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Arabia CSR Network®

# Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

April 2019  
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## GRI STANDARDS TRAINING



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### CSR ADVANCED CERTIFIED TRAINING COURSE

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

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND**

- Top level executives
- Mid level management
- CSR managers
- Sustainability focal points

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### CSR STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP COURSE

18-20 June 2019, Dubai

**ABOUT THE TRAINING**  
CSR requires Champions to chart the course. Bold the hands and lead the way. The Leadership dimension is often the key issue within sustainability awareness. Many companies have in their sustainability journey for lack of leadership vision and action to be the best. This course will offer delegates a deep understanding of this leadership dimension within CSR and Corporate Sustainability.

**TAKING YOUR SKILLS TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

- Equipped with new strategies for outliving leadership, you will emerge better prepared to:
- Assess the changing social and ecological environment and opportunity in triple-bottom line markets.
- Develop measures for improving sustainability strategy.
- Nurture relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Navigate the effects of the economic & financial crisis and the emerging trends of the bottom of the pyramid.

10<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Arabia CSR Awards Clinic

23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019

CSR Advanced

18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019

CSR Strategy and Leadership Training

To register please email us at [admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com](mailto:admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com), [trainings@arabiaccsrnetwork.com](mailto:trainings@arabiaccsrnetwork.com)

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a Sustainable Future ©

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Habiba Al Mar' ashi



## Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

In today's business world, maximising financial profits is simply not enough for businesses. Today employees demand more from organisations where they work; they want to be working for businesses that are making a positive impact in the world.

And it is not just the workforce; consumers too are increasingly influenced to buy from companies that have sustainability in their mission. For companies and businesses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the writing's on the wall; if they expect to attract top talent, increase sales and gain advantage over their commercial rivals, they need to start looking beyond bottom lines and profit margins.

This is where B Corp comes in. The B Corp Certification (also known as B Lab certification) is issued by a global nonprofit organisation that assesses for-profit companies based on their social and environmental performances. In order to achieve a B Corp Certificate, companies need to show highest standards of environmental and social performance, legal accountability and public transparency. At the same time, the companies must make use of their influence to voice social and environmental problems. Currently, more than 2,600 companies across 150 industries and in over 60 countries have been named Certified B Corporations and the list continues to grow. To find out more, don't forget to read this month's feature article on the topic.

March started with increased focus on the upcoming Arabia CSR Awards. The Awards Clinic is the next step in the process which is to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. It will guide the participants on the application process and field their queries. Invitations were sent out to potential applicant organisations in different Arab countries to participate in the Arabia CSR Awards.

From the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of March I was kindly invited by Gulf Petrochemicals Industries Company (GPIC) to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> GPCA PlastiCon Conference and 6<sup>th</sup> GPCA Research and Innovation Summit which was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, GRI held an online webex on 'Presenting the 2019 GRI Community Programme' which was attended by members from the Arabia CSR Network. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, Emirates Environmental Group in collaboration with Arabia CSR Network conducted the 2<sup>nd</sup> panel discussion on 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'. Also on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, I was invited by the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Dubai to a dinner on the occasion of the visit of the Mayor of Rotterdam, and the innovation trade mission on 'water-energy- food'.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, I participated as a panelist in the Governance of Sustainability and Corporate Philanthropy Panel Discussion which was organised by the Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance. The activities of ACSRN for the month were rounded off by the 3-day GRI Standards Training which was held from the 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March.

The coming month promises to be eventful as well with the further roll out of the Arabia CSR Awards Clinic on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April. The time to apply for this prestigious accolade is fast drawing to a close. Avail this opportunity to learn about the Awards application process and learn from the experiences of previous winners. We also have several trainings and workshops coming up in the next couple of months. The most immediate one is CSR Advanced Training to be held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> of April. 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



### *Arabia CSR Network welcomes a new member to its network*

BMMI, a diversified retail and distribution, hospitality, and contract services and supply group in the Kingdom of Bahrain with international operations across eight countries, joined the Arabia CSR Network since January.





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### ***The 10<sup>th</sup> GPCA PlastiCon Conference and 6<sup>th</sup> GCPA Research and Innovation Summit***

The 10<sup>th</sup> GPCA PlastiCon Conference was held under the patronage of the Minister of Oil - Kingdom of Bahrain. The conference addressed the question of what the future held for the region in the face of an industry wide growing realisation on the importance of sustainability and rejection of single use plastics and their harmful effects on the environment. The theme of the conference was 'Innovative Plastic Designs: Sustainability for Future Generations'. The programme covered three key focus areas:

- Product and process design that minimises and simplifies usage and wastage
- Participant led innovation that drives sustainability as a key business objective, not just corporate responsibility
- Reusability of plastic applications that prevent leakage into the environment

The topics were promoted under the framework of plastic waste value management. This was achieved by bringing together the various stakeholder groups from the plastics industry, regulators, brand owners, academia, waste management, investors, start-ups, and NGOs. To find out more, please visit: <https://gpcaplastics.com>



### ***GRI webex on 'Presenting the 2019 GRI Community Programme'***

A webex conducted by GRI on 'Presenting the 2019 GRI Community Programme' was held on the 19th of March, 2019 at 9:30 am, Europe Time (Amsterdam, GMT+01:00). Members from Arabia CSR Network attended the 45 minute webex which introduced the 2019 GRI Community Programme to the participants by highlighting how the GRI Community had the potential for driving business improvements from within by serving as role models for the wider community. It was stressed that members could provide valuable effort to GRI's efforts to drive sustainability considerations into the heart of decision making. Participants were apprised of the different benefits of becoming a member.



With regards to the Virtual Roundtables, it was announced that selection of members would be carried out this year.

The areas for discussion in the Roundtable this year would be:

- Water
- Occupational Health and Safety

The Roundtables offer a chance to connect, co-create and engage with peers on relevant and current sustainability issues and reporting them in an open environment. The experience will help participants and organisations in producing better and more relevant reports for stakeholders. It was also highlighted the membership would provide exclusive access to the Corporate Leadership Groups (CLG's) which is a platform that fosters international discussions between leading reporting companies and experts to create tools to improve sustainability reporting methods.

The 2019 programme for the CLG covers:

- Corporate Leadership Group on Digital reporting: seeking answers to challenges related to digitalisation and data management
- Corporate Action Group on reporting on Sustainable Development Goals: The aim of the action group is to develop best practices for reporting on the SDGs.

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> Panel Discussion on 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'***

Emirates Environmental Group in collaboration with Arabia CSR Network, Emirates Green Building Council and Clean Energy Business Council held the second panel discussion of 2019 on the topic of 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'. The event took place at the Modul University in Dubai on 25<sup>th</sup> of March. It was aimed at bolstering the knowledge on sustainable cities and communities in the region by bringing together sustainably conscious global citizens interested in learning more and understanding about the developments and advancements being made in the field of urban development. Focusing on Sustainable Development Goal 11, the panel discussion addressed City Resilience to climate change, Renewable Energy integration, Green Construction material and Green investments.





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The session addressed very strong questions regarding the challenges facing the region in the transition towards a truly sustainable city, the challenges in retrofitting existing structures to shift them towards renewable energy run structures and whether it could be used to making buildings net zero energy. Queries were also raised regarding measuring the resilience or the success of a city in terms of sustainability, the importance of Green Spaces in the context of UAE and the region and whether it was something developers were increasingly looking to adopt.

The topic was well covered with expert opinion from a diverse panel of speakers. These included the Managing Director of AESG and Chairman of Emirates Green Building Council, Associate Director at Arup, Assistant Director of Business Development at Etihad ESCO and the Director at 5 Capital. The panel explored how UAE is leading the talk on the implementation of sustainable city policies, projects and technologies. The presentations were followed by a lively interactive session where the experts and audience members shared information and discussed queries on the challenges and opportunities of the future of cities.

### ***Invitation: Chromatic Dinner***

Arabia CSR Network President and CEO Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi was invited by Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Dubai to a Chromatic dinner on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2019. The event was held on the occasion of the visit the Mayor of Rotterdam. It also coincided with the innovation trade mission on 'water-energy-food'. The event which was coordinated by the Dutch Creative Industry was the first of its kind in the region and was held to promote the Dutch connection in the Gulf region.



### ***Panel Discussion on Governance and Corporate Philanthropy***

The Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance in collaboration with the American University of Beirut and Suliman Olayan School of Business held a half day session on the topic of Governance of Sustainability and Corporate Philanthropy at the premises of the Dubai International Financial Center on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2019. Arabia CSR Network President & CEO Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi was invited as a panelist to bring her vast and successful experience to the fore and give her views on the topic.

Keynote speech was given by the Chairman of Future Pipes Group. The first panel discussion was moderated by the Vice President of the Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance and was on the topic of 'ESG & Investment Decisions'. Through rigorous discussions the session focused on how companies could better adopt sustainability practices and it benefitted them better as stakeholders. Some of the questions that were raised and answered during the course of the session related to the meaning of sustainability and its connection to ESG, the business case for sustainability, how to drive the sustainability agenda within companies and the ESG criteria that investors looked for.



The second panel was moderated by the CEO of the Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance and was on the topic of 'Principles for Corporate Philanthropy' and the session covered the concept of Philanthropy and Social Investment, why companies engaged in it and how it could be properly governed.

As one of the panel speakers, Arabia CSR Network President & CEO Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi brought her vast experience to the fore in answering questions related to areas such as companies integrating their sustainability initiatives and corporate philanthropy programmes towards maximising their greatest strengths, reporting methods to be used on the impact of their philanthropy and ensuring the long term sustainability of philanthropic programmes.

During her talk, Mrs. Habiba elaborated on strategic philanthropy and impact investing was becoming the new face of philanthropy. She was of the view that with the induction of Millenials in the workforce, every organisation now felt the need to have a committed philanthropic objective that reflects its brand image and attracts talent.





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## GRI Standards Training

The GRI Sustainability Reporting training imparts knowledge about reporting by removing misconceptions regarding sustainability and explaining the benefits of sustainable practices for organisations. Through the training, delegates get to learn how to intensify their understanding about the best way to use sustainability reporting for strategic purposes. Given that transparency and reporting are almost the minimum requirement for a sustainable business, GRI provides a well-structured process to mainstream it into business activities. Many reports have been launched by organisations that have taken part in these trainings and gained both knowledge and technical know-how related to sustainability reporting based on the GRI structure.

Arabia CSR Network is the 1<sup>st</sup> certified training partner of Global Reporting Initiative in the Arab region and the only organisation that gives this training in Arabic. From March 26<sup>th</sup> till the 28<sup>th</sup>, ACSRN ran a three-day English training course on the GRI Standards. This was the 46<sup>th</sup> training that was carried out by ACSRN with more than 400 professionals having finished it successfully till date. The training also included a session on the support services, resources and tools offered by GRI to reporting organisations. The participants were able to put their newly acquired knowledge to the test at the end through a highly effective exercise in which they were asked to review and evaluate two GRI Standards compliant reports issued from the region.



## Member News

### DEWA and DED sign MoU to support young entrepreneurs through DEWA Store

In a bid to strengthen, develop and integrate its strategic partnerships with government entities in Dubai, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Dubai Department of Economic Development (Dubai Economy). The MoU lets DED market its services, products and offers catered towards the small and medium enterprise (SME) sectors, in all DEWA Stores. The collaboration is in line with the government's strategy of turning Dubai into the happiest and smartest city in the world.

The MoU was signed by the MD and CEO of DEWA and the Director General of Dubai Department of Economic Development, accompanied by representatives from both sides. Speaking on the occasion, the Director General of DED said that the MoU underlined the commitment of government organisations in Dubai towards supporting the Dubai SME2021 Plan. He further added that the DEWA store was an innovative and ideal channel to promote SME capacity, thereby encouraging entrepreneurial competitiveness not just in Dubai but across the UAE as well.



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

### Emirates Global Aluminium extends Maersk Line shipping contract

Emirates Global Aluminium, which is the largest industrial company in the United Arab Emirates outside oil and gas, has signed an agreement with Maersk Line for the current year regarding a volume commitment extension agreement for transport of EGA's aluminium to customers around the world.

Emirates Global Aluminium has a stellar track record going back decades over which it has worked with 20 different shipping lines to ship its products, transporting metal to over 70 global ports. Amongst those, Maersk is one of EGA's most significant shipping partners. The logistics giant has been supplying shipping services to the EGA since 1992.

Speaking on the occasion, the Managing Director for Maersk in the UAE, Oman and Qatar acknowledged EGA as being a long standing key customer of Maersk. He further said that Maersk was grateful for EGA's continuing trust as it enabled them to continue to partner with the UAE Aluminium giant to ensure their products reached their customers as fast and as cost-effectively as possible.



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





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## Local and Regional News

### **Global Compact Network UAE Board of Directors - Call for Nominations**

In continuation of the UN Global Compact Network UAE's 2019 call for nominations for its Board, there is an update. In light of the high volume of response from senior representatives on behalf of their organisations, the Network has decided to open up two additional board seats to allow for more organisations from the micro, small and medium size categories to be included. If your organisation has not applied so far, do not hesitate any longer; forward your nominations to the local network at [info@unglobalcompactuae.org](mailto:info@unglobalcompactuae.org).



**Global Compact  
Network UAE**

To know more, contact  
<https://www.unglobalcompact.org>

### **Empower Saves Electricity worth AED 3 Billion In 2018**

Emirates Central Cooling Systems Corporation (Empower), which is the world's largest district cooling services provider, has lived up to its vision of raising awareness about conservation of energy amongst its consumers. The company, in pursuit of its goal of reducing energy consumption, achieved total electricity savings of 1,160 MW, worth AED 3 Billion, in 2018. The company supplies cooling services to more than 1,090 buildings that cater to more than 100,000 customers.



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In addition to this, Empower actively encourages a culture of CSR and Sustainability amongst its customers, suppliers and stakeholders through various initiatives. These include events aimed at promoting responsible behaviours with regards to climate change and limiting energy consumption. The company monitored the consumption levels through an online calculator on its website that helped customers plan and optimise their cooling needs. The move is aimed at instilling a sense of individual responsibility in the minds of the customers. This is also in line with the Dubai Plan 2021 and the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050.

## International News

### **Brussels SDG Summit: CEOs call to Action: Lead & Engage**

In a short span of two years, the Brussels SDG Summit has established itself as one of the premiere yearly joint meet-up for businesses and stakeholders to focus on a common goal for tackling the SDGs. The event will take place from the 6<sup>th</sup> till the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, 2019 at the Egmont Palace, Bruxelles, Belgium. In keeping with its tradition of the previous year, the Summit will serve up a highly engaging SDG-oriented roundtable sessions.



For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.brusselssdgsummit.net/>

### **1<sup>st</sup> European Sustainability Award: "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality"**

The first ever EU Sustainability Award is being organised by the European Commission. The event is slated to take place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019. The award aims to build up momentum on the positive outlook created following the publication of the 'Reflection Paper: 'Towards a Sustainable Europe 2030'.



For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.brusselssdgsummit.net/>

The Award will acknowledge the services of men and women from various organisations in Europe that have been striving to come up with sustainable solutions for the planet. The theme of this year's award will be 'Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality'. The Award will honour seven projects dealing with social, environmental and economic themes.

### **UN Global Compact and B Lab to develop online platform for companies to manage their progress on the Sustainable Development Goals**

The United Nations will partner with B Lab to create an online platform that will cater to companies managing progress on their SDGs. Once developed, the tool will be made available to the public. It is set to be launched in 2020 and will enable companies a wide range of services to help them compare and improve their performances. Furthermore, the tool will have online resources such as key indicators which will help organisations to benchmark themselves against industry leaders. The online platform comes equipped with specially developed metrics that have been developed in consultation with UN Global Compact and partners.



For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.unglobalcompact.org>







## Considering B Corporation Certification? Here Is What You Should Know About The Process.



By Sara Weinreb  
The author is a writer, strategist, and facilitator.  
She is also the host of the Medium Well podcast.

The B Corporation certificate is rapidly becoming a must-have item for organisations that are looking to incorporate impact into their operations. As per the website of the organisation, the certificate opens up the chance for organisations to gauge the effect of business decisions on their employees, customers, clients, the community and even the environment. For organisations that are mission-driven, it provides a useful tool as well as a verification process to guarantee that the organisation is in sync, externally and internally with its goals and actions. For companies looking to start out on obtaining the certificate, it might seem like a daunting task as it requires close scrutiny of all aspects of the business. However, those that have managed to emerge successfully at the other end with the certificate, the trials and tribulations are definitely worth the effort. In this feature article, five such successful companies give their output on the benefits of the certificate.

According to the CEO of 'Goddess Garden Organics', obtaining a B Corp certificate means having to sift through the data of all angles of the organisation's business to understand the effects it might be having on the social and environmental side. This is a more detailed process than the one that many organisations, professing to be operating with environmental and social responsibility, are able to prove. Only those organisations that have got the necessary documentation for every step are able to succeed. One way to simplify the process has been put forward by the

founder of 'WhyWhisper Collective', Alexandra Ostrow. She recommends keeping a track of the organisation's system from day one. Keeping track of data on an ongoing basis is crucial. It will also help companies when they apply for re-certify in the future. She further added that the process of certification opens up new avenues and areas for the organisation in which to make an impact.

According to the CEO and Co-founder of 'PARALLAX', the certification improved the organisation's credibility as a leader and enabled them to build on their products. It also enabled the organisation to branch out into new areas which it had not yet explored.

One of the biggest benefits according to most organisational heads was the sense of pride and achievement that was instilled in the company as a result of the certificate. Obtaining the certificate is a rigorous process and all departments of the organisation are scrutinised. Successfully negotiating the scrutiny and coming out with the certificate motivates the whole workforce to do more and better.

And finally, it is important to get the stakeholders on board before embarking on the journey. For some organisations, focusing on the impact of their actions might be a new direction. It is essential that everyone is onboard before this decision is taken. It is essential that stakeholders and board members understand what they are getting into and what the organisation hopes to get out of the process before committing to it.

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



## Case Study from the Archives - OMAN LNG

### Abstract

Oman LNG produces, markets, and delivers liquefied natural gas (LNG) safely, reliably and profitably to its customers. It began operations with strong ties to the Government of Oman.

This relationship has given OMAN LNG a strong foundation for aspiring to be a good corporate citizen. It holds firm Business Principles that are founded on corporate responsibility and participation in sustainable development.

Unlike many business models that inherently contribute to global greenhouse gas emissions, OMAN LNG's primary product (Liquid Natural Gas) is considered the most environment-friendly among the conventional fossil fuel sources.

Recognising the risks involved in the process of extracting, processing and transporting LNG, it has focused on its workers health and safety, and that of its nearby communities.

It has also established a Social Investment Programme Fund that finances carefully selected projects to help the people of Oman, both on national and local levels.

### Conclusion: Forging the road to sustainability

OMAN LNG has come a long way in its vision to become a trusted partner and player in industry, and to contribute to Oman's national growth. Its journey has come with much success, as well as its own set of challenges. Despite maintaining a multi-party project selection process, it feels the need to further expand stakeholder engagement to include non-governmental organisations (NGOs). OMAN LNG recognises the fresh perspective and complementary knowledge and skill set that representatives from NGOs can bring to the table. Furthermore, partnerships with NGOs can potentially increase its CSR capacity by sharing the task of implementation. It has been seriously considering various social development groups to pilot such synergistic partnerships.

With OMAN LNG's growing awareness of its stakeholders, it is determined to further improve its process of communicating and exchanging ideas with its stakeholders. In addition to the active participation of external stakeholders, OMAN LNG can also engage its internal stakeholders, such as employees, management, and shareholders, as part of its consultative process. However, these challenges are expected and essential segments of the road to sustainability. OMAN LNG's ability to identify such issues early on will allow it to transform them into opportunities. Moreover, these pale in comparison to OMAN LNG's success and achievements through the years. OMAN LNG has been a role model in corporate citizenship for companies and industries in Oman and the Middle East region. Its success has created a huge positive impact on the Omani economy by stimulating economic growth and long-term investments, as well as developing the nation's human capital. Above all, it has been a pioneer in what was previously uncharted territory, corporate sustainability. Through its commitment in the Social Investment Programme (SIP) it has showed its earnest determination to help build the nation. Its consistency and reliability in implementing meaningful and effective projects, demonstrate what good could be achieved when more companies aim for sustainability.

