

interest because much of his career. In a way, it's in synergy with the Tata world view.

The affidavit also reflects on the Tata Group Sustainability Policy announced in mid-2015 which, among other things, not only embeds a product life-cycle approach to sustainability but also, very boldly, commits to natural and social capital valuation.

in the form of a Global Sustainability Council, chaired by Mukund Rajan and 15 CEOs as members including those of Tata Steel Europe and JLR. Regional sustainability working committees (SWOs) – India, Africa, South-east Asia & China complete the picture. Global flows of ideas are now happening. The circularity initiative, for instance, draws on the considerable work done by JLR.

countries, has just about begun to address sustainability issues in a focused, strategic and structured manner. Yet, one of its companies, the Atlanta-based Novelis, is being celebrated for its bold and remarkable foray into 'circularity' which is at the very cutting edge of the global sustainability debate.

Novelis, the world leader in rolled aluminium products, in the last six years, has

been a part of many of his assignments and has had 'antagonistic experiences' and was mostly engaged in fire-fighting of sorts. He is now happy to transition from a stable placid, high-risk platform.

"Our models will have to involve stakeholders and make investments in value chains even if the payback may not be as high as we think it ought to be," explains Tony alluding to the grief that many glob-

mittee chaired by CEOs. A group-wide IT system, christened Enablon, has already been rolled out to 200 sites. "It will allow us to start or refine sustainability reporting," says Tony. He insists that much of sustainability is about mindset change. The question to be asked is - is your mind open to the fact that the world will change. Tony has been asking questions, uncomfortable ones too, of CEOs within the group. Every

The New CSR Job Market

As companies sharpen their CSR intent and step up opening up in this space. Dibeyendu Ganguly finds how the talent demand-supply dynamics are playing

As the CFO of Edelweiss Financial Services, Vidya Shah wrote many donation cheques to non-government organisations (NGOs) largely on instinct and trust. But soon after she resigned as CFO to set up the EdelGive Foundation, Shah visited some of these NGOs. The trip, which covered Nagpur, Sholapur and Kolkata, was an eye opener. "Even the largest NGOs were struggling. They couldn't plan beyond six months because they were not sure they would be able to raise funds. And they had no process to measure the work they doing," says Vidya, who is married to Edelweiss chairman Rashesh Shah, a batch-mate at Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad. That's how the foundation decided to help NGOs build capabilities.

Edelgive's annual budget is now ₹25 crore, but the initial years, when it was much lower, Vidya determined to keep administrative costs low by limiting the Foundation's staff strength. "I decided to hire people with a social work experience, since we already had enough people with a management background," she says.

As Indian companies expand the scope of their CSR activity, a churn is happening between the social and corporate sectors. Business executives are joining NGOs and social workers are receiving lucrative offers from corporate houses. As demand for talent increases, salaries are rising, but so is attrition. Meanwhile, a league of intermediaries



now exist to try and ensure the marriage of the two sectors proceeds without too many hitches. The stakes, after all, are fairly high, with the Ministry of Company Affairs pegging annual CSR spends in the coming years at ₹20,000 crore.

At Essar Foundation, CEO Deepak Arora has recruited over 200 people since taking charge in 2011. With each of the group companies contributing from their profits, the Foundation has an annual budget of ₹80 crore and most

of its projects are in-house rather than through NGO partnerships. "We offered at least 40% increase in salaries wherever we recruited. We could afford it because salaries in the NGO sector were low, especially at the junior and middle levels," he says.

One of the immediate fallouts of expanding CSR departments and increasing spends has been the rising profile of the CSR head. Time was, a company's CSR head would report to corporate affairs or human resources (HR). Today,

CSR heads are seen as a professionals in their own right and report to a board of trustees, or, in the case of multi-nationals, to a global CSR head. "To their credit, they realized they needed a full-time CSR professional. My mandate is to institutionalise the Foundation," says Arora.

The CSR universe is expanding and there are now dedicated headhunting firms that help corporates in their search. One of these is Third Sector Partners, which placed 65 senior level CSR professionals in the last financial year, a 60% increase over the previous year. Managing partner Poulomee Ghosh explains the basic dilemma corporates face while recruiting for CSR: "Most of them want someone from the development sector, with grassroots experience, but that really limits the choice. We persuade them to be open to crossover candidates from the corporate sector, especially from banking. They're usually willing to take salary cuts in order to join the social sector."

One such crossover candidate is Sumantra Sen, 47. After a two decade career with foreign banks, where he was exposed to development financing, Sen quit to set up a consulting firm called Responsible Investment Research. Last year, he joined the 30-year-old JSW Foundation as its CEO, which has an annual budget of ₹88 crore. "I can't compare my salary with the CEO of JSW Steel, but I can say it is no longer a big sacrifice

quitting banking to get into the social sector. All over the world, the upper limit on development sector salaries is \$3 lakh. In India too, the best people now get that much," says Sen.

As salaries rise across the board, NGOs are naturally feeling the pinch. At HSBC, Aloka Majumdar, head of group corporate sustainability, partners with 20 NGOs and all of them face high attrition rates. "NGOs today need high grade people because the requirements of funding agencies have become more stringent. They will eventually have to factor in higher salaries while applying for grants. A major salary correction is due in the social sector," she says.

HSBC spent ₹27 crore on CSR in the last financial year, which was less than 1% of profits. The budget is set to double this year and Majumdar is roping in new people, including some marketing executives who want to switch to CSR. Majumdar herself was formerly with Citibank, one of the pioneers of stra-

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tegic CSR in the banking sector and so a regular supplier of talent to its competitors.

When JP Morgan decided to set up a CSR function in India last year, it poached from Citi, since the two have a very similar strategy, focused on skill development, financial inclusion and small businesses. Chris Cooper, JP Morgan's London-based executive director for global philanthropy, says: "It wasn't easy, finding the right person to our head operation. It's an important position, since we have big plans for India."

And finally, there's the UTV's Ronnie Screwvala, who has set up his very own NGO, Swades Foundation, financed not from his companies but from ₹350 crore of his own money. Rather than partner with other NGOs, Swades is executing its own rural development projects and has recruited 300 people in the past three years, both from the social and corporate sector. It's a cultural challenge, says Ronnie: "When we started, review meetings would go on for four hours, with everyone narrating anecdotes to demonstrate the difference we were making. I would have been sucked into that culture if I didn't have experience running a company. Now I ask everyone to quantify their success in terms of income increases in the rural populace we're serving. Meetings get over in an hour."