable form of integration which engages families in community building offering these families a foundation for community-building.
2. The "Distribution of Building Material" project, provides support to refugee and IDP families in completing the building of their homes.
3. The "Social Housing in a Supportive Environment," provides individuals with access to communal housing opportunities in buildings owned by the Center for Social Work, which actively supports the tenants by helping them to engage in everyday activities with the assistance of its social workers and host families permanently residing in such centers.
4. The "Pre-Fabricated Houses" project, which provides permanent housing solutions for refugees and IDPs living in Collective Centers through the construction of quality pre-fabricated homes.
5. The "Rural and Agricultural Integration in a Supportive Environment" (RAISE) project monitors the progress of families that have been awarded village houses with the aim of ensuring their successful social and economic integration and providing them with assistance in developing their own income-generating activities.

#### **Some of the concrete results that we want to achieve over the next three years are:**

- Permanent housing for 200 families of refugees and displaced persons,
- Economic assistance for 100 families,
- Providing psychological support to all families.

## 4.2 Creating a healthy environment for the quality development of children and youth

This strategic area is concerned with improving the living and learning environment for children, youth and other socially vulnerable groups in Serbia.

### Why do we deal with this problem?

Proper growth and development of children and youth is the most important for the long-term impact on developing a healthy society. Following the transition period many families experienced a diminished financial status in addition to a deterioration of educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, etc..) and a general decline in social values. These changes are exerting an extremely negative impact on the healthy development of growing children and youth leading to increasing intolerance, disrespect for diversity and bullying. Available data confirm this assessment: they indicate that as many as 80% of young people aged 15 - 25 years have been exposed to drugs; a continuous increase in peer violence and extremism among young people and, while youth unemployment rate has reached 49% and 30% of these working in the gray economy.

The lack of programs to help in these areas, as well as the lack of a general systematic approach prompted us to create a strategic area dedicated to these issues.

### What we want to achieve?

The Foundation's goal is to improve conditions for children and youth, by providing financial assistance to vulnerable families and educational institutions, as well as promoting positive values among young people and improving their lives in different areas of personal and professional development (security, health, education, culture, employment and activism).

### How do we plan to achieve this?

Given the breadth and complexity of this area, the Foundation plans to launch a series of projects that will address different aspects of each problem. The Foundation is aware that all the problems can not be solved at once, so our step-by-step approach will include direct financial aid, media campaigns, educational institutions, financial support and grant funding opportunities to official and unofficial youth associations in Serbia.

### The planned projects/programs in this area include:

1. Financial assistance for single-parent families who do not currently have any special rights and/or legal status in Serbia which would help in identifying their special needs and obtaining appropriate financial support, thus improving conditions for the increasing number of children growing up in single family homes. The Foundation will launch a pilot project, which will provide financial assistance and support to families in their re-building process. The project will focus on each individual family and family members.
2. The on-going "Big Heart" and "Urban Reconstruction" projects involve the reconstruction of playgrounds and sports facilities for children and young people. The "Big Heart" project secures funding for the reconstruction of playgrounds in state-owned kindergartens throughout Serbia, making them accessible to children with disabilities. In this manner the Foundation is supporting inclusion and promoting tolerance among children from an early age. The "Urban Reconstruction" project supports the reconstruction of city and school sports courts promoting positive, healthy values through participation in sports.
3. The "Shared Values of Serbia's Youth" project goal is to identify and bridge the value gap between young people in Serbia and to reduce the symptoms of this gap: street violence, bullying, lack of tolerance and respect for others. The project is being implemented using two approaches.
  - The "Really Important" media campaign is aimed at promoting positive values in youth and their environments through broad social actions. The campaign features celebrities who have promoted positive values through their work and allows for young people to interact with them through social networking sites, workshops and lectures and talk about what's really important to them.
  - Creating a Platforms of Action and projects aimed at improving the position of youth in Serbia. It is a broad program that will run for three years following a series of projects in the fields of Safety (Bullying Prevention), Education and Employment (Social Enterprise Development), Health (Education and Prevention), Culture and Leisure (Development Activities of Youth Clubs), Environmental Protection (Youth Volunteer Work) and Activism and Awareness. The Platform of Action and projects was formed in partnership with 90 youth organizations, 7 Serbian ministries, 16 companies and 10 international organizations and will be implemented in collaboration with partners and youth organizations.

**Some of the specific results we are looking to achieve include:**

- Securing funding for 30 single-parent families.
- Renewing 15 playgrounds.
- Engaging over 200,000 young people in the activities of the “Shared Values of Serbia’s Youth project.
- Initiate projects in each of the areas identified in the Platform of Action

### 4.3 Promotion of Philanthropy

Philanthropic activism is a way to promote social solidarity through helping others.

**Why do we deal with this problem?**

In the past twenty years Serbian society has undergone a major social and economic crisis leading to the degradation of social values which, among other things, led to a lack of compassion and solidarity for those, who for whatever reason, need help and support. The socialist system, which existed in the country since the Second World War, left citizens with the expectation that the state will resolve all problems. Thus, the long and rich tradition of philanthropy in Serbia, was slowly disappearing. But, the Foundation believes that philanthropy is not only a way to show caring for those in need, but also a way for every one of us to actively participate in resolving social problems.

Ana and Vlade Divac have fostered the philanthropic spirit for over 20 years and the establishment of the Foundation is just the latest step in a long series of projects and initiatives the Divac family has practiced for decades. This is why promoting solidarity and activism through philanthropy is one of the ways in which the Foundation aims to contribute to positive changes in Serbian society.

**What we want to achieve?**

The goal of the Foundation is to contribute to the development of philanthropy in Serbia, as a way to promoting solidarity and personal activism.

**How do we plan to achieve this?**

Philanthropy in Serbia has a long and rich tradition, but during this time of transition and economic crisis, it is something that must be encouraged and nurtured. For companies or individuals to decide to engage in philanthropic giving during uncertain economic times, it is essential that the organization, channels and manner of philanthropic activity are precise, targeted and above all transparent. The Foundation therefore plans to influence the development of philanthropy through:

- Introducing new ways of giving - the Foundation has launched a number of different initiatives that opened up new ways of giving (SMS, selling products, gift boxes, campaigns donor dinners, sports camps, etc.). In addition to the ones being used, the Foundation intends to introduce new ways of giving (giving over the Internet, bank accounts, etc.).
- Increasing the number of “local” donors – by launching campaigns with different objectives in order to maintain the interest of existing and attract new donors, the Foundation will focus on both individual, corporate donors and donors from the Diaspora.
- Developing and maintaining strategic communication with major individual and corporate donors, in addition to donor base development.
- Participation in public support for the development of philanthropy - The Foundation will work with partners from the Serbian Philanthropic Forum on legislative and fiscal changes that would facilitate greater giving flexibility.

The Foundation encourages philanthropy through initiatives which are all designed to attract different types of donors. Some of the special programs the Foundation plans to launch include:

1. “One In a Million” project - the Foundation intends to encourage individual philanthropy, both at home and among the Diaspora
2. Philanthropy development in the Serbian Diaspora in Australia and Europe - in years past the Foundation mostly relied on the Diaspora in the United States. Last year, efforts were made to establish contacts with the Diaspora in Australia. During the next few years the Foundation plans to strengthen its presence in Australia, and explore opportunities among Diaspora in Europe, Canada and Russia.

**Some of the specific results the Foundation wants to achieve include:**

- Increasing the number of major individual and corporate donors from 10 to 30
- Increasing individual donations within Serbia
- Increasing individual donations from the Diaspora
- Emergence of new Diaspora from Europe, Canada and Russia
- Facilitating new ways of charitable giving within Serbia.

#### **4.4 The development of the organization and operation of the Foundation**

This strategic section addresses the Foundation's development.

**Why do we deal with this problem?**

The Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation has rapidly evolved during the last few years. The number of programs has increased from 2 to 8, the budget has increased by about 40% and the number of employees from 3 to 8. The Foundation wants its internal development to follow in step with its program successes.

**What we want to achieve?**

The Foundation's goal is to improve its organization and operation.

**How do we plan to achieve this?**

In the following period, the Foundation plans to work on:

- Consolidation of human resources and policies
- Building Capacity for CSO grant awards
- Adaptation of public relations strategies and practices
- Building financial stability and sustainability of the Foundation

**In order to achieve this, we plan the use of the following steps:**

1. Consolidation of human resources and policies – In order to accommodate the increased work volume the Foundation has hired three new employees in the last six months: Finance Manager, Coordinators for Individual and Corporate Philanthropy. Our goal over the next three years is to continually follow program development with human resource development. Therefore, we want to:
  - Establish a permanent Executive Board which will have an advisory and management role in the strategic development of the Foundation. The role of the Executive Board will include participation in strategic decision making related to the work of the Foundation, general monitoring of the Foundation's operations and projects, and support in raising funds for the Foundation.
  - Establish an Advisory Board; the Advisory Board shall consist of persons who are familiar with the work of the Foundation, have shown commitment to the objectives of the Foundation and have expertise in specific areas. The role of the Advisory Committee will include consultation related to specific issues (member expertise areas) and support in raising funds for the Foundation
  - Create a new structure that will match the Foundation's current program levels and institutional growth with enough flexibility to meet future organizational development needs.
  - Create human resource policies and procedures including an employee manual that includes hiring and termination policies, in addition to other areas related to employment (work hours, holidays, leave, safety and security, employee evaluation, etc.), job descriptions that correspond to each of the position titles within the organizational structure; employee performance; policies regarding the use of financial and company resources; employee training and development and procedures for document creating and archiving.
  - Establishing consistency in the application of these procedures and policies
2. Capacity building for awarding grants to CSOs – Through the development of new programs, the Foundation has recognized the need to provide donations (grants) to other organizations which allows for greater accessibility and efficiency in effectively resolving issues. Even though the Foundation has always encouraged this practice, our prediction is that this form of cooperation will intensify over the next period, and therefore we want to strengthen our capacity for awarding professional grants, by:
  - Developing criteria and procedures for grant allocation in order to support the effective and efficient selection of organizations and projects that will be funded.
  - Forming of a grant allocation committee/s made up of individuals with specific knowledge and expertise outside the Foundation.
  - Hiring a person who will deal with grant management and monitoring.

3. Public relations strategy development and adaptation - Although the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation has an excellent reputation, thanks to its success in previously implemented programs, has practically become the most trusted and best known domestic foundation among the media and general public, it is necessary to develop a consolidated public relations strategy, which should be applied in practice. Therefore, we want to:
  - Create an in-house public relations department by engaging a PR person who will deal only with this field of work; the Foundation intends to continue its use of pro bono PR agency services when deemed useful and appropriate.
  - To develop a clear corporate identity through the design of a logo for use on business cards, letterheads and other materials conveying the Foundations unique design features and its rules for the use.
  - Create a PR strategy to be implemented over the next three years, with specific goals and objectives related to the this area.
  
4. Building financial stability and sustainability of the Foundation - The Foundation currently receives income in the form of donations from a number of individual and corporate sources, government institutions and foreign donors, but due to the difficulty in forecasting donor inflow, coupled with the Foundation's self-financed operating costs (overhead), creates a certain level of financial instability. Therefore, in the next three years, our goals are:
  - Creating an annual budget with a three-year financial forecast
  - Establishing a practice of retaining a percentage of donations to cover the Foundation's operating costs.
  - Increasing the flow of individual and corporate donations, as well as income from abroad.
  - Establishing a reserve or endowment fund.

**Some of the specific results we want to achieve include:**

- Human resources organization enabling a more efficient and effective workflow within the Foundation
- Creating an efficient grants award process.
- Creating a clear public relations strategy.
- Establishing the Foundation's financial stability.