



Under the Patronage of  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE  
& ENVIRONMENT



Organised by  
الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الإجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

# NEWSLETTER

October 2021 Volume 10 Issue 122

## ARABIA CSR FORUM 9<sup>TH</sup> CYCLE

**REGISTER NOW!**  
**3 - 4 OCTOBER 2021**

**From 2020 to 2030  
Post-pandemic Sustainability  
and Resilience**

### Upcoming Trainings

 الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الإجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

**ONLINE TRAINING ON  
CSR STRATEGY  
AND LEADERSHIP**

**5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021**



 ARABIA CSR NETWORK 2021

**Online Training  
GRI Standards for  
Sustainability Reporting**

**Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2021**

 الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الإجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

**ONLINE CSR ADVANCED  
CERTIFIED TRAINING  
COURSE**

**14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021**



Note from President and CEO	2
ACSRN News	3
Member News	4
Feature Article	5
Best Practice	6

**We are Social! Follow us on**     **arabiaccsr**

Building Partnerships for a  
Sustainable Future ©

📍 P.O. Box 112101, Villa No. 117a, JMR 68, Jumeirah 1, Dubai - UAE  
☎️ : +971 4 344 8120, +971 4 344 8622 Fax: +971 4 344 8677  
✉️ admin@arabiaccsrnetwork.com 🌐 www.arabiaccsrnetwork.com

Editorial Team: Habiba Al Mar'ashi,  
Mariella Gaspar, Youshey Zakiuddin  
Joelle Kassouf, Shafaq Ali  
Design by: Harris Lalan



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

Hello Arabia CSR Network members, followers and friends,

It's great to state here that the start of September has brought about a return to normalcy in so many ways. Most children are now back to school and a large number of adults are working from their offices. With this, we hope that we continue to stay safe and healthy.

At the Arabia CSR Network, our activities are ramping up as we approach the biggest sustainability event in the Middle East and North Africa region – the Arabia CSR Forum and Arabia CSR Awards Ceremony. While many of you have heard of it and even been a part of it, we'd like to remind you that the Arabia CSR Forum is a trailblazer of an event as it brings to the table many cutting-edge sustainability issues discussed by the best and most experienced people in the sustainability arena. We invite government officials, business leaders, civil society stakeholders to help us pave new roads towards sustainability in the Arab World.

The Arabia CSR Forum is being held under the patronage of the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE). The theme of the event has been aptly selected to focus on our post-pandemic sustainability and resilience. This theme will allow us to ask some really challenging questions - Are we doing enough to survive and thrive in a post-pandemic world? And how are businesses changing to adapt to the new normal?

2020, and the pandemic that spread through the world during the year, was a stark reminder of the importance of various sustainability issues – especially those related to public health and safety, the negative impact of our food systems, business resilience to global environmental issues, income inequity and worker welfare.

The Arabia CSR Forum will pick on all of these critical topics by bringing in experts from various fields to dive deep into their wealth of experiences and share with us their wisdom. The format

of the Forum will include a number of plenary sessions covering topics that focus on achieving Net Zero, Internal Stakeholders, Climate Change, Economic Prosperity, Corporate Culture and more. These sessions will host many revered and respected speakers representing Government entities, Academia, Global Bodies and the Corporate Sector from the UAE, the GCC, the wider Arab Region and globally. I personally believe that this is one sustainability event that you should NOT MISS.

The Forum will be followed by a beautiful ceremony to celebrate the winners of the Arabia CSR Awards. This year, we had 100 applications with some excellent submissions. The winners truly are the organisations that have made the most of the current challenges to contribute in a meaningful way to our social development and environmental protection. If you would like to learn about CSR and sustainability from the leading companies, I strongly urge you to attend the Arabia CSR Awards Ceremony.

During the month of September, several meetings of the World Green Building Council took place including the Board of Director's meeting and the WorldGBC's Corporate Advisory Board. The Council is responsible for transforming the building and construction sector across three strategic areas—climate action, health & wellbeing, and resources & circularity. During these meetings, the 2022 Annual Plan was discussed which will provide continuity for WorldGBC's 2021 priorities and leverages their successes in 2021 to scale up their impact. The Corporate Advisory Board members, on the other hand, discussed the projects that will enable industry solutions and address the challenges ahead to be able to meet WorldGBC's 2030 goals.

With back to back preparations for the upcoming Arabia CSR Forum and Arabia CSR Awards, the Network has also organised its 61<sup>st</sup> GRI Standards training from 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September. You can read more about the training on page 5.

To conclude this note, I would like to remind you again to sign-up for the upcoming Arabia CSR Forum & Arabia CSR Awards Ceremony. Both events will take place over two days (October 3 & 4) at the Swissotel Al Murooj.

Please write to us at [awards@arabiacsrnetwork.com](mailto:awards@arabiacsrnetwork.com) to find out how you can attend and for more details.





## ACSRN News

### 1) WorldGBC's Commitment to Net Zero

Arabia CSR Network CEO and President, in her capacity as WorldGBC's Director and Board Member, attended the World Green Building Council's "Net Zero Carbon Commitment" meeting on **6<sup>th</sup> September**. The meeting serves as a follow up session made for WorldGBC Board of Directors to keep the team aware of the importance of bringing efforts into the commitment of net zero carbon buildings. The session started with an overview on the Net Zero Carbon commitment and highlighted the continuous growth in the global building's industry stock market. The document on "Advancing Net Zero Whole Life Carbon: Offsetting Residual Emissions from the Building and Construction Sector" was also discussed during the meeting wherein it outlines guidance on the use of offsetting in pursuit of net zero carbon within the Commitment, with clear reference to making net zero claims and alignment with other industry definitions of net zero. With regards to WorldGBC's commitment to Net Zero, They announced on 15<sup>th</sup> September the release of the updated Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment. The Commitment will now require that for all new developments and major renovations, in addition to addressing operational carbon, entities must achieve maximum reductions in embodied carbon across the building lifecycle and compensate for residual upfront emissions. Alongside this update, they will soon publish the 'Advancing Net Zero Whole Life Carbon: Offsetting Residual Emissions from the Building and Construction Sector', this publication will serve as guidance for how the sector should compensate for its total carbon impacts.

### 2) WorldGBC Board of Directors

ACSRN President & CEO, Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi attended on **8th September** World GBC's Board of Directors. The meeting started with a warm welcome from WorldGBC Chair. The Board then had a detailed discussion on the 2021 annual plan progress and strategies which revolved on Board Committee Top Level Priorities, Finance and Membership Committee update, Annual Plan Progress Dashboard and COP26 Strategic Developments. Departmental Updates was also discussed during the meeting which focused on engagement & networks, Building Life and BuildUpon2 in Europe, bolster existing work in Global Projects (Advancing Net Zero and Better Places for People), establish a third Global Project and Marketing & Communications (MarComms). The Board then moved to discuss the 2022 Planning of WorldGBC Strategy longevity and continuous improvement, priorities and annual plan, and the draft budget for the upcoming year. The meeting served as an update to the Directors on the business of WorldGBC. The 2021 progress and priorities of each Regional Green Building Council were also discussed during the meeting. The Board had a brief discussion about the ideas provided by each Board Member and how can the WorldGBC use these to bolster their work and share them throughout the network.

### 3) WorldGBC Corporate Advisory Board Meeting

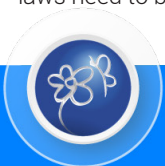
The WorldGBC has a global mission to transform the building and construction sector across three strategic areas—climate action, health & wellbeing, and resources & circularity. Through a systems change approach, WorldGBC's network is leading the industry towards a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable and resilient built environment. On **15<sup>th</sup> September**, Arabia CSR President & CEO, A co-founder and Treasure of EmiratesGBC and WorldGBC Director and Board Member, Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, attended the WorldGBC's Corporate Advisory Board. The WorldGBC's Corporate Advisory Board (CAB) is a select group of companies which are leaders on sustainability and which serve to guide WorldGBC on its strategy and activities. They share their insights, guidance and support for the next steps in WorldGBC's sustainability journey. In the meeting the CAB members discussed the projects enabling industry solutions, the challenges ahead to meet WorldGBC's 2030 goals, and the disruptive initiatives to overcome the barriers to Sustainable Buildings for everyone and everywhere. They also discussed about WorldGBC's most recent release of the updated Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment. This is a major step forwards, expanding the scope to recognise enhanced leadership action in tackling embodied carbon emissions from the building and construction sector, as a critical enabler in their journey towards sector decarbonisation.

[CLICK FOR MORE](#)

### Effective & Sustainable Partnership: A Door for the Next Generation

Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) supported its sister organisation, the Emirates Environmental Group to organise the 4th and last panel discussion of the year on **21<sup>st</sup> September 2021** titled **"Effective & Sustainable Partnership: A Door for the Next Generation"**. The discussion was moderated by EEG's Chairperson and had four esteemed guest speaker with immense knowledge and understanding about sustainability and the urgency to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set for the year 2030. The panel commenced with EEG's Chairperson talking about the concept of the global ripple effect, where a negative or positive effect in one area can have its consequences in another. She further went on to encourage the idea of sustainability as a norm in day to day life, rather than a cry for help in times of crisis. Achieving the SDGs has been one of UAE's top priorities; the government has put in place a dedicated committee solely working towards achieving the agenda. Additionally, Expo 2020 in collaboration with UN Global forum has taken the initiative to study how the global community can foster economic prosperity for all, while ensuring that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are accomplished. The esteemed panel consisted of Ms. Sabine Sakr, the Regional Development Coordinator at United Nations Environment Programme West Asia Office, Ms. Hind Al Shamsi, the Acting Director of the Industrial Statistics Department at the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Center (FCSC) affiliated with the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, Ms. Rose Armour, the Head of AUS Sustainability at American University of Sharjah, and Mr. Anirban, the Head of Business Development, Sales & Marketing - India & Middle East at DNV. During the session the panelists emphasised on the importance of partnership; in order to be able to achieve the goals in a set timeframe, therefore having strong partnerships with reliable entities is very essential. Moreover educating members of the society especially the youth on sustainability and achieving SDGs instills a sense of responsibility and understanding for a more sustainable mind-set.

To conclude, each speaker stressed on the importance of partnership, not only between countries but affiliations with like-minded entities and individual members of society to be able to achieve the set goals. EEG's Chairperson ended on the note of accountability; appropriate laws need to be put in place for the industries that fail to meet the basic standards of sustainability.





## Arabia CSR President & CEO at Fujairah TV

In line with the preparation for the 9<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the Arabia CSR Forum taking place on 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> October, Arabia CSR Network's President and CEO, Mrs. Habiba Al Marashi, was invited by Fujairah TV on **27<sup>th</sup> September** for a live interview to talk more about the upcoming 'Arabia CSR Forum'. The ACSRN President & CEO started with a brief introduction about the ACSRN Network and Arabia CSR Forum. She then briefly explained about the chosen slogan for this year's Forum cycle - "From 2020 to 2030: Post-pandemic sustainability and resilience." The interview then revolved on the President & CEO's view point and sharing of her expertise with regards to the roadmaps for adapting to a post-pandemic world and how has the pandemic demonstrated the importance for the economy to have a solid foundation of strong values such as safety, security, justice and inclusion. She also shared that the forum will address the lessons learned from 2020 that we can apply in the years to come for a more sustainable world. She shared her views on how companies can find ways to achieve a zero-emissions economy and the different challenges and opportunities faced by organisations during the pandemic and beyond.

**WATCH HERE** 

## ACSRN conducts the 61<sup>st</sup> GRI Training

ACSRN is the first certified training partner of GRI in the Arab Region since 2011. 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. As a Certified Training Partner of Global Reporting Initiative, ACSRN ran a three-day virtual training course on GRI Standards from **28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September**. The GRI Sustainability Reporting training is a very efficient mode of gaining comprehensive knowledge about sustainability and reporting. It helps to clear up misconceptions about what Sustainability means and how sustainable practices benefit an organisation. The training focused on the latest GRI sustainability reporting standard with an aim to help organisations better understand and communicate their non-financial performance and their sustainability related impacts. The training concluded with a highly effective exercise wherein participants reviewed and evaluated two GRI Standards compliant reports issued from the region. This practical activity ensured that the participants had fully grasped the content of the training module and were able to successfully apply the knowledge they had gained. Successful participants received a formal certificate from GRI for undertaking the training. To date ACSRN has delivered 61 sessions on GRI reporting, that have spawned a large number of reports and helped build the capacity of 450 individuals from diverse industries.

## 9<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the Arabia CSR Forum

Arabia CSR Network is conducting its 9<sup>th</sup> cycle of Arabia CSR Forum for two consecutive days on **3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of October** at Swissotel Al Murooj Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The Arabia CSR Forum is being held under the patronage of the Ministry of Climate Change and the Environment. The Forum will be graced by the presence of distinguished speakers including H.E. Sheikh Engr. Salim Bin Sultan Bin Saqr Al Qasimi – Chairman of Ras Al Khaimah Civil Aviation Authority and Member of the Executive Council of the Government of Ras Al Khaimah, High profile speakers from the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment and Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology, the FAO, the GISD and many more. It is the region's premier convention and is considered one of the biggest platforms in the Arab Region and beyond with regards to Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility. It attracts worldwide speakers, leaders, thinkers, practitioners and policymakers from all over the world to share and exchange their expertise and knowledge towards CSR and sustainability. This year's theme is "From 2020 to 2030: Post-pandemic sustainability and resilience"; it is designed to represent and match the 2021 context and current status. The Forum will cover the following sessions:

### Day 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> October

- Re-calibrating Our Values, Adapting to a Disrupted World
- From Words to Actions - The Goal of Achieving Net Zero
- Workers, Wellness & Welfare: Empowering Internal Stakeholders

### Day 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> October

- A Crisis on Our Plates: Tackling Climate Change through Food Systems
- Lessons Learned. The Future of Corporate Fabric
- Economic Sustainability: Recovery, Regulation and Resilience

The Arabia CSR Network has been active for almost two decades in mobilising the public and the private sector to build partnerships for a sustainable future, to raise awareness and the uptake of Corporate Social Responsibility as a strategic management concept. Through the years, the Network has managed to design programmes that tackle the needs and requirements of the organisations to embed environmental, social, and governance good practices in their daily operations and strategies. Don't miss this opportunity. Seats are limited. Visit <https://arabiacsrn.com/forum/> to know more and to register

**CLICK HERE** 

## SDG Investment Fair 2021

Mobilising private investment, a fundamental tenet of any country's SDG strategy, is challenging for many developing countries. Essential investment projects in developing countries need additional finance, and the SDG Investment Fair was created to connect countries with investors to help them finance their SDG programmes. In line with this, UNDESA hosted the SDG Investment Fair 2021 from **28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September** which Arabia CSR network attended virtually. The objective of the event is to introduce new countries to the SDG Investment Fair programme and receive updated information from a previous presenter to the Fair. The focus of the proceedings was the presentations of investment projects by governments to investors. The projects shall be bankable, ready for investment, and align with the country's SDG strategy. Three countries presented 1-3 projects to a variety of participants including but not limited to Global Investors for Sustainable Development' (GISD) Alliance, other institutional investors, banks, infrastructure investors, international financial institutions, development banks and academia. The presentations were then followed by interactive discussions between the countries and participants. The fair resulted in the invitations for after-the-fair matchmaking between countries and investors interested in the projects presented and facilitation of continued collaboration between interested investors (attendees) and countries. The Fair also featured one-on-one matchmaking sessions between the investors and countries, online investor exchanges, knowledge sharing and capacity building.







## Member News

### ABB to present sustainable solutions at Dubai EXPO 2020

ABB will participate in the Dubai EXPO 2020 as an official partner of the Swedish Pavilion and showcase its leading technology in a digital and interactive way partnering with more than 100 companies and institutions. With a history of more than 130 years and Sweden as one of the birthplaces of the company, ABB will join the country's efforts to highlight the most innovative solutions that will help build a smart society under the pavilion's theme of "Co-creation for Innovation". As part of its presence in Dubai, ABB will highlight how plastic waste is turned into furniture using a specially adapted robot from ABB and how the sustainability and production efficiency of mining operations can be increased by using smart, digital solutions. Other projects include ABB solutions that help turn Västerås – Sweden's fifth largest urban area – into one of the smartest cities in the country, establish one of the world's tallest wooden buildings as a showcase project for state-of-the-art energy technology and research into new materials for a smarter and more sustainable future.

[CLICK FOR MORE](#)

### DEWA uses Tesla's lithium-ion energy storage solution at MBR Solar Park

As part of its efforts to diversify Dubai's energy mix and enhance energy storage technologies, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) has inaugurated a pilot project for energy storage at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park using Tesla's lithium-ion battery solution. The project has a power capacity of 1.21 MW and an energy capacity of 8.61 MWh with a life span of up to 10 years. MD and CEO of DEWA, Mr. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer noted that DEWA is implementing other energy storage projects. These include using Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) in the construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which combines CSP and photovoltaic solar panels with a production capacity of 950MW. The project will have the world's largest global thermal storage capacity of 15 hours, ensuring energy availability round the clock. In collaboration with Expo 2020 Dubai and Siemens Energy, DEWA has also inaugurated the Green Hydrogen project, the first of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa to produce green hydrogen using solar power. The project began at the outdoor testing facilities of DEWA's R&D Centre at the solar park.

[CLICK FOR MORE](#)

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Climate crisis leaving 'millions at risk of trafficking and slavery'

The climate crisis and the increasing frequency of extreme weather disasters including floods, droughts and megafires are having a devastating effect on the livelihoods of people already living in poverty and making them more vulnerable to slavery, according to a new report. Researchers from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and Anti-Slavery International found that drought in northern Ghana had led young men and women to migrate to major cities. Many women begin working as porters and are at risk of trafficking, sexual exploitation and debt bondage. One woman, who migrated to Accra from northern Ghana, used to farm until the land was ruined by flooding and she was forced to move. For seven years she has worked as a porter (kayayie), carrying items on her head. She said: "Working as a kayayie has not been easy for me. When I came here, I did not know anything about the work. I was told that the woman providing our pans will also feed us and give us accommodation. However, all my earnings go to her and only sometimes will she give me a small part of the money I've earned." She dropped a customer's items once and had to pay for the damage, which she could not afford. The woman in charge paid up on condition that she repay her. She added: "I have been working endlessly and have not been able to repay." With countries in the South Asia region tightening immigration restrictions, researchers found that smugglers and traffickers operating in the disaster-prone region were targeting widows and men desperate to cross the border to India to find employment and income. Trafficking victims were often forced into hard labour and prostitution, with some working in sweatshops along the border. The World Bank estimates that, by 2050, the impact of the climate crisis, such as poor crop yields, a lack of water and rising sea levels, will force more than 216 million people across six regions, including sub-Saharan Africa, south Asia and Latin America, from their homes. Ritu Bharadwaj, a researcher for the IIED, said: "The world cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking that's being fuelled by climate change. Addressing these issues needs to be part and parcel of global plans to tackle climate change."



Excerpts from the article by:  
Sarah Johnson





## Best Practices 2020 From The Archives

### Transworld Group

#### Arabia CSR Awards 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up - Small Business Category

### Profile

Transworld began its operations as a shipping agency in Bombay, India; today the group stands as a global shipping and logistics conglomerate. With expertise that covers a complete range of solutions from Ship Owning to Project Logistics to Warehousing, the group provides world-class logistics and associated services.

Transworld Group also has multiple new companies that work alongside its core business. Transworld operates across offices in UAE, USA, KSA, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Singapore, Pakistan and India. Transworld's commitment to sustainability is visible in their Corporate Responsibility vision, mission and approach. Their Corporate Responsibility approach is to create strategies relevant to local, national & global contexts. They strive to generate shared values in the lives of their people, planet and the environment through employee volunteering, stakeholder engagement and grant making. Transworld focuses on measuring social and environmental impact of their various initiatives and demonstrate an ongoing learning.



### Summary

Transworld sees responsible shipping as fundamental to its business and societal objectives. Framed into a Corporate Responsibility (CR) governance and management structure, Transworld implements responsible practices in four core areas:

- Stewardship of Marine Environment
- Health, Food and Water Security
- Gender Equity and Inclusion
- Education, Arts and Civic Engagement

These tracks are built on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the triple bottom line approach of "People, Planet and Prosperity." Ethical and responsible work practices have been developed to create value and positive impact for all their stakeholders, who are identified as customers, employees, suppliers, community and the environment. At Transworld the aim of Corporate Responsibility is to focus on community impact, but also integrate it into their core business strategy. A unique feature of the Corporate Responsibility is the Energisers programme which galvanises their employees' positive attitude, focusing the company on its integral goal of contributing to the triple bottom line. During the last three years, the impact of the Transworld Group's CSR programmes across the world has reached to 87,741 beneficiaries, while 4,724 employee volunteers have contributed 7,832 volunteering hours for the programmes. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) good practices have been adopted to ensure triple bottom line benefits for the company. Transworld was conferred the Arabia CSR Awards in its 2020 cycle, in recognition of their laudable efforts to be a successful, worldwide business that strives to grow in an ethical and responsible manner.

### Lesson Learnt

Transworld's case is interesting in terms of the ambit of responsible practices, which amply covers the full spectrum of sustainability issues (Environmental, Social and Governance). Although a relatively smaller company with under one hundred employees, it demonstrates a genuine concern for the well-being of the environment and of communities they work with or serve.

Linking business practices with sustainable development imperatives at both global and local levels, Transworld is a successful example of forging value and strengthening the core, by reinforcing its inside-out and outside-in linkages. A viable stakeholder orientation and an ethic-based value system have converged to establish the business case of corporate responsibility and sustainability within Transworld. Consequently, triple bottom line benefits connected to the 'People, Planet, Prosperity' credo have made Transworld a top of the class shipping and logistics company.

