



AVANTHA



Glimpses of CSR

*Accelerating Progress Towards
Millennium Development Goals*



AVANTHA

The USD 4 bn Avantha Group is one of India's leading business conglomerates. With an impressive global footprint, the Group operates in more than 10 countries with 20,000 employees of 20 nationalities. The Group has business interests in diverse areas, including pulp and paper, power transmission and distribution equipment and services, food processing, farm forestry, chemicals, energy, infrastructure, information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services. Group companies include Crompton Greaves Limited, India's largest power equipment company, and Ballarpur Industries Limited (BILT), India's largest paper manufacturer, both listed on the Indian stock exchanges. Avantha Group's other successful companies include The Global Green Company, Solaris ChemTech Industries, Avantha Power & Infrastructure, Biltech Building Elements, Salient Business Solutions and Avantha Technologies. Led by Chairman Mr. Gautam Thapar, the Avantha Group demonstrates strong leadership globally and emerges as a focused corporate, leveraging its knowledge, leadership and operations to add lasting value for its stakeholders and investors.

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As the Avantha Group creates a global presence, our commitment to sustainable development becomes even more focused. Our manufacturing and business practices are at par with the best, and our endeavour is to create a brand that has 'People Planet and Profit' at the core of its values. Our Corporate Responsibility programmes have encompassed a myriad of social & environmental issues with the objective of helping the most disadvantaged of communities to emerge out of poverty, while preserving the ecosystem that supports them and us.

I believe that the recent call given by the UN to the governments across the world to accelerate the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals is an opportunity for the private sector to use the resources and skills available with them to further this cause. At Avantha, we have used this opportunity to align our CSR efforts with the MDGs and have been able to better understand the impact of our programmes. I think the time has come for companies globally, to synchronise and scale their efforts to help the governments to achieve the MDGs. I am happy to present to you some glimpses of the various initiatives undertaken by us in our CSR programmes across our businesses.

*Gautam Thapar
Chairman*

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Millennium Development Goal 1 : Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty.

Reduction in poverty is only possible if communities are assured of sustained incomes. The Avantha Group companies have used multi-pronged strategies to create adequate sources of incomes for poor communities.



Farm Forestry - Creating an Inclusive Business Model

BILT depends upon pulpwood grown on privately owned land. The company is helping small and marginal farmers who live in the vicinity of each of its mills, become suppliers to BILT. As of now, this initiative has already covered 1200 farmers. Over the next five years, the project intends to reach an additional 5000 farmers. This will earn the farmers an assured income of USD1333/acre in the 5th year of plantation.

There is a need for a significant start-up investment to bring degraded/unused land into pulpwood production. Given their poor credit ratings, small and marginal farmers often struggle to attract loans from the formal banking system as most of them are loan defaulters or cannot offer any collateral. BILT set up the Patneswari Agriculture Co-operative Ltd. (PACL) with farmers as members to help source loans, and in the long term transfer the ownership of the project to the community. BILT has provided the co-operative with an equity grant to access the loans from banks, and has also guaranteed a buyback and assured a support price to the farmers. Since 2009, NABARD, the apex bank for rural finance in India has stepped in to provide loans to the cooperative.

BILT continues to provide free technical guidance needed to grow pulpwood. This project will also help farmers augment their annual incomes during the gestation period through intercropping and farm/off-farm initiatives like vegetable farming and goat and cattle rearing. BILT will put in the human as well as financial resources to achieve interim incomes for the farmers, and will also provide short-term agriculture loans, linkages to local markets etc.

This inclusive business model creates a local source of raw material for BILT, while giving the farmers the much needed income to break out of the poverty cycle.



Reviving Handicrafts to Create a Sustainable Source of Livelihood

While dialoguing with communities, Sabah Forest Industries (SFI) realised that people living in the forests of Sabah, in Malaysia, do not have many avenues of livelihood. A baseline study in 2008 had divulged that there is considerable skill present within the community which could be harnessed, one such being traditional handicrafts made from rattan and bamboo. With the help of an NGO in Sabah and Malaysian Craft (a government undertaking), SFI decided to develop this as a source of sustainable livelihood for the women.

The first step was to create awareness among the communities who were not too sure whether this was a viable option. An initial training was organised to make them aware of the product design, quality and finish, and innovation. Malaysian Craft provided the market linkages, and added newer and more commercially viable items. Currently, 61 entrepreneurs from remote villages who participate in the programme, have formed a cooperative. SFI will continue to support the cooperative, and has also committed to set up a small shop to sell their handicrafts.

The communities have begun to understand that SFI is willing to take the long road with them towards their empowerment. This has helped set the ground for other high potential livelihood projects like herbal medicines, ecotourism, community forestry etc. For the company, it is a fructification of its empowerment initiative.



Livestock Development - An Effective Tool for Poverty Alleviation

For Jalal Mohd, his main source of income is his buffaloes as the arid desert area of Kutch where he lives supports very little agriculture. The health of his 11 buffaloes is critical to his earning capacity, and with no veterinary facility in the vicinity, his income fluctuated a lot. Solaris Chemtech initiated the livestock development program that has helped 3000 farmers augment their incomes. Today, Jalal has realized a 30% net increase in total milk production, giving him additional income of USD 110 per month.

Dairy farming is a reliable source of livelihood, and has the potential to ensure food and nutritional security for poor, small and marginal farmers. Almost every farmer owns an average of 3 milch animals. However, the average milk production is less than 900 liters per lactation, which is far below the world average. The Avantha Group across companies has partnered with a leading NGO for a Comprehensive Livestock Development project across 5 states in India, to boost milk production and enhance incomes. Along with genetic improvement, vaccination and curative treatment for common ailments is also provided

The project has added 2,100 genetically improved animals through this initiative. The incidence of diseases has come down to almost zero. Each cross-bred milch animal has a potential to generate a surplus of USD 800 per year, thereby enabling farmers to emerge from the vicious poverty cycle. So far, 7000 farmer families have directly benefitted from this programme.



Focussing on Agriculture to Create Food and Income Security

Bala Gouda, is a member of a SHG and supports a 6-member family. Her family income was about USD 220 per year. She shifted to maize and cultivated it on 3 acres of land as an intercrop between mango trees. She invested a total amount of USD 197 on inputs (maize seeds, fertilizer and for labour), and sold the maize for USD 567 from 3 acres of land. Now, Bala cultivates maize twice a year, as she has an assured market for it. She has invested the profits to purchase ornaments for her daughter's marriage.

Traditionally, tribal farmers cultivated maize on a “throw and grow” basis. There was no concept of cultivating a surplus to generate incomes. Realising the enormous potential for improving the economic conditions of these farmers, BILT initiated a programme to help farmers harness this inherent potential. Hybrid maize with a potential yield of more than 20 quintals /acre is being cultivated to meet the food needs of these farmers, and also generate additional income from the sale of the surplus. Over the last three years, more than 600 farmers have grown maize on 1200 acres of land. The economic impact due to this intervention alone is more than USD 267,000.

Agricultural service providers have been trained and developed to help farmers in adopting better practices. Each acre of land now gives a profit of upto USD 267.



Poultry - A Dependable Source of Income for the Landless Poor

Gorimani Paraja is a landless tribal woman, she has 3 children and her husband runs a small shop on the street corner of the village to support the family. The meagre income from the shop was not sufficient to run the family.

She is one of the 15 initial entrepreneurs who started poultry farming. The total investment for the unit was USD 683, which she took as a long-term loan from the SHG. When she reared the birds, she earned a net profit of USD 36. So far, Gorimani has earned a net profit of USD 173. She has also paid back the initial loan. Gorimani has become a role model, and has motivated a lot of other tribal women to initiate poultry farming. The family has also just constructed a new house.

Broiler poultry farming is a viable enterprise for landless families. BILT has supported the starting of fifteen units, and the programme has got a fillip with government support under its Rural Income Generation Scheme. Now, 134 families have been covered under this programme. Each of the households rears 300 to 350 birds in one batch. In a year, a family rears about 7 such batches and earns around USD 38 per batch. Over the last five years, BILT has impacted the lives of more than 1200 people with an income of more than USD 138,000.

Millennium Development Goal 2 : Achieve universal primary education.

A sound education has the potential to accelerate development and is the building block of any society. Avantha Group companies education initiatives are all in consonance with the government's educational system.



Making Universal Education a Reality

A day in the life of Gul Mohammad begins with ensuring that all the children in his hamlet in the remote part of Kutch go to the local school. There was a time when 30 children in the hamlet were out of school. This change was brought about by him with the help of the Solaris Chemtech-supported education initiative. More than 25 local youth like Gul have worked tirelessly in convincing parents to send their children to school in an area where formal education was not considered important bringing 10,000 children into the education net.

Primary education inputs are aimed towards improving the levels of teaching /learning, and mainstreaming children who are out of schools due to various reasons. The focus is children between 6 to 14 years and the strategy is three pronged; setting up Bridge Centres for out of school children, Remedial classes for in school children and Libraries to support ongoing self learning

The bridge centres are for children who have never enrolled in schools, or have dropped out from the formal education system for age-appropriate integration in the formal education system.

Remedial centres are run in school or in communities for children in grades 1 to 5, who are lagging behind in different subjects and/or are at a risk of drop out. All these centres also focus on the recreational, psychological and social needs of the children.

The Library facilities set up by the companies are supplemental to the formal education and serve to provide additional interest in reading and leaning.

Since inception, 1,59,000 children have benefitted from these centres. A significant achievement of this initiative has been that 18,000 children have been mainstreamed into formal schools.



Preparing Children for the Future through Computer Literacy

The future lies in creating a knowledge-based economy, one that provides quality education to the great many, not great education to a select few. The Information Technology sector offers manifold employment opportunities and the demand for IT educated youth is continuously rising. The Avantha Group believes that IT Education is the need of the hour and thus the foundation for computer education must be laid before secondary education.

To enable wider outreach of the company's computer literacy programme, a Mobile Computer Literacy Van fitted with Computers/ laptops and power back-up has been started. This van travels to 2-3 government schools daily for two hours each, thus covering 10-15 schools per week. Mobility brings easy access to isolated and disadvantaged groups in rural areas and enables delivery of computer e-literacy and IT-enabled education to rural, poor school children grades 5 to 7. The 3-year interactive course designed in local languages, not only engages learners, but also simplifies learning of students.

Till date, 13,000 children have been covered under the Computer Literacy Program. This year, there are 3400 children from 34 Government Schools getting access to compute education. An indirect impact of this programme has been the increased attendance of children.



Providing Urban Youth with Opportunities to Join the Industrial Workforce

To bridge the gap created by shortage of skilled manpower, Crompton Greaves is partnering with government run Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) in urban areas to upgrade their curriculum and infrastructure thus enhancing the employability of its students.

A new course on winding and assembling of transformers was designed and introduced in the ITI with the help of the company. The Crompton Greaves technical team attended the sessions to ensure that the curriculum was delivered appropriately. Every student who opted for it was given employment with the company

The 'Basic Power Generation, Transmission & Distribution Lab' was set up to give students hands-on experience. Today, the lab serves as a resource centre for students across the country. The Model has been appreciated by the Director of Vocational Training government of India and two more such projects are being taken up in other urban areas around the Crompton Greaves sites. More than 100 ITI students have been absorbed by various industries, of which 38 by Crompton Greaves.

Crompton Greaves continues to explore several vistas of partnership with ITIs in India, towards making them financially self-sustaining, and centre's of excellence. This symbiotic relationship has evolved into a win-win situation for both Crompton Greaves and ITI, as Crompton Greaves is able to get skilled personnel, while ITI can offer courses that are relevant to the industry.



Skill Development for Integration into the New Economy

Gurmeet is a 12th grade 19 year-old unemployed youth. His father, the only earning member in the family, is a labourer earning about USD 66 per month. Due to extreme poverty, Gurmeet could not continue his studies. He joined BILT's employability skill development programme, and on completion, was selected by a renowned retail company as Sales Executive at a salary of USD 96 per month.

The Avantha Group's employability programme that began in 2008, is exclusively designed for school drop outs/ unemployed secondary school graduates / street youth/ retrenched workers/ migrant youth from the poorest 15% of the population. The programme supports employment oriented workforce preparation to meet the requirements of the growing business in the local area. After extensive research and in conformity to the market needs, three course-curricula have been finalised:

- ITES (Information Technology Enabled Service)
- CRS (Customer & Relation and sales)
- BSPA (Bed Side Patient Assistant)

The curriculum and practical training modules are prepared based on inputs from corporates, businesses and market linkages and networks. Spoken English and Personality Development are part of all verticals.

Till date, 7 batches of 671 youths have been trained in employability skills. Of these, 524 youth secured meaningful employment in various service sectors.



Providing the Infrastructure for Quality Education

Adequate infrastructure is an important component for achieving universal education. Regrettably, several primary schools in India still lack even basics like classrooms, benches and chairs, safe drinking water, sanitation and in some, the repairs and maintenance is not up to the mark, which directly impacts the functioning of the school. Crompton Greaves in its endeavor to achieve quality education, has taken on the renovation and reconstruction of school buildings in several locations of its operation.

The Nandurvaidya village has a government-run school which was in dilapidated condition, where more than half of the school roof had collapsed due to poor maintenance. This adversely affected school performance and attendance among children and teachers. Less than 50% children attended school regularly.

The school was completely renovated by Crompton Greaves, and this change brought the students back to school as proved by the attendance, which has consistently been over 98%, and increase in enrollment figures over the last three years. Now, there is ongoing interaction between school principal, teachers, villagers and the company, who collectively work towards maintaining and improving the quality of the school education. Crompton Greaves employees participate by regularly donating storybooks to the school library, and also spend their time to conduct classes as volunteers.

Millennium Development Goal 3 : Promote gender equality and empower women.

Empowering women to be at the centre-stage of decision-making in society will accelerate the pace of development.

The women's empowerment projects at Avantha Group are focussed on collective mobilisation and financial and social inclusion.



Rural Women at the Forefront of Local Governance

35-year old Sanmati Harizan independently liaises with local banks, and visits government departments to facilitate starting of various schemes in her village. She also plays a significant role in the routine activities of her SHG like depositing savings, processing loan requisition of the members, and recovery of the loans from the members.

Such activities were never part of Sanmati's life in the remote tribal areas of Koraput in Orissa. Only after Sanmati became a member of the SHG, did she realise her innate leadership strengths.

The SHGs serve as a platform for empowerment of women through enhancing their participation in the social and political arena. Women are also encouraged to participate in the political process by standing for local elections of the Gram Panchayats (the village-level local self-government).

The Gram Panchayats (GP) rarely had any women representation. Though reservations for women do exist, women were reluctant to participate in the elections, those who did, were passive in the decision making process. As an impact of the SHG movement, more than 30 women have been elected to the GP so far. Training and capacity building programmes are regularly conducted for women GP members which cover leadership skills and information about various government schemes, as well as how to ensure effective delivery of the government schemes. More than 750 SHGs that have been formed by various group companies, are operational across India . Some of the SHGs formed by BILT and CG are also agents for delivery of government-sponsored schemes such as Public Distribution Systems, Midday meals at schools, which has resulted in better delivery of services.



Strengthening Financial Inclusion

Availability of timely credit is central to the success of a livelihood program. In many remote areas, formal institutions of credit are not always available, and most people depend upon local moneylenders. The Self Help Group (SHG) movement has opened up a channel of credit for poor families. However, setting up entrepreneurial activities requires larger loans, and, in the absence of banks, this gap needed to be filled through the creation of an institution that could give such loans.

Through its partnership with the SHGs around its plant at Maharashtra, BILT set up the women's credit co-operative society, which as of today, is transacting at a volume of USD 667,000 per annum. This co-operative venture has made significant contributions to the lives of 432 families who have accessed loans from it for economic activities.

The credit co-operative started in 2004, with a share capital of USD 445 collected from 201 women members. Today, 447 women are members and the numbers are growing steadily. The total cumulative transactions of the credit cooperative have reached USD 2 Million as on 30 June 2010. The co-operative has also generated employment for 125 women.



From Adversity to Leadership

30-year old Savita*, who is HIV positive, belongs to Ballarpur, Maharashtra. As a health worker in BILT's Continuum of Care Project providing support to people affected by HIV/AIDS, she has found a new lease of life. Her biggest learning has been to accept her status and not be afraid of what the future has in store for her. By forgiving her husband, who passed the HIV infection to her, she feels relieved of a huge burden. Now, she knows nothing can rob her of her composure. The HIV + families she comes in contact with, vouch for her rock-solid support, unwavering stoicism and immense energy. Looking at her, they feel enthused and try to absorb every word of advice she offers, in the hope that they may be as strong and healthy in body, mind and spirit, as she is.

Says Savita, "Economic independence has raised my confidence. The BILT ART centre has given me a great deal of emotional strength. I feel part of a large caring family. Also, I realise there is so much to do. Being in a professional corporate environment is good too, since systems are in place and one is surrounded by enlightened individuals. It's a beautiful environment and one I am proud to be a part of."

** Name changed to protect identity.*

Millennium Development Goal 4 : Reduce Child Mortality.
Millennium Development Goal 5 : Improve Maternal Health.
Millennium Development Goal 6 : Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Achieving health for all is critical to overall development and progress.

Maternal and Child Health is at the core of Avantha Group's health interventions.



Where there is No Doctor

The community health program of BILT focusses on women and children. Local women from every village are appointed as a crucial link between the community and the government health facility. These women are the first contact point for community members for appropriate counselling and access to health care services. There are 115 community health workers who facilitate components like medicines for minor ailments, immunization, institutional deliveries, ANC and PNC services, as well as addressing the neonatal care and adolescent groups, covering a population of 75,000.

The programme is divided in two parts: preventive health education and curative services like providing medicines for minor ailments, guidance to new mothers on breast feeding, addressing post-delivery problems like pneumonia, sepsis, facilitation for immunization etc.

The community health workers offer a comprehensive package, with the focus on improvement of maternal and neonatal mortality. They make available nutritional supplements at doorsteps to expectant mothers. They also check infant health post-delivery, and provide timely medical advice and assistance, if required. This has helped greatly in reducing cases of sepsis and pneumonia in infants. BILT intervention has increased institutional deliveries by 86%, immunization by 85%, and addressed the issues of neonatal care. At every village, groups of adolescent girls and boys have been formed, and they are educated on life skills. Women have been trained on preparation and dispensing of herbal medicines, developing kitchen gardens and low cost local recipes.



Continuum of Care for People Living with HIV/AIDS

BILT has been running two ART centres in high prevalence, but resource-poor districts in Orissa and Maharashtra. The centres are run as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with National AIDS Control Organization, (NACO). Presently, the centre reaches out to more than 1500 patients, of whom 780 are on ART drugs.

BILT realized that poverty coupled with inadequate incomes meant that the patients could not lead a normal life, and unless other needs were addressed, it would not make a difference in the patient's ability to combat the disease. The continuum of care project was launched in 2009, with the objective of providing a holistic package to PLHA's beyond medication.

This holistic package includes nutritional counselling and support, income-generation training and loans. The clinical team provides treatment and monitors the patients regarding clinical aspects, and the outreach team visits the families, provides home-based care, nutritional and other counselling. Patients' confidentiality is ensured, and written consent of each patient for participating in the project, is also taken. Indicators analysed after 300 patients have been in the project for a year have indicated that the average weight gain is 2.5 kg, Hb count by 3.3% and CD4 count by more than 20%. Patients now spend minimal time in hospitals due to ill health, More than 70% PLHAs have voluntarily disclosed their HIV status to family members; this has helped in acceptance of the disease by the family. Income-generation activities and vocational training have made the PLHAs more self-reliant.



Sustainable Solutions for Malnutrition

Gatta is in the remote forest area of the tribal district of Gadchiroli. It is the Raw Material Depots of BILT. Malnourishment amongst the children is a very serious issue here, especially as access to most government schemes is severely hampered, due to the inaccessibility of the area. The first baseline done in February 2009 revealed that a total of 80% children in the 0-6 age group were severely malnourished

Under these circumstances, merely feeding children is not a sustainable solution to the ongoing problem. It is important that in addition to the government feeding programmes, which rarely reach here, the community is equipped with tools and resources to be able to resolve the problem on a permanent basis by themselves.

The project used local human resources and other locally available food resources to create awareness, and find low-cost solutions to malnourishment. The strategy used was to locally make low-cost nutritional supplements, and to equip mothers with skills to prepare nutritional diets for their children out of local grown produce. Regular monitoring of mothers, and timely intervention has ensured that 90% of the 4000 children now covered by the project are out of malnourishment.



Augmenting Health Infrastructure in Rural Areas

Primary Health Centres (PHC) are run by the government in rural areas to cater to a population of about thirty thousand people. They are set up to serve as the first point of contact for people in the multi-tiered health system of the government, and are sometimes the only source for receiving medical care in an emergency.

Due to the dilapidated condition of the building of the PHC in Nandurvaidya, which is close to the Crompton Greaves Switchgear factory at Nasik, the doctors were not able to function effectively as very few patients ever came in for treatment. Crompton Greaves realized that renovating the centre would mean that people could have a reliable source of medical treatment in the area. After renovation and value addition to the facilities, the centre now serves more than 30 patients per day, and also has outreach programmes for surrounding villages for immunization, vaccination, pre and post natal care and preventive services on TB and Malaria.

Earlier, women were apprehensive about visiting the centre for Antenatal and Post natal care. With the modernization of the delivery room, the number of deliveries at PHC has increased to two per month. Due to the increased institutional deliveries, the town council of Nasik has provided an additional room for post delivery care.

Millennium Development Goal 7 : Ensure environmental sustainability.

Responsiveness towards a cleaner and safer environment is an important commitment for the future.

At Avantha Group, several initiatives are in place to manage environmental impacts in the long term.



Water - Effective Management of a Scarce Resource

Water is a scarce natural resource needed by the community and industry. BILT's participatory water management initiative includes sustainable harvesting of available water resources for renewing, recharging and conserving water, efficient usage of water for agriculture, agronomic practices through various technologies like drip and sprinkler irrigation. Reuse, recycling and treatment of effluent water, efficient and usage of treated effluent water are some measures taken within the company. All this, along with promotion of equitable water distribution and management system, ensures a greater ownership among all users.

A total area of 15,476 ha area and more than 5000 farmers are being covered under the project. Formation of community-based institutions like Water User Group's and Associations (WUG & WUA) have been initiated for management of systems. Fifty WUGs with 1170 farmer members are participating in the programme. The project activities are geared to help regenerate, save, reuse and recycle water, and develop methodologies to improve water resource management in the area.

Farmers have been trained on crop selection and rotation and improved agricultural practices through exposure visits, demonstration plots, field trainings and introduction to organic farming. Farmers have also been educated about tapping marketing opportunities. There has been an increase of 150 per cent in the overall production of different crops due to adoption of improved agriculture practices, and a net increase of 2500 ha irrigated area.

The holistic approach of water management and linking this with the practice of improved agriculture has ensured maximum but usufruct utilization of a scarce natural resource.



Providing Access to Safe Drinking Water

Millennium Development Goals emphasize the importance of sustainable access to safe drinking water, since unhygienic practices along with unsafe drinking water is one of the major causes behind the very large number of child deaths in the world. Community health security, particularly provision of safe drinking water, is an integral part of Avantha Power's social development initiatives.

As a first step, a borewell in Sarwani village was constructed. The village lies in a remote part of central India, with a population of 460, of whom 87% is tribal. Potable water is scarce; villagers were forced to fetch water from a distant hand pump. The matter was discussed with the villagers, after which the borewell was constructed. The villagers took active part in the construction work, and even cleaned the storage tank and the surrounding areas, and are responsible for maintaining the structure.

The state of other neighboring villages is more or less similar in this context. Construction of 9 more borewells along with water storage tanks of 10,000 Litres capacity was taken up. The water will be used for domestic purposes which has come as a great relief to women, who were earlier traveling miles to fetch water. Deepening of existing ponds in the villages has enhanced the recharge capacity of the bore wells.

In future, this will be linked to a series of water conservation measures to ensure sustainability of potable water resources in the area.



Sustainable Forest Management

Sabah Forest Industries manages nearly 300,000 hectares of forests including a large tract of industrial plantation - in Malaysia.

Sustainable forest management practices include reduced impact logging techniques to help protect the soil and saplings, thus ensuring natural regeneration. Biodiversity-rich areas are demarcated as protected forests and left untouched. Critical water catchment areas are set aside for clean freshwater supply.

SFI has achieved a recovery rate of 96% for each cubic meter of log delivered to the mills. This translates into near-zero wastage of resources. Trimmings and waste are used for pulping. Fine saw dust, barks and splinters and are burnt to produce steam for generating power. Residual ashes are mixed with effluents to produce compost to raise seedlings. Micromanagement of the entire process ensures continuous production of timber, while maintaining ecological balance. Certain areas have been demarcated for community forestry, with 1,600 hectares planted to date. Additionally, trial plantings of medicinal trees, have been initiated with seedlings collected from the forest concession area. Areas in the virgin forests are maintained as eco tourism sites.

Millennium Development Goal 8 : Develop a Global Partnership for Development.

Effective collaboration and partnerships are critical to the success of development programs. They can impact quality, replicability and have the potential to transform the scale of operation.

Avantha Group collaborates with various stakeholders in the implementation of its projects.



Partnerships and Collaborations for Achieving a Greater Impact

A myriad of partnerships are essential for sustainable development. Working jointly towards achieving a common vision is the central idea of these partnerships that are now an integral part of the CSR strategy at the group level.

Partnerships with the government are very crucial for the scalability and sustainability of CSR initiatives. Over the last several years, successful Public Private Partnerships have been formed on issues like livelihood interventions, health and education. One example is the MOU between Crompton Greaves Ltd. and the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) for a 5-year partnership to enhance the quality and infrastructure of the ITI's.

Livelihood interventions critical to the community's availability of timely credit is central to making these programmes successful and sustainable. Linking the poor to formal system of credit has been a big challenge that has been overcome by establishment of SHG's. There are several partnerships with banks and financial institutions across the country for the purpose of credit linkage. One such example is BILT's partnership with NABARD, the apex agriculture bank in India for Farm Forestry

Avantha group recognises the role played by national and international organisations, and donor agencies in sensitising causes and carrying out large and impact-oriented programmes across the world. Organisations like CII, ILO, IFC, Global Fund for HIV TB and Malaria and INTEL Foundation have been associated with the Avantha groups CSR programmes. These associations are especially beneficial in terms of access and exposure to global best practices in project planning, implementation, monitoring and impact assessment.



Employees as Partners

Thapar University

Thapar University is one of the pioneering technology institutes in India, where 35 undergraduate and post graduate students are regular student volunteers. They run evening classes for 132 poor children living in the vicinity mainly on languages, maths and science. Through this initiative, poor and academically backward children are able to compete with other children and perform better in classrooms. This also arrests the drop out of such children, who are generally first generation learners

The skills of the students combined with infrastructure of an academic institute have resulted in a very robust volunteer programme. Students also conduct Computer Literacy classes for older children from the communities using the existing university infrastructure. Recently, the students have also included 35 prison inmates in the computer literacy programme. These people will have the skill and ability to earn a livelihood once out of prison.

Crompton Greaves Power System Canada Inc, Employees help build with “Habitat for Humanity”

Habitat for Humanity is a Voluntary Organization that partners with communities to build safe, decent and affordable homes for low-income working families. Crompton Greaves employees volunteer their time to participate in landscaping, dry-walling, insulating, painting and build site maintenance. The programme provides safe, decent, affordable housing to low-income families in the Winnipeg area.



Corporate Social Responsibility

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