

الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

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Volume 8 Issue 101

# Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

The Arabia CSR Awards is a home-grown platform that recognises and honours organisations in the Arab region that demonstrate outstanding leadership and commitment to corporate sustainability. The Awards span 12 categories; Public Sector, Large, Medium, Small, Energy, Financial Services, Social Enterprise, Construction, Hospitality, Healthcare, New Business and Partnerships and Collaborations. The Awards is externally verified by one of the world's most reputed providers of business assurance, DNV-GL.

Since being created in 2008, the Arabia Corporate Social Responsibility Awards have processed applications from more than 1,200 organisations representing 42 sectors with more than 1,300 applications being recorded from 14 countries in the Arab Region. In the process, they have cemented their reputation as the 'Green Oscars of the Middle East' for setting the Sustainability Benchmark in the Arab Region. Join us as we set into motion the 13<sup>th</sup> cycle of the coveted Arabia CSR Awards at the Press Launch on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2020. Be there to learn about the distinguished history of the Award and to hear from the previous winners.



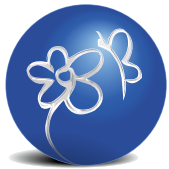
## TRAINING PLANNER 2020

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
<p>■ 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> January CSR Fundamentals Training (Eng)</p> <p>■ 27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> January GRI Standards Training (Eng)</p>	<p>■ 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> February CSR Advanced Training (Eng)</p>	<p>■ 18<sup>th</sup> March Stakeholder Engagement Workshop</p> <p>■ 19<sup>th</sup> March Materiality Mapping Workshop(Eng)</p> <p>■ 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> March GRI Standards Training (Arabic)</p>	<p>■ 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> April CSR Strategy &amp; Leadership Training(Eng)</p>	<p>RAMADAN</p>	<p>■ 22<sup>nd</sup> June Gap Analysis Workshop</p> <p>■ 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> June GRI Standards Training(Eng)</p>
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<p>■ 21<sup>st</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> July CSR Fundamentals Training (Arabic)</p>	<p>■ 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> August GRI Standards Training (English)</p>	<p>■ Inhouse training</p>	<p>■ Inhouse training</p> <p>■ 28<sup>th</sup> October Materiality Mapping Workshop (Eng)</p>	<p>■ 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> November GRI Standards Training(Eng)</p> <p>■ 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> November CSR Advanced Training (Arabic)</p>	<p>■ 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> December CSR Strategy &amp; Leadership Training (Arabic)</p>

■ CSR Trainings ■ GRI Standards Trainings ■ Workshops ■ Inhouse Trainings

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### Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

As the year draws to a close, countries are left facing a mountain of challenges in the shape of no concrete solution towards tackling the climate crisis. The recently held 25<sup>th</sup>

summit of the UN's Conference of the Parties (COP) at Madrid revealed the widening gap between the rich and poor countries as the latter laid the blame of the stalled progress on curbing global warming at the feet of the former. The main parties in this case taking the lead in attempting to block agreement on article 6 are Brazil, India and China. It must be clarified here that the contentious article 6 deals specifically with the role of carbon markets and its effect in helping countries fulfil their commitments under the Paris agreement through the instrument of carbon trading. These carbon markets thus, make it easy for member countries to claim carbon credits for carbon sinks, such as standing forests, and for emissions-cutting efforts, such as wind farms or renewable energy projects.

The recent stalemate between the countries has revolved around the future of carbon markets and their usage by countries to fulfil their commitments. In this case, Brazil is one such example where the government is accused of stalling progress on article 6 by asking that its amazon forests be counted as carbon sinks which could be used to offset its emissions targets. However critics contend that this would be construed as 'double counting' and allowing such an action would be contrary to the spirit of carbon markets which were envisaged as a way to generate financial flows to poor areas, and to cut carbon at the lowest possible cost. Progress on making a headway in this regard can go a long way of ensuring cooperation and raising ambition in the fight against global warming.

As we bid adieu to 2019 and look forward to a new year full of promises and potential, let us hope that we are able to look beyond our differences and individual preferences

to raise a united front against the threat of global warming. The first training of the year will be on CSR Fundamentals which will be conducted from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of January. 2020 promises to be a get off to a glorious start with the launch of the 13<sup>th</sup> Arabia CSR Awards on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January. The month of January will end with a 3-day training on the GRI Standards from the 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup>. The month of February will feature a 3-day training on the CSR Advanced. The month of March promises multiple opportunities for practitioners of sustainability through its multiple trainings and workshops. These include several trainings, Stakeholder Engagement Workshop, Materiality Mapping Workshop and the 3-day GRI Standards training in Arabic. The coveted Arabia CSR Forum and Awards will also take place in October 2020 which will promote the latest burning sustainability issues in the Arab world.

For all the readers of Arabia CSR Network Newsletter, here's wishing you a happy new year and may 2020 be filled with vibrant and sustainable future! We look forward to your continued support and partnership in our upcoming endeavours.





## ACSRN News & Events

### Materiality Workshop for Expo 2020 sustainability report

At the invitation of the Expo 2020's sustainability department, ACSRN actively participated in a workshop on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December at the Address Fountain Views hotel in Dubai. The objective of the workshop was to collect the feedback of Expo 2020's key external stakeholders related to the Expo's material (most significant) sustainability issues. The results would go on to inform the content of Expo 2020's second sustainability report, which will be published in tandem with the actual Expo 2020 to take place from the October of the next year. ACSRN is a certified training partner of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) since 2011, offering certified trainings on the various iterations of the sustainability reporting tool including the latest GRI Standards in both Arabic and English. The workshop was opened by Assistant Manager – Sustainability- Operations Back of House, Expo 2020, she and her colleague gave consecutive presentations, the first being a general introduction to Expo 2020 while the second presented the sustainability elements of Expo 2020 in depth. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session, where further elucidations were provided by the Expo team regarding the sustainability pillars, initiatives and reporting.

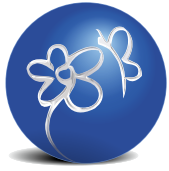
The aim of the workshop was to vote on a list of topics borrowed from the GRI Standards that had been selected by Expo 2020's internal stakeholders to define the content of the organisation's second sustainability report. The delegates were required to vote online with the objective of assigning the level of importance to each topic. The voting was facilitated by Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence, who are working with Expo 2020 for the latter's sustainability reporting. The list of topics along with selected indicators were provided to the delegates in printed form, for reference. The voting was carried out via a designated online platform, and live results were shared with the delegates. Upon the completion of the voting exercise, the Expo 2020 team concluded the workshop with a round of thank you's to all participants.

### CSR Advanced Training

From the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, a 3-day training on CSR Advanced took place in Dubai, which was organised and delivered by ACSRN. CSR Advanced training is meant for individuals who have a foundational knowledge of CSR and Sustainability and are looking to add to that which would help in their organisational roles. 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 advanced principles 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, exercises, 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 the discussion of two sustainability case studies of entities from the region, one government and the other private.





## Member News

### EGA Recruits Local Talent in Line with UAE Vision 2021

As part of its Emiratisation drive, Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA), the largest industrial company in the United Arab Emirates outside oil and gas, has recruited 70 young UAE nationals in November. EGA is known for honing local talent and has one of the highest Emiratisation rates in the country.

The new recruits will undergo national trainee development programmes that can prepare them for technical and operational roles in the future.

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, Abdulla Kalban, said, “The development of local talent has been a foundation of EGA’s success for the past 40 years, and we are fully committed to the ‘UAE Vision 2021’ goal of harnessing the full potential of national human capital.”

More than 1,100 UAE nationals work at EGA currently in roles dedicated to science, engineering, technology and the like. EGA provides management and technical training to thousands of employees every year. The company’s technical training programmes are recognised and accredited by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority.

We commend EGA on this wonderful achievement and wish them the best in their target of establishing 39% of Emiratisation of in-focus positions by the end of 2019.

### Emirates Transport Commended by the British Standards Institute

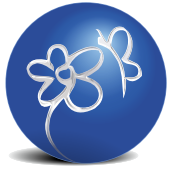
Emirates Transport, our Gold members, have been commended by members of the British Standards Institute (BSI) team for achieving the requirements of the ISO 39001:2012 Road Traffic Safety (RTS) management system certification, which was directly reflected in the reduction of traffic accidents and injuries resulting from them.

This was the result of audits and follow-ups carried out by the BSI team on several Emirates Transport’s locations across the UAE.

Executive Director of the Corporate Services Division, stressed the importance of continuing to strictly adhere to the road traffic safety management system, in line with the Corporation's commitment to implement the highest safety standards in all its operations.

As per this continuous improvement, the company has achieved all the performance indicators under the RTS standard, thereby, ensuring the highest levels of road and transport safety.





## Local News

### Mohammed bin Rashid attends launch of Smart CSR Platform

**His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai**, attended the launch of the Smart Corporate Social Responsibility Platform at the 3<sup>rd</sup> UAE Government Annual Meetings, on 26<sup>th</sup> of November.

The platform, overseen by the National Corporate Social Responsibility Fund, is aimed at enabling the private sector to effectively contribute to the country's sustainable development drive in implementation of the Cabinet Resolution No 2 of 2018.

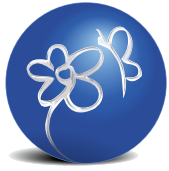
Set up as per Cabinet decision No. 2 of 2018 on corporate social responsibility and issued by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid, the Fund aims to set regulatory framework for social responsibility practices, and define roles and responsibilities of relevant authorities to regulate and stimulate social responsibility at companies and corporates. Sultan bin Saeed Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy, who is also the chairman of the Fund, said the new platform serves as a standard reference for all CSR projects and initiatives associated with the Sustainable Development Goals in the UAE.

The platform regulates and lists companies, beneficiaries and enterprises. "Social responsibility should be based on a purely voluntary basis practiced by companies and establishments out of their own belief and desire in contributing to the development of society through voluntary contribution to projects listed on the smart platform," the resolution said.

CSR practices involve contribution to community development in economic, social and environmental spheres through cash and physical contributions and adopting environmentally friendly policies at work. CSR practices also include enhancing spirit of innovation and scientific research and contributing to finding solutions to problems and challenges facing society.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual meetings took place in Abu Dhabi with the aim of unifying government work at the federal and local level and discussing developmental issues at all levels and in attendance of the decision makers. The meetings also aimed at participation of the various sectors in shaping the development vision of the UAE until the UAE Centennial 2071. A large number of federal authorities and local departments of all emirates attended the annual meetings, which included workshops and discussions about the national KPIs for Vision 2021.





## International News

### Increased action needed on human rights reporting

According to the findings of a recent report from the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) which analysed the progress made by countries towards meeting their targets under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, there is still room for governments of the world in order to help businesses understand, mitigate and improve their human rights impacts. The report which tracks progress by evaluating the progress of individual countries through the 23 National Action Plans (NAPs), suggest improvements through the strengthening of transparency and reporting requirements.

According to the insight from representatives from NGOs international organisations, businesses and policy makers, the following recommendations should be heeded by member countries in order to improve their NAP performances:

- Providing requirements for businesses to disclose their human rights impacts, with legislation on human rights due diligence;
- Specifying that companies need to identify and manage all human rights impacts, and demonstrating they have effective measures to address them;
- Setting measurable and realistic national targets on increasing the number of businesses that report human rights impacts;
- Making use of the human rights data produced in corporate sustainability reporting, as supported by the GRI Standards, to highlight challenges and assess progress.

To find out more, please visit:

[https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/Increased-action-needed-on-human-rights-reporting.aspx?dm\\_i=4J5,6M792,VGAHPD,QC9VS,1](https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/Increased-action-needed-on-human-rights-reporting.aspx?dm_i=4J5,6M792,VGAHPD,QC9VS,1)

### Improving understanding of sustainability disclosure by aligning taxonomy

In order to facilitate better understanding of the environmental, social and governance reporting landscape, two leading names in the field of sustainable reporting platforms have come together to jointly improve accessibility to comparable and reliable information. The first online sustainability reporting online platform is Carrots & Sticks which is from the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), UN Environment Programme and the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB). It is considered as an essential online resource for policymakers on sustainability reporting instruments, regulation, guidance and frameworks.

The other entity in this collaboration is the Reporting Exchange which has been established by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) in partnership with CDSB and Ecodesk .

The collaboration allows individuals with unparalleled access to more than a hundred reporting provisions which cover some of the largest 70 global economies which includes reporting requirements that are voluntary. Guidance from industry bodies, capital markets, regulators and professional bodies is also included. The added value of the collaboration is the singular usage of language and taxonomy by both initiatives in order to ensure a smoother understanding by the users. The overall aim of the collaboration has been to make the information captured by both the initiatives to be consistent and comparable which would in turn help users access the information they need in a better informed manner.

To find out more, please visit:

[https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/Improving-understanding-of-sustainability-disclosure-by-aligning-taxonomy.aspx?dm\\_i=4J5,6M792,VGAHPD,QC9VS,1](https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/Improving-understanding-of-sustainability-disclosure-by-aligning-taxonomy.aspx?dm_i=4J5,6M792,VGAHPD,QC9VS,1)



## 5 KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE 2020s BY JEFF BERARDELLI

### Feature, Blogs, White papers, Articles...



As the world braces itself for the coming confrontation against the calamity of climate change, there is widespread apprehension that the catastrophe will test the conviction and commitment of people all over the world. Here are five key questions and answers about the problem and what can be done about it:

#### • *Can we stop climate change and how will innovation help?*

The article does give a ray of hope but cautions that the changes will not happen overnight. According to the guidelines laid down by the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change there is need to reduce global emissions 45% by 2030 if we want to keep global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. Although that seems highly unlikely at present but that should not mean that we give up completely. The closer we keep warming to 1.5 degrees, even if we overshoot, the better off we'll be. The bottom line is we can still avoid the worst impacts of climate change. This can be achieved by multiple means such as reducing our use of fossil fuels.

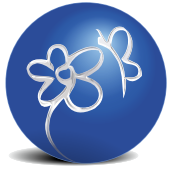
#### • *Where could we see rapid change over the next decade?*

One big concern by experts are the tipping points beyond which there will be no turning back. These are three primary areas climate experts are watching:

1. The continued burning of the Amazon rain forest has reached a dangerous point due to the way land is being abused, combined with climate change. There is widespread concern that at this rate the forest will dry out which will lead to a decrease in their ability to create their own source of rainfall. Once the tipping point is reached, it may turn the Amazon rainforest into a savanna which is an ecosystem with far less tree-cover and therefore much lesser capacity to absorb heat-trapping carbon dioxide.
2. The rapid pace at which the Permafrost is thawing leading to a rapid release of carbon that has been locked up for thousands of years. In 2019, the thawing was so much that in areas it went from being categorised as a carbon sink to a net emitter of carbon.
3. The loss of ice at the poles has been accelerating. This is alarming as ice helps cool the Earth and the less we have, the faster the climate heats up which is another feedback loop.

To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/climate-change-2020-questions-about-global-warming-impact/>



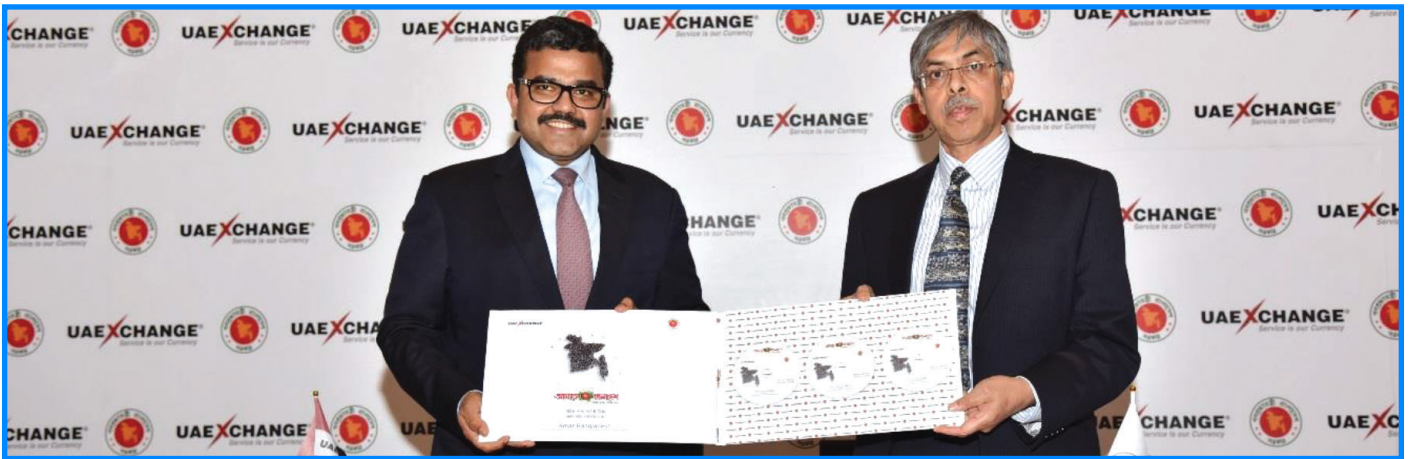
## Best Practices from the archives

### UAE Exchange

2<sup>nd</sup> RUNNER UP - ARABIA CSR AWARDS 2018 - FINANCIAL SERVICE CATEGORY

#### Abstract

UAE Exchange is a private owned company that specialises in foreign exchange, bill payment solutions and remittances. The company evaluates and assesses trends related to sustainability that could affect business strategies and operations. UAE exchange uses the data on perception surveys, sustainability, capability analysis published by UNEP Finance Initiative to identify future trends and opportunities as well as risks and threats. The organisation is a frontrunner in the use of analytical tools such as PESTLE and SWOT to gauge meaningful operational intelligence.



#### Conclusion:

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility is developed from the company's vision and reinforces their commitment to the key stakeholders upon the values UAE Exchange stands for- Integrity, Commitment, and Empowerment & Care. There are many lessons that can be learned from the best practices of UAE Exchange in the field of CSR and Sustainability:

- The company has established a comprehensive sustainability framework, aimed at improving transparency, which guides and governs their corporate functioning.
- The sustainability framework is being guided by the indicators of the UAE National Agenda leading to the UAE Vision 2021, which reflects on the UAE Exchange's commitment and responsibility as an organisation which originated and progressed from UAE.
- To be a part of a larger community working together towards sustainable development, UAE Exchange has developed a constantly evolving practice of engaging with multiple local, regional and international organisations that share its vision and commitments.

The organisation has a customer base of more than 2.5 Million in UAE. The reach of the organisation is such that 2 of every 5 people in the population is a customer. The success of the company relies on its deep-set resolve to provide services of the highest quality to customers, unremitted benefits to partners, unabated value to shareholders, inclusive workplace practices. This ensures employee happiness and belonging and strong corporate citizenship foundations which helps chaperon the environment and uphold community investment.

UAE Exchange has made significant strides in innovation, which they are working to advance even further by harnessing the power of proprietary technology and proficient people. In community responses, apart from charity, it has promoted capacity building practices, understanding community and social needs, enhanced relations with local/federal authorities/ universities, in-kind support, community engagement process and employee volunteering.