



Global Compact International Yearbook

macondo,

2013



PHILANTHROPY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF CSR



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Corporate social responsibility (CSR) encompasses many different components across a myriad of industries in both the public and private sectors. One of the most demonstrative aspects of CSR involves philanthropy, which not only includes a commitment of monetary support, but a personal involvement in volunteerism, too. These much-cherished values represent the cornerstone of our year in 2012 and future CSR endeavors.

The key concerning CSR — for business and community partners — is to take the initiative to consistently identify and seize opportunities to elevate the well-being of humanity. It further implies that our policies and practices must be ethical and transparent at all levels of operations. As an enterprise, we must be accountable in our daily work as well as to our customers, employees, and the communities we operate within. Hence, the obligation to pass on these philosophies and actions to our supply base is a fundamental and ethical business requirement.

The TMS Group strategy for social compliance and CSR is a holistic approach that utilizes the combined framework and participation within the United Nations Global Compact and the Business Social Compliance Initiative to create partnerships aligned with clear and measurable global standards that are addressed in a proactive way with suppliers. This progressive strategy toward implementing ethical corporate business processes is part of an overall CSR philosophy that embodies philanthropy as a key element.

Philanthropy and CSR are indeed mutually inclusive. Philanthropy for the TMS

Group embodies the following three key traits:

- (A) Protection: First and foremost upholding human rights and the respect of dignity for all.
- (B) Community Service: Strengthen and build the community ties and social involvement of our suppliers.
- (C) Inspiring: Develop new and existing methods to advance underprivileged people's socioeconomic status with an emphasis on access to education and healthcare.

Solely addressing operational CSR issues within the confines of global supply chains does not complete a true CSR profile. A significant degree of social responsibility and compliance is inherently manifested within the concept of corporate philanthropy. "Giving back" to the communities in which our global operations reside — and to those in need — also represents the "true heart and commitment" of the corporate citizen.

Consistent with the core values of corporate citizenship, the TMS Group conceives, promotes, and sponsors internationally-based philanthropic endeavors:

Haiti: "I am Haiti" project

The Franca Art and Fashion charity was founded by TMS Group CEO, Frank Fleischer, and his wife, Caroline. This charitable organization has a mission to promote the global-wide education, health, and welfare of disadvantaged children.

In 2012, the charity was a key contributor and sponsor of the "I am Haiti" project. This project utilizes art created by children, who are victims of long-standing poverty and were devastated by the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010. The children's artwork, which was exhibited in several charitable art shows, was then transformed into an





artistic fashion line of cashmere scarves. This process not only generated awareness about the plight of the Haitian people, it ultimately gave the children a voice and a creative outlet for their messages of survival, hope, and determination for a better future.

The TMS Group collaborated closely with the charity regarding the production, sales, and distribution processes. One hundred percent of the net proceeds generated by Franca Art and Fashion go to building a sustainable community and a brighter future for the children of the Maranatha School and Orphanage, which is located in the capital city of Port Au Prince.

Through dedication and tireless commitment, the school's staff cares for 160 children in a region whereby poverty remains pervasive. In the United Nations Human Development Index, Haiti as a nation ranks 145th of 169 countries, which is the lowest ranking in the Western hemisphere.

India: School rebuilding and sponsorship

The TMS Group has been a long-term sponsor and primary contributor to the rebuilding of the Sacred Heart Primary and High School located in the Paramankeni Kanchipuram coastal district of the Chennai region of India. The sponsorship dates back to the devastat-

ing tsunami that struck throughout Southeast Asia nearly a decade ago. The Sacred Heart School and surrounding community were decimated.

Through collaborative efforts with the TMS Group for fundraising and volunteerism, the school was rebuilt and has grown into a thriving institution.

The school is divided into primary and secondary levels. Nearly 40 percent of the enrollment is at the primary level, with student ages ranging from 6 to 11 years old. Sixty percent are enrolled in the combined secondary/high school levels for students aged 12-17 years old. An intermediate level/wing is being planned for ages 12-14 in 2014.

Annually, the school's student registration continues to grow through word of mouth within the adjacent communities. At the end of calendar year 2012, the student population was 424. Based on the current growth rate, the school is expected to double within the next three to five years. Families continue to relocate to the coastal fishing region in order for their children to enroll in the school's well-structured curriculum.

The basic education provisions throughout India are free. However, critical requirements must be provided by families such as: school uniforms, course materials, notebooks, and meals. The costs for these essentials oftentimes will limit a

family's ability to educate one or all of their children. Direct financial support, school uniforms, and computer equipment are all part of the continual provisions provided by the TMS Group for the Sacred Heart School.

The positive outcomes here translate into increasing numbers of children in this community who now have access to free education. Upon completion of high school, greater opportunities are opening for matriculation to universities or trade and vocational training schools. Furthermore, those children who take advantage of the newly created pathway out of poverty are becoming positive family and community role models.

Year 2012 synopsis

The TMS Group has a long history of philanthropy and it will continue to be a significant hallmark of the TMS Group's corporate citizenship and CSR philosophies. This includes not only offering financial support coupled with compassion, but emphasizing the creation of opportunities for socioeconomic mobility through individual and corporate deeds.

All of these efforts are done with the expressed understanding that education — combined with social development — offers the best hope. It is the key to breaking the vicious cycle of poverty that pervades developing nations and disadvantaged families. ■