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Arabia CSR Network®

CSR ARABIA

# Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

October 2016 Issue 62

## ACSRN co-organizes session on Responsible Consumption and Production of Water



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Ajman Executive Council**

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## Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

September was a month when the office of the Arabia CSR Network was at its busiest. This was the time when we prepared for two of our biggest activities of the year. On the one hand we were putting the final touches to the Arabia CSR Forum, while on the other we were busy closing the 2016 cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards. We also had the in-house training for the Ajman Executive Council to organize and conduct. In between all of this we are also engaged in our advisory projects, work on Sharaka, Sustainable Consumption & Production (SCP) panel discussion and so on.

A truly hectic period, it also brings a tremendous sense of purpose and dedication. With significantly small operations, Arabia CSR Network has managed to emerge as one of the most well-known think tanks in the Region. Our activities and programmes attract participants from near and far, public and private, academic and civil society alike. We have strong relations with government entities, private businesses, universities, NGOs, professional associations and UN bodies, with whom we engage on a regular and consistent basis. Our meeting with Fujairah Free Zone Authority reflects our keen desire to work with the authorities for the sake of sustainability in the UAE.

We started off in 2004 as the only multi-stakeholder CSR network in the UAE, and grew to become a unique organisation across the Region. Our reach extends to North Africa as well as the Gulf and Levant, and we have also received requests for collaboration from Africa. We work in tandem with national goals and objectives. We are also committed to universal mandates and targets. We believe in marrying the local with the global in a common purpose, which is the advancement of sustainable development. To our members we try to provide opportunities to show their commitment to sustainability, and offer them a platform to showcase their efforts. We are truly happy when our members receive plaudits for their work and earn a name for being leaders in their sectors through their work in sustainability. We publish the annual CSR best practices case studies to highlight the practices that stand out over others, and we believe these examples will indeed inspire and push many organisations to become ethical, responsible and sustainable.

With a few days left to the Arabia CSR Forum, if you have not registered yet, this is your last opportunity to do so. Please access the link provided in this bulletin and sign up for the year's most value added CSR event. If you are interested to collaborate we would be delighted to hear from you. So make haste and start on this sustainable journey if you haven't already. Together we can and we will make a difference.

## An update on the upcoming Arabia CSR Forum

On the 19th and 20th of this month and under the patronage of the League of Arab States, the Arab Region's most important conference on corporate responsibility and sustainability will take place in Dubai. The two day conference will be packed with panel discussions, video conferencing and live exchanges among audience and experts. The audience will be taken through a bunch of topics under the overall theme "Accelerating the Arab Sustainable Development Agenda Through Innovation and Collaboration." The focus of the conference is on raising knowledge and triggering commitments that support the Sustainable Development Goals. The objectives are to understand the relevance of the Goals for the Arab Region, develop suitable approaches to address various goals, engage different sectors and constituencies, and finally, identify ways and means of linking innovation and collaboration initiatives with the Goals.

The forum agenda is as follows:

### DAY 1

Keynote Address 1: Transforming the Arab World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

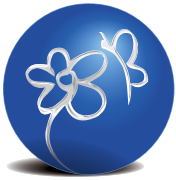
Keynote Address 2: Sustainable Development Goals to drive Innovation & Collaboration in the Arab Region.

Plenary Session I: How will the SDGs drive Innovation and Collaboration?

### CREATIVE LABS

1. The Road to 2030: Youth Perspectives for the Arab world
2. Fit for Purpose Philanthropy to accelerate the Post 2015 Agenda
3. Social Enterprise: A Compass for Sustainable Growth

THE SHARAKA'S PRINCIPLES: A COMPASS FOR SUSTAINABLE ARAB PARTNERSHIPS



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## DAY 2

Keynote Address 3: Policies and Frameworks to drive the Post 2015- Arab Sustainable Development Agenda  
Plenary Session II: Partnerships for the SDGs: Enhancing CSR for Policy coherence and Resilient Collaborations  
Plenary Session III: Interdependencies and disparities between Private, Public and Civil Society Collaborators  
Plenary IV: The Nexus of Youth, Innovation and Social Enterprise

The Arabia CSR Awards ceremony will be held on the 20th of October at the same venue as the Forum. The evening will be dedicated to acknowledging the finalists of the 2016 Arabia CSR Awards. Trophies will be conferred in the different categories of the award. For the first time, certificates of appreciation will also be presented to all applicants. A grand occasion, it promises to provide a wonderful platform to recognize the achievements of CSR and sustainability leaders from the Arab Region. Both the awards ceremony and the forum will be conducted as Carbon Neutral events, a practice that has been developed by Arabia CSR Network for the past few years.

Sit with galaxy of experts and sustainability thinkers that will shed light on the latest developments, trends and challenges in the field of CSR and sustainability.



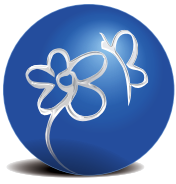
## ARABIA CSR FORUM 2016

19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> October | Steigenberger Hotel, Dubai

[www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com](http://www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com)

To register please click on this link





## UPCOMING EVENTS



### ***Arabia CSR Network presents to Fujairah Free Zone Authority***

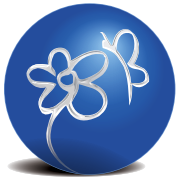
On the 4th of September the Arabia CSR Network President and CEO Habiba Al Marashi gave a presentation to Fujairah Free Zone Authority. The objective of the visit and the talk was to give an introduction to sustainability and highlight the efforts of ACSRN in advocating sustainability among various sectors in the UAE and across the Region. Mrs. Al Marashi spoke about the activities of the organisation, throwing light on the different kinds of trainings that ACSRN offers, the advisory and assurance services, as well as the Arabia CSR Awards and Arabia CSR Forum.

The two organisations discussed mutual interests and explored opportunities of working together in the area of sustainability. Fujairah Free Zone Authority is the only Free Zone in the UAE which is located outside of the Strait of Hormuz. This strategic location ensures a great deal of attention from international investors and multinational companies around the world.

### ***Arabia CSR Awards judges meet to decide results***

The jury panel of the Arabia CSR Awards 2016 met virtually on September 7th to discuss the results of the evaluation of applications and finalise the winners of this cycle. The hour and a half long conference was organized by the award secretariat and included the independent panel of regional and international experts that comprise the jury. The judges are selected based on their proven knowledge, successful track record and hands on experience in CSR and sustainability. The results of the evaluation were discussed by the secretariat and all the judges, and finalists were identified from each of the categories. It was unanimously decided to withhold a couple of awards for not reaching up to the expected standard of excellence and attaining a certain threshold in the scores. The decisions were formalized and the final list of winners was drawn. The results will be announced in the upcoming awarding ceremony to be held on the 20th of October in Dubai. Apart from the scores, the judges also provide specific, elaborate comments on the applications to help applicants understand their strengths and weaknesses. This contribution from the jury is one of the value additions that attract many organisations to the awards.





### **ACSRN gives GRI training to Ajman Executive Council**

Arabia CSR Network organized a customized training based on the GRI accredited course module for the Ajman Executive Council. The training was held from October 27th to 29th in Ajman. The training focused on the sustainability reporting process which has been defined by GRI and is followed by thousands of reporting organisations all over the world.

This training was customized to suit the needs and expectations of the council, it was also delivered in Arabic. The Arabia CSR Network is currently the only training provider that delivers an Arabic GRI training course.

The training was based on the guidelines and principles of the GRI G4 framework and covered the key components, reporting methodology and other important elements of GRI G4 reporting. The course was explained via lectures and exercises, and complemented by discussions and group tests.

All the participants rated the training as excellent and promised to recommend it to their networks.

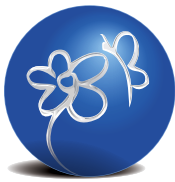


### **ACSRN co-organizes session on Responsible Consumption and Production of Water**



Arabia CSR Network and Emirates Environmental Group, in association the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Emirates Green Building Council came together to co-organise the third panel discussion on the theme of “Responsible Consumption and Production”. The event took place on the 29th of September 2016. This session focused on Water within the overall theme of Sustainable Consumption and Production”, which is Goal number 12 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Highlighting the centrality of water the panel discussion highlighted various aspects and shed light on the efforts of global, national and local governments and organisations to find sustainable and tangible solutions to reduce water wastage and alternatives to producing clean, recycled and safe water. One of the key issues discussed was consumer responsibility both social and environmental, for the transformation to more sustainable consumption-production-patterns.

The panel included Ms. Fatma Mohammed Alfoora Alshamsi, Assistant Undersecretary for Electricity, Clean Energy and Desalinated water, at the Ministry of energy Mr. Naser Lootah, Executive Vice President of Generation Power & Water, Dubai Electricity And Water Authority (DEWA), Dr. Asad Sarwar Qureshi, Senior Scientist – Irrigation and Water Management from the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture, Mr. Steve Nash, Projects Director, Metito and Mr. Stuart Mee, Sustainability Manager, Interserve. The session was moderated by Mr. Abdul Aziz Al Midfa, Vice Chair of Emirates Environmental Group. The well attended event gathered together representatives of federal and local agencies, as well as corporate and academic establishments.



## Members Update

### **CEO of wasl Asset Management Group receives prestigious accolade**



His Excellency Hesham Abdullah Al Qassim, CEO of wasl Asset Management Group, has won the Property CEO of the Year award at the CEO Middle East Awards 2016, winning it for the second consecutive time. The prestigious accolade was awarded in recognition of the outstanding performance made both by him and the company he leads. Organised by ITP Publishing and held in conjunction with popular business publication CEO Middle East, this year's awards were the programme's tenth edition. Hesham Al Qassim's Property CEO of the Year award publicly acknowledges the tremendous role he has played in growing, developing and diversifying wasl's real estate and property portfolio, as well his leadership and direction in project development and overall business growth. In the eight years since he was appointed as CEO, Al Qassim has been the instrumental driving force that has transformed the group from its previous incarnation as the Dubai Real Estate Corporation (DREC), to a world-class asset management company and one of the region's most highly-regarded property development and management organisations. To read the full article please go to <https://www.wasl.ae/press-releases/hesham-al-qassim-wins-property-ceo-year>

### **Emirates Global Aluminium (“EGA”) Annual Summer Training Programme targets local youth and citizens**

The annual Summer Training Programme at Emirates Global Aluminium (“EGA”) drew together a total of 22 students from high schools and universities across the country who received one month's real-life work experience at the company's midstream aluminium businesses in the UAE. Of the group, 15 trainees majoring in Human Resources Management, Marketing and Finance were enrolled in relevant departments at Dubai Aluminium (“DUBAL” or Jebel Ali Operations). The other seven trainees were welcomed in the Capital Projects, Human Resources and Finance departments at Emirates Aluminium (“EMAL” or Al Taweelah Operations).



In line with a corporate commitment to making a positive impact in the communities surrounding its operations, the EGA Summer Training Programme gives UAE-based students business experience relevant to the discipline they are currently studying. Guidance is provided on recommended subjects to steer them towards a successful career path in their chosen disciplines. Participation in the Summer Training Programme is compulsory for all university students currently benefitting from the EGA Scholarship Programme, who are expected to spend up to five weeks working at EGA in at least two long vacations during their study period; and to join the business upon graduating. To read the full article please click on <http://www.ega.ae/en/media/newsdetail?id=5973>

## General News

### **Renewables investment in Middle East reaches new heights**

The Middle East tripled renewable energy investment last year despite fewer energy dollars being spent globally, with industry insiders characterizing the region as a hot spot for green investment. The International Energy Agency (IEA) released a report that showed energy investment globally reached US\$1.8 trillion last year, down 8 per cent from \$2tn in 2014. Investments in renewables made up about 17 per cent of that figure, the highest source of power investment. But as less money is funneled into the energy sector overall, Mena as a whole has markedly gained speed in renewables over the past 12 to 18 months, according to David Charlier, a partner based in Dubai at law firm Ashurst.

This can be seen in the movements made by the UAE in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, but also with other GCC countries such as Kuwait procuring the Kabd waste to energy project and Saudi Arabia's recent renewable energy commitments. Mr. Charlier pointed to Jordan and Morocco actively expanding both wind and solar plans, and while Egypt is facing currency issues, some projects are still moving ahead.

In June, Dubai beat world records again with the lowest prices of solar energy at 2.99 US cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) – cheaper than the International Renewable Energy Agency's calculation of power generation via natural gas at 5 cents. Chile came in over a month later, announcing solar power at 2.91 cents per kWh. To read the full article please click on [http://www.ifpinfo.com/Sustainability-NewsArticle-7985#.V-jQv\\_197cs](http://www.ifpinfo.com/Sustainability-NewsArticle-7985#.V-jQv_197cs)



## Feature Article

# How Industrial Firms Invest in Renewable Energy, Affordably



Big companies have been buying a lot of clean energy lately – 3.5 gigawatts of renewable capacity last year alone (a good chunk of all the capacity added\*). These leaders, mostly consumer-facing brands like Google, Apple, Microsoft, Walmart, and IKEA, have been covering their roofs and filling giant fields with solar panels and wind turbines. To do this, they have mostly used power purchasing agreements (PPAs) to buy their clean power. Under this financing structure, the company contracts to buy kilowatts, not the turbines and panels. They put up almost no capital and usually lower their day-to-day energy costs.

It sounds like an easy win-win, but industrial companies have had a harder time making it all work for two key reasons: costs and accounting. First, due in large part to the scale and consistency of their energy purchasing, industrials already pay the lowest rates for power. Second, signing long-term power agreements for 15 to 20 years is hard for any company to swallow, and they often struggle with how to handle the accounting (is the contract a lease? Is it a liability, an asset, or something else?). This hurdle seems especially hard for old-school, more fiscally conservative entities.

So the PPA terms that retailers and tech companies sign have not worked for the heavy guys.

Until now.

Manufacturers like Dow and Owens Corning are showing it can work for industrials as well. Both have recently contracted to buy the power from multiple 100-plus megawatt wind farms. I spoke with Owens Corning execs, catching up after working with them a number of years ago, to understand how they did it. Frank O'Brien-Bernini, the company's Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, laid out the strategy he and his team used to get over the hurdles, which boils down to five key actions:

Research shows how others do it. They held about 40 meetings with companies that had bought renewable energy and with big project developers. Then, after their own renewables purchases, they've "paid it forward" and talked with other industrials.

### GET EARLY BUY-IN.

*They had framing conversations with the CEO and CFO early on to discuss any financial or operational challenges. As renewables costs have dropped, the first hurdle on cost has gotten easier, but not gone away entirely, and the accounting issues remain.*

### USE CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAMS.

*You need legal, accounting, procurement, energy, and sustainability involved. As O'Brien-Bernini put it, the months they spent getting the deals through their process were "faster than any company the energy suppliers had seen...but it didn't feel fast!" His experience gibes with the findings of a new survey that PwC conducted on corporate renewable buying. Well over half the respondents reported that three or more corporate functions were "key decision makers."*

### FIND THE RIGHT LOCATIONS FOR THE BUSINESS.

*The company started with smaller PV systems at two Owens Corning facilities: an insulation plant and an office parking lot in Ohio. These impressed employees. Then they made the bigger moves to reduce their GHG and energy footprint. The company contracted for the power output from two new 125-megawatt wind farms in Texas and Oklahoma. As with most PPAs, the contract was a critical asset for the energy developer to take, literally, to the bank to get financings..*

*For Owens Corning, the locations matter. The Texas site alone produces more energy than what Owens Corning uses across its significant Texas operations. This allowed the company to claim carbon-neutral status for Texas-made products, a nice and strategic marketing win.*

### SEEK ADVICE ON THE ACCOUNTING.

*While PPAs are the dominant model for financing corporate renewables, signing 15- or 20-year agreements can be tricky. So they got third-party advice from PwC about how to treat the purchases and commitments on their financial statements.*

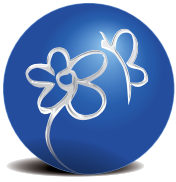
*In total, getting these renewables deals done takes some work. It requires some solid research on deal structures and locations; organizational navigation to get everyone on board; and savvy accounting. But it's all worth it. Almost every company that I talk to, regardless of sector, is finding deals at or below their current energy prices. Owens Corning won't actually reveal the exact energy prices they're paying. But O'Brien-Bernini implies strongly that it's a good deal, saying, "This is adding value to our company."*

*Execs at industrial companies often believe that they can't find renewables cheaper than their rock-bottom power rates. They're wrong — and they're losing money because of it.*

*\*The estimates on how much capacity was added to the U.S. grid vary, depending on what you're counting (and who's counting) from 14.5GW to 19.5GW or more. All sources seem to agree that renewables were two-thirds or more of the total.*

*This article is sourced from Harvard Business Review and is credited to Andrew Winston. Winston is the author, most recently, of The Big Pivot. He is also the co-author of the best-seller Green to Gold and the author of Green Recovery. He advises some of the world's leading companies on how they can navigate and profit from environmental and social challenges.*





## Case Study from the Archive - ACER

### Abstract

*Acer is a well-recognized brand in the electronics sector. Established in the year 1976, it has a legacy of strong commitment towards its stakeholders, society and environment. Acer's corporate culture is based on the speed and efficiency, and its CSR practices are not just a marketing tool but it's a genuine business objective that it recognizes as a 'must have' for the sustainability of the organization, the planet and its people. Hence in 2013, it went for restructuring which has kept up the pace of reform and innovation. Further it holds high levels of integrity, transparency, and innovation as its core values.*

*Acer has delivered an exemplary CSR services to the society and environment. Over the period of time it has undertaken several CSR initiatives to fulfill its sustainability goals. Their efforts towards the environmental protection are commendable. Through its affiliation with the Emirates Environmental Group, Smartlife, the Sheikh Mohammed Foundation and Dubai Chamber for Sustainable business it has excelled in its sustainability practices. They have also received a lot of awards for the innovation and best practices. It has reduced its impact on the environment by creating a safe package design, refining product transport efficiency, improving product recycling channel and reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emission by 30%. Acer has taken several years of careful and calculated planning to formulate a CSR approach which in itself is sustainable, flexible and evolutionary in nature.*

### Conclusion

Acer a multinational electronics giant has shown its remarkable efforts towards the society, environment and governance. It played its duty of corporate citizenship by its serious determination on the sustainability and CSR. Acer believes that survival of the planet depends on the work which is done together for the sustainable development of the planet. It considers sustainability as an opportunity for the stakeholders and for the organization.

Acer has an outstanding communication channel through which it interacts with stakeholders and engages them in the sustainable development program of the company. It supports bidirectional communication and exchange which generates unique ideas and opinions from the stakeholders. Acer has got unique core values which work on the Wangdao philosophy (value creation, balance of interests and sustainable operation).

When it comes to the CSR, it has taken several major sustainability initiatives like dealing with conflict minerals, participates in the public and private alliance for responsible minerals trade, carbon disclosure project, initiation of corporate green competitiveness alliance and promotion of the Taiwan corporate sustainability forum etc.

Acer is a responsible organization and it has always shown its deep concern towards the environmental issues and the impact of the organization on the environment. It offers environmental friendly products as well as it has successfully reduced the volume of paper products used in the packaging of its notebook and desktop computers by almost 2,400 tons. It has reduced its CO2 emissions through following

its three principles; increasing loading efficiency, changing shipping modes and improving supply chain management. Further it also supports international initiatives and encourages other organizations in the world to work together in preventing global GHG from increasing.

Acer has proved itself as a leader in computer technology and also a leader in sustainable development. But, still some scope is left for Acer to improve specially it has to demonstrate itself into a strong local and regional commitments and projects. It also needs to have a clear structured local strategy aligned with the global 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 Acer and other companies that have been recognized for their innovative and effective CSR strategies write to us at [admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com](mailto: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 more about 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](mailto:admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com) For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit [www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com](http://www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com)