



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

April 2020

Volume 9 Issue 104

Arabia CSR Network

newsletter

ARABIA CSR AWARDS 2020

13th Prestigious cycle

Sponsorship for the prestigious Arabia CSR Awards 2020 is open - Contact us now at awards@arabiacsnetwork.com or admin@arabiacsnetwork.com for details on a range of benefits.

Register Now & Don't Miss the Opportunity to be a CSR Champion

Register Now

Upcoming Training & Events

Arabia CSR Awards Online Clinic

16th April, 2020

For Registration get in touch with Arabia CSR Network

Tel.: +971 4 344 8622

E-mail: admin@arabiacsnetwork.com

www.arabiacsnetwork.com



arabiacsnetwork

Launching of the 10th edition of Arabia CSR Best Practice Publication 2019



CSR STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP COURSE

20th-22nd April, 2020

USD 1,610
(for 3 Days)

USD 1,382.50
(Early-bird discount)

Tel.: +971 4 344 8622 | E-mail: admin@arabiacsnetwork.com | www.arabiacsnetwork.com



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 the Netherlands.

Date: 23rd - 25th June 2020

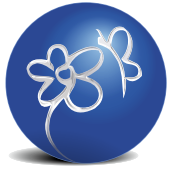
We are Social! Follow us on

[@arabiacsnetwork](https://www.facebook.com/arabiacsnetwork) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/arabiacsnetwork) Arabia CSR Network [@ArabiaCSR](https://twitter.com/ArabiaCSR) [@arabiacsnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/arabiacsnetwork)

Building Partnerships for a Sustainable Future ©

P.O Box 112101, Villa No. 117a, JMR 68, Jumeirah 1, Dubai United Arab Emirates
Tel: +971 4 344 8120, +971 4 344 8622 Fax: +971 4 344 8677
Email: admin@arabiacsnetwork.com Web: www.arabiacsnetwork.com

Editorial Team:
Habiba Al Mar'ashi
Muhammad Ali Bandial
Design by: Shabbir Arif



Note from the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

It is a testing time for all of us as the world is in the grip of a pandemic that threatens to shake the foundation of societies. The novel Corona virus, which we now know as COVID-19 is projected to destabilise entire economies. Especially at risk are the poorer countries that are lacking in infrastructure and resources. Globally, the virus has spread to more than 700,000 and the numbers continue to rise as countries scramble to contain it before it completely overwhelms and inundates the health structure. The idea behind the 'social distancing' being practised by countries globally is to 'flatten the curve' of the spread of the virus so as to give some breathing space to the hospitals and the doctors that are working round the clock to get a grip on the situation.

The situation and the magnitude of the spread varies from country to country depending on their level of preparedness and how soon they are able to get ahead of the curve and act pro-actively. Despite being a central transit location, UAE has once again proven its worth by being able to successfully manage the spread of the virus to an absolute minimum. A major reason for this has been sustainable best practices that have been placed in policies that have ensured that the system does not fail us even in times of emergencies.

As we sit inside our homes, this should also serve as a moment of reflection. There is a lesson to be learnt from how the world has come together and continues to do so in order to face an imminent threat to our lives. I believe that we are already seeing the positive effects of that collaboration.

Another impending threat that has been staring us in the face for a long time has been the threat posed by climate change and global warming. According to the World Health Organisation, air pollution, which is one of the components of global warming, kills more than 7 million people each year. However, it remains to be treated on the same footing as we are treating this pandemic.

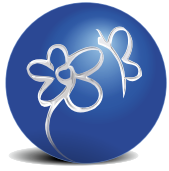
There is no doubt in my mind that united, we will overcome the coronavirus pandemic in the near future. However, with regards to the climate crisis, we are already out of time. The best we can do now is to mitigate the inevitably disastrous consequences that are in store. It is up to us to take heed and set in place stringent measures as we are doing for the Corona virus. Because, inspite of the invisibility of the climate crisis, it is just as dangerous for us, if not more.

In 2018, more than 60 million people suffered due to extreme weather and climate change. Heatwaves and wildfire killed more than 1,600 people in the US, Japan and Europe. The bushfires in Australia this year have destroyed entire regions and wiped many animal species. Cyclone Idai destroyed Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe while damages worth US \$ 24 billion were caused to the US economy by hurricanes Florence and Michael according to the World Meteorological Organisation.

Another worrying aspect is the theory that pandemics and climate crisis go hand in hand. According to research, changing weather patterns might be causing species to move into environments where they don't have the immunity against local diseases, giving rise to pandemics as the present one.

According to the New Economic Foundation, when dealing with lessons from the current pandemic, policymakers should keep in mind the climate crisis as well. Any other solution would only be a temporary one that is bound to fail in the long run.

The month of March was spent in preparing for our upcoming activities and dealing with the setback of the Corona pandemic. We have opted to run some of our trainings online and postponed others till the month of June while preparations and follow ups are ongoing for the Arabia CSR Awards.



ACSRN News & Events

1st Business Groups & Business Councils Roundtable Discussion for 2020

On **12th March**, Arabia CSR Network President and CEO was invited to attend the 1st roundtable discussion of the year 2020 which was hosted by Dubai Chamber of Commerce. The event was attended by all the major Business Councils and Business Groups. The President & CEO of Dubai Chamber led the discussion by sharing an important dialogue on the challenges facing the business community in Dubai.



He was followed by the Chief Representative of the Dubai Chamber office in China who disclosed some interesting facts and figures on the COVID-19. The Director of Strategy at the Dubai Chamber further shared an update on the support measures for local businesses which comprised of an overview of the stimulus package announced by the Central Bank of the UAE including reducing cost of living. The discussion also featured recent updates on the EXPO 2020 which were shared by the Senior Manager of International Engagement Expo 2020. To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.swissbcuae.com/news/dubai-chamber-update-covid19-expo2020/>

Member News

BMMI and INJAZ Bahrain sign an MoU

On **20th January**, a memorandum of understanding which was aimed at supporting Bahrain students with full scholarships annually, was signed, between the BMMI and INJAZ Bahrain Group. The move is in line with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 goals for continued economic development as it will help students to achieve their goals while preparing them for a successful future. Furthermore, it will empower Bahraini youth to succeed in the global economy. Speaking on the occasion, the BMMI representative called it a proud moment for the company as supporting communities is of high priority for BMMI. She added that when it came to education, it was one of the core CSR policy focus areas for the company and that BMMI believes in investing in people and local communities.

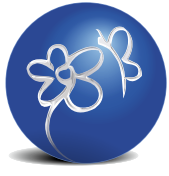
To find out more, please visit: <https://www.startupmgzn.com/english/news/injaz-bahrain-and-bmmi-sign-an-mou/>

Chalhoub Group to grow e-commerce following closure of 60 stores in Middle East

The Chalhoub group which is the largest luxury distributor in the region, is living up to its commitment to sustainable business practices by shutting down nearly 60 physical stores across the Middle East in 2019 and launching three new e-commerce websites in 2020. The group is reassessing its brick and mortar shops in a bid to reduce the carbon footprint and is reinvesting in online stores. In this regard, the group has already opened 12 e-commerce websites for its brands in the Middle East - including Level Shoes, Sephora Middle East and L'Occitane - and also launched the Arabic website of online retail giant Farfetch.

To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.arabianbusiness.com/retail/440373-chalhoub-group-to-grow-e-commerce-following-closure-of-60-stores-in-middle-east>



Regional News

Policy issued to phase out single-use plastic bags in Abu Dhabi by 2021

In order to eliminate the use of avoidable single-use plastic and non-plastic materials in the UAE capital by 2021, the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) has rolled out a new policy that is aimed at encouraging sustainable practices such as reusing and recycling. The move has been rolled out under the Abu Dhabi government's 'Ghadan 21' programme which is aimed at increasing sustainability and improving the environment.

The policy, which has been prepared in support with 12 other government entities, including the Department of Economic Development, as well as six major outlets and many private sector entities producing plastic materials in Abu Dhabi, is slated to be implemented over the coming two years and will be conducted in line with international standards and in collaboration with government and private organisations.

Through the policy, it is hoped that a legislative process will be developed to phase out the use of plastics through properly laid out incentives and regulations. To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.constructionweekonline.com/business/263558-policy-issued-to-phase-out-single-use-plastic-bags-in-abu-dhabi-by-2021>

POSTPONED: 6th Annual Retrofit Tech MENA Summit, 67- April 2020, Dubai

Due to the current situation with regards to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and following close consultation with key stakeholders in order to ensure clients' needs, CEBC has decided to postpone the 6th Retrofit Tech MENA Summit and Awards which was scheduled to be held from the 6th to the 7th April in Dubai to 7th - 8th September, 2020 in Dubai. This decision has been taken in order to adhere to the highest medical and hygiene measures to reduce the risk of transmissions. Furthermore, it has been done in light of the fact that the event will inevitably be impacted by speakers, delegates, sponsors and partners unable to attend due to global travel restrictions.

To find out more, please visit: www.cebcmena.com

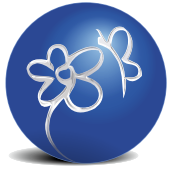
Team Sweden in the GCC

Team Sweden is a collaboration between the Embassy of Sweden and Business Sweden to help international companies gain access to the Swedish market and help domestic ones utilise it as a platform for expansion. Clients range from start-ups via small and medium sized businesses to multinational enterprises – with tailor-made services catering to all of these segments. Team Sweden has been providing the latest news, comments and feedback on selected news items related to trade, culture, investments and promotional activities. All the news and views published are written by staff working for the Embassies of Sweden in Abu Dhabi, Doha and Riyadh or by Business Sweden in Dubai and Riyadh. To find out more, please visit: <https://www.business-sweden.com/>

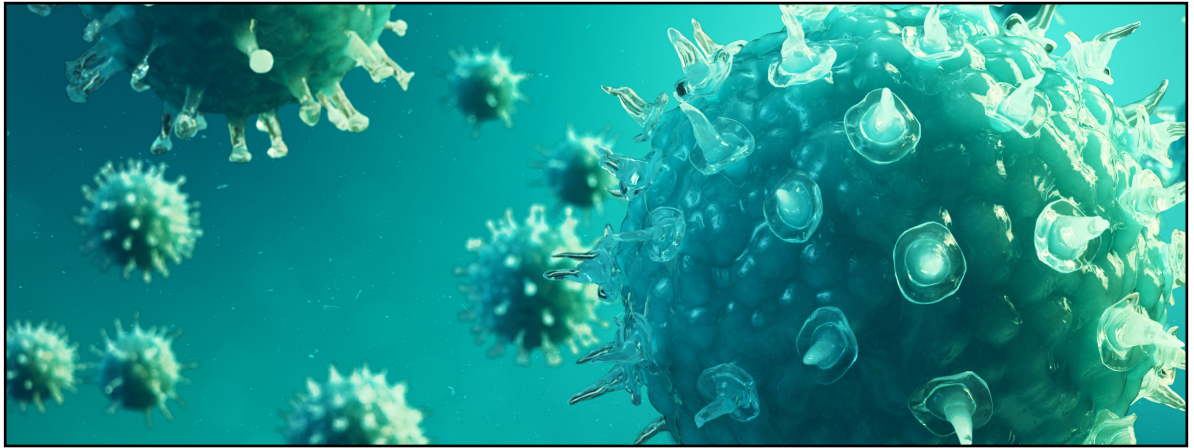
International News

Call to Action: Circle of Aunts & Uncles

The Circle of Aunts and Uncles is a micro-loan fund which provides low interest loans, advice, and connections for Philadelphia area entrepreneurs who don't have access to "family and friends" stage capital. Due to the current global shut down of businesses arising out of the corona virus pandemic, local entrepreneurs have been hit severely. The circle of Aunts and uncles has made a call to action to help these entrepreneurs out by buying gift certificates from them or making some sort of contribution. To find out more, please visit: <http://www.circleofauntsanduncles.com/>



MELTING GLACIERS AND THAWING PERMAFROST COULD RELEASE ANCIENT VIRUSES LOCKED AWAY FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS

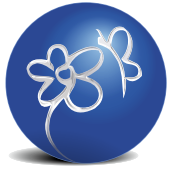


There is a danger that the warming of the planet could lead to thawing at the poles which could lead to the re-emergence of ancient pathogens currently unknown to science. Researchers fear that the viruses that have been lying dormant under the glaciers and permafrost for centuries could unleash a new global pandemic if 'woken up'. These projections were made on the basis of findings made earlier in the year when two ice core samples that were identified in Tibet were found to be containing several of these dormant viruses. What was even more worrying was the fact that both ice samples were really old; one was 520 years old while the second one was dated to 1,500 years old. Of the viruses that were discovered, 28 strains were uncovered for the first time with no prior knowledge of them. Although still a worst-case scenario, but it is feared that the melting of the ice caps could release toxic pathogens into the environment. From known viruses such as small pox that had been completely eradicated, there could be new strains that had caused animal and human extinctions in the past which could be released.

Viruses have been known to survive tens of thousands of years as they are not living things in the technical sense. However, in order to activate and reproduce they need to penetrate the cell of a living organism. This makes the process of killing them problematic as they are not alive outside a living organism. With the Arctic warming twice as fast as the rest of the world, scientists are racing against the clock trying to come up with a solution to contain these ancient omens of doom. The main reason for the increased interest in these ancient viruses and ice-locked microbes has been due to the scientific data highlighting a rapid increase in ocean warming and ice melt which could lead to the unleash of these diseases. This has been proven by the Arctic warming two times faster than the rest of the world with ice sheets consistently thinning all over the world. According to the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2019 the smaller glaciers in Europe, eastern Africa and elsewhere are expected to lose more than 80% of ice mass by the end of the century. Even more worrying is the fact that the permafrost, which covers 24% of the Northern Hemisphere, an area equivalent to 9 million square miles, is thawing at an even quicker pace. According to calculations made by scientists, even if we manage to keep the temperature of the Earth within the 2 degrees, we would still lose 24% of permafrost. The areas emerging from the permafrost would be converted from carbon sinks into carbon emitters, thereby raising global temperatures as well.

To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.newsweek.com/melting-glaciers-thawing-permafrost-ancient-viruses-1486037>



Best Practices From The Archives Iraqi Business Council

Arabia Csr Awards 2018 - Special Recognition - Social Enterprise Category

Profile

Established in 2007, The Iraqi Business Council (IBC) is a unique coalition of Iraqi Businessmen with a mandate to serve the interests of Iraqi investors in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and seek ways to reconstruct the weakened Iraqi economy. The broader goal of IBC is to enhance Iraqi investments in Jordan and develop trade relations between the two countries which is an objective that naturally fosters economic growth for both countries. The idea was born when a group of Iraqi businessmen residing in Jordan decided to create a formal body that would provide a point of reference for investors, facilitate business transactions and consolidate trade and investment efforts.

As a pioneer in introducing this approach among Iraqi businesses, the IBC made sure it made a responsible start; it was the first Iraqi organisation to join the United Nations Global Compact and adopt its principles. They did not stop there, the IBC became a forceful advocate of responsible business amongst its peers, chambers of commerce and private sector networks and businesses. Targeting business at all levels, IBC adopted a multi-stakeholder approach to disseminate sustainable business practices to legislators, decision makers and business owners in an effort to consolidate all efforts towards sustainable business.



Summary

The Iraqi Business Council has applied the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility in the most optimum way: utilising it as a tool to strengthen economic, cultural and social ties and transcending boundaries. Although a business council, IBC expanded its activities to several social and humanitarian spaces with the aim of providing support to Iraqi people in and out of the country. The IBC encourages communication and engagement between the Jordanian society and the Iraqi community and works closely with economic development specialists in Jordan to improve the business environment and explore ways to disseminate CSR and Green Strategies in the private sector.

Although relatively small in size, the Iraqi Business council has proven that size doesn't matter as it has had a huge impact on the Iraqi and Jordanian business scenes at a very macro-level. With a progressive vision the organisation has not limited its focus to current business opportunities but in building business capacity and creating an attractive investment climate to secure responsible business growth in the future and also aligning business and sustainability mandates. IBC has also created a loving home away from home for Iraqis in Jordan, paying great attention to their needs and creating a nexus of economic, cultural and social value on its platform.