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CSR ARABIA

Arabia CSR
Network newsletter

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Issue 6

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Note by the CEO / President Arabia CSR Network

Greetings from the Arabia CSR Network!

Gone through January in such a breeze makes me wonder how soon time flies. It is especially important that we hold strong to our New Year commitments and resolutions before we regret how soon the year has passed. The Arabia CSR Network has lofty aspirations for 2012 and we really hope we can meet our targets with our limited resources. We hope 2012 will bring in greater engagement with our partners and member companies. We also hope we will be able to solidify our presence in the region as a one-stop resource for CSR and sustainability related assistance. Last month, the Arabia CSR Network signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Swedish Business Council for sharing experiences, best practices, and knowledge for CSR and sustainability. This was an excellent start to the year.

We have also been working towards the Arabia CSR Awards 2012. A lot of companies have already started showing interest in applying for this year's cycle. Thank you for your interest. We will officially launch the Awards Cycle in the first week of April and share the application form with all of you. For 2012 we have also planned a number of networking events, webinars and other activities. Please see our calendar of events on Page 4. These targets have been made to continually reinforce the message that sustainability and CSR is essential for businesses and governments today. So please make sure you all play your respective parts in helping us meet this objective.

We are also now active on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Make sure you connect us on these websites. Also, please feel free to write to us on admin@arabiacsrn.com. Send us your comments and suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Networking

The Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) and the Swedish Business Council (SBC) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on Monday, 16th January 2012 at the Swedish House to bolster the spirit of Corporate Social Responsibility and best practices in the Arab region.

The MOC was signed by Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, President and CEO of ACSRN, and Mr. Torbjörn Bodin, President of SBC, in the presence of H.E. Abdullah Al Saleh, the Undersecretary of UAE's Ministry of Foreign Trade; H.E Mr. Daniel Johansson, Swedish State Secretary to the Ministry for Enterprise and Energy; H.E. Mr. Max Bjuhr, Ambassador of Sweden to the UAE; H.E. Mr. Abdulla Saleh, Governor, Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and other distinguished guests, dignitaries, business leaders and ACSRN members.

According to the MOC, both parties shall promote sustainability best practices in the region. The SBC will encourage the Swedish companies operating in the UAE and the Arab region to join the ACSRN and the UN Global Compact Local Network while the ACSRN will help promote the establishment of effective sustainable development programs among SBC's member companies.

Both parties will also conduct advocacy initiatives and organizational capacity-building training sessions through



programs and events related to but not limited to sustainability reporting, corporate governance, transparency, CSR impact measurement, business ethics and environmental management. Habiba Al Marashi, President and CEO of Arabia CSR Network, one of the few multi-stakeholder forums dedicated to promoting CSR and best practices in the region, said the UAE can draw valuable lessons from the Swedish corporate best practices.

"Sweden has been at the forefront of CSR leadership both at the governmental and private level. The Swedish government continues to lead the global CSR scene by exploring new ways of ensuring that Swedish businesses comply with sustainability requirements both at home and abroad. As a result, Swedish businesses have an excellent track record in the implementation of CSR policies and adoption of sound business strategies," said Al Marashi.



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Al Marashi also noted that the UAE ranks among the top business powers in the world, particularly in the Arab Region, according to the Global Human Development Report released by the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) recently. *“Corollary to this status is the serious responsibility of sustainable economic growth which will only be possible if there is emphasis on good governance, transparency, sustainable use of natural resources, compliance with international regulations on labor and human rights and more,”* Al Marashi said.

Torbjörn Bodin, President of SBC, one of the most important business councils in the UAE, stated that the Swedish Business Council was delighted to sign the agreement of a cooperation together with Arabia CSR Network, sharing a mutual interest of the development of corporate social responsibility and sustainability policy and practice in the region.

“We are convinced that our network and recourses, combined with Arabia CSR Network’s knowledge and expertise in the region, will make this a fruitful cooperation. We realize that Sweden and Swedish companies can benefit and learn a lot from being part of this unique co-operation,” said Bodin.

Bodin also noted that the agreement is based on a deep seated commitment to the development of corporate social responsibility and sustainability policy and practice in the region.

“The UAE ranks among the top business powers, particularly in the Arab world, which also means a serious responsibility. By sharing our experiences and knowledge, we are aiming to increase the awareness of CSR both as a normative concept and as a business strategy as well as a long term sustainable economic growth,” Bodin added.

“I have great hopes for the cooperation between the Arabia CSR Network and the Swedish Business Council. Very soon we should be able to experience actions and activities coming out from the agreement.”

- Max Bjuhr, Ambassador to the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar, Embassy of Sweden

“Dear Arabia CSR Network, heartiest congratulations on the admirable achievement. May all that you work for always be met with the highest success and rewards.

-Rosy Salameh, Assistant CEO at Tiger Profiles & Insulation LLC

Arabia CSR Awards update



As we approach the official launch of the Arabia CSR Awards 2012 cycle, we feel it would be necessary to inform interested organizations and government institutions of the Award categories for this year. These categories have been defined on the basis of continuous improvement through public feedback and suggestions.

For 2012, private companies and public institutions can apply for the following categories:

1. Government / Public Sector Category

4. Small Private Sector Category

2. Large Private Sector Category

5. New Business Award

3. Medium Private Sector Category

6. Corporate-NGO Project Award

The 2012 Awards Cycle will feature a questionnaire similar to last year’s application. However, it has been streamlined to make it easier and more meaningful for applying organizations.

Write to us at admin@arabiacsrnetwork.com for more information related to the Awards. Please mention “Arabia CSR Awards” in the subject.



Training

GRI training in February 2012

Recent studies show that the practice of sustainability reporting is significantly picking up pace with more companies investing in publishing annual non-financial information related to their environmental, social and governance performance. This is excellent news! However, there is also observation that most companies publishing their sustainability reports are not necessarily doing it the ‘optimal’ way. This is why the Arabia CSR Network aims to build the capacity of organizations functioning in the MENA region to develop meaningful and effective sustainability reports using the widely acclaimed GRI framework.

While 2012 saw the entry of a couple of consultancies and agencies that will offer similar trainings, it is worth mentioning that the Arabia CSR Network is the first GRI certified training organization for the region and has years of experience of highlighting and showcasing best practices for CSR and sustainability.

The next GRI certified sustainability reporting training by the Arabia CSR Network will be conducted from 26th to 28th February 2012. There are limited seats available for this session. Therefore, please book your seat by writing to us at admin@arabiacsnetwork.com for more information related to the Awards. Please mention “GRI sustainability reporting workshop” in the subject.

Events calendar 2012

As mentioned above, the Arabia CSR Network has a number of activities lined up for individuals and organizations interested in CSR and sustainability.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
2			■		■			■			■	
3		■	■		■	■			■		■	■
4			■	■			■		■			

1

Arabia CSR Awards

The fifth cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards will be launched in April and conclude with the awarding ceremony in October.

2

Networking events

With the partnership of the Swedish Business Council and other partner organizations, the Arabia CSR Network also aims to organize a series of one-day events that will not only help raise awareness on latest CSR related information but will also allow networking amongst CEO’s, senior management and other professionals for better and more effective CSR implementation.

3

Trainings

The Arabia CSR Network will also conduct a number of GRI sustainability reporting trainings throughout the year. These sessions will not only focus on how to develop a report, but also on how to understand your organization’s sustainability impacts, prioritizing what to do, measuring performance, effectively engaging with stakeholders and much more.

4

Webinars

An innovative feature that the Arabia CSR Network will introduce this year is a series of webinars with the ACSR Awards winners of 2011. Any individual or organization interested in learning about these winners’ CSR best practices can attend this webinar simply through their computers.

Feel free to write to us at admin@arabiacsnetwork.com for more information on the Arabia CSR Network’s event calendar for 2012.



Feature Article

“The decline of progress in sustainability and how to escape latent cognitive dissonance”

– Ralph Thurm

Every day I am receiving the GreenBiz newsletter in which Joel Makower explains to me that another success story could be told in sustainability. Just on the occasion of the launch of the 2012 State of Green Business Report, for the first time since I follow Joel’s efforts, his head seemed to be hanging down. Yes, sure, a lot of good things were happening, but he also alerted us that for the first time in five years there was a visible ‘decline of progress’, and the following phrases really touched me:

“Each year, we take the pulse of sustainable business through the lens of 20 indicators of progress, or lack thereof. [...] For the first time, we saw a significant decline in progress—not just in one indicator, but several. [...] What’s to blame? Simply put, sustainable business is suffering a recessionary hangover. For much of the past few years, many of our indicators moved in positive directions. [...] We were, shall we say, irrationally exuberant. The reality is this: Much of the progress we saw in our 2010 and 2011 reports were lagging indicators based on work done with pre-recessionary budgets. As the economic realities have set in, environmental progress has stagnated, or worse. [...]

It’s not all bad news. This year, like all years, we find many promising developments in the world of corporate sustainability. [...] As we have in the past four reports, we pick 10 promising trends, from the rise of sustainable consumption, to the growing engagement of chief financial officers in companies’ sustainability initiatives, to the fact that clean technology, contrary to the political narrative, is alive and well, even flourishing. There is much reason for hope. Indeed, that’s where the cognitive dissonance sets in: We report on so many promising developments each week, so many companies that are engaging more thoughtfully and holistically than ever with what it means to integrate sustainability into their operations, products, and services. [...]

But for all of the good work being done, it’s simply not good enough. Can we simply pass this off as a byproduct of a bad economy, and cross our fingers that progress will accelerate when times get better? Or is it time for companies to dig deeper, and for their employees and customers to get more engaged? What will it take to make real progress?”

Well, nobody really knows, that’s the blunt truth, we are all somehow muddling-through. Two factors keep us in the mist and not let us see the real challenge: huge amounts of debt money and lack of a good benchmark: Is Joel’s observation just true for the U.S.? Well, most likely not. We are still in a financial crisis that was

only smoothened due to immense capital injections by governments around the world (app. 2.400 billion USD). Some of the progress in the sustainability data landscape in 2010 and partially in 2011 was simply possible due to artificial growth, funded by taxpayer’s money. Some of that money supported special infrastructural upgrades or repair in the energy and building sector and allowed for a continuation of pre-crisis programs, keeping jobs or even helped adding capacity. That was good for the moment and for the data. But this ammunition is more or less gone.

Governments have consequently turned around and spending cuts are becoming the new reality, which in fact will more likely lead to an increase of the decrease of progress. At the same time we also saw in 2011 the biggest increase of CO2 emissions ever measured and an amount of natural disasters that were (partially) caused by human activity was at an all-time high. Social unrest in many parts of the world rounds up the picture. We are nearing a Catch 22 situation in which e.g. the shift to innovation on renewables can’t be given the necessary substantial support due to spending cuts, short-term repair and increasing social costs, while technologically being the only way out of the crisis. Other non-Western countries say thank you.

But then, how much is good enough? How can we break through the latent cognitive dissonance that Joel’s observing so well? Well, we need to start defining our common success factors, both on macroeconomic level as well as on organizational level. We need to understand that no single industry can remain in its comfort zone (not even if enlarged by supply chain policies and product take-back arrangements) if they want to be successful, and by that I mean: survive. Singular company programs or collaboration within an industry is not good enough since it undermines cross-fertilization between industries and still blocks unlocking the real potential of sustainable innovation.

I love the example of what telecommunication has done for the agricultural industry and the social development of farmers and communities in many SEA countries (apart from democratization and education), and much more of this is needed, and quicker. However, in order to be able to achieve this cross-fertilization, way more synchronization of activity and adaptation planning is needed, and that will only work with a common paradigm to work towards. John Elkington’s Volans and Deloitte Innovation are advocating for Zero Impact Growth as the minimum synch to work towards, with the Deloitte/Volans ZERO HUB as an open innovation platform to help us get there (starting this spring). Only if we have a joint and accepted benchmark (with zero impact growth as the necessary ‘North Star’) we can start doing and measuring what is at least good enough. Sustainability performance must be measured in context! Plato already said: ‘The part can never be well until the whole is well’.

This is a shortened version of a blog by Ralph Thurm on his blog www.aheadahead.wordpress.com. Ralph is a member of the Arabia CSR Awards Jury and is also the Director, Sustainability & Innovation at Deloitte, Netherlands.



Members Update

Organizations that have recently joined the Arabia CSR Network:

1. *PricewaterhouseCoopers, UAE*
2. *Serco, UAE*

The Arabia CSR Network welcomes you to the Network!

Ajman Free Zone Authority received award for Government Excellence

AFZA received the third place award for the "Ajman Shield for Government Excellence" in the second evaluation session for 2011. The Award, conferred by H.H. Sheikh Humaid bin Rashid Al Nuaimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ajman, Sheikh Zayed Center for Conferences and Exhibitions at Ajman University of Science and Technology (AUST). The event was also attended by Sheikh Rashid bin Humaid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of Municipality and Planning Department, Abdul Rahman Mohammed Al Owais, Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development in addition to a number of Sheikhs, dignitaries and senior officials. <http://www.wam.org.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1289996896344&p=1135099400124&pagename=WAM%2FWamLocEnews%2FW-T-LEN-FullNews>

Deutsche Bank awarded for its Islamic Finance business

Deutsche Bank was recently presented with the "Best Islamic Trustee/Custodian 2011 Award" by Islamic Finance news. This the second consecutive year that Islamic Finance news has recognized the Bank's excellence in providing Islamic Trustee and Custody Services in their Global Banking Awards.

Deutsche Bank also received the "Project Finance Deal of the Year 2011" and the "Saudi Arabia Deal of the Year 2011" for successful execution of Saudi Aramco Total Refining and Petrochemical Company (SATORP) Sukuk Certificates. Deutsche Bank is a leading global investment bank and helps create lasting value for its clients, shareholders and the communities in which it operates.

DEWA honored by Dubai Women's Association

The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority was recently honored by the Dubai Women's Association for its support to the organization at a ceremony held under the patronage and attendance of Sheikha Amina Bint Hamid Al Tayer, President of the Dubai Women's Association. "DEWA's support for all social institutions is one of the most important pillars of its corporate social responsibility strategy to raise public awareness on the importance of community relations. This is being achieved through

humanitarian and social drives to develop society on both individual and institutional levels," said Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD & CEO of DEWA.

"DEWA has always been keen to push the activities of the Association, which has, since its inception, been involved in advancing sustainable development for the advancement of women. We are delivering on this goal by adopting an efficient strategy that includes projects that target families and the community," said Khawla Al Mehairi, Chairperson of Women Committee at DEWA. <http://gulftoday.ae/portal/a9d93dec-c596-485e-aede-ad4d4368fe6b.aspx>

DEWA recognized by Dubai Autism Center

DEWA was also honored by the Dubai Autism Center for its support and assistance to DAC's activities and events, especially the recently-held conference Autism under the Microscope. Mr. Mohammad Al Emadi, Board Member and Director General of The Dubai Autism Centre (DAC), presented a trophy to HE Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD and CEO of DEWA. "DAC plays an important role in increasing social awareness and shedding more light on the victims of this disease and their needs, as it speaks for them at all local, regional and international levels. It also contributes to providing all psychological and educational facilities, as well as specialized medical staff," explained HE Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer. <http://www.ameinfo.com/285620.html>

Dubal's energy conservation initiatives continue to deliver positive results

Dubal - the state-owned enterprise that operates one of the world's largest aluminium smelters - has whole-heartedly adopted the directives issued by H H Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum (President of Dubai Civil Aviation, Chairman of Emirates Airline Group, and Chairman of DSCE) to all DSCE member companies regarding the measures which the Dubai Government is taking to minimize energy consumption in Dubai, in fulfillment of the Emirate's 2030 Energy Strategy. Through concerted efforts in this area, DUBAL saved more than 3 million kWh in the three-month period from July to October 2011.

"The four 'quick wins' for energy conservation identified by the DSCE are proving effective at DUBAL," says Tayeb Al Awadhi (Vice President: Power & Desalination). "We have fully implemented the directive to set air-conditioning thermostats to 24°C during working hours and 27°C outside working hours; as well the directive to turn off all non-essential lights after working hours. We are also on track to achieve the third directive, namely to change to energy efficient lighting, where our internal target is 78 per cent of the changeover by year-end. Once this is complete, we'll be in a good position to achieve total energy-savings of 22,317,240 kWh per year by 2013." <http://www.ameinfo.com/285571.html>



DPG organizes recycling week

Dubai Properties Group organized a 'Recycling Week' at its headquarters to highlight the importance of recycling paper and other material amongst its staff members.

The event also featured a lecture on the number of recycling opportunities available in Dubai and the impact of plastic pollution on the local environment. The initiative was launched by the DPG CSR team and is in line with its 'Responsible Living' theme. Under its 'Responsible Living' banner, DPG is committed to promote living in responsible way to its stakeholders. <http://www.ameinfo.com/285557.html>

Du honors employees who contribute to society

Employees who had dedicated their time in 2011 to du's community-enhancing initiatives were honoured during a ceremony, held recently at the telecommunications company's premises in Dubai Media City. du encourages its employees to get involved in a number of initiatives and activities throughout the year that will benefit the people and society of the country.

"The effects of volunteering extend into health benefits, with those involved in doing good experiencing greater functional ability in life," said Dr. Mansoor Anwar, Director, Medical and Occupational Health Services, du. "There is a direct link between volunteering and well-being, and wellness amongst our colleagues, in addition to the engagement stimulus provided by dedicating time as a group, leads to good performance and higher levels of satisfaction."

In 2011, du employees were involved in initiatives such as 'One Root, One CommuniTREE' and 'Clean UP UAE' by Emirates Environmental Group (EEG), and self-organised activities such as Mawaed al Rahman (through which 90,000 Iftar meals were distributed); Haq Al Leylah for the children patients at Al Wasl Hospital; an Iftar that hosted orphan children and a day out at KidZania for children with thalassemia. <http://www.jordandirections.com/2012011550424/company-news/du-recognises-employees-who-volunteered-their-time-for-worthwhile-causes>

Du launches mobile doctors' helpline

UAE telecom operator du, collaborating with Dubai Health Care City, has launched a live round-the-clock doctors' helpline in Dubai. This service, called 'Mobile Doctors 24-7 International', will initially be offered to 40,000 select du customers for a free trial period of 60 days.

By offering around-the-clock and free of charge phone-based access to qualified physicians, this service will aim to provide the appropriate level of health care at the time of need without overburdening existing healthcare services in the emirate. du, said: "Across the region there is already a huge burden on healthcare

systems due to rising costs, scarce resources and lack of capacity. Supporting an innovation that allows real time access to quality healthcare from the convenience of your home and respecting the mobility our customers demand, is our goal." http://www.tradearabia.com/news/IT_211663.html

Jumeirah Group's Academy tops global Student Satisfaction Survey

The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, one of the world's leading business hospitality management schools and a part of the Dubai-based luxury hospitality company, Jumeirah Group, has topped a recent student satisfaction survey conducted by the International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality, THE-ICE.

The findings of the survey indicate that the Academy has outperformed other institutions in areas such as "Academic Quality", "Career Development", "Learning Spaces (or infrastructure)" and embracing "Multiculturalism" in its academic programs. Students have indicated that they were extremely satisfied with their on-campus food and accommodation, and with the overall experience that the Academy and Dubai as a study destination had to offer. <http://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/154000320/4054462.html>

Metito hosts UK water mission to UAE

Metito, a leading provider of intelligent water management and solutions, recently hosted a delegation of eight UK companies from across the water and waste water sector as part of their trade mission to the UAE. Ian Gibbons, Deputy Consul General, British Embassy Dubai, said: "This seminar and subsequent visit to Metito will enable lasting relationships and business to be achieved between our two countries and I look forward to seeing the results in the coming months and years." http://www.tradearabia.com/news/ENV_211432.html

PwC helps build local talent in professional services

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), a leading international professional services firm, has collaborated with a prestigious leading private college in Oman - the Modern College of Business and Science (MCBS) - to provide its international professional qualifications and offer students unparalleled training opportunities. This collaboration will offer courses in financial reporting, management accounting, auditing and business skills and will help individuals to obtain high quality professional qualifications and aid in the development of talent across the region. PwC's own specialist tutors will provide the training, drawing on their first-hand business knowledge and practical experience to bring added value to participants. http://www.zawya.com/story.cfm/sidZAWYA20111231055616/PwC_Academy_assures_professional_education



General News

Software developers and South Asian accountants support GRI

Sustainability reporting is on the agenda for hundreds of accountants in South Asia, thanks to a new partnership between GRI and the South Asia Federation of Accountants (SAFA). The two organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November outlining their future cooperation, which is to include a series of workshops. GRI and SAFA signed the MoU at the international conference 'Best Practices and Reporting for Sustainable Development', held in Dhaka.

The Director of GRI's Focal Point India, said "If sustainable development is to be reached, the time has now come for sustainability reporting to become standard practice. If businesses and all other organizations monitor and report data on their sustainability performance, they will have the vital information needed by executives to manage risk and identify sustainability opportunities."

GRI works with hundreds of organizations around the world in its mission to make sustainability reporting standard practice. Making the GRI Guidelines accessible is an important part of this, and GRI's Certified Software & Tools Program enables software and tools providers to include content from the Sustainability Reporting Framework in their products.

UN Secretary-General Urges Business Leaders to Advance Corporate Sustainability

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, speaking at the first anniversary of Global Compact LEAD, a platform for advanced corporate sustainability performance, directed private sector leaders to accelerate their global corporate sustainability practices in the months leading up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The Secretary-General highlighted the Rio+20 Conference as a unique opportunity to chart a more sustainable course for our world and bring corporate sustainability to scale.

"I hope that Rio will be a turning point for corporate sustainability as a driver of change," he said. "We must mainstream universal sustainability principles in business to ensure that we reach critical mass."

The Secretary-General noted three ways that business can elevate the corporate sustainability agenda: by serving as ambassadors for corporate sustainability to industry peers; aligning lobbying activities with sustainability commitments; and going to Rio armed with commitments and transformative partnerships to advance the agenda.

Latest activities conducted by the UAE donor organizations in response to the crises in Yemen and Somalia

UAE donors have reported to the UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid (OCFA) in 2012 contributions totaling AED 16.8 million (USD 4.5 million) towards ongoing relief efforts for the drought in Somalia and the humanitarian crises in Yemen. Contributions to both these countries have been made by the UAE Red Crescent Authority (RCA).

The UAE RCA send a ship to Mogadishu in Somalia carrying 939 tons of food, medicines, clothes, blankets, shelter materials, school items and electrical appliances. The donation also includes the implementation of a mother-child health program and other initiatives. In Yemen, the UAE RCA, in coordination with the Yemeni Red Crescent and the International Committee of Red Cross, distributed relief items to 14,000 beneficiaries in Bani Hareth District.

Meetings with Arabia CSR Network

CISCO Middle East

Arabia CSR Network was invited by CISCO Middle East to discuss the various services that ACSRN provides, such as the trainings, awards program, research etc. CISCO also shared their CSR initiatives, such as the CISCO Networking Academy, blood donation drive, prison academy and more. Both organizations discussed areas of collaboration for strengthening their respective sustainability goals.

Excellence Inc.

Excellence Inc. is a non-profit organization in Jordan that mainly works with Government & public sector institutions to build their sustainability strategy and procedures. They had approached ACSRN to add value to the GRI sustainability reporting trainings that ACSRN offers to Arabic speaking Middle East Countries. For more information, please visit: <http://www.excellenceinc.org/>



Corporate Outreach



Visit to Gulf Petrochemical Industries Co.

The Arabia CSR Network was invited by GPIC in Bahrain to inform the company about ACSRN's objectives and services. During this meeting, ACSRN was given the opportunity to discuss CSR standards such as the GRI reporting framework, UNGC's principles and more. The meeting resulted in GPIC's renowned commitment to implementing CSR best practices with the help of the Arabia CSR Network.

During this visit, the Arabia CSR Network was also requested to attend GPIC's Strategic Staff Meeting. During this meeting, the management discussed the political situation of Bahrain and its impact on the organization. The management also spoke about the need for the organization to act as a catalyst for unity within the country.

The President Mr. Adulrahman Jawahery stated that it would be part of GPIC's CSR stewardship to reach out to key segments of society to ensure the well-being of everyone. He stated that GPIC would like to give utmost preference to the education of women in the organization and in society.

The President also called for adoption of change within the organization to move forward. He claimed that since the standard of education within the organization was much higher today than before, it would be easier to implement the organization's expansion plan for the coming years. He stated that since a lot of new and young talent was introduced into the organization, he had high hopes that change would be quick, cost-effective and long-lasting.

Discussing the achievements of the past year, GPIC's Chairman stated that there were no incidents reported by the Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) department. In addition, sick leave was reduced by 21%. GPIC continued its ISO 26000 certification status and also was able to increase its environmental outreach by 117%. Contribution to charities increased by 83%, sponsorships of social programs by 400% and social and education programs by 42%.

During the meeting, GPIC's medical department also presented a study in which they reported the average days absent of the male and female staff. This study reported that the female staff members were absent fewer days as compared to their male colleagues. The Chairman stated that he wished to have this study continue on a long-term basis.

Arabia CSR Network's involvement in this meeting was very useful as it made valuable suggestions on how GPIC could consider the local, regional and global sustainability context that it operates in. ACSRN also put forward several recommendations for GPIC to enhance its sustainability performance and its role as one of the biggest commercial entities in Bahrain and the Gulf region.





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Best practices from the archive



An overview of GPIC

Established in December 1979 as a joint venture between the Government of Bahrain, (SABIC) Saudi Arabia & (PIC) Kuwait, Gulf Petrochemical Industries Co. (GPIC), Bahrain

utilizes natural gas as raw material and commenced production in 1985. With over 550 employees, GPIC's vision is 'to be a global dynamic world-class organization of choice recognized for excellence'.

Over the years, the company has developed some key CSR programs that focus on areas such as environmental education and research and employee wellbeing. GPIC has also been able to support a number of local NGO's and charity organizations as part of its contribution to social development in Bahrain.

Sustainability is strongly embedded in the company's mission, which is "to add value to our customers and stakeholders by meeting their expectations whilst: Producing high quality petrochemicals, Managing our business in a safe, environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner, Optimizing resource utilization, Embracing knowledge, innovation, creativity and best practice." With a high level of emphasis on CSR, GPIC measures success through Profitability, Enhancing SHE (Safety, Healthy and Environment) and Social Responsibility.

GPIC believes that in investing capital to make the process plants at GPIC safe is only one side of the coin; investing in the welfare of the society and deserving groups in particular being the other side. GPIC has injected about USD 2.6 billion into the



national economy of Bahrain since its inception. This contribution has been made in several areas such as employment, training, procurement, dividends to the Government and most importantly in the form of purchases from within Bahrain. GPIC Bahrain is also certified to the Environmental Management system ISO 14001 and implements strict waste management control.

At GPIC, employees are the most valuable asset. To participate in the decision making process, employees voice their views through the well established 40 committees and through the suggestion scheme. Participants are rewarded on monthly basis. The same occasion is also utilized to reward Employee of the Month. Annually, outstanding employees are also rewarded for their achievements. Employees' benefits include a saving scheme, health insurance covering all employees & their families, loans, indemnity, annual bonus, etc.

GPIC's CSR initiatives are indicative of the fact that the Company is an experienced player in Bahrain's economy and is aware of the country's pressing issues. While it has not branched out to many areas, it has made sure that it invest significantly into the CSR areas it is working in, such as environmental awareness, employee wellbeing and support to local NGOs for social development.

Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2008-2010

This abstract has been taken from the ACSRN publication titled 'Arabia CSR Practices: 2008-2010'. For more details on GPIC. and other companies that have been recognized for their innovative and effective CSR strategies write to us at admin@arabiacsrn.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 you can be a member, and how your organization will benefit from it, call us at +971-4-3448622 or write to us at admin@arabiacsrn.com For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit www.arabiacsrn.com