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Arabia CSR Network®

CSR ARABIA

Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

May 2016 Issue 57



Arabia CSR Awards Clinic highlights key aspects of the application process



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية
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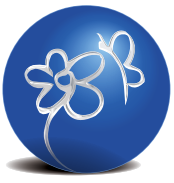
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Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai recently announced the historic move to allocate a AED 1 billion endowment fund that will serve to advance a science and technology based future for the country. "The future is not built on possibilities and numbers but on clarity of vision, planning, action and implementation. Science and technology are changing the world at an accelerating pace, and the choice is to either play the role of influencers or get confined to the position of the affected", he said at the launch of the Dubai Future Foundation.

The Vice-President also invoked the concept of the 'House of Wisdom' of the 9th century established by Arabs and Muslims 'as a global model for sciences and a platform for innovators' from all over the world. "Today we need this concept again in the 21st century to keep up with the changes and to shape the future to serve humanity. After more than 1,000 years we are recreating wisdom through Dubai Future Foundation," he added. Once again the UAE leadership has taken the bold step to forge ahead on the path to innovation, science and technology in a bid to craft a dynamic future for individuals, organisations and sectors to be achieved under the banner of the Dubai Future Agenda. The agenda is dedicated to propel UAE more firmly as a global leader and strengthen its competitive position in the world.

Last month we were fortunate to organize and participate in a bunch of important events that have given us a great deal of visibility and helped our outreach tremendously. We organized the Awards Clinic to help organisations prepare appropriately for the awards, understand the basic requirements of filling out the application form, and become familiar with the process of putting together a strong application. We were delighted to have past winners with us in the clinic, who emphasized the value of the awards in improving their CSR experience and strengthening their sustainability practices substantially.

Then we visited Jeddah and for the first time delivered an in-house training to a leading financial institution in the country. The training was very successful and deeply appreciated by the participants. At a networking dinner we were delighted to meet like-minded people from various organisations representing government, business and civil society. We also had a wonderful session that was hosted by the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry for their members. Although the theme of the seminar was corporate responsibility, the platform afforded a great opportunity to showcase the Arabia CSR Awards and roll it out in the Kingdom. Thus, this became the third road show for the awards, something that had been planned since last year, in order to increase the outreach and expand the award more fully in neighbouring countries in the MENA region. With this we have managed to penetrate North Africa, the Levant and the GCC, which we hope will be reflected in the number of participants from these regions in the current cycle of the awards. The closing date for submission is June 30th and I strongly urge all of you to apply to the awards and help us provide a platform to you to acknowledge your labour and commitment towards the idea of a sustainable future

Upcoming Events

22-24 May 2016

English

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

Arabic

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

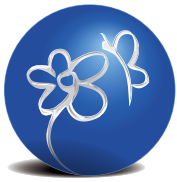
WHAT HAS \$28 TRILLION GOT TO DO WITH EQUALITY ON THE WORK FLOOR?

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IF WOMEN PLAY AN IDENTICAL ROLE IN LABOR MARKETS TO THAT OF MEN IT WILL GENERATE AT LEAST \$28 TRILLION TO THE ECONOMY BY 2025*

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*SOURCE: REPORT MCKINSEY GLOBAL INSTITUTE SEPTEMBER 2015.



Arabia CSR Awards Clinic explains key aspects of the application process

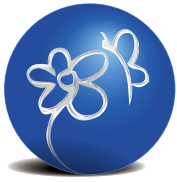
The Arabia CSR Network organised a half day clinic to shed light on the key aspects of the region's best known CSR award. The Arabia CSR Awards are widely known as the Arab Region's homegrown sustainability benchmark. This annual award is conferred on organisations that demonstrate a high level of performance in CSR and corporate sustainability. An elaborate application process ensures that internationally aligned best practices are adhered to, such as the GRI sustainability reporting guidelines, European EFQM Excellence Model and the UN Global Compact Ten Principles. The award is supported by the League of Arab States, the United Nations Environment Programme and the UN Global Compact. There are nine award categories that organisations can choose to apply to. The clinic was supported by HolidayInn Al Barsha.

The award clinic was held in order to ensure a smooth application process on the part of existing and potential participants. The aim of the clinic was to provide all applicants fair and equal knowledge of the application process in an adequate time frame before the submission deadline to ensure fair competition and a smooth progression. Leading the clinic was Arabia CSR Network President & CEO Habiba Al Marashi, who gave an overview of the awards with particular reference to the previous award cycle. She remarked "The Arabia CSR Awards has established itself as the most rigorous and highly acclaimed Awards of its kind in the region, integrating the most powerful international guidelines and frameworks and implementing them in the Arab region, bridging the gap between theory and practice beautifully. Perhaps one of the strongest advantages of the Awards is that it guides organisations to take a close look at their sustainability practices and constantly improve their performance in environment, social and governance areas."

Another primary speaker was a member of the awards jury who explained the criteria of the award and what judges look for in submitted applications. She spoke about the assessment methodology and provided recommendations for winning entries. Other presenters included representatives from ABB, Qatar, Farnek, Gulf Petrochemical Industries Co. (GPIC)- Bahrain and Road Safety-UAE; - some of the organisations that had made the cut in last year's awards. The concluding part of the event was dedicated to a Q&A session where attendees were given the opportunity to raise questions and clarify issues related to the application process.

"It was a wonderful event, a very well organized platform for sharing lessons learned and best practices en-route to excellence in corporate sustainability. Very useful tips were provided to all attendees on how to submit a successful application." – Nadeem Rana, Environment Superintendent, Safety, Health & Environment Department, Gulf Petrochemical Industries Co., Bahrain





Network delivers training session in Jeddah

The Arabia CSR Network was recruited by the National Commercial Bank of Jeddah to deliver a three day training on CSR and sustainability to a group of employees. The course was entitled “CSR Essentials” and focused on key knowledge concepts and practical tools related to the subject. The content incorporated definitions, approaches, implementation methods and practical examples, which was delivered through class room style lectures, group discussions and exercises.

The team of participants comprised mainly of the Corporate Responsibility department that is entrusted with developing and managing the company’s CR initiatives. The customized course was developed by the Network to suit the needs of the bank, which has been practicing CSR since the early 2000s. In fact it was one of the first banks in the region to espouse non-financial reporting, a practice that has been continued through its amalgamation into the annual report.



The trainers explained fundamental concepts in CSR and sustainability to the participants, eliciting discussions that helped to link the organisation’s practices and initiatives to these concepts. Rich in regional content and practical examples and experiences, the discourses allowed participants to greatly deepen understanding about sustainability and how to differentiate it from an externally focused engagement to a value creation tool that enhances business performance in a holistic fashion.

Jeddah Chamber of Commerce organizes half day seminar on Corporate Responsibility

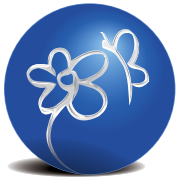
Close on the heels of the training course for National Commercial Bank, Arabia CSR Network was also invited to address the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce & Industry members. The Chamber, in collaboration with National Commercial Bank and the CSR Committee of the Chamber, organized the seminar on Corporate Responsibility to help members benefit from the knowledge and expertise of Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, ACSRN President and CEO. Mrs. Al Marashi was accompanied by Ms. Hanan Abbas, Independent Advisor and member of the Arabia CSR Awards jury.

The duo spoke about the sustainability trends and developments in the world and their relevance in the MENA Region. They also discussed the imperative of CSR and Sustainability and what it entails, and ended the session with summaries of regional examples of exemplary sustainability practices.

The audience was invited to a round of discussion, which helped to shed light on many important aspects related to corporate responsibility and how organisations should view it as a strategic management tool. Present among the audience were top representatives of member organisations of the Chamber, which boasts of an active CSR Committee in which the National Commercial Bank is represented. The Network was presented with a token of appreciation from the Chamber.



The Network took this opportunity to present the Arabia CSR Awards 9th cycle to the audience. Mrs. Al Marashi explained the essential elements of the initiative, how it has evolved, who its partners are, and which categories organisations may apply to. Utilizing the occasion she called it the “third road show in 2016 of the Arabia CSR Awards”. This year the Network has adopted the novel method of visiting different Arab countries to launch the awards and meet people to disseminate information about the awards. Already three road shows have been conducted so far, - one each in Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The objective of the road shows is to attract more participants from the respective countries.



Zulekha Hospital releases Sustainability Report

ACSRN President & CEO was the Guest of Honour at the launch of the sustainability report published by Zulekha Hospital. The event to release the Sustainability Report 2014 and 2015 took place on the 5th of April in Dubai. The report is compliant to the GRI framework and is in accordance with the Core criteria of reporting.

Mrs. Al Marashi gave a short inspiring talk on the subject of sustainability reporting and congratulated Zulekha Hospital on their various achievements including in the domain of transparency and non-financial disclosures. Said Mrs. Al Marashi “ I would like to congratulate Zulekha Hospital for this achievement. Indeed it is an achievement because it is not an easy job to produce a Sustainability Report that details an organisation's performance in environmental, social and governance areas, which are not within the purview of customary business reporting. While developing an annual report or a financial report is relatively straight forward and there are ample proven methodologies. In many cases there are local mandatory requirements or international guidelines for financial reporting. There are only a handful of countries in the world where disclosure of non-financial information is obligatory as a regulatory requirement.”



Members Update

EGA implements advanced Technology Innovation

As part of its mandate to drive an ongoing quest for innovation-based improvements, the dedicated Technology Development & Transfer department at EGA continuously forges ahead in identifying and implementing technological advancements for the benefit of the aluminium industry. A case in point is the successful filing of an application in September 2015 to patent the development of hinged grating for easy access to the outer shell of electrolytic cells, facilitating safer inspection and measurements as well as natural cooling and temporary forced cooling during cell start-up.



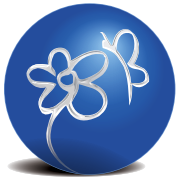
The use of the hinged grating on the top cover design, implemented across EGA Reduction Technologies, has already yielded measurable operating cost reductions and increased productivity. Working closely with Takamul – an innovation protection support programme developed and operated by the Abu Dhabi Technology Development Committee (“TDC”) – the new innovation will set the industry benchmark for utilisation in this type of plant. To read the full article please click on: <http://www.ega.ae/en/media/newsdetail/?id=5854>

New smart sensing solution for motors from ABB

Until now, the monitoring and preventive maintenance of low-voltage motors has been time-consuming and expensive. New technology from ABB transforms simple motors into intelligent machines that tell you when they need servicing. Smart sensors attached directly to the motor supply information regarding operating and condition parameters via wireless transmission.

The innovative sensor technology offers plant operators not only huge potential savings on maintenance and repair, but will henceforth also make it easy to utilize the Internet of Things, Services and People (IoTSP) * for millions of motors. The IoTSP is ABB's concept for enabling its customers to take advantage of the opportunities of digitalization. With the new solution, small and mid-sized companies can also benefit from the advantages offered by the IoTSP. To learn more about this innovative project please click on <http://www.mena.abb.com/cawp/seitp202/ddf13742133301e744257f9b00236cb6.aspx>





General News

Dubai Future Foundation established to help shape the future of key sectors

The Dubai Future Foundation was set up last month by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai as an independent research endowment establishment with an aim to shape the future of the strategic sectors in cooperation with the government and private sector entities.

The Foundation is called the 'house of wisdom', in recognition of the 9th century "House of Wisdom" set up by Arabs and Muslims to advance a global model for science and innovation. A Dh1 billion Future Endowment Fund was also initiated to invest in innovation for the future. Shaikh Mohammad also approved the Dubai Future Agenda as a strategic framework for the Foundation. Speaking on the occasion, Shaikh Mohammad said "Dubai has a modern infrastructure and appropriate legislative structure which can promote its position as a global hub for the making of the future in the region and the world. Shaping the future is not a new concept for Dubai.

The city has achieved significant experience in aviation, trade, financial services and technology." The Dubai Future Agenda will focus on supporting and developing individuals, organisations and sectors, and includes more than 20 initiatives to enhance the leadership of Dubai and the UAE. Sheikh Mohammed also gave the stamp of approval to the Future Cities programme "as a framework for the launch of strategies and research projects related to the future to achieve the global leadership of Dubai and the UAE and create a global model in the field of future cities with all its components such as energy, transportation and infrastructure."

GRI to organize Master classes in the Global Conference

GRI is organising the Global Conference in Amsterdam from May 18-20th. On the side of the conference, GRI is also going to conduct a set of master classes for interested participants. GRI is working together with expert organizations as master class facilitators to deliver interactive workshops that will build understanding and provide practical guidance on a variety of key sustainability reporting challenges. In addition to the dynamic three day conference program included in the registration cost, GRI offers these add-on master classes designed to give focused learning moments to empower sustainable decision making.

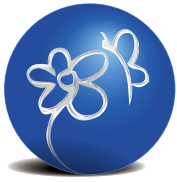
The 3 hour master classes can be booked as one class for each day as the classes will be held in parallel on Wednesday the 18th and Friday 20th May. Please note that these classes are not certified by GRI. The maximum number of participants per Master Class is 40, so spaces are limited to those who register first. A digital letter of attendance can be provided to participants after completion. For more information please check out www.globalreporting.org

Feature Article

An interview with Bloomberg's Sustainability Editor, Eric Roston

Journalist Eric Roston has been overseeing sustainability news coverage at Bloomberg LP since 2011, and over the past 15 years has worked on climate change from virtually every angle, including publishing the popular science book, "The Carbon Age". Eric Roston will be moderating all four plenary sessions at next month's GRI Global Conference. In this exclusive interview, we discover his views on the key sustainability challenges of our time, and, what action is needed to solve them.





What do you see as the main issues in sustainability right now and why?

The issues are more focused, direct, and I think mature, than they have ever been in the past. The idea of a global “carbon budget”—that there’s only so much CO₂ we can produce without courting true danger—now enforces discipline on every nation and company that considers it. The crash in energy prices has both helped and complicated the movement away from fossil fuels. We’re seeing the leading sustainable companies really transforming what they make, how they make it, and how they disclose it all to stakeholders. There are now commonplace, standard practices in sustainability that a decade ago would have been wishful thinking.

In what way do you see sustainability reporting and increased transparency playing a role in helping to address these issues?

In the U.S., which is the place I know best, policy developments tend to lag private-sector adoption. So the more that the country’s and the world’s biggest companies embrace sustainability and transparency, the likelier it is that Washington and state capitals may give it the force of law. What we’re looking for here is contagion—a good kind—where companies compete on sustainable best practices and lift everybody around them.

Last year we saw major developments in the sustainability landscape, namely the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Change agreement. How important were these developments and how do you think they will affect business and economies?

Everything in the SDGs is also good for business. Health. The rule of law. Infrastructure. A clean environment. Efficient systems. The faster nations can address the challenges spelled out in the SDGs, the better it is that business will be able to serve their citizenry. Much is made about the lack of the UN climate process to produce a legally binding treaty that guarantees carbon cuts. It was probably never possible. But that shouldn’t diminish the very real soft power which is already signaling markets, companies, and governments that it’s time to step up an already fast-paced transition toward a carbon-free energy economy.

Why has Bloomberg LP decided to partner with GRI for the 5th Global Conference?

The partnership is a great expression of Bloomberg LP’s *modus operandi*. Several years ago, long before I slinked in, Bloomberg LP ginned up two major initiatives under the leadership of Curtis Ravenel, global Head of Sustainability. One initiative brought sustainable scrutiny to the company’s worldwide operations, resulting in massive, widespread cost savings, efficiency improvements, and a strong sense of community. At the same time, the company built into the Bloomberg Professional Service an entire platform devoted to the environmental, social, and governance information disclosed by public companies. All that information is available to clients along with companies’ traditional financial data. So in both its operations and its product, Bloomberg LP took an early lead in sustainable business, and the GRI Global Conference is an ideal place to see what people think is happening next.

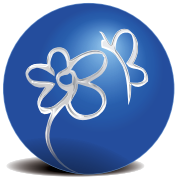
The first plenary session at the GRI Global Conference asks the question “20 years on: Are we making a difference?” What do you think?

Where we see changes in improved livelihoods, in how companies use resources, in better technology, they are coming faster than even some of the most starry-eyed optimists might have predicted 10 years ago. Only good can come from transparency. Only good can come from cleaning up the energy system. And only good can come from defining business as a means to improving people’s lives and communities.

What’s your message to people who are contemplating attending the GRI Global Conference but have not yet committed to doing so?

My god, what are you waiting for? The GRI Global Conference is about nothing less than the most transformative ideas in the world, brought to you by the people who invented and are implementing them. For me, sustainability is not about companies and governments. It can’t be if you want to keep the topic lively and engaging. It’s about people, and why people do what they do when they get out of bed in the morning. These particular people are dead-set on improving the lives of others around the world and into infinity. That’s who we’re going to hear from. This meeting-of-the-minds will bring tears to your eyes and laughter to your gut. You will make new friends. You will bring back inspiration for your colleagues who can’t make it. You will change the world. But you have to sign up first. This article can be read on the following link

<https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/An-interview-with-Bloomberg%E2%80%99s->



Case Study from the Archive (Arab Bank)

Abstract

Financial Institutions are the organizations which have the highest exposure to different kinds of risks and this environment of peril brings a sense of urgency of sustainability among the stakeholders of these organizations. Arab Bank Group is one of the leading financial institutions which endeavors to maintain the highest standards of excellence in financial services based on sustainable growth and development. Arab Bank has made a difference with its best practices. It has made substantial gains by focusing on five main areas of sustainable development, which includes responsible financing, empowered employees, transparent reporting, system optimization and community cooperation. In the year 2014, the bank has augmented its CSR program's donation channels for their participating NGOs, resulting in a 20% increase in total donations from customers to support the local community.

Arab Bank Group's unique objectives of integrity and fairness are based on stakeholder's priorities, environmental commitment and its multi-dimensional approach towards sustainability. These characteristics have made it the first runner-up in the financial services category in the Arabia CSR Awards 2015.

Conclusion

In the journey of sustainability and CSR, Arab Bank has achieved several major milestones which not only reinforced the Bank's leading position in sustainability on the local level, but also reaffirmed its competitiveness in the regional and even global sustainability field. While achieving many of its sustainability objectives in the past, they continued to set the bar higher for themselves in 2014 and 2015 have successfully accomplished these commitments during the year.

They have made considerable gains in the five main focus areas, which include responsible financing, empowered employees, transparent reporting, system optimization and community cooperation. The bank also established new commitments within these focus areas and set their future course of action.

They launched their fifth sustainability report, covering the Bank's achievements in the social, environmental and governance fields in accordance to the updated GRI indicators (G4). As these guidelines focus mainly on the process of identifying and reporting on material sustainability aspects, the Bank was able to further enhance its sustainability strategy and concentrate on the economic, environmental, and social impacts. This has resulted in its becoming the first Jordan-based Bank to follow the new generation of guidelines for sustainability reporting and to be among the very few companies in Jordan and the region to issue this type of a report.

While it is clear that the bank has a strong sustainability program with clear focus areas, however, SMART goals have to be put in place in order for stakeholders to align with the bank's sustainability endeavors. The bank has to focus on strong stakeholder/bank innovation driven solutions; and more efforts have to be put in place to ensure their alignment with the overall sustainability strategy.



Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2015

This abstract has been taken from the ACSRN publication titled 'Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2015'. For more details on Arab 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