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Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

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Approaching the HIGH PROFILE EVENT *Arabia CSR Awards and Forum 2012* page 2



Training & Workshop - page 3

*Four Ways to Set High-Impact Sustainability Goals in
Developing Countries* - page 4

*Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation partners with
Du for home renovation* - page 6

*DEWA increase its e-services for better customer
service and reduced carbon emissions* - page 7

An overview of Sayga - page 10



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Note by the CEO / President Arabia CSR Network

Habiba Al Mar'ashi



As-Salamu Alaykum and belated Eid greetings from the Arabia CSR Network!

Someone once said that the best arguments for sustainability are good case studies and stories of businesses that have intelligently implemented CSR practices and reaped the benefits from their commitment to function as good corporate citizens.

Here at the Arabia CSR Network, we have been busy doing exactly that during August, i.e. compiling details and achievements of the organizations that won the Arabia CSR Awards last year. The key objective of this exercise is to put together the different case studies for other organizations and individuals to learn from. Of course, there are other ways that these cases can be utilized, for e.g. for university students studying business ethics, or people doing research on corporate responsibility in the Arab world.

The case studies, titled the "Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2011" will be officially launched and available for distribution on 24th October 2012, i.e. the day of the Arabia CSR Awards 2012 Forum & Ceremony. I urge you all to register yourself for this event where we will invite intellectual powerhouses and sustainability experts to share with us their thoughts and solutions for a sustainable way forward.

We have two very useful events planned for you this month (September):

The first is a 3-day GRI certified training that will help you understand the process of writing your organization's sustainability report – an important CSR tool for communicating your performance and engaging with different stakeholders.

The second is a half day workshop that will seek to answer frequently asked questions about the new guidance for social responsibility – ISO 26000. Hosted by DNV, this is a must-attend event for those who wish to understand the valuable role of this standard in their respective organizations.

I encourage you all to attend these trainings organized by the Arabia CSR Network. Please get in touch with us on admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com for further details. You can also find us online on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for more frequent updates, CSR news and resources.

Awards Update

الجائزة
العربية
للمسؤولية
الاجتماعية
للمؤسسات



ARABIA
CORPORATE
SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY
AWARDS

Arabia CSR Awards 2012 Forum and Ceremony

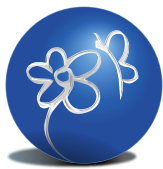
Organized under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the Arabia CSR Awards 2012 Forum and Ceremony will honour the CSR champions of the Arab world for 2012. The bigger objective of the event, however, is to bring together people from across the globe to understand and discuss innovative ways to advance the sustainability agenda in the Middle East, North Africa and Levant region.

By calling in some of the world's leading CSR experts and thinkers - such as Dr. Jamshed Jiji Irani, Mr. Herman Mulder, Lord Michael Hastings, Dr. Mark Boutros Ghali and more - we hope to inspire

business leaders in the Arab Region to take a confident leap towards a sustainable future and provide a platform through which people can exchange best practices and build lasting partnerships.

Since this year marks the fifth cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards, we hope that this Forum will be the biggest and the best that the Arabia CSR Network has organized so far. For more details on this event, please see the agenda [here](#).

Do not miss out on this high profile event; please save the date (24th Oct 2012) and confirm your participation by filling out the registration form [here](#). We look forward to seeing you all at the Arabia CSR Awards 2012 Forum and Ceremony!



Analysis of entries from Arabia CSR Awards 2011

In 2011, the Arabia CSR Awards revamped its questionnaire to align it with international standards such as the UN Global Compact principles and the GRI framework. As a result, the Awards application was segmented into 9 sections focusing on governance, environmental policies, reporting policies etc. Assigning scores to each of these sections allowed the Arabia CSR Network to do a quick analysis as to which sections the applicants scored highest in, and which ones were generally the weakest.

As can be seen on the right, the area that the Arabia CSR Awards applicants from 2011 – 41 organizations from 11 Arab countries – scored most in was that of ‘Environmental Policies’ and ‘Organizational Vision, Mission and Strategy’.

It should also be noted that the lowest scores were given for ‘External Reporting’ and ‘Social Performance’. These are good indicators of CSR practices in the region, i.e. it shows that organizations have actively taken on board the responsibility to reduce environmental impact. In addition, organizations have also invested in aligning their vision and mission with sustainability issues.

In these aspects, Arab companies – based on the sample of ACSRA 2011 applicants – are doing a reasonably good job. Since external reporting is still a weak area with respect to this sample, the Arabia CSR Network provides regular trainings on the most widely used reporting framework in the world – the GRI framework. These trainings aim to build organizational capacity to use this framework to prepare good quality sustainability and CSR reports which can further set the stage for transparency and increased stakeholder engagement.

Avg. % score	Sustainability Aspect	
50	External reporting	
51	Social Performance	
52		
53	Stakeholder engagement	
54	Community investment & outreach	Internal reporting
55	Average score of all aspects	
56	Strategic approach and policies	
57		
58	Organizational structure and governance	
59		
60	Organizational mission & strategy	Environmental policies

Training & Workshops

GRI Sustainability Reporting Training – September (23-25, 2012)

It is becoming increasingly important to assess companies beyond their financial performance. It is also crucial to understand how the companies are addressing sustainability issues that are most likely to affect their business in the future. As such, most organizations are publishing annual sustainability reports which talk about the company’s environmental and social performance and also how they aim to avoid future risks and utilize potential opportunities.

The most common framework that organizations are using to develop their sustainability reports is the one developed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). To enhance the commitment and capacity of organizations in the Middle East towards better and more transparent reporting of their sustainability performance, the Arabia CSR Network is conducting a GRI sustainability reporting training from 23rd to 25th September in Dubai, UAE.

This training is extremely useful for organizations involved in Environmental Health and Safety, Environmental Compliance, Construction, Oil & Gas, Petrochemicals, Hospitality, Transportation, Finance & Accounting, Human Resources, Insurance, Real Estate, Retail Sector, Consultancy Services; Service Sector organizations; Government departments; Non Government Organizations and others that have an impact on the environment and society. Please note that this training will only be finalized on registration of at least 10 participants; therefore, kindly confirm your participation at the earliest. For more details please visit <http://www.arabiacsrnnetwork.com/home/gri> or contact us at admin@arabiacsrnnetwork.com / +971-4-3448622.





Introduction to ISO 26000 – Arabia CSR Network and DNV (26th Sep 2012)

The ISO 26000, although very recently launched in 2010, is being considered by many as the gold standard for social responsibility. It is a voluntary guidance standard (not certifiable) that is flexible and adaptable to all kinds and sizes of organizations. The ISO 26000 covers themes such as Organizational governance, Human rights, Labour practices, Environment, Fair operating practices, Consumer issues and Community involvement and development. Those familiar with GRI's indicator list and UN Global Compact's principles will see a lot of useful overlap in these themes.

The ISO 26000 guidelines have been designed to make it easier for organizations to implement social responsibility via a step by step approach. The Arabia CSR Network and DNV are organizing a half-day event on **Wednesday, 26th September 2012** (in Dubai, UAE) with a focus on ISO 26000, the upcoming guidance on social responsibility.

The key objective of the event is to clarify some of the common queries and myths concerning the ISO 26000 amongst CSR & sustainability managers and CEO's. Interested individuals and organizations are encouraged to attend this event to learn how ISO 26000 can benefit their respective organization. The key speaker of the event will be **Mr. Antonio Astone**, DNV Business Assurance's Global Sustainability Manager. For more details, please click [here](#).



Note: Attendees of Arabia CSR Network's GRI training (23-25 Sep 2012) will receive a 50% discount to attend this ISO 26000 event.

Feature Article

Four Ways to Set High-Impact Sustainability Goals in Developing Countries

- Bushra Azhar

The small but growing CSR industry in developing countries often takes its cues from the paths CSR has already laid in the developing world. But the challenges and benefits are often informed by more immediate on the ground realities.

Over the years, I have seen significant changes in the way companies in developing countries approach Corporate Social Responsibility issues. However, most businesses still struggle with materiality--information that is of material interest and value--in their sustainability agenda.

From pinpointing high impact areas for strategy-setting to ascertaining significant issues for reporting, businesses in developing countries endlessly grapple with the challenge of determining which issues are material and which are not.

“While it is helpful to strive for international best practices, it is imperative that CSR issues are prioritized based on your own ground reality.”

In 2010, I worked with a client on developing a CSR strategy. I still remember the morning when we sat down for chat with the CEO and he gave us his three-point agenda. As much as I feel that management input and vision have a place in a strategy, the issues that he raised were neither significant nor relevant; he only wanted them included because he had recently returned from a conference in Europe that emphasized them.

This approach to setting materiality on CSR issues is not uncommon in countries where CSR is still confused with Customer Sales Representative (true story!).

Since the concept is new, management often tries to model CSR efforts on the best practices from developed countries. While it is helpful to strive for international best practices, it is imperative that CSR issues are prioritized based on your own ground reality.



Below are four things companies in developing countries should consider while setting materiality on CSR issues:

1. KNOW YOUR USP

Here USP stands for Unique Social Problems--issues like street children, gender disparity, and access to clean water that are common in large parts of the world. Overlooking these issues for their lack of glamour may seem like a good move from a brand differentiation perspective but will never result in long-term benefit for either the company or the community.

For example, while many developing countries give economic progress the highest priority, there are basic issues such as safe drinking water and food that demand attention from the public as well as the private sector. In some countries, including Bangladesh, China, and India, negative health impacts are growing over large areas due to fluorine and arsenic pollution in air and drinking water. To know your USP, one of the best places to start is the list of Millennium Development Goals for your country.

2. WOO YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Typically public consultation in developing countries is limited to aid agencies and development workers, and companies do not normally conduct regular Stakeholder engagement sessions beyond the annual general meetings (open only to the shareholders). Consequently, the engagement process is not well defined and the stakeholders are not familiar with what it entails.

That said, feedback from stakeholder engagement is one of the most valuable inputs to a company's materiality setting exercise. As I learned the hard way, stakeholder engagement is not just a one sided drill; rather it is a problem-finding exercise which benefits both the company and the beneficiaries by prioritizing the issues of highest need and by developing solutions that result in long-term benefit. It is also a great way to build rapport with them--something that take years to build through conventional branding and advertising.

"In developing countries in particular, the socio-cultural context may limit or impede certain well-meaning activities."

3. RESPECT YOUR LIMITATIONS

There are unique cultural, religious, social, and historical elements in every country. In developing countries in particular, the socio-cultural context may limit or impede certain well-meaning activities.

This could be because the society is still not that open or because the governments have a certain mandate. Whatever the case may be, companies operating in these countries would do best to respect limitations and set their materiality based on what is realistically achievable. The issue of contraceptives in Saudi Arabia is as controversial and inherently impossible to deal with as the issue of Internet Freedom in Iran.

I normally recommend that clients use a screening mechanism I affectionately call SAF (in my mother tongue, the acronym means «clear»). The purpose of this screening test, which stands for Suitability, Adaptability and Feasibility, is to weed out those activities which are not suitable from a cultural context, not feasible for the company from a cost or logistics point of view, or are not adaptable with a change in circumstances.

4. LEVERAGE YOUR REALITIES

Finally, companies should use their own business realities and industry situation as the litmus test for setting materiality. For a textile manufacturer, the key priorities may be working conditions, child labor, or residues of pesticides and chemicals left behind on the fabric. For the ICT industry, issues like the digital divide, energy efficiency, and a recycling infrastructure may be the most material.

As Wayne Visser writes in his excellent book *The A to Z of Corporate Social Responsibility*, "Developing countries provide a socio-economic and cultural context for CSR which is, in many ways, different from developed countries." For long term CSR success, it is vital that companies choose to recognize these key differences and look at social issues through the lens of their own ground realities.

Bushra Azhar is a CSR and Sustainability Consultant based in the Middle East with experience in mining, healthcare, utilities and family owned business conglomerates. She works with local companies in helping their businesses become more sustainable and their practices more ethical. She is the founder of *Good Business Sense*, a blog dedicated to spreading simple, practical CSR knowledge and the idea that good CSR is simply Good Business Sense. You can contact her through her email bushra@gbssense.com or via *Twitter @bushraazhar*



Members Update

Volunteers devote time to Du's Mawaed Al Rahman initiative



Demonstrating the philanthropic nature of UAE society, 70 volunteers devoted more than 288 voluntary hours to Du's Mawaed Al Rahman initiative. The volunteers, from within Du staff and the public, helped to distribute Iftar meals to those in need, in five locations across the UAE. Due to the phenomenal community response and generous donations made by Du employees, the telecom increased the number of meals distributed this year from 150,000 to over 163,000.



Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation partners with Du for home renovation

The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation recently partnered with Du in support of the company's Ramadan home renovation campaign, 'Feekom Al Khair w Al Barakah' ('with your goodness and blessings'), by committing to manage the renovation of 30 homes for Emirati orphans. The campaign has received increased interest, with generous donations pouring in from Du customers and the general public alike. The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation will be responsible for the renovation of all 30 homes. Under Du's Ramadan initiatives theme of 'Khair w Barakah' (goodness and blessings), the home renovation fundraising campaign allows the community to help rebuild and renovate homes for Emiratis across the UAE.

DUBAL extends a hand of kindness to labourers during Ramadan



In a distinctive display of humanitarian concern, Dubai Aluminium ("DUBAL") - the state-owned corporation that operates the world's largest single-site smelter using pre-bake anode technology - prepared thousands of gift

bags for the less privileged in Dubai. Some 1,800 gift bags were prepared and then presented to the labourers employed by the 44 contractors and sub-contractors working on DUBAL's Jebel Ali site, thereby demonstrating the Ramadan spirit of purification through charitable deeds. The annual initiative, titled "Bring-A-Smile", was fully funded by DUBAL at a cost in excess of AED 142,000.

Each labourer received a cooler backpack, which can not only serve as a handy carry-all for a range of items but can also be used to keep food and water cool in the heat of the summer. Having first obtained a wish list from the labourers, seven items ranging from toiletries to T-shirts were placed in every pack.

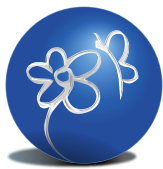
DUBAL employees and their family members volunteered their time and energy to fill the bags over a two-day period; and also assisted in distributing the gift bags to the recipients. The smiles of gratitude and happiness on the labourers' faces confirmed the successful fulfillment of the initiative's core objective - namely to bring cheer to those living and working far from home. A balance of 100 backpacks remained after the event. The gift items packed into these additional cooler backpacks were distributed randomly to DUBAL employees residing in the corporation's on-site Residential Area.

Coca-Cola Company sponsor students for entrepreneurship program



In an effort to support and to empower the next generation of youth to become the next business and social entrepreneurs, the Coca-Cola Company with the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, one of the top-ranked programs in the United States for entrepreneurship education, developed a one-month entrepreneurship education program for 100 Arab college students from across the Middle East and North Africa region.

As part of the program, these students have had an unparalleled opportunity and developed business skills that they have brought back home. During the one-month program students, undertook courses and acquired skills such as; developing a Business Plan; Social Entrepreneurship; and Non-Profit Management, they have also participated in interactive sessions and presented their business plans to panel format in order to maximize students' exposure.



'Smile on the Face' campaign sponsored by Emirates NBD for Dubai labourers

Leading Events Management Company, Tamquest Events in partnership with the Community Development Authority (CDA) in Dubai launched the 'Smile on the Face' campaign to promote the welfare and development of labourers in Dubai. One of the sponsors of this initiative was Emirates NBD.

The 'Smile on the Face' campaign aimed to help light up the faces of about 200,000 blue-collar job holders by means of providing food, water and grooming kits, and conducting activities as part of their year-long campaign.

This joint venture comes under the umbrella of 'Honour Labour', an initiative by the CDA launched in May 2012 to raise awareness amongst labourers, and provide them with better productive programs and social service schemes with the intention of sustaining some of the services for a longer period of time.

General News

The next generation of GRI Guidelines: comment on the G4 Exposure Draft

G4 Guidelines Workshop in Abu Dhabi

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group (ADSG) and Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) are organizing a workshop to collect feedback on the Exposure Draft of G4. This workshop will be delivered by Asthildur Hjaltadottir, Deputy Director – Guidance, Support & Innovation. It will be held in Abu Dhabi, UAE on Tuesday, 11th September 2012.

The Exposure Draft has been created by expert Working Groups from around the world, based on the input GRI received in the first G4 Public Comment Period (PCP) in late 2011.

The authority aimed at achieving social empowerment through increasing the role of citizens and businesses in the community by cooperating with concerned entities in order to encourage and foster social responsibility.



DEWA increase its e-services for better customer service and reduced carbon emissions

DEWA is planning to increase its range of e-services, which it hopes will result in reduced carbon emissions. The organization said that its e-services contribute towards the environment by minimizing consumer visits to customer service centers. It estimated that it reduced CO2 by 7,071 tons in 2011 through customers making 2.1m electronic transactions. This is equivalent to 35,357 new green trees covering 67 football fields. Currently, DEWA offers customer services at 13 physical locations across the Emirate, but it is working on an expansion strategy to open more in several government buildings.

In the workshop, participants will have the chance to discuss important questions about the Exposure Draft, posed by GRI's Technical Advisory Committee. The workshop, which is being held as part of the second Public Comment Period (PCP) for G4, provides an opportunity for GRI stakeholders to discuss the proposed changes in G4, to generate input for the PCP, and to create awareness of G4.

To register yourself for this workshop, please click [here](#).

GRI conducts free webinars to discuss upcoming G4 sustainability reporting framework

The GRI Secretariat is offering webinars about the proposed content changes in the G4 Exposure Draft. Webinars for the following content proposals have been announced: Supply Chain, Disclosure on Management Approach, Governance and Remuneration, Boundary, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Anti-Corruption. The webinars will be hosted by GRI staff and will last approximately one hour, including a 15 minute question and answer session.



Topic of webinar	Time and date
Supply Chain Disclosure	Thursday 30 August – 4pm CET
Disclosure on Management Approach	Wednesday 5 September – 9am CET Monday 10 September – 5pm CET
Governance & Remuneration	Thursday 6 September – 9am CET Tuesday 11 September – 5pm CET
Boundaries	Friday 7 September - 9am CET Wednesday 12 September – 5pm CET
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions	Thursday 13 September – 9am CET Friday 14 September – 4pm CET
Anti-corruption	Wednesday 19 September – 4pm CET

Please register for these free webinar on GRI's website via this [link](#).



GRI calls for public feedback on new reporting guidance

Proposed new reporting guidance on anti-corruption and greenhouse gas emissions for GRI's G4 Guidelines is now available for public comment, and GRI invites you to provide feedback and share the call for feedback with others. The full G4 Exposure Draft is still available for public comment until 25 September 2012. Interested individuals can comment on the whole draft, and on the proposed new guidance on anti-corruption and greenhouse gas emissions separately, by following a simple process:

1. Download and read the G4 Exposure Draft, or anti-corruption or greenhouse gas emissions guidance
2. Register on the GRI Consultation Platform
3. Provide feedback

For more information, to download consultation documents, and to submit feedback,

visit <https://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/latest-guidelines/g4-developments/Pages/default.aspx>



IIRC publishes Draft Outline of the future Integrated Reporting Framework

The International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) released the Draft Outline of its Integrated Reporting Framework on 11 July 2012. According to the IIRC, the Outline “establishes for the first time the basic structure of the Framework and is intended to keep stakeholders informed as the Framework is developed.” The Framework content is planned to be launched at the end of 2013.

According to the IIRC, the new Draft Outline aims to keep stakeholders informed of the likely structure and general content of the Framework as work on its development progresses, taking into account the feedback received on the Discussion Paper, engagement with the pilot program participants and additional research and work being conducted by the IIRC Secretariat

Many organizations that use the GRI Guidelines have started experimenting in the field of integrated reporting despite the absence of an internationally-accepted definition and framework. Other details on the technical content are expected to be released in late 2012, followed by a draft Framework for public consultation in early to mid-2013. ‘Version 1.0’ of the Framework will be released in late 2013.

The IIRC welcomes feedback from stakeholders on the outline proposal – feedback can be sent to outline@theiirc.org.

Source: www.globalreporting.org

UNGC Launches World's First Platform to Unite Stakeholders on Water Stewardship Projects



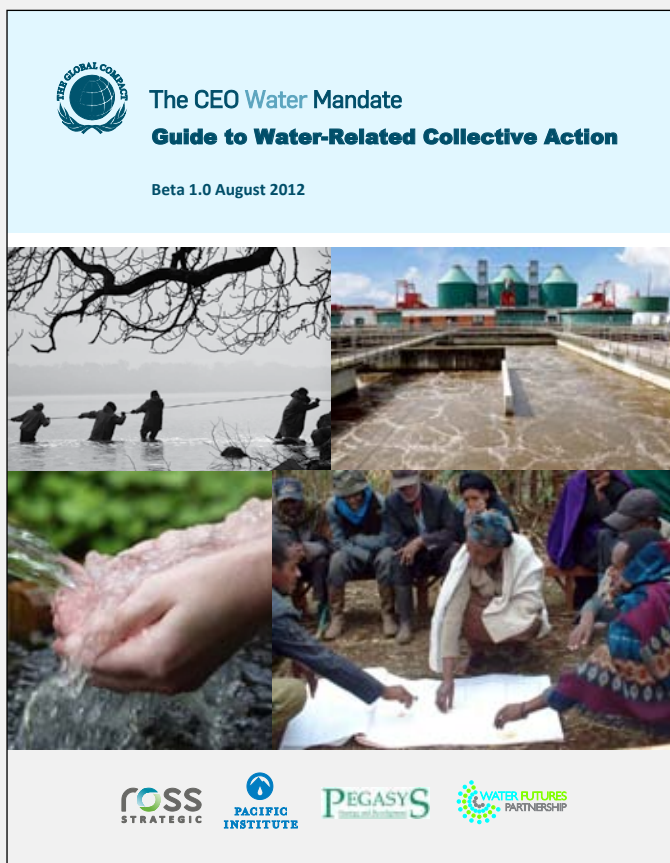
The UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate initiative announced the launch of a global Water Action Hub – the world's first on-line platform to unite companies, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders on a range of critical water projects in specific river basins around the planet.



"Given the scale of water challenges, there is a need for organized and readily accessible information to help businesses understand their options for collective action on water issues, particularly whom they can work with in a particular region of interest," said Gavin Power, Deputy Director of the UN Global Compact, and Head of the CEO Water Mandate.

"The Water Action Hub is designed to help companies and other organizations more effectively understand which stakeholders are active in particular river basins and any relevant water-related initiatives these stakeholders are undertaking. It is potentially transformational."

The core of the Water Action Hub online tool is a map-based data management system that facilitates match-making by allowing users to identify potential collective action opportunities via river basins, organizations, projects, and collaboration action areas.



The CEO Water Mandate Guide to Water-Related Collective Action can be downloaded free of charge from the Pacific Institute website at www.pacinst.org/reports/water_related_collective_action and on the CEO Water Mandate website at www.ceowatermandate.org. The Water Action Hub is live at www.wateractionhub.org.

Business Role in Development Seen as Stronger than Ever Before

The UN Global Compact Office released a summary of media coverage of its Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum, held on 15-18 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, in conjunction with the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

Reflecting the Forum's diverse media attendance, coverage of the event was extensive, totaling hundreds of articles, editorials, blog posts and broadcasts (TV and radio) referencing the event and its multiple announcements, deliverables and outcomes.

Generally, coverage of the Forum typically offered variations on the following set of messages:

- Business is playing a bigger role in advancing sustainable development than ever before and business representation in Rio is significant.
- Corporate leaders are increasingly supporting the sustainability agenda, as evidenced by more than 200 corporate commitments made at the Forum.
- Energy and climate, water sustainability, natural capital accounting and sustainability reporting are key issues for business engagement moving forward.

To read the complete media coverage report, please click [here](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).
Source: www.unglobalcompact.org

UNCTAD Entrepreneurship Policy Framework and Implementation Guidance

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) offers a useful framework to support developing country policymakers in the design of initiatives, measures and institutions to promote entrepreneurship. While cautioning that one-size does not fit all, it suggests policy options and recommended actions in priority policy areas that have a direct impact on entrepreneurial activity.

The Framework identifies policy objectives and options in the form of recommended actions and proposes checklists, case studies and good practices. The framework also offers a user guide and methods for policy monitoring and evaluation and provides a set of indicators for organizations to measure progress. The complete entrepreneurship policy framework and implementation guidance can be found [here](http://www.unctad.org).

Source: www.unctad.org



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Best practices from the archive

An overview of Sayga

Sayga is Sudan's premier company that focuses on manufacturing, packing, and distributing basic food supplies. Operating in a country where poverty is pervasive and malnutrition indicators are poor, focusing on profit alone is not an option. It recognizes that its business plays a critical role in bringing people, communities, and a nation together through a common need for food and nutrition. Sayga is an industry leader in manufacturing, packing, and distributing basic food supplies in Sudan. It is a large operation with more than 1,400 employees. Sayga's CSR program focuses on health and nutrition, environmental stewardship and national capacity building.

From the initial stages, Sayga wisely decided to focus less on philanthropy and more on livelihood development. The company has made a conscientious effort to opt for projects with long lasting impact, even though they require higher upfront investment. Through CSR, Sayga has been able to greatly influence the advancement of Sudan's food industry. Sayga realizes the interdependence between agriculture, the environment, and the planet's natural resources. Agriculture is heavily reliant on water supply, soil fertility, and climate and weather conditions. At the same time, the planet's future is being influenced by the practices of the agricultural sector; indiscriminate food production and processing inflicts damage on natural resources and distorts climate stability. Sayga has considered minimizing its negative environmental impact as a critical part of its CSR strategy.

Sayga is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact. To strengthen its commitment to CSR, Sayga seeks guidance in the Global Compact's principles of human rights, labor, the environment and anti-corruption. Sayga also supports the United Nations World Food Program by helping facilitate customs processes and manage the movement of cargo. It offers its silos for bulk storage of food in preparation for repacking. It also incorporates an awareness of the Millennium Development Goals into its own goals and objectives. The corporate value system of the DAL Group, Sayga's parent company, influences Sayga's own values and beliefs substantially.

Guided by its focused CSR strategy, Sayga has launched numerous projects and programs to support health and nutrition in Sudan. It leads the baking industry in its campaign to withdraw the

use of potassium bromate in baked goods. It also mills wholegrain flour, which is a staple food rich in vitamins and minerals. It continues to find new ways to manufacture fortified food products that improve the overall nutrition of the Sudanese people.

Sayga has taken another approach to improve food nutritive value. It has initiated educational and training programs to improve the practices of producers and consumers alike. For example, together with DAL sister companies - Blue Nile Dairy and DAL Medical - milk farmers are provided with information to help them understand diseases that herds are susceptible to, and to know the available medicines that help keep cows healthy. It also trains farmers on better feeding practices to increase milk productivity. It has improved its collection process to guarantee safe storage of large quantities of milk.

Sayga has made headway in energy efficiency in its own energy production. It has implemented several structural improvements such as redesigning and retrofitting its power cables and lighting facilities. Further energy savings have been achieved by increasing efficiency in energy production and transmission at the East Power Station. One of the most innovative programs that Sayga has spearheaded is the Green Bakery Initiative. Aimed at reducing its customers' manufacturing carbon footprint, it provides guidance to bakeries on environmental issues and how to minimize their impact. One of the first projects was to switch bakeries' fuel source from wood to LPG. In 2009, more than 1,000 bakeries in different states of Sudan started using LPG. Sayga plans to double the number of green bakeries to cover areas affected by armed conflict. It will look into greener bakery projects by seeking partnerships with other organizations.

In 2000, Sayga opened the Baking Development Center (BDC) as its major contribution to capacity building in Sudan. Certified by the Vocational Training Authorities, this program offers training courses in culinary arts, baking, and basic management, free of charge. It is also the only specialized training institute in the country. The idea to create an institution such as the BDC develops from the concept of adding value to its core business – wheat importation and milling. The strategic decision to steer a CSR program along developing skills in using its core products is an ingenious way to achieve corporate and social success simultaneously.

Sayga's strategy in attempting to alleviate hunger in Sudan sets it apart from many organizations. It endeavors to go beyond commercial success to pursue a higher cause which is nation building.

Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2008-2010

This abstract has been taken from the ACSR Network publication titled 'Arabia CSR Practices: 2008-2010'. For more details on Sayga 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 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@arabiaccsrnetwork.com

For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com