



ARABIA CSR AWARDS 2023 16th Cycle

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



Upcoming Trainings

Sustainability Reporting Training



Date: 6th - 7th March 2023

Online Stakeholder Engagement Workshop

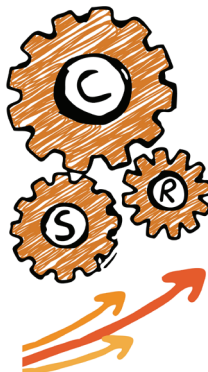


Date: 9th March 2023



الشبكة العربية للمسؤولية
الاجتماعية للمؤسسات
Arabia CSR Network®

Online Certified Training on Fundamentals of CSR & Sustainability



Date: 13th - 15th March 2023

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Note from the President & CEO Habiba Al Mar'ashi

Hello Arabia CSR Network members,

We hope you have been keeping safe and well. We are already two months into 2023 and it seems incredible how fast time is flying. At the Network's office, the days have been very busy with many back-to-back engagements. The whole team at ACSRN was engaged throughout the month with organising and attending a myriad of events and conferences –locally and globally both physically and virtually.

During the month, we conducted a three day CSR Advanced Training course that provided a way to participants to acquire in-depth insights and critical perspectives of responsible and sustainable business practices. Our trainings and workshops are spread throughout the year and we have few lined up for the month of March; the Sustainability Reporting Training, the Stakeholder Engagement Workshop and the CSR Fundamentals all of which will be held virtually. I encourage you to register and attend these trainings as they are essential to understanding, implementing and promoting sustainability in entities from all fields. Advancing sustainability in companies is something that will make them resilient for the future. Furthermore, these courses are valuable learning curves that allow organisations' to reach new heights of excellence and achievements more so in the "Year of Sustainability".

The month of February marked a major milestone for us. In my capacity as a member of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance, I hosted Middle East's first GISD Forum titled "Bridging the Climate Finance Gap" on Friday, 24th February 2023 at the Lapita Dubai Parks and Resorts in Dubai, UAE. The conference saw the presence of Mr. Navid Hanif - the Assistant Secretary-General - UN. This hybrid forum attracted global and local financial experts who came together in Dubai to discuss and express their viewpoints on the strong financial contributions that are required to necessitate the steps that will

drive climate actions. We concluded the month by supporting EEG to conduct its major corporate event, the 26th Annual Corporate Gala Dinner which was held on 24th Feb under the kind Patronage of H.E. Eng. Sheikh Salem Bin Sultan Bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Chairman of the Department of Civil Aviation RAK, Member of the Government of Ras Al Khaimah Executive Council and Honorary Member of EEG. This annual event was conducted this year under the theme 'Carrying the Sustainable Beacon, Rallying to a Carbon Neutral Society'.

The Network initiated the "Arabia CSR Awards" in 2008, and since then it has welcomed more than 1,360 organisations who have participated in the awards, representing 44 sectors from business and industries operating across 14 Arab countries. The office is very busy following up to ensure registrations for the awards ahead of the Awards Clinic; one of the key events that we organise every year to facilitate the applicants. We shall organise the Clinic in the 1st week of April, it will provide a detailed walk-through of the award participation and application process to all interested and applying organisations. If you are interested to showcase your sustainability achievements, I strongly encourage you to register and apply for this Awards programme. We are certain that it will be very beneficial for all organisations.

The holy month of Ramadan will fall in the 2nd half of March, in which Muslims observe fasting (abstaining from eating and drinking) from dusk to dawn. Ramadan is the holiest month for the followers of Islam. It's the holy month of the Islamic calendar that prepares us to focus attention towards equality, social order, compassion, kindness, humility and sharing. In the month of Ramadan, we learn righteousness, benevolence, tolerance and environmental preservation. The month of spirituality has come, wishing you a blessed Ramadan filled with the right deeds and actions.

Reach out to us to get updated on a range of activities and workshops that we have planned for the 1st half of the year. Our objective is to keep driving the sustainability agenda in the MENA region, and we need everyone's support to make that happen.





ACSRN News

Bridging the Climate Finance Gap Forum

Sustainable finance has gained considerable traction in recent years. It has become one of the major megatrends in the financial industry. It has a key role to play in the world's transition to Net Zero by channeling private money into carbon-neutral projects. To discuss ongoing sustainable finance policy reforms, policy effectiveness, to bridge the gap towards sustainability outcomes and address challenges in policy frameworks, Arabia CSR Network's environmental partner - Emirates Environmental Group organised the 1st ever forum of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance on **Friday, 24th February 2023** at the Lapita Dubai Parks and Resorts in Dubai, UAE. It was conducted under the theme "Bridging the Climate Finance Gap" co-sponsored by McDonald's UAE, support sponsors were KEO International Consultants and Tristar Group.

Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Co-Founder and Chairperson of EEG in her speech at the Forum mentioned that: "The title of the forum was chosen not only to remind us that we have a climate crisis that is devastating many parts of the world. It was also chosen to bring awareness to the fact that there is a massive financial gap in addressing the climate issue that is going to make things much worse, especially for nations and people that need support."

Mr. Navid Hanif - the Assistant UN Secretary-General in his address said "COP 28 in this part of the world is an opportunity to send a clear message, that the private sector, private capital will come on board, advancing the Paris accord. We also saw, 20 years ago it was inconceivable to come into this region and talk about renewable energy, solar energy, shifting away from fossil fuels. Decarbonising your economy, it's a main stream thought in this part of the world. We are here to share with you, the knowledge that we have generated so far, but also to learn from you the challenges that you are confronted with."

The keynote address was given by Dr. Nasser Saeedi – Chairman of the Clean Energy Business Council and Honorary Member of EEG. In his speech he emphasised "The politicians and policymakers signing on Net Zero emissions are not going to be around when the issues come and bite, so I for one think that these climate and net zero emissions commitments have got to be enshrined in constitutions. If they are in constitutions, they become much more difficult to disregard. I think we need to start helping countries introduce climate into their constitutions; have climate change laws."

Convening top investors, policy makers, government leaders, regulators, innovators and financial institutions from around the world, the Forum consisted of two plenary sessions titled:

1. Scaling Up Green Finance – What COP28 can Achieve?
2. Shifting the Investment Ecosystem: Integrating a Long-Term Sustainability Perspective

Overall, the high-powered event brought together renowned leaders, which aimed to unleash the potential of sustainable finance, reflect on the latest developments, study the trends in sustainable finance and analyse the Net Zero transition plan.





EEG's Corporate Gala Dinner

Arabia CSR Network's environmental partner, Emirates Environmental Group (EEG) under the Patronage of H. E. Engineer Sheikh Salem Bin Sultan Bin Saqr Al-Qasimi, Chairman of the Ras Al Khaimah Civil Aviation Department and a Member of the Government of Ras Al Khaimah Executive Council, conducted the 26th cycle of EEG's annual Gala Dinner on **24th Feb** under the theme "Carrying the Sustainable Beacon, Rallying to a Carbon Neutral Society". The sponsors of the event were: McDonald's UAE - Platinum Sponsor, Wasl Properties - Special Sponsor, Farnek - Carbon Neutral Partner.

In her speech at the Gala Dinner, Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Co-Founder and Chairperson of EEG said "We have engaged all the key sectors of the society in the UAE in a host of activities that are geared to educate, motivate, inspire and engage. Our projects and programmes have been running successfully for decades and I will not shy away from the fact that this speaks volumes about our dedication, perseverance and ability to sustain amidst past economic, societal, health and other challenges that we have all faced." The Gala Dinner recorded an immense gathering of members of the Diplomatic Corps, Corporate heads, Government representatives and International delegates and the Media. The evening appreciated the deep impact that collaborations and partnerships between entities are paving the way towards a sustainable future. EEG recognised and felicitated 55 entities from the government, the private sector and the civil societies during the gala event.



Training in February

Arabia CSR Network organised a 3-day CSR Advanced Training from **20th Feb to 22nd Feb**. The training registered participants from the UAE and the other GCC countries. The training was delivered through a series of video lectures, quizzes, discussion prompts, case studies and written assessments. Participants identified and evaluated strategies, processes and leadership techniques that enabled successful sustainability transitions in a business context. An open discussion also helped the participants to share and learn some effective practices on CSR and Sustainability among themselves. Extensive discussions took place on several sustainability reports that have been issued by entities from the region. These specialised training conducted by ACSRN enable participants to receive a thorough and structured insight at the theoretical precepts and practical approaches to CSR and Corporate Sustainability and guide them through the whole spectrum of the evolution of CSR.

Arabia CSR Awards 2023

The Arabia CSR Network inceptioned the Arabia CSR Awards in 2008, which is well known as a veracious and bonafide platform grown out the Arab Region. In a short span of 15 years, the Arabia CSR Awards has earned wide applause and has become the "sustainability barometer" of the Arab Region. Recognised for its rigour and meticulousness, the Awards have netted valuable backing from local, regional, international and global institutions down the years.

Currently in its 16th cycle - the registrations are open till the 30th June 2023. This year's awards include 15 categories to choose from. The categories are: Small Public Sector Organisations/Departments, Medium Public Sector Organisations/Departments, Large Public Sector Organisations/Departments, Large-sized Enterprises, Medium-sized Enterprises, Small-sized Enterprises, Energy, Financial Services, Social Enterprise, Construction, Hospitality, Healthcare, Best New Business, Automotive Industry and Partnerships & Collaborations (projects/programmes/initiatives). Visit the site: <https://arabiacsrawards.com/register> or write to us at awards@arabiacsnetwork.com for more information.





Member News

DEWA

ACSR Network's corporate member, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), MD & CEO – H.E. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer of (DEWA), in a speech entitled 'What we offer to COP 28' on the 2nd day of the World Government Summit 2023 emphasised that the World Government Summit has become a distinguished global event and a comprehensive knowledge platform for anticipating and shaping the future. He expressed delight that DEWA is the Sustainable Energy Partner of the Summit, which was held under the theme 'Shaping Future Governments.'

Al Tayer explained that the UAE was the 1st country in the Middle East and North Africa to launch a strategic initiative to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. DEWA is pioneering in sustainability, innovation and future-shaping in all its projects and initiatives to achieve the goals of the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 and the Dubai Net Zero Carbon Emissions Strategy 2050 to provide 100% clean energy by 2050, with a focus on innovation, technologies of the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', digital transformation and the circular economy as key enablers for achieving sustainability.

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Business News

Masdar and IFC partner to Explore Ways to Advance Climate Action in Emerging Markets

Masdar, one of the world's fastest-growing renewable energy companies, has signed an agreement with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in developing countries, to explore areas of collaboration to support climate action for emerging markets. The collaboration framework was signed by the Chief Executive Officer, Masdar and the Vice President of Industries at IFC, on the side-lines of the World Government Summit 2023.

HE Dr Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, COP28 President-Designate, said, "As the UAE prepares to host COP28, we have placed a special emphasis on ensuring better, more efficient and more equitable access to climate finance. The UAE is a trusted partner of many nations and actively supports the development of emerging nations. The International Finance Corporation has been a key partner for Masdar in a number of emerging markets, and this agreement carries forward the UAE's commitment to equitable climate finance and inclusive sustainable development."

The Managing Director of IFC, said, "We are excited to advance our partnership with Masdar today and leverage IFC's climate expertise across emerging markets to support Masdar in achieving breakthroughs in sectors such as renewable energy, green hydrogen, and green finance."



[Read More](#)





FEATURE ARTICLE

Blue Carbon Matters

By Whitney Johnston, Director, Ocean Sustainability, Salesforce

Blue carbon refers to carbon stored in the above and below ground biomass and sediments of coastal and marine environments. These ecosystems store massive amounts of carbon, making them an integral part of global efforts to combat climate change. Investing in blue carbon projects and credits will help protect these unique aquatic ecosystems and also ensure the vast quantities of carbon they have sequestered from the atmosphere stays under water.

More efforts—and finance options—are needed to conserve these vitally important habitats. Companies and individuals can and should invest in high-quality carbon credits to help fulfill their net-zero ambitions. The climate crisis has reached such urgency that we need all available climate action simultaneously, including carbon credits as an investment.



The following 5 principles, each of equal importance, are foundational to the development and deployment of high-quality blue carbon projects and credits.

1. Safeguard nature
2. Empower people
3. Employ the best information, interventions and carbon accounting practices
4. Operate locally and contextually
5. Mobilise high-integrity capital

Blue carbon holds immense potential not only for decarbonisation efforts, but also because of the wealth of co-benefits to communities and ecosystems. As carbon markets become bluer, the world must design and invest in blue carbon projects and credits that cause a shift towards greater accountability, equity and transparency.





Best Practices 2021 From The Archives

Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est. Co.

Arabia CSR Awards Winner - Automotive Industry Category

Profile

The Mohamed Naser Al- Sayer Group was formed in 1958 by the chairman Naser Mohamed Al- Sayer. This privately owned group of companies is active across a diverse range of products and services. The corporate vision is to be a leader in every sector that the company is involved in, offering the best value-for-money-products in their sector, together with the finest after-sales care and support available. The company's strength is their people and they have a strong and well educated workforce dedicated to uphold the organisation's corporate philosophy of the highest standards of customer care.



The Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons has showcased its commitment to CSR and Sustainability well by prioritising, aligning and integrating sustainability practices throughout the organisation, starting from its senior management, moving towards its staff, partners, suppliers etc. Its 'Sustainability Committee' is headed by a Board Member and has been meeting periodically to discuss and align its strategic goals with ESG objectives.

As an acknowledgment of its work in CSR, it was awarded the Kuwait Award for Public Relations and Customer Service for excellence in CSR Programmes, and was the 1st runner up at the Arabia CSR awards 2021. The company has also highlighted its pledge to be in sync with national and international priorities by ensuring that the Kuwait National Development Plan and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are reflected in its vision, mission and strategic goals. Its sustainability practices have been guided by the 4 pillars of Nature, Economy, Wellbeing and Society.

Lessons Learnt

Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons' 'Sustainability Platform' has supported it to synergise strategic objectives with corporate priorities, goals & objectives. The platform has also helped evaluate key opportunities and assimilates sustainability in them; supporting the developing of strong materiality and stakeholder's engagement processes; which in turn supported the establishment of a good governance framework; and helped in the measurement of the impacts on the environment and society.

The company's emphasis on hybrid vehicles & assimilating the vehicles into their internal fleet, undertaking energy optimisation projects, steam car wash, grey water treatment plants, green battery, AC gas recovery, water based paints etc. have all contributed to greater efficiency and water and energy conservation.

Al-Sayer has effectively leveraged partnerships with various organisations to support its work with the community and the environment. These have included the work related to health awareness, promoting youth empowerment and entrepreneurship skills, supporting human rights and working to alleviate refugee conditions etc.

For employees, the company was able to effectively vaccinate 3,000 staff members against COVID-19 by June 2021. It also provides a platform to promote innovative ideas, while also measuring its impact through Social Return on Investment (SROI).

