



## Upcoming Trainings



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

Hello Arabia CSR Network members, readers and well wishers.

Ramadan Kareem and Mubarak to all of you.

Sustainability is no longer a distant challenge to be managed. It is an urgent mandate which needs to be applied and scaled. Countries have embedded the notion of sustainability in their future visions, which will require robust policies and regulations. There is an opportunity for the MENA region to embrace sustainability as part of a broader effort to build new sectors and engines of growth. These efforts include huge transformational shifts, such as large-scale adoption of low-carbon oil and gas, renewables, solar and hydrogen power.

Companies in MENA Region can boost their competitiveness by future-proofing against the sustainability challenges, including water scarcity and domestic solid waste management. With growing sensitivity toward social and environmental issues, companies in the MENA region are increasingly striving to become better corporate citizens. Executives have recognised that long-term economic growth is not possible unless that growth is socially and environmentally sustainable. A balance between economic progress, social responsibility and environment protection renowned as the triple bottom line, can lead to competitive advantages.

CSR will likely come into an even greater prominence as consumers and stakeholders seek to support businesses that align with their morals. With this, the Network has increased focus on the upcoming Arabia CSR Awards that brings forth unprecedented CSR initiatives which will have a rippling positive effect. Regarded as the 'Green Oscars of the Middle East,' the Arabia CSR Awards recognises corporate social responsibility (CSR) principles and implementation strategies of green champions from across the region. Over the course of 15 years, the Awards has mobilised hundreds of businesses from diverse sectors and industries and created positive impacts of immense magnitude on the region's sustainable development scape.

To invigorate this 16<sup>th</sup> cycle of the Awards, we are hosting the Awards Clinic on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023. This Clinic will provide a detailed walk-through of the award participation and application process to all interested and applying organisations.

I invite all the entities regardless of their line of business and industry to join the sustainability journey and apply for the 16<sup>th</sup> cycle of the acclaimed Pan Arab "Arabia CSR Awards". More details on <https://arabiacsrawards.com>.

In March, ACSRN joined the world to celebrate International Women's Day and I engaged at various platforms to recognise the accomplishments of women, appreciate their contributions in the society, celebrate their successes, raise awareness about the significance of upgrading skills, uplift and inspire others to be changemakers.

And In March I also attended the first COP28 Presidency-hosted and youth-led event "Road to COP28" at Expo City Dubai. It was held under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Chairman of the Higher Committee overseeing preparations for COP28.

It was a day-long event with a range of activities such as workshops, youth circles, debates, intergenerational dialogue, and a climate leaders panel. This event represented a significant moment for the country's youth to come together and join the wider community towards raising awareness and mobilising an all-of-society effort towards COP28. It was attended by Sheikh Zayed bin Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan; Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, President-Designate of COP28 UAE; Reem Al Hashimy, Minister of State for International Cooperation, Shamma Al Mazrouei, Minister of Community Development and COP28 Youth Climate Champion; Mariam Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment; and Razan Al Mubarak, COP28 UAE UN Climate Change High-Level Champion, and several other UAE government ministers.

As always, get in touch with us for your CSR and sustainability requirements, may it be training your team, or setting up your organisation's strategy, or even managing your environmental footprint. The Network is here to assist you in your journey to be a sustainable and responsible organisation. You can reach out to us at [admin@arabiacsnetwork.com](mailto:admin@arabiacsnetwork.com).

I hope you enjoy reading about these events and activities in more details in the inside pages of this newsletter. I invite you to join us and let us continue working together to build effective partnerships for a sustainable future particularly in this Year of Sustainability.





## ACSRN News

### President & CEO of Arabia CSR Network attends several engagements to celebrate International Women's Day.

To celebrate International Women's Day on **March 7, 2023**, Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi joined a panel discussion at the CEO Club's Network titled **"How Women Rise Globally and What Makes a Woman Thrive?"** at World Trade Centre, Dubai. In her address she mentioned "Emirati women are already at the helm of both public and private institutions and organisations. Our leaders have paved the way for Emirati women to assume their rightful place, it is for us to honour their trust and fulfil our responsibilities as citizens of the UAE. The onus is on us, Emirati women, to carve out the role we desire for ourselves, through our inner force, and not wait for outer forces to design it for us in the way they envisage. Women are key to bringing about societal transformation and behavioural change, as nurturing figures and ground level educators, at home and outside."



Another engagement was her joining as a keynote speaker at Tristar Group's International Women's Day celebrations at Taj Hotel - Business Bay on **8th March**. Mrs. Al Mar'ashi spoke under the theme **"Digit ALL - Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality."** She stated in her speech that "When we discuss women's rights in the 21st century, we are actually discussing the right to be provided with an enabling environment to develop the capacity of women to be productive members of the society and to be given equal opportunities to succeed in life. Digitisation and technological advancements have tackled issues of gender disproportionality in various fields. It is not like in historic times where the majority of the work was done through human labour. While biological difference can vary from person to person, but for majority of the occupations out there today, we have the technological resources to perform those jobs. Technology and innovation are built to incorporate all. So, let us ensure that access to digital technology, digital information, distribution of innovative devices is all given to those that face inequality to better ourselves as human beings."



And in continuing the line of speaking engagements, on **16th March**, she joined Accenture International Women's Day celebration as a Key Note Speaker at the Marina Social under the theme **"Be without limits"** Mrs. Al Mar'ashi shared her childhood upbringing and the discovery of the path of environmental sustainability which in reality was a journey of self-discovery, her message to all was, 'Do not limit your challenges. Challenge your limits'. Allow yourself to be challenged, and challenge your own knowledge and capacities. Out of this process will emerge a stronger and better YOU.

### MOCD - The first preliminary event for the Conference of the Parties titled - The Road to COP28

Under the patronage of HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan - Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the COP28 Conference all officials from the public and private sectors and youth of all ages gathered in the 1st preparatory event for the Conference of the Parties of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, titled "The Road to COP28" On Wednesday, **15th March** at Dubai Expo City.

The day aimed to raise awareness of the upcoming climate conference's goal of accelerating global action. The morning programme of workshops was focused on students aged 7 to 15 to understand and tackle climate change issues. The afternoon programme included debates, workshops, sustainability initiatives and performances hosted by organisations including the Federal Youth Authority and the Arab Youth Centre. The evening programme was a platform for the UAE authorities to share their ambitions for COP28 alongside youth climate advocates. With climate action at the center, the event revolved around 4 strategic pillars: participation, action, voice and education. The 'Road to COP28' also saw the launch of key initiatives to enhance youth participation within the UN climate process and amplify the efforts of youth-led and youth-focused organisations in







the global climate community. The event highlighted the priorities and principles underpinning COP28, through a myriad of activities to engage more than 3,000 people, including students, youth in national service, youth climate advocates, people of determination, senior citizens, and more. The event was attended by COP28 leadership, senior government officials, and ambassadors to the UAE. President & CEO of Arabia CSR Network, Mrs. Habiba Al Mar'ashi attended this launch event as a member of the expert group of the year of sustainability. The launch event aimed at raising awareness of the importance of climate action and encouraging participation and interaction in COP28.

## Arabia CSR Awards 2023

The Arabia CSR Awards is the Arab Region's premiere CSR and Sustainability accolade. They are a unique set of awards that bring out the best practices and achievements related to CSR and Sustainability in the Arab Region. Designed in a way that allows the blending of international standards and frameworks with local practice, the Arabia CSR Awards represent the best of the global and the local! Truly the 'Sustainability Benchmark of the Region'.

Over the course of 15 years, the Awards has mobilised hundreds of businesses from diverse sectors and industries and created positive impacts of immense magnitude on the region's sustainable development sphere. We invite trailblazers that have been consistently proving their business excellence in CSR & Sustainability to apply for this significant Awards.

The Arabia CSR Awards Clinic is scheduled to take place on **6<sup>th</sup> April 2023!** The Awards Clinic is designed especially for those entities who have registered and applied for the Awards. It will take them through the awards process and submission requirements as well as provide an opportunity to get queries addressed regarding the awards process as well as the application itself. Through this ACSRN aims to provide applicants with enough support to improve their submissions and submit a successful application. However, there is still time for those who are interested to register and apply for the awards and avail of the opportunity to receive a complimentary seat at the Awards Clinic.

Register now for the 16<sup>th</sup> cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards here: [arabiacsrawards.com/register](https://arabiacsrawards.com/register) or contact us at [awards@arabiacsnetwork.com](mailto:awards@arabiacsnetwork.com) or [admin@arabiacsnetwork.com](mailto:admin@arabiacsnetwork.com) to get more information!

## Member News

### ABB

Since the launch of its 2030 sustainability strategy in November 2020, ABB has made continuous progress towards its goals of enabling a low-carbon society, preserving resources, promoting social progress, and creating a culture of integrity and transparency along the extended value chain.

ABB has published its 1<sup>st</sup> integrated report which covered both the 2022 financial and sustainability performance. This report highlighted their progress against their strategy and demonstrated how they create value holistically for their stakeholders in the short, medium and long-term. As ABB's primary report at Group level, this report is aimed at a broad range of stakeholders and integrates the most important material information of the company and its strategy, business, governance as well as its financial and sustainability performance.

To increase accountability, ABB published new 2025 mid-term targets for the low-carbon society pillar of its sustainability strategy. The targets include:

- Reduce own scope 1 & 2 of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by at least 70 %
- Work with main tier-one suppliers [1] to reduce their scope 1 & 2 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 20%

ABB's integrated report is based on elements of the International Integrated Reporting Framework while the financial statements are prepared in accordance with US GAAP. The sustainability information is provided in accordance with the GRI Standards and also covers the SASB Standards, the TCFD (Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures) Recommendations, the EU taxonomy and the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact.

To read more here: <https://new.abb.com/news/detail/100279/abb-publishes-its-first-integrated-report>





## FEATURE ARTICLE

# Decade of Hydrogen

Excerpts from Giampaolo Cantini, Senior Fellow, Global Energy Center

If the 1990s were the decade of wind, the 2000s the decade of solar, and the 2010s the decade of batteries, the 2020s could launch us toward a next frontier of the energy transition: hydrogen. Hardly a week goes by without a major new hydrogen project or breakthrough. Investments and government support are growing and the hydrogen technology is ready to further scale-up. In just the past five years, more than 30 countries have developed or started to prepare national hydrogen strategies (IEA 2022).

Described as the “most abundant clean fuel in the universe,” the application of hydrogen as a fuel for transportation, including plans for a hydrogen-powered aircraft in the next decade, and growing uses in everything from ammonia fertilizers to shipping, indicate its renewable clean qualities are an attractive alternative to carbon-based fuels. Hydrogen as a future solution is nearer on the horizon than one may think. Estimates by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) anticipate that hydrogen could reach 12% of the global energy mix by 2050 and predict that it’ll be the source with which future energy-producing nations and the sector’s major players will champion their sustainable reconversions.



Moreover, it is a key element of the IEA’s net-zero scenario that aims to bring global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions to net zero by 2050. The IEA’s flagship report outlines a 400-point plan to decarbonize the global economy, including hydrogen and hydrogen-based fuels to fill the gaps where electricity cannot readily replace the demand or capabilities of fossil fuels, such as in large-scale transportation or heavy industries including steel, chemicals and large manufacturing.

A number of announcements made recently concerning plans on green hydrogen development in the MENA region are set to advance the idea of a future pattern of energy interdependence. If fully implemented, such projects, might act as a catalyst for more investments in hydrogen production and infrastructure in the region and for the process of demand creation that remains at the core of the future of hydrogen development.

[Read More](#)





## Best Practices 2021 From The Archives

### Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach

#### Arabia CSR Awards 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up - Hospitality Sector Category

## Profile

Four Seasons Hotel specialises in the hospitality industry by offering experiences of exceptional quality. Their objective is to be recognised as the company that manages the finest hotels, resorts and residence clubs wherever they are located. They create properties of enduring value using superior design and finishes, and support them with a deeply instilled ethic of personal service. Doing so allows Four Seasons to satisfy the needs and tastes of its discerning customers and to maintain its position as the world's premier luxury hospitality company.



Four Seasons believes in nurturing relationships through ways of adopting various sustainable initiatives. These include using various tools for employee engagement so that the efforts of employees towards conservation of the environment are given due recognition. The company also explores local-level sustainability initiatives and supports sustainable engagements and experiences for guests. After having set various targets and goals, the hotel was able to highlight the following achievements:

- A reduction of 27% and 36% respectively in energy and water consumption from 2016 to 2020
- 40% decrease in energy consumption for cooling due to investment in Guest Room Management system
- Complete removal of single use plastics in all the hotel
- Incorporating smart tracking of utilities to measure utility consumption
- Use of solar power which supports 40% of water heating requirements
- Complying with audit requirements of DTCM's DST programme

Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach has set an example of how sustainable practices can be integrated into the core of the hospitality business. It has set environmental, social and governance criteria as its major pillars which drive its global sustainability framework.

## Lessons Learnt

Four Seasons has undertaken regular stakeholder-engagement initiatives (one of the tools being the survey undertaken for guests, owners and employees in December 2020) to identify and work on areas of improvement which greatly helped the company in promoting its existing sustainability initiatives, while also further strengthening future initiatives.

The outcomes and findings from stakeholder engagement exercise have helped Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach to design a strong vision and strategy for achieving sustainability related goals. It was able to clearly pinpoint that 'our people' are its most important assets and it identified the key strategic action of 'Evolving Our Culture'.

In order to take the actions forward, the Green Team was set up which pledged to advance the company's sustainability pillars, that is, Design places and operations for sustainability; Reduce environmental impact; and Foster connections for sustainable initiatives.

The hotel has also extensively promoted water recycling, replacement with LED compliant bulbs, cooling tower filtration system resulting in 30% savings, waste segregation and much more.

