



## Arabia CSR Awards 16<sup>th</sup> Cycle Press Launch



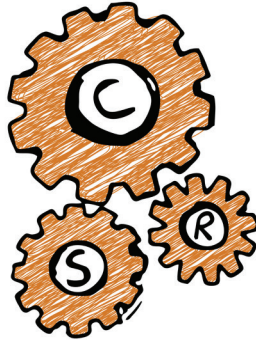
## Upcoming Trainings



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

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

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية  
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات  
Arabia CSR Network®

### ONLINE CSR ADVANCED CERTIFIED TRAINING COURSE

20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023



### Sustainability Reporting Training

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023



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

Marhaba, dear fellow members and readers!

I hope this delightful winter in the UAE and the ecstasy of entering a new year has sprouted your ambition to make 2023 an incredible year of your life.

I am glad to share that our team at the office of the Arabia CSR Network started the year in full swing with optimism, giving a good start and hoping for a great finish this year. There couldn't have been a better start for sustainability enthusiasts like us than the UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan announcing 2023 to be the "Year of Sustainability".

January always holds a special place from the Network's point of view and demands distinct attention for we convene the press launch of the celebrated Arabia CSR Awards, popularly known as the "Green Oscars of the Middle East". The Awards have annually since their introduction in 2008 acknowledged those private and government entities of the Arab region which have demonstrated an exceptional blend of social responsibility, business excellence and transparent governance processes in their respective industries.

It gives me immense pleasure to reveal that the structured process followed during the whole course and the scrutinisation of the applications based on international frameworks over the span of 15 cycles of the CSR Awards have attracted 1300+ registrations from 1200+ organisations belonging to 14 MENA countries and 40+ industries.

2023 will mark the 16<sup>th</sup> cycle of the accolade and I highly encourage the participants of the previous years and the new aspirants to put their best foot forward while showcasing their firm's sustainable practices in the applications. Through the medium of a press launch, we have opened the registrations on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and they will be closed by the 30<sup>th</sup> June, thereby, offering you ample time to gather and submit pieces of evidence along with the comprehensive application.

All the relevant details related to the registration process for the Awards may be found at [www.arabiacsrawards.com](http://www.arabiacsrawards.com).

I would like to thank all the wonderful guests who attended the launch on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Your warm presence truly escalated my team's motivation to deliver the best cycle we have witnessed so far. It was joyful to watch the previous year's winners sharing their experiences of the CSR Awards process and valuable suggestions. While, on the other hand, the questions of the curious award

aspirants, especially the first-timers made the event much more meaningful.

You'll also be glad to know that I got the opportunity to have a fantastic meeting with the Hon'ble Consul General of Kuwait this month building on the meetings with Diplomats from different Arab countries since December last year where I elaborated on the history and significance of the Arabia CSR Awards to him. My motive behind such interactions is to expand the scope of influence of the Awards in the Arab region. The efforts of ACSRN was appreciated and I was delighted to receive the commitment for support for the propagation of sustainable behaviour in the region.

Moving forward, I would like to update you about the active participation of the Network at the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the National Dialogue on Climate Ambition (NDCA) organised by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) on 16<sup>th</sup> January. The discussions of NDCA which encompass the involvement of various stakeholders hold vital importance in the context of strengthening the climate action narrative in the United Arab Emirates. In fact, the outputs of the forum are being used as inputs to the UAE Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative.

My note will remain incomplete if I do not talk about the Sharjah Excellence Award Programme where I was assigned the responsibility of judging the excellence of business enterprises along with the other dignified jury members. It was genuinely an honour to be playing my part as a jury member again this year and I truly think that the consistent endeavour of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) to foster a professional culture of business creativity, innovation and sustainability in Sharjah is quite commendable.

Thinking about 2023, the Network is excited about the plethora of opportunities that lie ahead amid the rising wave of COP28 to be organised in Dubai during November-December of 2023. COP28 is of particular significance as it marks the conclusion of the first Global Stock take, a comprehensive assessment of the progress made in achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

We have planned the activities of each month strategically so as to maximise the positive impact left upon various stakeholders in the region by the start of COP28.

Before signing off, it will be my pleasure to remind all of you that if your organisation is looking for any knowledge support to implement sustainable practices, feel free to reach out to us at [admin@arabiacsnetwork.com](mailto:admin@arabiacsnetwork.com).

Now, more than ever, collaboration incubates progress!





## ACSRN News

### Engagements with Kuwaiti Consul General

The Arabia CSR Network instituted the Arabia CSR Awards in 2008 with a vision to honour the organisations in the Arab World for their outstanding leadership in Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability. The awards are acclaimed as the 'Green Oscars of Middle East', and continue to prove itself as a home-grown product of the MENA Region that promotes and elevates organisations that have successfully molded CSR and sustainability best practices in their core businesses and operations.

Building on the growing importance of CSR globally, Arabia CSR Network, Founder, President and CEO, Ms. Habiba Al Mar'ashi met with H.E. Ali Salem Al-Zaidi, Consul General of Kuwait, Dubai on **10<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023**. They discussed the background history of Arabia CSR Awards and its momentous growth in the Arab Region. The meetings facilitated a discussion to advance and scale up the reach of the Awards in the GCC and contribute to the Sustainable Development of the region. The Network is seeking out "influencers" and strong "green" voices within the sustainability domain to foster growth and recognise the CSR champions of the region.

### National Dialogue on Climate Ambition (NDCA)

Climate change is one of the most important environmental issues at the national and global levels, given its economic, social and environmental impacts. This issue has received considerable and early attention in the UAE and the country has exerted numerous efforts to address the effects of climate change. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCAE) launched the National Dialogue for Climate Ambition (NDCA) in 2022 to step up climate and advance all-inclusive stakeholder participation in the UAE Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative.

On **16<sup>th</sup> January 2023**, MoCCAE held the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the NDCA under the theme "Adaptation in the Context of Community behaviour". The event was conducted during the Abu Dhabi Sustainable Week that Mrs. Al Mar'ashi, attended physically.

H.E Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, graced the event and opened the assembly with a keynote speech on the topic. This was followed by a dialogue of the Interactive Youth Circle that aimed to highlight integration and prioritisation of Children, NGO's, Civil Societies, Youth and People of Determination in Climate action, climate anxiety and the role of education in managing that.

### Launch of 16<sup>th</sup> cycle of Arabia CSR Awards 2023

The Arabia CSR Awards was instituted in 2008 with a vision to honour the organisations' in the Arab World for their outstanding leadership in Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability arena. The Awards since its inception has become the 'sustainability benchmark of the Arab Region'. Each successive cycle has solidified the awards' reputation as the mirror through which entities are able to gauge their performance with their peers and competitors.

Currently in its 16<sup>th</sup> cycle - the Arabia CSR Awards were launched in a press conference held at Five Palm Jumeirah on **23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023**. The event was held in a hybrid manner to give convenience to regional applicants & provide participants with a complete overview of the registration, applications & submission procedures, best practices on CSR & Sustainability from previous winners.

The conference began with a presentation by Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi wherein she took the audience briefly over the Awards history and its journey since its inception in 2008. Following her presentation, representatives of the winners of the Arabia CSR Awards 2022 then relayed their experiences and explained how their organisations managed to





claim winning positions. They further explained the overall benefits that participating in the Awards has had on their sustainability performance and strongly encouraged all those present to embark on the journey of the Awards and inspire others in their circles to do the same.

The Awards Secretariat then ran with the audience the newly launched awards website. The guidelines of the Awards, registration procedure, application tips, and timeframe were all shared with the audience. Lastly, there was a Q&A session where the audience pondered on the challenges and the experts cleared their doubts.

ACSRN President concluded the session by expressing her appreciation to all the panelists for coming forward and sharing their views. She urged the participants to grab the opportunity to compete & showcase their achievements in a bid to honour their efforts and inspire others to follow suit. While closing the ceremony, she wished good luck to the aspiring applicants and conveyed her excitement at the start of yet another great Cycle.

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## Sharjah Excellence Award

President & CEO of ACSRN was invited to be one of the distinguished jury members of the Sharjah Excellence Award on **24<sup>th</sup> January** organised by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI). The objective behind distributing prestigious awards in 9 categories is to appreciate the entrepreneurial acumen of private and public sector organisations.

Undoubtedly, the awards over time have become successful in cultivating an environment of productivity, creativity, innovation and sustainable achievements to attract investment and growth. The institution intends to launch more of such incredible initiatives that carry the potential to boost Sharjah's economy and aid the vision, aspirations and goals of the Sharjah government.

### Member News

#### ABB

ABB, a technology leader in electrification and automation, unveiled its smart building management systems (BMS) for the Middle East region at the Light Middle East and Intelligent Building Middle East 2023 event held at the Dubai World Trade Centre. The ABB Cylon Smart Building Management Systems portfolio of products covers scalable automation and energy control for a wide variety of commercial or industrial buildings, regardless of size. The BMS enables buildings to automate functions and reduce energy costs with energy control and management. It also allows real-time monitoring and control of the building facility.

ABB Cylon provides a comprehensive approach to smart building management by seamlessly connecting and integrating multiple BMS solutions to guarantee optimal building management and monitoring. Through intelligent air-conditioning, heating, and emergency lighting, it can ensure greater energy efficiency, increased levels of security, and can maximize occupant comfort and health.

The company is using smart building solutions to address the growing carbon footprint of buildings around the world as they consume more than 30% of the world's energy while emitting 40% of global carbon emissions. With its 'Mission to Zero' programmes, ABB aims to use smart energy and asset management to make any building energy-efficient and carbon neutral and achieve net zero emissions by 2030.

[CLICK FOR MORE](#)







## FEATURE ARTICLE

# Can the GCC manage the region's food crisis?

Excerpts from Ginevra Moroni, Marketing Manager, Forward Fooding

The GCC since decades have been affected by scarce water availability.

However, recently this system has begun to show its limitations. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as supply chains slowed and countries struggled to adapt to a new normal, the financial ability to procure goods was no longer a guarantee of success. The turmoil that ensued led to concerns for the future of food security in the region. It was the latest in a series of wake-up calls for local governments, highlighting the need to strengthen local food systems. In the past few months, food technology investments in the region have intensified. New initiatives and partnerships have made the news, revealing GCC countries' commitment to a new way forward.



Let's take a closer look at a couple of GCC countries who have launched notable initiatives to boost food security:

**UAE:** The UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHAP) launched the UAE National Nutrition Strategy 2022-2030, which lays out a comprehensive roadmap for developing sustainable healthy food systems, establishing supportive healthy food environments, and promoting healthy food choices in the UAE. In 2021, the country unveiled the first of a series of projects aimed at tripling its food production, a major innovation district combining laboratories, research centers, and prototype agricultural systems. Lastly, in November, government agency Tamkeen and the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment launched the FoodTech Challenge, a \$2 million competition seeking to identify technology innovations capable of efficiently and sustainably transforming traditional agricultural practices.

**Qatar:** Another contender for the top innovation hotspots in the Gulf region is Qatar. It is following a similar path to food independence as that of UAE. The Qatari government launched the Qatar National Food Security Strategy 2018-2023 to deliver high-quality food at reasonable rates through domestic production, strategic storage, and reliable import sources. Early in 2022, Qatar's sovereign wealth fund led a \$250M investment round in French vertical insect farm operator.

To learn more about the GCC's groundbreaking food innovation projects, [CLICK HERE](#)





## Best Practices 2021 From The Archives

### Zurich International Life

#### Arabia CSR Awards 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up - Financial Services Category

### Profile

Zurich International Life has been present in the Middle East region for 32 years, providing a range of protection and savings solutions designed to meet changing customer needs and market conditions. Part of Zurich Insurance Group is its Middle East presence which covers the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain, with a 23% market share and close to 300,000 customers across both retail and corporate segments. The Zurich Insurance Group is a multi-line insurer that serves its customers in global and local markets. With about 55,000 employees, it provides a wide range of property and casualty, life insurance products and services in more than 215 countries and territories. Zurich's customers include individuals, small businesses, medium-sized and large companies, as well as multinational corporations.



Zurich International Life has put a lot of emphasis on environmental issues at the local level, as well as on issues of social importance. Several measures have been taken to decrease carbon emissions from company-operations, thereby taking positive steps to reduce climate change impact, energy consumption and conservation of natural resources. It has established the Zurich Foundation, and its key pillars are adapting to climate change, improving mental wellbeing and enabling social equity. It has showcased a model which others can replicate since it has continued to have a robust mechanism to ensure focus remains on its people throughout the pandemic, with zero lay-offs or salary reductions, offering employees new flexible ways of working to allow for a sustainable work- life balance.

### Lessons Learnt

Zurich International Life has taken social responsibility very seriously in the Middle East. Various regional initiatives which it has undertaken are commendable. These include its digital solutions offer, like the two direct-to-customer products –which removes the requirement for paperwork and boosts customers' experience.

The company's work with the community has included its efforts through Zurich Cares. Additionally, it has supported two special needs centres in the UAE. In 2020-2021, it supported the building of two additional classrooms in Al Noor Centre for Children with Special Needs. To provide personal and professional support to its employees, Zurich has formed Employee Resource Groups that run several initiatives in ME including Zurich Ethics hotline, Dignity@Work policy and Employee Assistance Programme.

Zurich International Life has focused on recycling and energy efficiency. Wherever possible, the company has implemented paperless practices since April 2020; It has separated various kinds of waste by placing segregated waster bins throughout its office locations. Different initiatives at its premises have helped conserve power and consumption of water. In 2021, the company recycled 2,550 kg of paper under the "For Our Emirates We Plant" initiative, receiving Emirates Environmental Group's certificate of appreciation.

During the COVID-19 pandemic phase, the Zurich Foundation supported UNICEF's global efforts to help deliver COVID-19 vaccines to the world's most vulnerable, with an initial donation of CHF 1 million. The programme was also supported by various local fundraising activities with a total donation of up to CHF 2.5 million.

