



## Upcoming Trainings

### Online Training 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.

25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

### VIRTUAL MATERIALITY MAPPING WORKSHOP

28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021 | DUBAI, UAE



### A Certified Training on Fundamentals of CSR & Sustainability

Date:  
8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>  
February 2021



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## Note from the President & CEO Habiba Al Mar'ashi

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 aftermath of the pandemic. All hopes are pinned on the speedy supply of the vaccine that will finally put this dark chapter behind us.

As a nation that has always risen up to challenges, the UAE has made us proud by establishing its position as a world leader in sustainability.

This had been reflected time and again in its forward-thinking policies and national agendas such as Vision 2021, the UAE Energy Strategy 2050, the UAE Green Agenda 2015 - 2030 and the National Innovation Strategy.

In a situation rife with massive economic upheaval the UAE government has not been deterred by the massive turbulence caused by Covid-19. It has remained steadfast in its commitment towards implementing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on a national scale.

According to the findings of a recent study titled 'The time has come, the KPMG UAE Survey of Sustainability Reporting 2020', there has been a significant increase in companies that have connected their activities to the SDGs in 2020, rising from 37% in 2017 to 49% in 2020.

The report further states that amongst the top 100 UAE companies, there has been an increase in corporate sustainability reporting going up from 44% in 2017 to 51% in 2020. A major reason for this increase has been a strenuous commitment towards bolstering national initiatives and efforts to gain stakeholder confidence.

This has been achieved through proactive communication focused on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance. Consequently, analysts and market experts have attributed the cause for the uptake of market-driven solutions to UAE's innovation-driven approach.

Great promise has been shown by these affordable and scalable solutions that have helped to address the challenges plaguing the region for long. One such positive example has been in the field of sand technology which has had a positive effect on desert farming. This has enabled individuals and institutions to achieve food and water security at scale.

This bodes well for the region and will go a long way towards catalysing UAE's green economy goals and will also help strengthen UAE's position as a global leader in sustainability.

The month of **December** ended on a positive note as Arabia CSR Network held the last two CSR trainings of the year 2020 to equip entities in the Arab Region with the urgent requirement to deliver on the global goals and strengthen the sustainability practices. It conducted the CSR Strategy and Leadership training and CSR Advanced training both in Arabic from **22<sup>nd</sup>** till **29<sup>th</sup> December**.

The participants joined from prominent organisations in the UAE and beyond. They were also introduced to reporting frameworks such as Global Reporting Initiative – (GRI Standards), UN Global Compact – UNGC Communication on Progress (COP), Social Responsibility ISO 26000, etc.

Looking ahead to 2021, we at ACSRN are committed to reaching out and widening our reach further. To achieve our goal, the Network has scheduled a year packed with trainings and workshops.

The registrations for **January** and **February** trainings are open and have already started filing up. ACSRN urges companies to step up efforts to embed the latest sustainability approaches and tools in their core operations and businesses.

Furthermore, in **January** we will launch the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the iconic Arabia CSR Awards. Instituted in 2008, the Arabia CSR Awards is the undisputed sustainability benchmark of the Arab Region, earning the trust and recognition of global and regional bodies such as The United Nations Global Compact, The United Nations Environment Programme and The League of Arab States.

This is reflected in the interest of organisations from different sectors and sizes to participate from all over the Arab world with its different parts.

As we bid adieu to 2020 and look forward to a new year full of promises and potential, let us take solace from the valiant battle put up by our heroes fighting in the forefront against a faceless enemy.

Let us hope that we are able to look beyond our differences and individual preferences to raise a united front against the threat of calamities and pandemics.

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





## Stakeholder Workshop

Arabia CSR Network was invited to participate in Tristar Groups' Sustainability Stakeholders Workshop, held on **8<sup>th</sup> December** as a virtual event. The objective of the workshop was to collect stakeholder feedback on Tristar's sustainability practices and achievements, which will inform the materiality process and the 2020 sustainability report of Tristar Group.

The workshop included insightful presentations outlining Tristar's commendable work on Sustainability and their ESG good practice, which were delivered by the company's senior HSE and Sustainability leaders, as well as partners.

An online poll was conducted through which participants were able to provide feedback on the environmental, social and governance practices within the group, as well as on their sustainability reporting practices and outcomes.

Following the above, a short discussion session was held whereby participants added their thoughts and suggestions.

The session ended with an inspiring message from the CEO of Tristar Group urging all to support and adopt the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to forge collaborations for the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Tristar Group, one of the winners of the 13<sup>th</sup> cycle of Arabia CSR Awards 2020 has been unfolding the opportunities to elevate its CSR and sustainability activities consistently.

It organised this workshop to delve deeper into key materiality issues and get valuable feedbacks from their external stakeholders. ACSRN congratulates Tristar Group for such proactive approach.

## Networking and Sustainable Development

The 6<sup>th</sup> AHS International Conference was organised by Al Hussein Society/Jordan Center for Training and Inclusion under the theme of 'Networking and Sustainable Development' on **15<sup>th</sup> December**. The opening remarks were shared by the German Ambassador, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development Germany (BMZ) representative, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), and Founder & President of Al Hussein Society.

The conference was set in three sections as follow,

1. Networking with Public sector
2. Networking with Universities: Evidences and Practices
3. International Networking and CBID

ACSRN President & CEO was invited to address the CSR and good governance.

She talked about the linkages between corporate social responsibility, corporate accountability and good governance as a pressing need across the spectrum of stakeholders; be it the shareholders whose investments are protected in the process, or those in the company value chain, and external stakeholders like the community and environment.

She also elaborated on the impacts of COVID-19 and the potential for business to leverage their assets and experiences to identify problem areas and collaborate in support of the development and stability of societies.

## CSR Strategy and Leadership Training

Being one of the largest, well-reputed and the earliest certified training entity in the region, ACSRN is a market leader in providing CSR and sustainability reporting trainings, both in English and Arabic.

The Arabia CSR Network Certified Training series was developed in 2014 and launched on **January 2015**. The series contains: Fundamentals of CSR and Sustainability, CSR Advanced and CSR Strategy and Leadership.

The training contents undergo regular updates to ensure that it is encompassing the latest tools in CSR and sustainability. From the **22<sup>nd</sup>** to the **24<sup>th</sup> December**, ACSRN conducted 3-day virtual

training on CSR Strategy and Leadership in Arabic. This training offers a deep understanding of the leadership dimension within CSR and Corporate Sustainability.

It takes delegates through various concepts, approaches and examples to demonstrate how an effective leadership can help an organisation attain new heights in CSR and Sustainability.

Delegates are expected to have a prior exposure to sustainability and the fundamental rationale behind CSR and Corporate Sustainability together with a fair understanding of Strategic planning and Management.





## ACSRN News

### CSR Advanced Training

From the 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> December, 3-day training on CSR Advanced in Arabic took place, which was organised and delivered virtually by ACSRN.

CSR Advanced training is meant for individuals who have a good 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 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 lectures, 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.

## Member News

### DEWA's Smart Services

In a turbulent year, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) has once again made the nation proud by achieving a new high in terms of sustainability and promoting a green environment. It successfully completed over 7 million smart transactions between January and September 2020, the organisation has achieved carbon emission reductions amounting to 24,000 tonnes. In other terms, the entity has achieved savings amounting to more than AED 285 million.

In terms of a green environment, this is equal to planting 27,000 trees in an area equal to 52 football pitches. Speaking on the occasion, Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD & CEO of DEWA, said that the company had made sure that all of its services were easily accessible on its website and smart app for ease of use. This ensured a fast-tracked process and paperless solutions which helped in protecting the environment. He further added that DEWA's commitment to enriching the customer experience with smart services included using the latest disruptive technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

These in turn helped achieve the Dubai 10X initiative, which mandates the Government of Dubai to be a global leader that is 10 years ahead of all other cities through government innovation and the reworking of traditional work mechanisms. It also achieved the Smart Dubai initiative, to make Dubai the smartest and happiest city in the world. He also said that DEWA is one of the leading organisations in digital transformation. Smart adoption of DEWA's services reached 98.56% in Q3 of 2020.

To find out more, please visit: <https://wam.ae/en/details/1395302897532>

### ENOC Wins 'National & GCC O&G Project of Year

Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC) staked its claim as the leading integrated energy player operating across the energy sector value chain in the Arab Region by winning the 'National Oil & Gas Project of the Year' and 'GCC Oil & Gas Project of the Year' at the MEED Project Awards 2020. The entity was awarded these titles for its refinery in Jebel Ali which is a major contributor to the government's downstream strategy in its bid to be self-sufficient in domestic fuels and increase exports simultaneously.

The refinery expansion project which is valued at an excess of US\$ 1 billion, ensures the production of high quality, environmentally friendly, refined products for the local and international markets. The project which was announced in 2016, finished in 2019. The production capacity of the refinery is 213,000 barrels per stream day. It has been built based on the highest local and international standards to ensure safe and risk-free operations.

The Group CEO of ENOC said that as a wholly owned-government entity, the entity is committed to supporting the UAE Government in ensuring energy security while focusing on enhancing domestic refining capabilities and distribution network. He further added that ENOC Group's Jebel Ali Refinery not only builds in-country refining strengths but also supports the green vision of the government through the production of environment-friendly products that abide by international regulations. Winning the honours for the National Oil & Gas Project and GCC Oil & Gas Project for the ENOC refinery expansion project amidst tough competition, underlines the value-add of the refinery to the country.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.wam.ae/en/details/1395302896809>





## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Concrete is awful for the planet. Clever Chemistry Can Help

If you were to stick your head out of the window, chances are that most of your vision would be covered with buildings made out of one material; concrete. It has been a truly wonder ingredient, one that has realised many of our dreams. From office towers to shopping malls to highways to airports, everything is made from this magic material. Every year tens of billions of tonnes of concrete is produced. This is a staggering amount, in simple terms, it is enough to construct a 100-foot wall around the equator.

That is not the problem though. The point of worry is the process of the creation of concrete which accounts for about 8% of all annual carbon emissions. In order to produce cement limestone and other minerals, they are placed in a kiln and baked at temperatures reaching 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit. The first problem with this process is that the heat for those kilns is generated by burning coal or other fossil fuels. The second and more serious problem is that a by-product of concrete is the generation of carbon dioxide which goes up into the atmosphere. In terms of country wise emissions, the levels achieved through the production of concrete places it at number three, behind only China and the United States.

Researchers the world over are working around the clock, trying to find a solution to this problem. One such front runner in this race is "Carbon Cure Technologies" which is aiming to produce 'a system to replace some of the cement used in making concrete with carbon dioxide, thereby both reducing emissions and sequestering carbon. Not to mention saving money.'

To find out more, please visit:

<https://www.wired.com/story/concrete-carbon-emissions-clever-chemistry-can-help/>





## Best Practices 2019 From The Archives Accenture Middle East

Arabia CSR Awards 2019 - 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up - Large Business Category

Accenture is a global brand that specialises in providing consultancy services in strategy, digitalisation, technology and operations. According to its Corporate Citizenship Report 2018, Accenture has branches in more than 120 countries with a workforce of 477,000 people. Some of the biggest brands have worked with Accenture, including 91 of the Fortune Global 100 and more than three-quarters of the Fortune 500. The company has annual net revenues of US\$ 39.6 billion and has invested nearly US\$ 800 million in research and innovation to develop leading edge ideas. Accenture Middle East has been providing a wide range of consulting and professional services in the MENA Region since March 2009. These services include analytics, business process management, cloud services, international development, risk management, it support, infrastructure outsourcing, and other operations.



### Summary

Accenture Middle East's top management leads the company's global responsible business, corporate sustainability, and corporate citizenship initiatives. This helps integrate sustainability, human rights, ethical innovation, social innovation, and responsible products and services to every piece of its business. The company is fully conscious that the attention towards responsible business is gaining momentum and the expectations from businesses are rising in the middle east.

The company is committed to enhancing its social presence in this region and helping others in the ecosystem grow stronger. Accenture Middle East is conscious of sharing its commitment to building a sustainable and responsible future with all its stakeholders, through its skilling programmes with expo live, Al Nahda, Efe & Evolvin' women.

The company is looking forward to become the organisation of reference when it comes to the integration of relevant social initiatives into its business strategy, in addition to good governance practices and policies that are built on the local context and the company's strong commitment to making a positive social impact.

The company is an early adopter of the science based target to address climate change and is the largest professional services company to make the commitment to reduce its absolute greenhouse gas emissions by 11% by 2025. It has embraced diversity to help women and people of determination advance professionally in the middle east and are committed to remaining relevant to the region by defining sustainability topics that are most significant to their business, stakeholders and the local context.

