



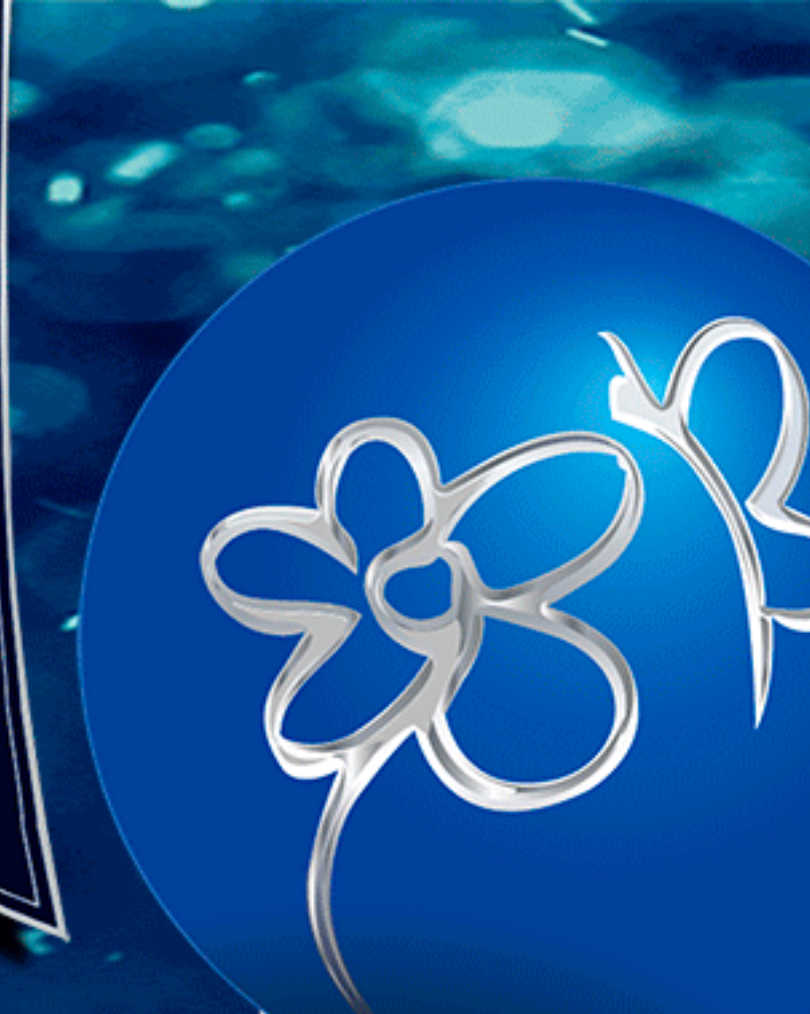
الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية
الإجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

CSR ARABIA

Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

January 2016 Issue 53



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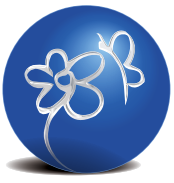
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Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

A very happy new year to all our readers and may you have a sustainable year ahead!

The COP21 Climate Summit was successful in adopting the Paris Agreement. It included high-level plenary sessions and workshops 'led by innovative speakers, featuring proven concepts within sustainable business, finance and governance.' The programme also included the Sustainia Award Ceremony highlighting solutions and innovations from different sectors of society; the best solutions for COP21 and a sustainable future.

UAE took a very proactive role. According to press statements, - the main takeaways from the event included a clear indication that there is a need and opportunity, for the financial sector to invest in climate change solutions – provided that governments create the stable and long-term investment conditions to support this. Public and private finance must work together if we are to adapt to a new reality. Furthermore, as climate change affects us all, and nearly every aspect of our livelihoods, there is a need to integrate the concerns of the people in the way it is addressed. With exponential efficiency, reductions in costs, innovation in solutions, the world is set for bottom-up solutions to support the global agreement on climate change. (<http://cop21.org>).

Along with the Paris Agreement and the solution revolution, there was much in the World Climate Summit that would give the world hope. For the first time governments have managed to come to a consensus on binding climate commitments, and the commitment to reduce global warming and rise in temperature. This is expected to give rise to various measures at national levels around the world. The UAE is already deeply committed to a pro-climate low carbon green agenda. The government is playing a lead role and has launched a number of initiatives that are directed at sustainable energy and climate change response, not only at the local level but globally as well. Countries across the Arab Region need to follow suit and develop policy frameworks and financial mechanisms to create an ecosystem for low carbon green and equitable growth.

In 2016 the Arabia CSR Network will be conducting a series of roadshows across the Region to promote the Arabia CSR Awards, its training services and the Sharaka partnership platform. ACSRN has renewed its training agreement with the GRI and will be offering sustainability-reporting courses in both English and Arabic. We will conduct a series of open and in-house trainings, focusing also on our own set of certified CSR trainings. We look forward to your whole hearted participation in all these programs. Do keep an eye out for information on our website and social media platforms, as well as the newsletter.

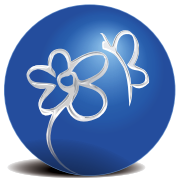
Trainings & Events

Certified training on CSR Advanced is held in Dubai

The Arabia CSR Network's portfolio of trainings was tremendously enriched by the introduction of a staggered set of three courses on CSR. In 2015 the network rolled out the certified training programme, comprising of three highly rich and intense courses on various stages of CSR and corporate sustainability. The first two were called Fundamentals of CSR, and CSR Strategy and Leadership. The CSR Advanced, as its name suggests, stands at the third stage of knowledge attainment in the subject. It is aimed at helping delegates navigate advanced concepts in CSR theory and understand their practical applications.



The key objectives of the training were to provide a thorough and structured look at the theoretical underpinnings and practical approaches to CSR and Corporate Sustainability. It familiarised delegates with the whole spectrum of the evolution of CSR, key trends and developments, the value proposition of CSR, strategy, planning and resource allocation; monitoring and measuring CSR performance, reporting results and outcomes, and benchmarks and best in class examples. The session was delivered over four days and included lectures, discussions, group and individual exercises, as well as case readings. Delegates represented public authorities, public and private businesses and civil society organisations from the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. All delegates undertook an end-of-course examination to assess the level of knowledge and competency on the subject. Successful candidates received a certificate of attainment from the Arabia CSR Network.



GRI Sustainability Reporting Training concludes 2015 on the right note

The Arabia CSR Network ended the year with a certified training on sustainability reporting. It was held in Dubai and attracted participants from public and private enterprises and civil society organisations, belonging to countries like the UAE and Kuwait. The training focused on the Global Reporting Initiative's GRI G4 guidelines and framework of sustainability reporting. The GRI is the world's most widely used sustainability reporting framework, leading over other non-financial reporting frameworks and tools for its composite approach to economic and social performance. According to the 2015 KPMG report on corporate responsibility (CR), including CR data in annual financial reports it is now a firmly established global trend. Almost 3 in 5 companies do this now, compared with only 1 in 5 in 2011.

The report findings also indicate that the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) remains the most popular voluntary reporting guideline worldwide. Arabia CSR Network annually undertakes a series of GRI trainings, being a certified training partner of the GRI in the Arab Region. It was the first certified training partner in 2011 when it entered into an alliance with the GRI to deliver trainings in Arabic speaking countries. Since then it also branched out to translate and offer certified GRI trainings in the Arabic language. The Network's strength lies in its ability to make the global standard relevant to the local context and in offering practical tips to implement GRI compliant reporting. ACSRN concluded 5 GRI trainings in 2015, bringing the total number of GRI trainings offered by the Network to 26 and the total number of participants to 236 individuals, representing 105 organisations. The successful trainings have led to release of sustainability reports using the GRI framework, and in building the skills and expertise of sustainability professionals. The format of the training is a mixture of lectures, discussions and exercises, yielding a rich exchange of information, knowledge and experience in CSR and sustainability. The individual segments of the session focus on the sustainability context, the GRI's mission, vision and services, the GRI principles and the GRI reporting process.

Doha CSR Conference

The Arabia CSR Network recently travelled to Doha, Qatar, to attend a regional conference on Corporate Social Responsibility. It was organized on December 21st by Al Sharq Newspaper under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Abdulla bin Suoad Al-Thani, the Governor of the Qatar Central Bank. Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, the President and CEO of Arabia CSR Network had been invited to speak about the future of CSR in the Gulf Region and join a panel discussion on the topic. She spoke about the salient features of CSR as it is currently practiced in the Arabian Gulf Region. She then went on to present a brief outlook of where CSR is headed in the future in the Region, highlighting what would be the ideal developments in the progression of CSR. The experience was interesting and helped to reveal some of the achievements and challenges in CSR implementation in the Region. "The outlook for the Gulf would indicate a positive growth of the sustainable development imperative with significant progress in areas such as energy, water, women's economic empowerment and youth employment. As the region's competitiveness is sought to be increased, CSR will be the obvious direction that businesses will be taking," Mrs. Al Marashi remarked.

Upcoming Trainings

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Arabia CSR Network®

**A 'PRACTICAL APPROACH TO
INTEGRATED REPORTING'**

20-21 January, 2016 Dubai, UAE

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الاجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

**SOCIAL IMPACT MEASUREMENT
(SROI-BASED) WORKSHOP**

17-18 February, 2016 Dubai, UAE

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Arabia CSR Network®

**تدريب معتمد حول أسس الاستدامة
والمسؤولية الاجتماعية للمؤسسات**

تاريخ التدريب: فبراير ٢٠١٦ | دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة

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الاجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

**CSR STRATEGY
AND LEADERSHIP
COURSE**


15-17 March, 2015 Dubai, UAE

 **Certified Training on Sustainability Reporting using the
Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) G4 Framework**

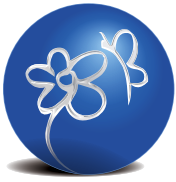
 Arabia CSR Network
is a GRI-Certified Training Partner
in Arabic speaking
Middle East Countries

 Global
Reporting
Initiative®

► 24th - 26th April 2016

 **تدريب معتمد عن تقارير الإستدامة باستخدام الإطار الرابع لوثيقة
الإرشادات G4 الصادرة عن المبادرة العالمية لإعداد التقارير GRI**

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Members Update

wasl Asset Management Group gets Dubai Chamber CSR Label

Dubai Chamber has conferred the CSR Label on wasl Asset Management Group for the second time. The label acknowledges the company's high performance in CSR initiatives. Speaking on the occasion, Abdulla Obaidalla, Chief Operating Officer of wasl commented, "wasl's corporate philosophy is that it is so much more than a real estate development organisation, it is an integral part of the UAE community. As such, it operates an extensive CSR programme that encompasses all facets of society, including work for those with special needs, care of the environment and ensuring a positive workplace for its team members. We are delighted that our commitment to the nation has been officially recognised by DCCI with the prestigious Dubai Chamber CSR Label for the second time."

For more information please visit <https://www.wasl.ae>

DEWA releases 12th Best Consumer Awards for 2015

DEWA has launched its Best Consumer Award for the 12th consecutive year to encourage Dubai's residents to be effective participants in the sustainable development of the Emirate. The Award is part of DEWA's efforts to preserve the environment and natural resources and to support its vision of becoming a sustainable innovative world-class utility. To qualify for the award, customers have to reduce their electricity and water consumption by at least 10% from 1 January to 31 December 2015 compared to the previous year. Consumers who achieve the highest savings in electricity and water will receive cash prizes in addition to appreciation certificates from DEWA. A total of AED 39,000 will be awarded to the 13 top participants. The winner who achieves the highest savings will receive AED 10,000, while the second will receive AED 5,000 and the third AED 4,000. The other 10 participants will receive AED 2,000 each.

"The award supports the Green Economy for Sustainable Development initiative launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to promote the sustainable development of Dubai. It also supports the Dubai Integrated Energy Strategy 2030's goal of reducing energy consumption by 30% by 2030. The award is part of DEWA's efforts to raise awareness among all segments of society about the importance of rational consumption and preserving natural resources for generations to come," said HE Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD and CEO of DEWA. For the full article please see <https://new.dewa.gov.ae/en/about-dewa/news-and-media/press>

McDonald's UAE completes 5 million kilometres on McFuel biodiesel

McDonald's UAE fleet recently completed 5 million kilometres, or the distance to Mars and back, fuelled entirely by biodiesel, thanks to a partnership formed four years ago between the world's largest fast-food chain and the Dubai-based biodiesel producer Neutral Fuels. Sixteen vehicles collect cooking oil from McDonald's 135 outlets up to twice a day, which is then converted into a renewable fuel, or biodiesel. It is the first quick service restaurant in the Mena region recycling all of its "waste cooking oil for refuelling the company's logistics fleet to transport its goods throughout the emirates", said Rafic Fakih, managing director and partner at McDonald's UAE. Each litre of cooking oil can make about one litre of biodiesel, according to Karl Feilder, chairman of Neutral Fuels. And the price matches what customers would pay at the pump, although the company declined to comment on wholesale prices and discounts for providing the feedstock. For the full article please see <http://www.thenational.ae/business/energy/mcdonalds-uae>

Al Ghurair Recognized

Al Ghurair Investment (AGI) was recognized for its role in promoting sustainable business practices. Addressing a forum of business leaders, NGO's and policy-makers, the Chamber's President & CEO, H.E. Hamad Buamim, said: "We are very proud of Al Ghurair as a company". He was speaking at the 'CEO Dialogue: Empowering a Sustainable Future' hosted by AGI in the Al Ghurair Rayhaan by Rotana. The event was held in partnership with the Chamber's Centre for Responsible Business and in association with Dubai Municipality. In a keynote address, the Group CEO of Al Ghurair Investment, urged an open dialogue involving all stakeholders. "Building a sustainable future will require the involvement of all sectors", he said "and closer dialogue between the public and private sectors". He insisted that pursuing sustainable measures had the potential to produce "green dollars" for business – citing as an example, the \$14 million Co-Generation Power Plant being built by AGI at Jebel Ali. To read the full article please visit <http://www.al-ghurair.com/en/news/>



General News

GRI publishes Combined Report

The Global Reporting Initiative has recently published its combined report for the years 2014-2015 sharing information on its financial and non-financial performance. Titled 'Leading for a New Era of Sustainability', the report is a compilation of GRI's current performance and an overview of the challenges and opportunities foreseen for the future. According to GRI, 'It is not only a window to GRI and our work, it's a strategic document for ourselves, our stakeholders, and our network, and demonstrates the true value of sustainably reporting.' The report is available for viewing on the GRI website under the section GRI's Own Reports.

Feature Article

Historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change, 195 Nations Set Path to Keep Temperature Rise Well Below 2 Degrees Celsius



A historic agreement to combat climate change and unleash actions and investment towards a low carbon, resilient and sustainable future was agreed by 195 nations in Paris recently.

The Paris Agreement for the first time brings all nations into a common cause based on their historic, current and future responsibilities. The universal agreement's main aim is to keep a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

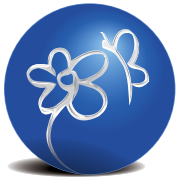
The 1.5 degree Celsius limit is a significantly safer defense line against the worst impacts of a changing climate. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious and important goals, appropriate financial flows will be put in place, thus making stronger action by developing countries and the most vulnerable possible, in line with their own national objectives.

"The Paris Agreement allows each delegation and group of countries to go back home with their heads held high. Our collective effort is worth more than the sum of our individual effort. Our responsibility to history is immense" said Laurent Fabius, President of the COP 21 UN Climate change conference and French Foreign Minister. The minister, his emotion showing as delegates started to rise to their feet, brought the final gavel down on the agreement to open and sustained acclamation across the plenary hall. French President Francois Hollande told the assembled delegates: *"You've done it, reached an ambitious agreement, a binding agreement, a universal agreement. Never will I be able to express more gratitude to a conference. You can be proud to stand before your children and grandchildren."* Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), said:

"One planet, one chance to get it right and we did it in Paris. We have made history together. It is an agreement of conviction. It is an agreement of solidarity with the most vulnerable. It is an agreement of long-term vision, for we have to turn this agreement into an engine of safe growth."

The Paris Agreement and the outcomes of the UN climate conference (COP21) cover all the crucial areas identified as essential for a landmark conclusion.

As well as setting a long-term direction, countries will peak their emissions as soon as possible and continue to submit national climate action plans that detail their future objectives to address climate change. This builds on the momentum of the unprecedented effort which has so far seen 188 countries contribute climate action plans to the new agreement, which will dramatically slow the pace of global greenhouse gas emissions.



The new agreement also establishes the principle that future national plans will be no less ambitious than existing ones, which means these 188 climate action plans provide a firm floor and foundation for higher ambition. Countries will submit updated climate plans – called nationally determined contributions (NDCs) – every five years, thereby steadily increasing their ambition in the long-term.

Climate action will also be taken forward in the period before 2020. Countries will continue to engage in a process on mitigation opportunities and will put added focus on adaptation opportunities. Additionally, they will work to define a clear roadmap on ratcheting up climate finance to USD 100 billion by 2020. This is further underlined by the agreement's robust transparency and accounting system, which will provide clarity on countries' implementation efforts, with flexibility for countries' differing capabilities.

Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement by the COP (Conference of the Parties), it will be deposited at the UN in New York and be opened for one year for signature on 22 April 2016-Earth Day. The agreement will enter into force after 55 countries that account for at least 55% of global emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification.

All countries will submit adaptation communications, in which they may detail their adaptation priorities, support needs and plans. Developing countries will receive increased support for adaptation actions and the adequacy of this support will be assessed.

The agreement includes a robust transparency framework for both action and support. The framework will provide clarity on countries' mitigation and adaptation actions, as well as the provision of support.



At the same time, it recognizes that Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States have special circumstances.

The agreement includes a compliance mechanism, overseen by a committee of experts that operates in a non-punitive way. The COP also closed on a number of technical issues. Under the Kyoto Protocol, there is now a clear and transparent accounting method for carry-over credits for the second commitment period, creating a clear set of rules.

The first round of international assessment and review process (IAR) that was launched in 2014 was successfully completed. A number of technical and implementation issues related to the existing arrangements on technology, adaptation, action for climate empowerment and capacity building were also successfully concluded.

For the full article please see: <http://unfccc.int>



Case Study from the Archive

BMCE Bank

BMCE Bank stands out like a beacon in the North African commercial banking sector. It is viewed as a pioneer in many respects, for envisioning overseas expansion and for its role in promoting sustainable finance in the banking sector. It has always had a positive, proactive stance on Sustainable Development, and sees CSR as a means to promoting and advancing it.

The bank recognized early on the overriding import of external risks in its corporate and commercial activities, and undertook commensurate steps to tackle them. Therefore becoming a socially responsible enterprise was a logical outcome of an integrated approach to economic, social and environmental risks, opportunities and impacts. Aside from being an ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Standard) certified organization, it works through an integrated Social and Environmental Management System (SEMS) to manage both social and environmental impacts.

BMCE Bank has adopted the ISO 26000 international framework for sustainability. It is also the first bank in North Africa to sign the Equator Principles and co-manages the African Outreach Group. Strategic alliances with the International Financial Corporation (IFC), UNEP Financial Initiative (UNEP-FI), National Agency for the Development of Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency (ADEREE), the Moroccan Centre for Clean Production (CMPP), CGEM, and have brought significant value added to the bank's

CSR portfolio. The core components of BMCE Bank's CSR are workplace ethics, environmental management, sustainable finance community and engagement.

The Medersat.com is a flagship initiative undertaken by the BMCE Bank Foundation, which was created in 1995 to promote education in rural areas and environmental preservation, and is supported by the Bank through its annual allocation of 4% of gross operating income. This pioneering programme and its unique model of education and environment has had a tremendous impact in rural areas. BMCE Bank has been acclaimed for its social and environmental practices and has won the Top CSR Performer Award from Viego in 2013 and 2014.



Conclusion

BMCE Bank has made a place for itself in the Sustainable Banking landscape in the MENA region. It is very clear that the bank is pushing the envelope when it comes to the CSR agenda in Morocco and the African continent. It is clearly a pioneer in mainstreaming environmental and social risk management within its business, setting a precedent for not only its peers in the services industry, but also motivating customers to change their behaviour to more sustainable ways. The bank voluntarily embraced management practices that would help it to intensify efforts to become more responsible and sustainable, and emerged as a pathfinder in human resource and environmental management. For their visionary policies, practices and engagements, and for transforming the banking environment and paving the way for more access to finance, BMCE Bank has won repeated acclaim, locally and internationally. The bank uses reporting tools attached to the different standards and frameworks it adheres to, upholding a high level of transparency and accountability. It is commendable that BMCE has considered the GRI G4 guidelines to widen the scope of performance assessment through a more expanded range of KPIs. It is also expected to motivate greater transparency and disclosure within the banking and finance sector as a whole.

Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2014

This abstract has been taken from the ACSRN publication titled 'Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2014'. For more details on Abstract BMCE Bank and other companies that have been recognized for their innovative and effective CSR strategies write to us at admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com and book your copy now! Please mention "Arabia CSR Best Practices" in the subject.

The Arabia CSR Network welcomes new members to be a part of its CSR journey. To learn how to be a member, and how your organization will benefit from it, call us at +971-4-3448120 or write to us at admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com