



“Launch of the 11th cycle of the Arab World’s Own CSR Benchmarking Tool”

January 17th, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The region’s premier CSR and Sustainability Awards was officially launched in the United Arab Emirates in a press conference held this morning at the Grand Millennium Hotel, the venue supporter of the event. Currently in its eleventh cycle, the Arabia CSR Awards have been successful in unveiling best practices of public and private establishments across the Arab region. With an objective to bring the latest international CSR and sustainability developments, trends and standards to the Arab world, the Awards recognise and honour organisations in the Arab region that demonstrate outstanding leadership and commitment to Corporate Sustainability. Many well-known names from different sectors have also been featured among the galaxy of winners of the Arabia CSR Awards. With introduction of a new sector specific category the Awards will be spanning twelve categories this year; - raising the bar for both intra-sector and cross-sector competition. **The categories are Public Sector, Large, Medium, Small, Energy, Financial Services, Social Enterprise, Construction, Hospitality, Healthcare, New Business and Partnerships & Collaborations.**

In its 10 prestigious years history, the Arabia CSR Awards have been re-shaped several times to make it the best and leading award scheme in the Arab world. It is in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and externally verified by one of the world’s most reputed providers of business assurance, DNV-GL. The criteria of the award are derived from global and regional frameworks and standards, namely, the UN Global Compact Ten Principles, GRI and the European EFQM business excellence model. 826 organisations representing 31 sectors have registered to participate in the Awards, with more than 1000 applications recorded, 13 countries have been covered and 161 awards have been conferred on the CSR champions of the Arab world.

Speaking at the press launch, Arabia CSR Network President and CEO Habiba Al Mar’ashi said, “The Arabia CSR Awards are seen as the Arab region’s own benchmark in CSR and sustainability. Using the application process, hundreds of organisations have been able to upgrade their CSR and sustainability practices and brought it into alignment with international standards and best practices. This is primarily the reason for its popularity and why it has grown in stature over the years to become the most highly coveted CSR and sustainability award among Arabian companies and government establishments. We hope this year we will be able to overreach the targets set for the awards and bring in more Arab countries within its fold through strengthened collaborations and targeted messages to organisations in our region.”

Hosting a press conference to announce the event, Mrs. Habiba Al Mar’ashi presented the winners of the various categories from last year’s cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards. The 2017 winning entities spoke of their experiences and shared how the Awards had taken them the extra mile on their sustainability journeys, achieved through its exhaustive criteria, holistic self-assessment mechanism and expert feedback provided from the jury panel. The winners confirmed that the Arabia CSR Awards had significantly boosted their CSR implementation and ultimately their sustainability performance, a factor they attributed to the cross-functional engagement required to successfully complete the rigorous application and the opportunity to critically self-assess their existing CSR strategies and operations.



The speakers mentioned that the feedback received from the jury was of invaluable worth and instrumental in their graduation from an applicant to a winner. Al Jazeera International Catering shared the history of their participation in the Awards across cycles, how they solved challenges and finally made it to the winning league. Etihad ESCO, DLA Piper and Salalah Methanol spoke about the salient features of their respective organisations' sustainability practices and how the awards helped them to close gaps and pursue recognised standards of excellence in CSR and sustainability.

The sponsors and supporters of the of the Awards so far include: Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (Gold Awards Sponsors), Emirates Environmental Group (Environmental Partner), Wasm CSR(country partner in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Newtonology (country partner in Kuwait). Media Partnerships and sponsorship opportunities are available, with an array of attractive benefits, including extensive pre and post-event media coverage and on-site branding.

Editor's notes:

The Arabia CSR Network is a professional multi stakeholder organisation established in the UAE in 2004. It is devoted to advancing the principles and practices of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Arab region. It facilitates networking, learning and sharing experiences and knowledge in matters of CSR. The Arabia CSR Network was the first GRI certified training partner for the Arabic speaking Middle East countries. The Arabia CSR Network promotes, encourages and recognises responsible business practices through a bunch of services and offerings, including training, research and best practice, advisory services, third party assurance a partnership platform and a Pan-Arab acclaimed award and forum initiative known as the

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