



مسارات التغيير: أثر حقيقي وليس مجرد وعود

المنتدى العالمي للاستدامة والمسؤولية الاجتماعية للمؤسسات

CURRENTS OF CHANGE: IMPACT BEYOND PROMISES

GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY & CSR FORUM

2026 أكتوبر 13 - 12
12TH - 13TH OCTOBER 2026



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Note from President & CEO	2
ACSRN News	3
Upcoming News	7
Member News	7
Feature Article	8
Best Practice	9

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Note from the Founder & CEO

Dear Members, Partners, Stakeholders, Friends and Well-wishers. As we conclude another dynamic month, we find ourselves navigating an increasingly complex global landscape. Across the globe, organisations are being called upon to rethink traditional models of growth and embrace approaches that balance economic performance with environmental stewardship and societal wellbeing. The businesses that will thrive in the years ahead are those that recognise sustainability not as an obligation, but as a strategic opportunity to build resilience, foster innovation, strengthen stakeholder trust and create long-term value.

Close to home, the Arab region is making encouraging strides. We are observing governments advancing ambitious sustainability agendas, the private sector is increasingly integrating ESG considerations into business operations and communities are demonstrating a growing awareness of their collective responsibility. Here in the United Arab Emirates, national visions and forward-looking policies continue to set a clear direction towards a diversified, knowledge-based and sustainable economy.

However, it is during times of uncertainty like the one we are in, that organisations reveal their true character. Economic fluctuations, shifting market dynamics and evolving stakeholder expectations often place sustainability initiatives under scrutiny.

Yet, these are precisely the moments when sustainability matters most. Responsible organisations understand that environmental and social considerations cannot be postponed until circumstances improve. Rather, sustainability must remain part and parcel of organisational strategy and culture, guiding decision-making even in the most challenging of times.

This month marked a particularly significant milestone for the Arabia CSR Network with the official closure of submissions for the 19th Cycle of the Arabia CSR and Sustainability Awards on **30th June**. Each year, the Awards offer a powerful reflection of the region's sustainability landscape and this cycle has once again demonstrated the remarkable progress organisations continue to make in embedding responsibility into their operations.

The calibre of applications received this year is both inspiring and encouraging. They represent organisations that have moved beyond rhetoric to deliver measurable impact, innovate responsibly, engage stakeholders meaningfully and integrate sustainability into the very fabric of their businesses. As we embark upon the rigorous judging process, we look forward to recognising and celebrating those organisations that are setting new benchmarks of excellence for the Arab world.

Equally exciting are the preparations underway for the 14th Global Sustainability and CSR Forum, which will take place on **12th -13th October** at the Dubai World Trade Centre under the theme "Currents of Change: Impact Beyond Promises." At a time when stakeholders are increasingly demanding accountability and tangible outcomes, the Forum will serve as a critical platform to explore practical pathways for accelerating sustainable development and fostering meaningful cross-sector collaboration.

June was also a month characterised by active engagement, dialogue and international cooperation. From **1st -3rd June**, I had the privilege of participating in Propak MENA in Cairo, Egypt, reaffirming the importance of regional collaboration and knowledge exchange. On **5th June**, in celebration of World Environment Day, I joined Al Dhafra TV for a live interview to discuss pressing sustainability issues and the role that organisations and individuals alike must play in sharing responsibility.

The month also included participation in the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Lebanese Business Council (**6th June**), the release of the Berkeley Services sustainability podcast (**10th June**) and the Emirates Green Building Council Management Committee Meeting (**16th June**). On **17th June**, we had the opportunity to engage in discussions on one of the region's most pressing challenges during a high-level panel on water security in arid regions, followed by the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Emirates Green Building Council on **18th June**.

Further enriching these engagements was the GISD Alliance briefing on **19th June**, led by José Viñals and Bathylle Missika, focusing on the work of the 4P Eminent Persons Group and its efforts to address unintended consequences of prudential frameworks on investment flows to emerging markets and developing economies.

The month concluded with my participation in the World Green Building Council Leadership Summit in London from **21st -24th June**, bringing together global sustainability leaders to exchange perspectives and strengthen international partnerships.

I encourage you to explore the dedicated articles featured throughout this newsletter to learn more about these engagements and the valuable insights they generated. Each of these experiences reinforces the importance of collaboration, continuous learning and collective action in driving sustainable progress.

As we look towards the 2nd half of the year, I invite organisations across the region to remain steadfast in their sustainability endeavours. Let us continue to challenge ourselves to move beyond compliance and embrace leadership. Let us ensure that sustainability remains embedded in our values, informs our decisions and guides our actions responsibly.

Finally, I would like to extend a warm invitation to organisations that share our vision to join the Arabia CSR Network. By becoming part of this growing community of responsible businesses and institutions, you gain access to a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, capacity building, recognition and collaboration. More importantly, you become part of a movement committed to creating lasting positive impact across the Arab region.

I also encourage our existing members, partners and supporters to continue championing this mission. Your unwavering commitment enables us to strengthen our collective voice, expand our reach and inspire more organisations to embrace sustainability as a force for good.

Together, let us continue to lead with purpose, act with integrity and build a future defined not only by prosperity, but by responsibility, resilience and shared progress.





ACSRN News

ACSRN at Propak MENA, FI Africa and FoodGuard Summit 2026

The Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) participated in Propak MENA, FI Africa and the FoodGuard Summit 2026, held in Cairo, Egypt from **1st to 3rd June**, reaffirming its commitment to advancing responsible business practices and promoting sustainability across the region.

Representing the Network, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network, took part in the events' knowledge-sharing platforms and contributed to discussions centred on integrating sustainability into mainstream business operations.

On **3rd June**, Dr. Al Mar'ashi delivered a presentation at Propak MENA entitled "Advancing Sustainability in Trade and Investment: Pioneering Environmental Solutions for a Better Future." The session highlighted the growing importance of embedding environmental and social considerations into corporate decision-making and emphasised the role of collaboration in accelerating sustainable development.

The participation offered a valuable opportunity to engage with regional and international stakeholders from the manufacturing, packaging, food production and investment sectors, fostering the exchange of ideas and best practices that support responsible growth and long-term resilience.

As one of the leading advocates of Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainability in the Arab region, the Arabia CSR Network continues to facilitate dialogue, encourage innovation and build partnerships that enable organisations to navigate evolving sustainability expectations while creating positive impact for society and the environment.



ACSRN Founder Calls for Collaborative Action Towards a Sustainable Future

In celebration of World Environment Day 2026, Dr. Habiba, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN), participated in a live interview with Al Dhafra TV on **5th June**. During the interview, Dr. Habiba shared insights on the importance of sustainability and the collective responsibility of all sectors of society in advancing environmental stewardship.

The discussion highlighted the growing need for organisations to adopt responsible practices and contribute meaningfully towards sustainable development.

As the region continues to advance its sustainability agenda, she underscored the need for stronger collaboration between the public sector, private sector, civil society and communities to accelerate progress towards shared environmental and social goals. She also highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability and measurable action in ensuring that sustainability commitments translate into meaningful impact.

The appearance served as an opportunity to reinforce key messages surrounding World Environment Day and the importance of continued collaboration and awareness in addressing sustainability challenges and creating a better future for all.

ACSRN continues to champion initiatives that encourage responsible business practices, foster cross-sector dialogue and support organisations in integrating sustainability into their long-term strategies. Through knowledge-sharing platforms, capacity-building programmes and stakeholder engagement, the Network remains committed to advancing sustainable development across the Arab region.

Lebanese Business Council's 30th Anniversary Celebration

On **8th June**, the Founder & CEO of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN), attended the 30th Anniversary Dinner Party of the Lebanese Business Council, held at the Marriott Resort Palm Jumeirah, Dubai. The celebratory event brought together prominent business leaders, diplomats, entrepreneurs, and distinguished guests to commemorate three decades of the Council's dedication to strengthening business relations and fostering economic cooperation within the UAE and beyond.

The occasion provided an excellent platform for networking, knowledge exchange and dialogue on the importance of collaboration in driving sustainable and inclusive growth. It also highlighted the valuable role that business councils play in connecting stakeholders, facilitating partnerships and contributing to the development of vibrant and resilient business communities.

As an organisation committed to advancing responsible business practices and sustainability across the region, the Arabia CSR Network values opportunities to engage with diverse stakeholders and strengthen relationships that support collective progress towards shared social, environmental and economic objectives.





Berkeley Services Sustainability Podcast

On **11th June**, Berkeley Services released a special podcast episode featuring Dr. Habiba, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network. The episode served as a platform for meaningful dialogue on the evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility, sustainability leadership and the growing importance of embedding responsible business practices into organisational strategies.

During the discussion, Dr. Habiba reflected on the remarkable progress that the sustainability and CSR landscape has witnessed across the UAE and the wider region over the past two decades. She shared insights into how businesses are increasingly recognising sustainability not merely as a philanthropic endeavour, but as an integral component of long-term resilience, competitiveness and value creation.

The conversation also explored the critical role of partnerships in advancing sustainability agendas, emphasising that meaningful impact can only be achieved through collaboration between the private sector, civil society, governments, academia and communities.

Drawing on the Arabia CSR Network's extensive experience in promoting responsible business conduct since its establishment in 2004, Dr. Habiba highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability, stakeholder engagement and measurable outcomes in driving credible sustainability performance.

The podcast further examined emerging trends within the sustainability landscape, including the integration of ESG principles into corporate governance, the need to address greenwashing through robust reporting mechanisms and the opportunities available to organisations that embrace sustainability as a strategic imperative.

The Arabia CSR Network extends its appreciation to Berkeley Services for facilitating this important conversation and for providing a platform that encourages organisations to exchange knowledge, challenge conventional thinking and advance the collective pursuit of a more sustainable and responsible future.

The discussion also reinforced the importance of fostering a culture of sustainability that extends beyond compliance, encouraging organisations to integrate environmental and social considerations into everyday decision-making. As sustainability continues to evolve as a defining business priority, the Arabia CSR Network remains committed to supporting organisations through knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and collaborative initiatives.



[Watch here](#)

Organising a Panel Discussion Jointly with EEG

On **17th June**, the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) proudly collaborated with EEG to organise the 3rd panel discussion of the year, conducted under the title of "Water Security in Arid Regions: Innovations for Scarcity, Resilience & Sustainable Growth."

Held in observance of the United Nations World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, the session convened sustainability leaders, policymakers, researchers, industry experts, educators, and youth representatives to explore practical solutions to one of the region's most pressing sustainability challenges.

The programme commenced with an Inter-School Debate on the motion, "Desalination Is the Most Reliable Long-Term Solution for Water Security in Arid Regions," showcasing the critical thinking and leadership potential of young participants.

The expert panel featured Lt. Col. Eng. Taher Hassan Mohammed Ali Taher, Director of Corporate Leadership Department at Dubai Civil Defence; Dr. Sajid Pareeth, Director of Water & Climate Solutions at Expo City Dubai; Prof. Fatin Samara, Deputy Director of the Energy, Water & Sustainable Environment Research Centre (EWSERC) at the American University of Sharjah; Mr. Iftikhar Hamdani, Area General Manager – Northern Emirates at Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel and Coral Beach Resort Sharjah; and Ms. Alicia Dauth, Chartered Environmentalist and Water, Environment Stewardship & Resilience Advisor.

The discussions underscored the importance of integrated approaches to water management, highlighting innovations such as renewable-powered desalination, wastewater reuse, smart water technologies and collaborative governance frameworks to enhance resilience in arid regions.

As a long-standing advocate for responsible business practices and sustainable development, ACSRN recognises that water security is not solely an environmental issue but also a social and economic imperative. Strengthening resilience against water scarcity requires collective action, informed decision-making and meaningful partnerships across sectors.

The session further highlighted the importance of investing in innovation, knowledge exchange and capacity-building to support the development of sustainable water solutions that can meet the needs of both present and future generations.

Through such dialogues and collaborative platforms, ACSRN remains committed to fostering cross-sector engagement and advancing practical solutions that contribute to long-term water resilience and sustainable development across the region.





WorldGBC Leadership Summit 2026 in London

From **21st to 24th June**, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) and Board Director of the World Green Building Council (WorldGBC), participated in a series of high-level engagements held as part of the WorldGBC Leadership Summit 2026 in London, United Kingdom.

Throughout the four-day programme, she attended the WorldGBC Board Meeting 2026, the WorldGBC Global Solutions Forum, the WorldGBC Board and Corporate Advisory Board Dinner, and the WorldGBC Annual General Meeting (AGM).

These strategic gatherings brought together sustainability leaders and representatives from Green Building Councils across the globe to exchange knowledge, strengthen partnerships and shape the future direction of the sustainable built environment movement.

A key highlight of the Summit was the WorldGBC Global Solutions Forum, held as part of London Climate Action Week 2026, which showcased practical and scalable solutions already being implemented across the built environment sector.

The Forum focused on accelerating action through collaboration, innovation and the sharing of best practices to build resilient, low-carbon and resource-efficient communities.

Dr Habiba's participation reflects ACSRN's commitment to remaining engaged in global sustainability dialogues and fostering cross-sector partnerships that advance responsible business practices and sustainable development. Such international platforms provide valuable opportunities to exchange insights, strengthen networks and contribute towards collective efforts aimed at creating a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable future.



EU-GCC Webinar on Energy System Resilience

On **24th June**, the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) participated virtually in the webinar "Energy System Resilience in Times of Volatility: Resilient Power Systems for the GCC – Renewables, Flexibility and Security of Supply," organised under the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project.

The webinar convened policymakers, industry leaders, utilities, and experts from Europe and the GCC to discuss strategies for strengthening energy security and resilience while advancing the green transition. Discussions explored renewable energy integration, grid flexibility, energy storage, energy efficiency, and opportunities for enhanced EU-GCC cooperation in clean energy technologies.

ACSRN welcomed the opportunity to engage in this important dialogue, which aligns with its commitment to promoting sustainable development, responsible business practices, climate resilience, and cross-sector collaboration. The session reinforced the importance of international cooperation and innovation in building sustainable and secure energy systems for the future.



Sharjah Excellence Award 2025

The Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Board of Trustees of the Sharjah Excellence Award celebrated the winners of the Sharjah Excellence Award – 2025 Cycle during an awarding ceremony held on **24th June** at the Expo Centre Sharjah.

The Sharjah Excellence Award continues to play a pivotal role in promoting a culture of excellence, innovation and continuous improvement within the UAE's business community.

By recognising organisations that demonstrate outstanding performance and best practices, the Award contributes towards strengthening competitiveness and advancing sustainable economic development.

The success and credibility of the Award are underpinned by the expertise and commitment of its distinguished jury panel. Among those recognised for their valuable contribution was Dr. Habiba Al Amr'ashi, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network, who served as a jury member for the Sharjah Excellence Award 2025 Cycle.

Her participation reflects ACSRN's longstanding commitment to advancing responsible business practices and encouraging organisations to pursue excellence with integrity, innovation, and sustainability at their core.

The Arabia CSR Network extends its congratulations to all the award recipients and commends the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry for its continued efforts in recognising and celebrating organisations that exemplify excellence and contribute positively to the region's sustainable development journey.

Arabia CSR and Sustainability Awards – 19th Cycle Applications Now Closed

The submission period for the 19th Cycle of the Arabia CSR and Sustainability Awards officially closed on **30th June**, marking another significant milestone in recognising excellence in sustainability and responsible business practices across the Arab region.

This year's applications reflect the growing commitment of organisations to embed sustainability into their core strategies and operations. Participants from diverse sectors have showcased innovative initiatives, measurable impact and strong leadership in advancing environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles.





The Arabia CSR Network will now commence the rigorous evaluation process, during which an esteemed panel of independent experts will assess each submission against the Awards' comprehensive criteria, focusing on strategic integration, stakeholder engagement, innovation, transparency and demonstrated outcomes.

EGBC Engagements

1) On **16th June**, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) and Co-Founder, Vice Chair and Treasurer of the Emirates Green Building Council (EGBC), participated in the EGBC Management Committee Meeting, contributing to discussions on the Council's ongoing initiatives and strategic priorities within the built environment sector.

The meeting provided an opportunity for Management Committee members to review the progress of key programmes, exchange updates on upcoming activities and identify avenues for enhancing stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Discussions centred on advancing sustainable building practices and supporting the transformation of the built environment through innovative and responsible approaches.

As a long-standing advocate for sustainability and responsible business practices, Dr. Habiba continues to promote the integration of environmental, social and governance considerations across sectors. Her involvement in both ACSRN and EGBC reflects a commitment to fostering partnerships and encouraging collective action towards achieving sustainable development objectives.

2) On **18th June**, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, delivered the Opening Remarks at the Emirates Green Building Council's 20th Anniversary Celebration, held at the Grand Plaza Mövenpick Media City, Dubai. The milestone event brought together leaders from the built environment sector, sustainability experts, policymakers and industry stakeholders to commemorate two decades of EGBC's efforts in advancing sustainable building practices and driving positive transformation within the UAE.

In her opening address, Dr. Habiba reflected on the importance of collaboration, responsible leadership and long-term commitment in accelerating sustainability across sectors. She acknowledged the progress made over the past twenty years while emphasising the need for continued innovation and cross-sector partnerships to address emerging environmental challenges and support the UAE's sustainability ambitions.



3) On **18th June**, Dr. Habiba, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN), and Co-Founder, Vice Chair and Treasurer of the Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC), participated in the EmiratesGBC Q2 Board Meeting, joining fellow Board Members to review organisational progress and discuss strategic priorities for the remainder of the year.

The meeting served as an important platform to reflect on key achievements, assess ongoing initiatives and explore opportunities to further strengthen EmiratesGBC's role in advancing sustainability within the built environment sector.

Discussions focused on enhancing stakeholder engagement, promoting industry collaboration and supporting programmes that contribute to more sustainable and resilient communities. Dr. Habiba's participation reflects ACSRN's continued commitment to fostering cross-sector partnerships and encouraging the integration of sustainability principles across all areas of development.

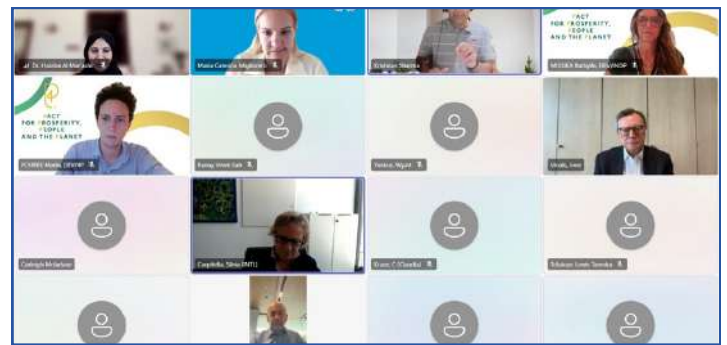
GISD Engagements

1) On **19th June**, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network, participated virtually in an online briefing organised for members of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance. The session focused on the work of the 4P Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Barriers to Investment in Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs).

The briefing was led by the Co-Chair of the GISD Alliance and member of the 4P EPG, together with the Head of the 4P Secretariat. Participants were provided with updates on the progress of the EPG's work, which seeks to examine whether prudential frameworks may unintentionally constrain investment flows into emerging and developing economies.

Discussions also introduced a forthcoming survey targeting financial sector stakeholders, the findings of which will contribute to international processes including the Baku-to-Belém Roadmap, as well as discussions within the G20 and G7.

Dr. Al Mar'ashi reaffirmed the importance of strengthening global collaboration to ensure that financial systems evolve in a way that supports inclusive and sustainable growth. She further emphasised



2) On **23rd June**, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi participated in the high-level roundtable "From Compliance to Value Creation", organised by the United Nations Global Compact's CFO Coalition during London Climate Week. The session convened senior leaders from global financial institutions, corporations, and sustainability organisations to discuss the evolving role of sustainability in driving long-term business value, resilience, and competitiveness. Discussions explored how organisations can move beyond compliance-driven approaches towards integrating sustainability into core business strategy and decision-making.

The roundtable provided a valuable platform for exchanging perspectives on sustainable finance, responsible investment, corporate leadership, and the growing importance of value creation in advancing sustainable development goals.





Upcoming News

CSR Strategy & Leadership Training 21st – 23rd July

As sustainability continues to reshape the business landscape, organisations require leaders who can integrate responsible practices into strategic decision-making. The CSR Strategy & Leadership Training is designed to equip professionals with the knowledge and practical tools needed to develop effective CSR and sustainability strategies that create long-term value.

Participants will gain insights into emerging trends, stakeholder engagement, materiality considerations, governance mechanisms and the integration of sustainability principles into organisational culture and operations. Through interactive discussions and case-based learning, the programme will empower leaders to drive meaningful change and strengthen their organisation's contribution towards sustainable development.

Gap Analysis Workshop 24th July

Understanding where an organisation stands on its sustainability journey is the first step towards meaningful progress. The Gap Analysis Workshop provides participants with a structured approach to assessing current practices against recognised sustainability frameworks, reporting requirements and stakeholder expectations. The workshop will guide organisations in identifying strengths, uncovering areas for improvement, and prioritising actions that support enhanced performance and long-term resilience. Participants will explore practical methodologies for conducting internal assessments, setting realistic targets and developing improvement roadmaps that align with organisational objectives and sustainability ambitions.

Register now at admin@arabiacsrnetwork.com

Global Sustainability & CSR Forum – 12th & 13th October

As organisations navigate an increasingly complex sustainability landscape, the need for meaningful collaboration, practical solutions and accountable leadership has never been greater. The Global Sustainability & CSR Forum 2026 will provide a distinguished platform for stakeholders to engage in transformative discussions under the theme "Currents of Change: Impact Beyond Promises."

Conducted in Partnership with Dubai World Trade Centre, it will take place on 12th –13th October 2026, the Forum will bring together policymakers, business leaders, sustainability practitioners, academics and civil society representatives to explore how commitments can be translated into measurable outcomes that benefit both business and society.

Through insightful keynote addresses, expert-led panel discussions and interactive exchanges, participants will examine emerging trends and critical priorities shaping the future of sustainable development. Key areas of focus will include climate resilience, responsible governance, sustainable innovation, stakeholder engagement, social impact and the collaborative approaches required to accelerate progress towards regional and global sustainability objectives.

Convened by the Arabia CSR Network in collaboration with the DWTC Sustainability Dialogue, this flagship event seeks to inspire action,

foster strategic partnerships and promote the exchange of knowledge that empowers organisations to lead with purpose and accountability.

Whether you are refining your sustainability strategy, seeking innovative solutions, or looking to strengthen your organisation's impact journey, the Global Sustainability & CSR Forum offers a valuable opportunity to connect with thought leaders and contribute to shaping a more resilient and inclusive future.

[Register here](#)

Member News

Palestine Investment Fund & European Union Strengthen Support for Jerusalem's SMEs

The Palestine Investment Fund (PIF) and the European Union (EU) have signed an agreement to launch a new phase of the Jerusalem Grants Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), reaffirming their shared commitment to strengthening economic resilience and promoting sustainable development in Jerusalem.

The initiative also reflects the broader efforts of institutions operating under the PIF Group, including the Palestine for Development Foundation (PSDF), a valued member of the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN). Through its work in advancing sustainable community development and social impact initiatives, PSDF continues to demonstrate the important role that purpose-driven organisations can play in fostering resilience and creating opportunities for underserved communities.

With a co-financing contribution of €4.5 million over four years, the programme aims to strengthen Palestinian institutions and businesses in Jerusalem through financial grants, technical assistance and advisory services. It is expected to support 130–136 projects, helping them expand operations, enhance competitiveness and adapt to challenging economic conditions.

The initiative is also projected to create 250–350 new jobs and safeguard 350–400 existing positions, with a strong focus on youth- and women-led enterprises, entrepreneurship and environmentally responsible projects.



[Read here](#)





Feature Article

How to ensure ESG transparency

Excerpt from Dan Byrne, journalist, writer and editor at The Corporate Governance Institute

Quick recap: what is ESG?

ESG is an investing principle that prioritises practices that positively impact the plant, its people and the way businesses are governed. It's a tool for investors, allowing them to assess the practices of different companies and compare them against each other.

Environmental components often concern things like carbon emissions and energy usage; social issues often concern things like diversity and labour practices; and governance issues concern things like board conduct and executive pay.

What are the signs of good transparency?

Let's zoom out from ESG for a moment to look at some core qualities of general good transparency.

- **Consistent reporting:** Regular updates that feature both positives and negatives.
- **Accurate & validated data:** Your company has done its homework on the information it presents.
- **Alignment with recognised frameworks:** Your company has identified a reporting framework that works for various stakeholders and presents using those standards.
- **Accessibility:** transparent companies make reports easily accessible to the public, often publishing them on their websites or investor portals.

Why is transparency important in ESG?

Transparency is fundamental to ESG for two reasons:

- The concept is now a critical tool stakeholders use to judge a company.
- The idea is very technical and precise, and fundamental transparency matters more than ever.

Pursuing good transparency is the ultimate sign that your company is willing to take on ESG properly. It increases your trust among stakeholders, boosts your industry reputation, and ultimately enhances your company's long-term value.

How can you ensure that you are transparent in ESG?

Achieving ESG transparency requires deliberate actions and a commitment to honesty.

Here are steps to help ensure transparency in your company's ESG efforts:

- Implement robust data collection processes. Invest in systems that can process vast amounts of ESG data in a short space of time.

With the advent of AI, these are widely available and hugely beneficial, considering the amount of reporting needed.

- **Ensure you have the right expertise to sign off on data collection and reporting.** No matter how much data AI can process, its work needs to be checked by trained professionals who understand precisely what the numbers are saying.
- **Align with global standards and frameworks:** Pick an established ESG reporting framework like GRI, SASB, or TCFD and stick to it. Make this decision based on what your stakeholders are used to or want to see.
- **Commit to regular and honest reporting:** Publish ESG reports at regular intervals. Don't wait for pressure from multiple stakeholders to build before you say anything.
- **Engage with stakeholders:** Open communication, such as surveys, forums and public Q&A sessions, can build a positive perception of transparency and show that your company values stakeholder input.

In summary

ESG transparency is essential because it shows your commitment to the principles many stakeholders use to judge a company's long-term prospects.

The key to good transparency is proactivity, honesty and a push for high standards using the latest technology and training.

Organisations that embrace transparent ESG reporting are better positioned to identify risks, uncover opportunities and strengthen stakeholder confidence. By adopting recognised reporting frameworks, investing in reliable data systems and fostering a culture of openness, businesses can enhance the quality of their disclosures while supporting informed decision-making.

Ultimately, transparency should not be viewed as a reporting exercise alone, but as an integral component of effective governance and sustainable business strategy.

When supported by accurate data, independent verification and meaningful stakeholder engagement, transparent ESG practices can help organisations build trust, strengthen their reputation and create long-term value for both business and society.





Best Practice

AJMAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Small Public Sector Category

WINNER

Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards 2024

Brief

The Ajman Tourism Development Department (ATDD), established in 2012, plays a pivotal role in advancing sustainable tourism in the Emirate of Ajman and the UAE. Tasked with promoting Ajman as a leading tourism destination, ATDD integrates sustainability principles across its operations. Its strategic alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Ajman Vision 2030 ensures a balanced focus on environmental well-being, social prosperity and economic growth.

ATDD's commitment to sustainability is evident through its ISO 14001-certified Environmental Management System, sustainable tourism strategies and initiatives like the "Tourism Sustainability Award". It has pioneered 14 sustainability projects in collaboration with key stakeholders, aligning with UAE's Year of Sustainability and COP28 priorities. Additionally, ATDD actively engages local communities, supporting SMEs and fostering cultural preservation through innovative policies and inclusive practices.

ATDD's leadership plays a proactive role in CSR initiatives, aligning them with the Ajman Vision 2030. Key initiatives include support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the empowerment of marginalised groups such as people of determination and the promotion of cultural activities that celebrate Ajman's heritage.

Summary & Lessons Learnt

The Ajman Tourism Development Department's journey in advancing sustainable tourism provides valuable insights into the key drivers of success: strategic alignment, community engagement and innovation. By integrating sustainability into its vision, mission and values, ATDD has demonstrated the importance of aligning operational strategies with global frameworks such as the UN SDGs and Ajman Vision 2030.

A critical lesson learned by ATDD is the value of stakeholder inclusivity. Through comprehensive engagement mechanisms, the department has effectively addressed community needs while fostering partnerships with government entities, private sector players and cultural organisations. This collaborative approach has helped build a resilient and inclusive tourism ecosystem. Innovation also emerged as a vital enabler for ATDD's sustainability goals. Guided by ISO 56002, the department has adopted forward-thinking strategies, such as green infrastructure development, smart tourism solutions and eco-friendly policies. These innovations have allowed ATDD to address pressing challenges like environmental conservation and accessibility while creating unique tourism experiences.

Continuous learning and regular assessments have been instrumental in refining ATDD's policies and initiatives. Adapting to emerging trends and global best practices ensures the department remains relevant and impactful.

ATDD's approach serves as a model for public organisations striving to balance sustainability with economic and social development goals.

The Ajman Tourism Development Department has established a robust governance framework that emphasises transparency, accountability and proactive management. The department adheres to international standards for environmental management and health & safety, ensuring a consistent focus on organisational excellence. Transparency is a key pillar of ATDD's governance practices. The department conducts regular internal and external audits, ensuring compliance with policies and international standards. Performance metrics are tracked and reported through advanced tools like dashboards and results are shared with internal and external stakeholders to foster trust and accountability.

ATDD enforces a zero-tolerance policy for corruption through robust policies such as whistleblower protection, conflict of interest declarations and anti-corruption training for staff. These measures are supported by a grievance mechanism that allows employees and external stakeholders to report concerns securely and ensures swift and fair resolutions.

Ajman Tourism Development Department stands as a model of excellence in integrating sustainability and innovation within the public sector. Through its alignment with international standards and global frameworks like the UN SDGs, ATDD has successfully embedded environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles into its core operations.

By implementing initiatives such as the Tourism Sustainability Award, green infrastructure development and inclusive community programmes, ATDD has showcased how public sector organisations can balance economic growth with environmental conservation and societal well-being.

Furthermore, its proactive approach to stakeholder engagement and strategic partnerships has fostered collaboration, enhancing the impact of its sustainability efforts.

