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Arabia CSR Network®

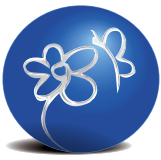
Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

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Arabia CSR Forum 2018



Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

September saw the Network a veritable hive of activity. We were busy in preparing for two of our biggest events in the 2018 calendar, namely, the 8th Arabia CSR Forum and the gala event that concludes the Arabia CSR Awards annual cycle.

We had to harness all our ingenuity and problem solving skills to overcome last minute challenges such as speaker cancellations, awards feedback compilation and so on. Al Hamdulillah, we managed to plug loopholes and overcome last minute trials and tribulations.

The 8th Arabia CSR Forum turned out to be the best ever, where an optimum number of high level speakers ensured that the audience gained new and unique insights and advanced knowledge through speaker presentations and dialogue with the speakers. I am also delighted that we had built into the agenda a music concert and a students poster drawing competition. The purpose of the first was more than just entertainment, it showcased the talent of prominent Arab musicians that were globally renowned for their expertise in blending the music of our region with that of the east & west.

The live poster design competition too was much more than a drawing competition. We hosted students from post graduate, under graduate and last year of secondary levels for the two days of the Forum and invited them to showcase their thoughts on each session of the forum. Once again, they outdid themselves and proved they were an aware, informed and articulate generation. Capturing Sheikh Zayed' vision in the year that commemorates his legacy, replaying key messages emanating out of the Forum, and expressing how the future looks like based on current trends and developments, the posters spoke to the audience through the medium of art. The winners of the competition, despite their young age won the admiration of all present and it was good to see the cheering they got from them.

The Arabia CSR Awards once again established without a shred of doubt that sustainability is a driving factor in the region that is helping government and private organisations to create a positive and long term impact. I congratulate all the participants of the awards for demonstrating dedication and diligence towards addressing economic and societal needs and challenges. The entities that came forward to support us with sponsorship and partnership are the jewels of our network and we are in gratitude to them for recognising and encouraging our efforts. Lastly and importantly, we wholeheartedly thank His Excellency Eng. Sheikh Salem bin Sultan Al Qasimi for inspiring us with his participation in the two events, and his generous appreciation of the work being done by the Arabia CSR Network.



H.E. Eng. Sheikh Salem Bin Sultan Al Qasimi,
Chairman of Ras Al Khaimah's Department of Civil Aviation



Arabia CSR Forum 2018



Arabia CSR Forum 2018 – Government, private sector and UN talk about sustainability as a fundamental approach to growth and development

The 8th Arabia Corporate Social Responsibility Forum saw leaders and experts from the government, UN, private sector and academia from different Arab Countries and other parts of the globe, discuss important issues such as climate change, water, waste, renewable energy, responsible banking, benefit corporations, youth and women, innovation, investment and many more. The presentations and discussions were immensely informative and instructional, combining different perspectives from key sectors. A high level range of speakers from MENA, Asia, Europe, Africa and Canada joined forces to stress on the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals as a means to further equitable development across the world.

Held on October 2nd and 3rd at the Roda Al Murooj hotel in Dubai, the conference was organised by Arabia CSR Network, in support with Exclusive Sponsors Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), Emirates National Oil Co. (ENOC) and the Saudi Mining Company (Ma'aden) and Gold Sponsor Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC, Bahrain). Other partners included UN Environment (Strategic Partner), Emirates Environmental Group (Environmental Partner), Expert Consulting, Canada (Technical Partner) and Gulf News (Media Partner). Supporting entities included DNV-GL, Clean Energy Business Council, Emirates Green Building Council, Farnek and myclimate (Switzerland). The two day event was fully 'Carbon Neutral', - a distinction that not many conferences can aspire to.

Themed “**Driving Innovation through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**”, the forum captured leading global and local efforts to align with the universal 2030 agenda of sustainable development. The conference was anchored by Dr. Elissar Sarrouh, a former UN diplomat and current Professor of Practice at the Institute for the Study of International Development in McGill University, Canada and CEO of Expert Consulting.

The forum had a comprehensive agenda that included keynote addresses from government, business leaders on thought provoking topics such as “**Shaping our prospects with sustainable values**”, “**Innovation and Investment: Where do we go from here**”. Each day featured two powerful plenary sessions; - “**Utilising the SDGs to navigate uncertain times**” and “**Renewable Energy - Fuelling Sustainability**” on day one; and “**Sustainable Development through Industry 4.0**” and “**What are investors looking for when it comes to sustainability**”.

In her opening remarks Arabia CSR President & CEO Habiba Al Mar'ashi remarked, “We see a sea-change in the culture, mindset and readiness to adopt sustainable practices, and not as way of looking good. Sustainability and CSR is more than skin-deep; indeed it has gone into the bloodstream of businesses and Governments alike.” She spoke about the outcomes of the previous Arabia CSR Forum and shed light on some of the current focus areas of the Network.



In his keynote speech H.E. Eng. Sheikh Salem Bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Chairman of Ras Al Khaimah's Department of Civil Aviation explained that sustainable values have shaped UAE's vision and mission since the formative years under the father of the nation, late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He provided evidence by citing various articles of the UAE constitution. He referred to the country's economic, environmental, social and humanitarian initiatives that support the objectives of the SDGs. He also delighted the audience with a narrative of his own experience at apiculture and the establishment of honey bee farming in the UAE based on superior bee breeds and technological inputs. He concluded his speech with a note of appreciation for Arabia CSR Network in promoting CSR and sustainability among multiple sectors across the region.

In the next keynote, H.E. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of DEWA drew attention to the UAE government's many sustainability commitments and initiatives, and DEWA's towering role in it as a leading governmental agency. He added that Dubai is spearheading sustainable energy DEWA is at the forefront of this effort. He spoke about the UAE's adoption of innovation including Artificial Intelligence, blockchain, big data, etc. Mr. Al Tayer said that DEWA's annual CSR spend mounts up to 8% of sales revenue.

Mr. Abdulaziz Al Midfa, Vice Chair of Emirates Environmental Group, one of the oldest and most active NGOs in the country, heading the first plenary, *"Utilising the SDGs to navigate uncertain times"*, spoke at length about the sustainability context within which governments and businesses are operating, and the role of everyone in responding to the challenges of the current time and future, based on new paradigms and innovative problem thinking. Among the speakers Dr. Iyad Abumoghli, Principal Policy Advisor in UN Environment, spoke about the effectiveness of the SDSs as the new collaborative medium of economic growth, social prosperity, environmental sustainability, peace and justice. He explained UN Environment's Faith for Earth Initiative and its goal to strategically engage with faith-based organisations and partner with them to collectively achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and fulfill the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. The next speaker Sumana Sarkar, head of Sustainability for MENA and Africa in Ericsson, spoke about her company's extensive efforts to be a responsible corporate citizen and gave descriptions of some key projects as examples of the positive impact they were creating on the ground. The audience participated in the discussion and raised many important issues such as the inclusivity of the Internet, UN's expertise in connecting young people and entrepreneurs from different religious backgrounds, national targets for SDGs, the imperative of working not only for people but with people, the telecom company's approach towards inclusive mobility and People of Determination.

The second plenary of the day focussed on the theme, *"Renewable Energy, Fuelling Sustainability"* with Karin Ireton, independent advisor in sustainability matters, heading the session. She introduced important issues within the topic including the dilemma of low price due to technological breakthroughs but not corresponding increase in uptake of renewables, and the link up to SDGs numbers 7, 9, 12 and 13. The panelist's presented interesting and diverse perspectives on the topic based on their own work. Ali Al Jassim, CEO of Ettihad ESCO spoke about Dubai's extensive work on energy efficiency, and his company's contribution to the Emirate's sustainable energy strategic objectives and targets. Abdurahman Alsum, Senior Sustainability Strategist in Ma'aden spoke about the approach towards renewable energy that the mining industry is developing and the challenges within, emphasising that mining activities are mainly reliant on manual processes that do not necessarily lend itself to technological innovation, however in matters of health, safety and environment technological advances have enabled the industry to become more responsibility. Saeed Al Abbar, Chairman of Emirates Green Business Council and CEO of AESG, gave an enlightening talk on net zero carbon cities, describing a new pathway to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions at scale. Various questions were put forward by the audience such as energy efficient villas and factories, the practicality of making buildings net zero emission, managing solar rooftops in a sandy environment, incentives for tenants and owners to embrace renewables, solar for community, regulations, best practices, current and in the pipeline net zero buildings in the UAE, centralising solar systems across the cities in various emirates and the challenge of different tariffs.





The second day of the Forum opened with two keynote addresses on the theme “**Innovation and Investment - where do we go from here**”, the first of which came from H.E. Abdulaziz Asker Al-Harbi, Senior Vice President for Operations, EHS and Shared Services. The key message of his address was the need for new and innovative leadership models, business models and social models, capable of advancing technology for sustainable development. The second keynote was presented by Dr. Iyad Abumoghli, Senior Principal Advisor, UN Environment, where he defined a new approach to engage stakeholders to harness different kinds of innovation that are required to manage changes and their impact. Among the questions asked by the audience was the issue of inclusive innovation targeting not just industry and urban progress but also the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector which is an important value added to national GDP, the reach of blockchain in remote areas to BPL sections, cyber security, mindset change, leadership element and so on.



The first plenary session of day two was led by Nandkumar Vadakepath, Head of Department, Sustainability Operations in DNV-GL. The theme of the session was “Sustainable Development through Industry 4.0”. The first speaker, Dr. Waddah Ghanem, Senior Director, Sustainability, Operations and Business Development in ENOC, spoke about the importance of sustainability and recent developments within it, and the opportunities offered by the fourth industrial revolution in maximising business contributions to sustainable development. The next speaker, Sunil John, Founder & CEO, Asdaa Burson Marsteller, and President - Middle East, Burson, Cohn & Wolfe, gave an illuminating presentation on the findings of the Annual Arab Youth Survey undertaken by his company, which revealed new insights on youth perspectives, opinions and needs related to their economic and social development. Interesting findings related to education, employment, living, connectivity and media, governance, were an eye opener for the audience and speakers alike, and represented what is required to be done for the benefit of the future generation of Arab youth. The last speaker of the session was Dr. Yusef Al- Assaf, President, Rochester Institute of Technology, Dubai. Dr. Yusef’s presentation took the audience through a set of riveting subjects like smart society, super smart society or Society 5.0 as aspired by Japan, the Forbes survey on the fourth industrial revolution or Industry 4.0., smart city platforms, etc. The questions fronted by the speakers were related to the impact of digital revolution on Corporate Governance, business and university partnerships to ensure a match between skills and market requirements among Arab youth, and many more.



The concluding plenary session was on the theme, “What are investors looking for when it comes to sustainability” and was led by Dr. Elissar Sarrouh, who also anchored the entire forum. Introducing the topic, she referred to a recent report published by UN Global Compact on business and the SDGs. The first speaker Karin Ireton shared rich insights on such contextual principles like those of sustainable banking and sustainable insurance, and the significance of platforms like Global Impact Assessment. The next and last speaker of the Forum was Marcello Palazzi, Co- founder, B-lab Europe & Founder President, Progreso Foundation, described the Benefit Corporation or B-Corp movement across the globe. He highlighted Industry giants and Fortune 500 companies that are certified B Corps, and also explained the benefits and advantages that accrue from the accreditation, as well as its requirements. The question and answer round picked up crucial issues like how long it can take a SME to become a B Corp, impact versus profit, banks and transparency, B Corp and the ratings and rankings landscape, etc.



Two additional programmes had been added to the forum in this year. At the end of day one, two musical legends including the region’s very own Arabic-Jazz fusion pioneer Kamal Musallam, entertained the attendees with their masterful performance. At the end of the second day there was poster design competition for students of the last year of high school and university that had taken place throughout the two days of the forum and ended on the last day. The students had been invited to attend all the sessions on both days and summarise each through posters designed on site during the breaks on the first and second days. Four teams from Higher Colleges of Technology Ras Al Khaimah Women’s College, Wollongong University, Middlesex University, and Our Own English High School Dubai were called to the stage to present their design with explanations. Three judges, - Dr. Nejat Al Makki (The famous UAE Artist), Ms. Hanan Abbas and Ms. Ritu Chaturvedi, chose and awarded the best teams, which included HCT Ras Al Khaimah Women’s College, Wollongong University (one prize each for two topics) and Our Own English High School (two prizes for two topics)





Arabia CSR Awards 2018



11th Arabia CSR Awards acknowledges the champions of Arab sustainability

The eleventh cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards saw tough competition among 108 organisations belonging to 39 sectors and operating from nine countries across the GCC, Levant and North Africa regions. The awards were available in 12 categories; - **Large sized enterprise, Medium sized enterprise, Small sized enterprise, Public sector organisations, Financial Services Sector, Energy Sector, Social Enterprise, Hospitality Sector, Construction Sector, Healthcare Sector, New Business and Partnerships & Collaborations.**

The rigorous criteria of the awards have given it a next to none reputation across the Arab world and beyond. These awards look deep into strategy, leadership and governance, alignment with macro- issues and SDGs, vision, mission and values alignment with sustainability, stakeholder participation, subsidiary and supplier engagement, communication and reporting, data analysis, management and KPIs related to environmental, social and governance performance, performance on labour rights, human rights and anti-corruption, community engagement strategy and impact, partnership approach, innovation and distinctive achievements and consistent improvement. Claims of performance in each area has to be substantiated with supporting evidence that the jury can use to validate the same. Submission of sustainability reports are awarded additional marks, which encourages organisations to report performance publicly. The criteria was developed with elements taken from principles enshrined in UN Global Compact, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and EFQM model of excellence.

This year the applications gave strong evidence that organisations in the Arab world have not only embraced international best practices, but are developing a set of good practice that respond strongly to local issues, needs and challenges; which are shaped by close cooperation with stakeholders and value chain impacts. From government organisations and government owned enterprises reaching out to play a role in implementation of the SDGs, addressing changes in the economic and societal domains, adopting technological and social innovation, pioneering reporting on the newly launched GRI Standards, and seeking to establish themselves as visionary, responsible, forward thinking and impact investing entities. Each applicant was provided with a detailed feedback on their entire application, score by score, which is the greatest value add of the awards.



The CSR and sustainability champions of 2018 were announced and felicitated in a grand ceremony held on the 3rd of October at Roda Al Murooj hotel in Dubai, under the patronage of *His Excellency Eng. Sheikh Salem bin Sultan bin Al Qasimi, Chairman of Ras Al Khaimah Civil Aviation*.

The winners were

Winners	Country	Organization name
Public Sector Category		
Winner (Tie)	UAE	Dubai Electricity and Water Authority
	UAE	Dubai Customs
1 st Runner Up	UAE	General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs - Dubai
2 nd Runner Up	UAE	Sharjah Electricity and Water Authority
Large Business Category		
Winner (Tie)	UAE	Emirates Transport
	Bahrain	Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company
1 st Runner Up (Tie)	Kuwait	Al-Sayer Holding
	KSA	Saudi International Petrochemicals Company (Sipchem)
2 nd Runner Up	UAE	Al Naboodah Group Enterprises LLC
Medium Business Category		
Winner	KSA	Farabi Petrochemicals Company
1 st Runner Up	UAE	Al Jazeera International Catering LLC
Small Business Category		
Winner (Tie)	UAE	AESG Project Development Consultant
	UAE	Knowledge Group
1 st Runner Up	Jordan	TactiX Strategic Consulting
Construction Sector Category		
Winner	UAE	Al Naboodah Construction Group

Energy Sector Category		
Winner	UAE	Emirates National Oil Company
1 st Runner Up	UAE	Engie
Financial Services Category		
Winner	KSA	The Saudi Investment Bank
1 st Runner Up	Morocco	BMCE Bank of Africa
2 nd Runner Up	UAE	UAE Exchange Centre
Hospitality Sector Category		
Winner	UAE	Holiday Inn - Al Barsha
Partnerships and Collaborations Category		
Winner (Tie)	Sudan	Dal Food
	KSA	Ma'aden
1 st Runner Up	Morocco	BMCE Bank of Africa
2 nd Runner Up (Tie)	Oman	DUQM Refinery
	UAE	Emirates Transport
Healthcare Sector Category		
Special Recognition	UAE	Aster DM Healthcare
Social Enterprise Category		
Special Recognition	Jordan	Iraqi Business Council - Jordan
Best New Business Category		
Special Recognition	UAE	The Desert Farmer

Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, President & CEO of Arabia CSR Network, explained in her welcome speech, the salient features of the 11th cycle, including a new, vastly improved and efficient awards online portal, the third party verification of results by DNV - GL and the carbon neutrality of the ceremony.

Arabia CSR Network says a big CONGRATULATIONS to the winners and a heartfelt THANK YOU to the sponsors of the gala,



