

الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية
الإجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

March 2019
Volume 8 Issue 91



Stakeholder Engagement Workshop

Current market trends show that organisations are becoming increasingly responsive to the role of stakeholders and not just shareholders. The complex web of stakeholders that most organisations work with makes stakeholder engagement an imperative and one that offers tremendous benefits.

These issues will be addressed during a one-day workshop being organised by Arabia CSR Network, the Region's leading training services provider and think tank. In the workshop delegates will be coached on the most important characteristics of stakeholder engagement, how to map stakeholders to the circles of interest and influence, what kind of factors influence effective consultation, how to manage a successful dialogue with different stakeholders and how to use stakeholder engagement as a tool for long term collaboration.

The workshop will focus on the following:

- Stakeholder Mapping
- Stakeholder Dynamics
- Stakeholder Theory
- Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement
- Stakeholder Dialogue
- Basic principles of Collaboration
- Prioritizing CSR Issues

Who will this workshop be for?

All professionals working in the field of CSR, sustainability, communications, marketing in particular, as well as anyone that has a direct interaction with stakeholder constituencies.

18th March 2019

For more details or to register please contact admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com or call us on +974 344 8120 / +974 344 8622

GRI Standards for Sustainability Reporting

Around the world, thousands of organisations report annually to disclose their performance in environmental, social and governance areas. The most commonly used framework for sustainability reporting has been the GRI guidelines.

Participants will be issued a certificate from GRI Headquarters in Netherlands.

From Global Reporting Initiative comes, a new set of standards for Sustainability Reporting!

The GRI Standards include all the main concepts and disclosures from the G4 Guidelines, but feature a new modular structure and revised format with clear reporting requirements. The Standards were developed and released by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), which is GRI's dedicated standard-setting body.

Arabia CSR Network, a Certified Training Partner of GRI, since 2011 is conducting a 3 Day Training Course on the new GRI Standards. The accredited course content will be delivered through lectures, discussions, exercises and case studies. It will include the following segments:

- Introduction and background
- Overview of the GRI Standards
- GRI Standards in detail
- Start your reporting process using the GRI Standards
- Additional resources

The training is of immense value to organisations currently using the GRI guidelines to report non-financial performance or those that are preparing their sustainability reports. It is particularly beneficial to report writing teams, sustainability professionals, consultants, researchers and so on.

45 > GRI Trainings conducted till date
400+ > Professionals Trained from the Arab Region
150+ > Sustainability Reports Issued

Cost of the training:

US\$ 2,275 Including the 10% GRI Certification fee + 5% VAT

US\$ 2,000 Early bird discount 20 days before the training

Group discount available: If you register more than three participants from the same organisation

Date: 26th – 28th March 2019

For more details or to register please contact admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com or call us on +974 344 8120 / +974 344 8622

CSR ADVANCED CERTIFIED TRAINING COURSE

CSR and Sustainability are not static concepts. They work in tandem with and in response to the economic forces changing and re-shaping the global market. To develop the right approach for changing social contexts in emerging market scenarios, organisations are essentially required to have an in-depth and advanced understanding of CSR and Sustainability.

This training will provide a thorough and structured look at the theoretical, practical and strategic approaches to CSR and Corporate Sustainability. It will take delegates through the whole spectrum of the evolution of CSR, key trends and developments, strategy measuring CSR performance and best in-class examples.

This course is intended for people with a certain degree of exposure to CSR and Sustainability, having a rudimentary understanding of any CSR concepts and terms, and basic Business Project Planning and Management.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Top level executives
- Mid level management
- CSR managers
- Sustainability focal points
- Internal and external specialists
- Marketing, PR and brand specialists
- NGOs, Academics and Researchers

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

This certified training comes with a value added: participants have the opportunity to get a certificate of participation at the end of the training.

Cost of training:

US\$ 2,550

US\$ 2,200 Early bird discount

Course Details

The content of the two-day course is divided into thematic sessions, and will be delivered by a group of expert trainers using a combination of pedagogy, discussion and exercises.

The content is divided into the following:

- Evaluating the Internal and External Environment
- Approaches to CSR and Sustainability
- Stakeholder Analysis and Materiality
- Developing CSR Strategy – a Framework
- Monitoring and Performance Measurement
- From CSR Implementation to Sustainability Reporting
- Best Practice Case Examples

For more details or to register please contact admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com or call us on +974 344 8120 / +974 344 8622

18th March 2019

Stakeholder Engagement Workshop

26th - 28th March 2019

GRI Standards

23rd - 25th April 2019

CSR Advanced

To register please email us at admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com, trainings@arabiaccsrnetwork.com

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Building Partnerships for
a Sustainable Future ©

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Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

Ever since the founding of the Union, protecting the environment has been one of the cornerstones of UAE's sustainable developmental journey. The bedrock of this principle was laid by the visionary example of HH the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan who paid extra attention to conservation of natural resources and wildlife and environmental issues.

Due to its central role in the global world, and to cement its leadership position, UAE should have in place policies that are focused on environmental protection and resource sustainability. As a result, environmental sustainability has been made a key focus area in UAE's Vision 2021 as well as Vision 2071. The aim of these policies is to undertake bold initiatives in a number of sectors with the overall goal of turning UAE into the best country in the world. In this respect, Vision 2071 which celebrates UAE's 100 years has in place four pillars. These are: a government focused on the future, a happy and cohesive society, a diversified economy and development of education with special focus on engineering and advanced technology. The last pillar is in some ways the most crucial as only through instilling environmental stewardship in the minds of future generations can we hope to save our planet and ensure its sustainability.

The month of February picked up from where January had ended with preparations for the 12th Arabia CSR Awards underway. The Awards Clinic is the next step in the process which is to be held on the 10th of April. It will guide the participants on the application process and field their queries. In the meantime, invitations are continuously being sent out to potential applicant organisations in the Arab Region to apply for the Awards. In between there were meetings and engagements in which I and my colleagues participated and represented the Arabia CSR Network. On the 3rd of February, I was invited by the Managing Director & CEO of DEWA to attend a groundbreaking ceremony, the MENA regions first solar powered Green Hydrogen Project in Seih Al Dahl in Dubai. The Sharjah Economic Excellence Award Ceremony Cycle 2018 was held on the 7th of February 2019. I attended the ceremony as a member of the jury. The Award aims to promote corporate governance, encourage the adoption of quality standards and business ethics, develop the responsibility of private sector enterprises towards society, and enhance the role of economic institutions in promoting sustainable development by providing facilities and launching new projects and initiatives.

The introductory session meeting with representatives of the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs-Dubai on 14th of February was a fruitful one and boded well for the future collaborations between the two entities. During the meeting, the members from GDRFA were informed about the history of Arabia CSR Network and the various services it provided. They were encouraged to apply again for the 12th cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards to give their organisation more exposure and wider appreciation. ACSRN concluded successfully training on "The Fundamentals of CSR" that took place on the 25th till the 27th of Feb. ACSRN as an organisational stakeholder of GRI also participated in a webinar on "Developments in Sustainability Reporting - A focus on Climate Change". We have a cluster of strong trainings and workshops in the pipeline for the coming months. We have **GRI Standards Training from the 26th -28th of March**. Do join us in trainings and apply for the Arabia CSR Award to learn, share, exchange and spread the word about the role of corporate responsibility in promoting sustainable development.

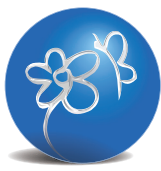
ACSRN News & Events

First Green Hydrogen Project breaks ground in Dubai

On the 3rd of February, 2019 the groundbreaking ceremony to explore the potential of producing and using hydrogen as a low-carbon energy source was held. The initiative is part of the first solar-powered Green Hydrogen Project in the MENA region. The Project is located at the Mohammad Bin Rashid Solar Park and will be powered by the energy produced by the park.

The President and CEO of Arabia CSR Network, was among the invitees and attended the groundbreaking ceremony. The project is collaboration between Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) and Siemens. H.E. Sheikh Ahmad Bin Saeed Al Maktoum - The Chairman of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy inaugurated this ground breaking event in the presence of the Minister of Energy, the Minister of Climate Change and Environment, the President and CEO of Siemens and many officials from different government entities.





Sharjah Economic Excellence Award Ceremony Cycle 2018

The Sharjah Entrepreneurial Award which aims to promote and honour the most successful business people in Sharjah who have made a significant mark in the business world was held on the 7th of February 2019. Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, President and CEO of Arabia CSR Network being a member of the jury was invited and attended the event. The award is specifically for private sector entities that fall within Sharjah City, Eastern Region and Central Region.

Through acknowledging their contribution, the Award promoted corporate governance practices and encouraged the adoption of quality standards and business ethics. The winners received prizes to incentivise innovative enterprise projects, support and encourage environmental business practices and initiatives that will contribute to energy efficiency, reduce emissions and the amount of waste produced and achieve sustainable development in the Emirate of Sharjah and the UAE.



Introductory session with General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs

An introductory session was held at the offices of the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) - Dubai on the 14th of February, 2019. During the meeting, President and CEO of Arabia CSR Network Mrs. Habiba informed the members of GDRFA about the activities of the ACSRN and what it stood for. She also updated them with a brief description of the Arabia CSR Awards and the various stages of development that it had gone through over the last 11 years since being introduced.

Mrs. Habiba apprised members of GDRFA about the benefits of applying for the Award. She explained the online 8-step application process and reiterated the positive aspects that the organisation stood to gain from gaining national, regional and international exposure by participating in the 12th Arabia CSR Awards. Other possible mechanisms of cooperation were also discussed in the meeting.



ACSRN conducts 1st CSR training for the year 2019

From February 25th to 27th a training titled "Fundamentals of CSR and Sustainability" took place in Dubai, which was organised and delivered by ACSRN.

The course module has been developed with the aim of equipping participants with a deep and thorough understanding of the holistic concept of CSR and how it lends itself to organisational and social value. The 3 day course covered the definition of CSR and various approaches that align with it, CSR implementation steps and challenges, strategising CSR practices to improve economic, social and environmental performance, and examples and cases.

The course combines theory with experience – it is based on different exercises. The training material is imparted through an amalgam of lecture, Q&A and discussion. The objective is to ensure a clear and contextual understanding of the relevance of CSR to tackle current and future risks and opportunities. The training concluded with an hour and a half long assessment test which challenged participants to put their understanding into paper. Successful participants are presented with a Certificate of Attainment valid for three years that they can use to add to their skills and competencies.





GRI organises webinar on climate related corporate reporting

Developments in Sustainability Reporting: A Focus on Climate Change was the subject of a webinar that was organised by GRI's secretariat on the 28th of February for the gold members. A strong bunch of experts and practitioners across organisations gave diverse perspectives on corporate reporting related to climate change, challenges, investor interest and expectation, importance of non-financial reporting in the market context and the findings of a related report.

Member News

Emirates Transport achieves 97% satisfaction in 2018

Emirates Transport has been able to achieve 97% customer satisfaction for the year 2018, beating the previous record of 91% set in 2017. Furthermore, the entity has been able to resolve 91.2% of customer complaints inside two business days. This was announced by the General Manager of the organisation as he lauded the impressive progress of Emirates Transport as it strove to enhance and develop customer experience.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services Division also added that the Customer Satisfaction section within the organisation was closely monitoring user preferences in order to make the required updates and modifications to ensure a more comfortable user experience. She also highlighted the commitment of the ET Call Centre which was continuously responding to customer inquiries about the services provided by ET at its various branches.

The complaints are categorised into three compartments; emergencies that needed to be resolved and closed within 24 hours, regular queries that should be resolved within two working days and complex issues that required 11-15 working days.



To find out more, please visit:
<https://www.et.gov.ae>

DEWA presents its experiences and achievement in sustainable energy and water security at WGS 2019

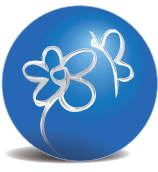
Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) highlighted its key achievements and initiatives in the field of water and energy security and sustainability at the 7th World Government Summit (WGS) 2019. The authority was the sustainable energy partner of the WGS.

The event was organised under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. The MD and CEO of DEWA discussed the entity's experiences in developing water security of Dubai in its efforts to promote a greener environment.

He further explained DEWA's target to desalinate 100% of Dubai's water through clean energy by 2030. He also elaborated on the organisation's efforts towards shaping the future of energy and promoting the share of clean and renewable energy in line with the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050. Talking about ensuring the sustainability of clean water production, he explained the principle adopted by DEWA through its three pillars. These pillars would be based on using clean solar energy to desalinate seawater using the latest Reverse Osmosis (RO) technologies. Excess water thus produced, would be stored in aquifers and pumped back into the water network whenever needed.



To find out more, please visit:
<https://www.menaherald.com>



General News

Online Consultation on Gender Equality

UNDP, UN Women and the Tunisian Ministry of Women, Family, Childhood and seniors are asked for contributions for an online consultation, based on the topic of gender equality. The four central themes of the consultation were:

1. Discussion 1: Beijing to Beijing + 25
2. Discussion 2: Gender equality for local governance transformation
3. Discussion 3: Women, Peace and security
4. Discussion 4: Innovation, technology and women's economic empowerment

The key recommendations from the consultation will feed into the agenda for the upcoming Tunisian Forum. It will also set the framework for future talks between activists, civil society and governments all over the world. The consultation closed on Thursday the 28th of February, 2019.

To know more, visit: <https://www.globaldevhub.org/consultation-tfge>

Abu Dhabi Sustainable Business Leadership Awards 2019

Application slots are open for the 5th cycle of the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Business Leadership Awards. The award has gained recognition for constantly promoting and celebrating sustainability best practices. It has made a name for raising awareness about the benefits of sustainable management practices for businesses. It strives to recognise and appreciate organisations that have demonstrated a sustainable impact in their field of influence through their operations.

The awards has categories and the applications are open till the 31st of March, 2019. The winners will be announced on the 16th of April 2019.



مجموعة أبوظبي للاستدامة
Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group

To know more, contact
ADSGawards@adsg.ae.

Environmental sustainability values & practices are integral part of UAE heritage

On the occasion of the 22nd consecutive celebration of the UAE National Environment Day, the President HH Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan stressed on the importance of renewing our national commitment towards protecting our natural resources in order to preserve the environment for coming generations.

The occasion which is held every year on the 4th of February highlights a shared responsibility by all the citizens of UAE to preserve the environment. The day is marked by promoting and selecting an environmental goal that is of national importance. In keeping with the tradition of the past three years, the focus this year has also been on spreading awareness amongst consumers and producers about sustainable production and consumption patterns.

Describing the values and practices related to the sustainability of the environment as being an integral part of UAE's heritage, President Khalifa responded to the sentiments of the Nation's Founding Father, HH the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan when he said that the forefathers of the nation were able to survive on land and in the sea because they recognised the need to conserve the environment and to take from it only what they needed to live and to preserve it for succeeding generations. He called on both government organisations and the private sector to play its part in helping UAE achieve its national goals and to raise awareness of community members, especially school and university students.



To find out more, please visit:
<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302736850>



UAE Leading MENA for Global Talent

According to a report published by INSEAD, the Paris based graduate business school, the UAE has been ranked number 1 in the MENA region and number 19th globally in the 2019 version of the Global Talent Competitiveness Index report.

This is the fourth time in a row that UAE has topped in the MENA. The Global Talent Competitiveness Index is a detailed annual index that charts the progression of countries in their ability to grow, attract and retain talent. The index provides a panoramic view of the city for policy and decision makers to use when devising strategies to boost competitiveness.

In the report, a special mention was made of the consistent efforts the UAE government had made towards ensuring that it remained within the exclusive group of nations that attracted and unleashed talent and provided a nourishing environment for skilled cadres.

The rankings were based on six pillars: enable, attract, grow, retain, vocational training skills and general knowledge skills. The 'attract' pillar proved to be the UAE's strongest suit, ranking the country just behind Singapore and Luxembourg. Other areas which were mentioned were the levels of external openness, strong technical and vocational skills and the high levels of employability within the UAE.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.urdupoint.com>

Let's make 2019 the year of tipping points

It has been 20 years to the month after former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan first established the Global Compact between the UN and the world's businesses. Based on the universal principles of human and labour rights, respect for the environment and anti-corruption, which are still as relevant today as they were two decades ago.

With the world into the third year since the signing of the Sustainable Development Goals, there is progress on many fronts along with huge gaps that remain to be fulfilled. Most alarming in this aspect is that of climate change and inequality. This is also where businesses can step in and make the change. There is an urgent need to fast track the process of turning corporate sustainability into a viable and successful process for mainstream companies to adopt. The UN Global Compact, for its part, has been creating awareness and catalysing action on the ground through its 70 local networks. This is done by educating local participants with required expertise and skills to drive sustainability at the local and national levels.

In 2019 UN Global Compact will be introducing three new global impact initiatives targeting stakeholders towards sustainability. These are: Driving the SDGs through Youth and Innovation, Closing the Climate Change Gap and Closing the Gender Empowerment Gap.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org>

Ring the Bell for Gender Equality

Ring the Bell for Gender Equality is an initiative that is being organised by the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiatives. It will be held on the 8th of March, 2019 when stock exchanges will be invited to host a bell ringing ceremony focused towards raising awareness towards the issue of gender equality. The aim is to induce in the private sector a realisation of their importance in advancing gender equality comparable to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 5.

The initiative brings together for the 5th consecutive year, representatives from the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative, UN Global Compact, International Finance Corporation, UN Women and the World Federation of Exchanges and Women in ETFs.

The aim is to surpass 2018's total of 65 stock exchanges that participated in the event.

To find out more, please visit <http://www.sseinitiative.org>

Ring the Bell for Gender Equality



United Nations
Global Compact



Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities



Feature, Blogs, White papers, Articles...

In the world of sustainability, colonialism is not dead



When a Scandinavian fashion label used sustainability themed showcase at the closing of the Copenhagen Fashion Week, it hardly caused a stir amongst the ‘fashionistas’. Titled ‘Life on Earth’ the pictures of underprivileged women in developing countries had no plausible link to the white European models decked out in high-priced designer clothes on the runway.

Neither were their stories mentioned nor were the proceeds of the event in any way linked towards the sustainability of the under-developed regions. The images basically provided a ‘cool’ backdrop for the event.

According to Anna Nadim Sabir, a New York-based fashion blogger, this is where the problem lies. The fashion industry is a microcosm of a larger pattern of exploitation that the West in general has been promoting in the name of sustainability. It is in fact, a vicious circle in which it is precisely the women depicted in the pictures who are worst affected by the fashion industry that is pretending to highlight their

plight; Western brands compete against each other through exploiting poor wages and terrible working conditions of third world sweat shops that manufacture the clothes for them.

The trend points to a larger malaise known as ‘Eco-colonialism’ which alludes to the global narrative of sustainability and how it champions those who are actually the driver of the ills in the first place.

To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.eco-business.com/opinion>

Author

Zafirah Zein

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<https://www.eco-business.com/opinion>



Case Study from the Arabia CSR Best Practices 2018 - BLC Bank

Abstract

BLC Bank operates in a country (Lebanon) that suffers from a number of political and socio-economic issues. Nonetheless, it diligently serves its stakeholders while staying true to its goal to contribute to the development of Lebanon's social and economic development.

The bank has brought to the forefront the issue of women empowerment at the workplace and has been actively pushing for gender equality in the banking sector. Its women empowerment programme seeks to benefit its key stakeholders, including employers, customers as well as suppliers.

BLC Bank has also demonstrated its commitment to preserving the environment in a strategic way that enhances its business portfolio as well - the bank offers individuals (especially farmers) in Lebanon a number of loans to install eco-friendly and renewable energy technology.

The Bank's headquarter is a testament to environmental preservation as it has been awarded the ARZ Bronze Certification by the Lebanese Green Building Society – thus becoming the first green rated commercial building in Lebanon.

Conclusion

BLC Bank, a Lebanese financial institution, is certainly a sustainability front-runner for the country. It has built on its banking, insurance and asset management expertise to address a number of material sustainability issues, prominent of which is its laser-sharp focus on women empowerment. BLC Bank is the first Bank in the Middle East and North Africa region to commit to the UN Women Empowerment Principles. Moreover, it is the first in the region to join the Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA), a well-respected international alliance that it has chaired for a number of years.

The bank has worked towards creating a women-friendly and women-focused workplace and has supported female entrepreneurs by providing them with special financial and non-financial services to grow their businesses. A number of its other policies also demonstrate its commitment to women empowerment. The bank's sustainability strategy is considerate of other issues in Lebanese society that it has the power to influence. The bank offers a number of loans to individuals and businesses to invest in environment-friendly technology. These loans address issues such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, pollution abatement, solid waste and waste water treatment, recycling, landscaping, and eco-tourism.

The bank's meaningful impact in Lebanon has also driven its Private banking unit and BLC Services (Insurance and services) to adopt the same social, governance and environmental policies and procedures as BLC Bank. Similarly, its subsidiary in Cyprus USB Bank PLC is also supporting a number of CSR-focused projects in the same vein as the Lebanese headquarters, thus testifying its success to building positive value in terms of reputation and impact.

