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NEWSLETTER

Volume 10 Issue 183



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Building Partnerships for a Sustainable Future ©

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Note from the Founder & CEO

Dear Members, Partners, Stakeholders, Friends and Well-wishers. As we enter November 2026, the global sustainability landscape continues to evolve, reminding us that responsible leadership, environmental stewardship and sustainable development are no longer optional considerations. They are essential foundations for economic resilience, corporate competitiveness and long-term prosperity.

Around the world, climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion and economic uncertainty continue to place immense pressure on communities, institutions and businesses. Recent international developments have reinforced the urgency of accelerating climate action, strengthening sustainability governance and translating global commitments into measurable outcomes.

As the international community prepares for COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, the focus must shift decisively from ambition to implementation. Stronger climate finance, transparent reporting, responsible investment and meaningful partnerships will be essential to ensuring that sustainability commitments deliver lasting environmental, social and economic benefits.

Across the Arab region, sustainability is increasingly becoming a strategic business priority. Governments are advancing ambitious environmental policies, while organisations are strengthening their environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices, integrating sustainability into decision-making and recognising the importance of accountability and measurable performance.

Here in the United Arab Emirates, October witnessed significant sustainability engagement through influential platforms, including WETEX 2026, the World Green Economy Summit, the 14th CEBC Annual Summit, the EmiratesGBC Annual Congress, the Emirates Flight Catering Sustainability Forum and other industry-led initiatives. These gatherings reflected the UAE's continued commitment to advancing innovation, responsible investment and collaboration across sectors.

For the Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN), October was particularly meaningful as we successfully concluded two of our flagship programmes: the 14th Global Sustainability & CSR Forum on 12th –13th October and the 19th Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards on 14th October.

The Forum, organised under the theme "Currents of Change: Impact Beyond Promises," brought together policymakers, business leaders, sustainability experts, academics and civil society representatives to examine how sustainability commitments can be translated into credible action. Discussions explored climate finance, decarbonisation, sustainable mobility, circular economy practices, responsible business leadership and technological innovation, reinforcing the importance of collaboration and measurable environmental and societal impact.

The 19th Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards subsequently celebrated organisations demonstrating outstanding commitment to responsible business practices and sustainability excellence across the Arab region.

Beyond recognising excellence, the Awards continue to provide participating organisations with independent benchmarking, constructive feedback and opportunities for continuous improvement. Together, these two flagship initiatives reinforced a fundamental message: sustainability leadership is not measured by the commitments organisations announce, but by the progress they demonstrate and the positive impact they create.

Beyond our flagship programmes, October was also an exceptionally active month of regional engagement. On 1st October, I participated in the 14th CEBC Annual Summit, contributing to discussions on climate finance, resilience and sustainable economic transformation.

On 21st October, I delivered a keynote presentation titled "Nature, Biodiversity, and the Climate Science – Foundations for a Changing World" during the CEBC MENA Renewables & Sustainability Seminars at WETEX 2026. I also attended the opening of the World Green Economy Summit, reinforcing the importance of sustainable innovation and climate action.

On 27th October, I was interviewed in a fireside chat at the 15th EmiratesGBC Annual Congress, Where I talked about the formation of the MENA Green Building Council its objectives and the bigger purpose of transforming the construction sector in the Arab Region.

This was followed by an engaging fireside conversation with Professor Dame Heather McGregor, the Vice Chancellor of Herriot Watt University at the Discovery Series 2026 Report Launch on 28th October, exploring perspectives on leadership and organisational development and discussing the UAE's built environment, its achievements and the priorities needed to accelerate sustainable transformation.

On 29th October, I moderated the Innovation & Infrastructure Panel at the Emirates Flight Catering Sustainability Forum, addressing practical solutions for waste management, resource recovery and circular economy implementation. I warmly invite you to explore this newsletter for further insights into these engagements, their key discussions and the valuable perspectives shared. Each reflects our commitment to promoting knowledge exchange, responsible leadership and meaningful collaboration.

As we look ahead, particularly towards the landmark 20th Cycle of the Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards and the 15th Global Sustainability & CSR Forum in 2027, we are inspired by the journey we have undertaken and the opportunities that lie ahead.

These milestones will provide an important occasion to celebrate our achievements, strengthen our partnerships and further elevate the standards of sustainability leadership across the Arab region.

Let us carry forward the momentum of the past month with renewed determination. Let us continue to strengthen the systems, partnerships and leadership required to advance sustainability across the Arab region and beyond. The path ahead is complex, but it is also full of opportunity. Our responsibility is not merely to advocate for sustainability, but to demonstrate its value through measurable progress, responsible leadership and lasting positive impact.

ACSRN News

14th CEBC Annual Summit

The Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) reinforced its commitment to advancing responsible business practices, sustainable finance and regional collaboration as its Founder & CEO, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, participated as a panellist at the 14th Annual Summit of the Clean Energy Business Council (CEBC) MENA, held on **1st October** at the DIFC Conference Centre in Dubai. Organised under the theme "The Turning Point: Change, Resilience, and Economic Transformation in MENA," the Summit convened senior government officials, financial leaders, industry pioneers and sustainability experts to explore how the region can navigate economic uncertainties, strengthen resilience and accelerate its transition towards a low-carbon and sustainable economy.

Dr. Habiba joined the Opening of High-Level Panel, "Realignment and Resilience: Financing a New Era of Climate Action in MENA," which focused on the critical role of financial mobilisation, strategic investment and cross-sector collaboration in translating climate commitments into meaningful action. The high-level discussion explored the evolving pace of the energy transition, opportunities to accelerate climate finance and the importance of managing economic and environmental risks.

It also examined how the region can mobilise investment at the scale required to support clean energy development, strengthen institutional resilience and transform vulnerabilities into opportunities for sustainable growth. Bringing her extensive experience in corporate social responsibility, sustainability governance and stakeholder engagement, Dr. Habiba shared valuable perspective on the importance of integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations into financial and business decision-making.

Her participation underscored the need for stronger collaboration between governments, financial institutions, businesses and civil society to ensure that climate finance delivers measurable environmental, social and economic benefits. The Summit further addressed pressing regional priorities, including cross-border energy infrastructure, supply chain resilience, industrial decarbonisation, sustainable investment and the development of reliable energy systems aligned with Net Zero ambitions. Dr. Habiba's participation reflected ACSRN's longstanding mission to bridge sustainability commitments with responsible corporate leadership, investment accountability and measurable impact.



14th Global Sustainability & CSR Forum

The Arabia CSR Network successfully concluded the 14th Cycle of the Global Sustainability & CSR Forum, held on **12th –13th October** at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), in collaboration with DWTC Sustainability Dialogues. Convened under the compelling theme "Currents of Change: Impact Beyond Promises," the Forum brought together an influential gathering of policymakers, business leaders, sustainability experts, investors, academics, civil society representatives and young changemakers to explore one critical question: How can sustainability commitments be translated into meaningful action and measurable impact?

Over two days of engaging discussions, the Forum reinforced the urgency of moving beyond ambitious declarations towards practical solutions, credible strategies, responsible investment and cross-sector partnerships capable of delivering lasting environmental, social and economic benefits. The Forum commenced with a welcome address by Mr. Mahir Abdulkarim Julfar, Executive Vice President of Dubai World Trade Centre, followed by an opening address by Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder & CEO of ACSRN.

In her remarks, she emphasised the importance of collective responsibility, collaboration and accountability in driving sustainability progress. She reflected on the Forum's evolution into an established platform for knowledge exchange, bringing together diverse perspectives to bridge the gap between sustainability commitments and practical implementation.

The opening programme featured distinguished keynote speakers, including Mr. Navid Hanif, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Ms. Sarah Shaw, Chief Executive Officer of MAJRA – The National CSR Fund; Mr. Eugene Mayne, Founder and CEO of Tristar Group and a galaxy of other distinguished speakers including H.E. Dr. Agnes Kalibata the Founder and Chair of Connect for Impact Advisory Group and Former Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda.

Their contributions highlighted the changing global sustainability landscape and the growing responsibility of governments, businesses and institutions to translate ambition into credible and lasting outcomes. The first day featured three thought-provoking plenary sessions addressing some of today's most pressing sustainability priorities. "Climate Finance 2.0: Mechanisms, Markets and Accountability for Climate Transition". This session examined how innovative financing instruments, blended finance and stronger investment frameworks can accelerate climate action while ensuring transparency and measurable impact.

"The Sustainable Mobility Revolution: The Future of Transport & Cities" explored the transformation of urban mobility, integrated transport networks, sustainable maritime practices and infrastructure solutions that can support more efficient, connected and resilient cities. Meanwhile, "Net Zero Landscape: Decarbonising Efforts in the Region" highlighted practical approaches to emissions reduction, including energy-from-waste solutions, sustainable infrastructure, efficient building design and emerging technologies supporting the transition towards low-carbon economies.

The day concluded with "From Promises to Impact: Best Practices That Deliver," a session showcasing real-world sustainability initiatives in energy management, digitalisation, responsible procurement, circular economy practices, construction waste management and food waste reduction. These examples demonstrated how organisations can embed sustainability into everyday operations and transform strategic commitments into measurable results.

The 2nd day opened with keynote addresses by Mr. Lorenzo Tacchella, Head of Private Sector Partnerships for GCC Countries at the World Food Programme, and Dr. Franklin Carrero-Martinez, Senior Director of Science and Technology for Sustainability at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Their contributions explored the relationship between sustainable development, responsible business, partnerships and the institutional systems needed to build resilient societies. The day's plenary discussions addressed 3 interconnected areas of sustainability transformation.

"Greening Healthcare: Sustainable Systems & Practices" examined how healthcare institutions can integrate sustainability into operations, policy and decision-making while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals. "Blue Economy 2030: Coastal Development & Climate Solutions" explored how responsible coastal development can balance economic growth with marine biodiversity protection, sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience.

"Innovation That Matters: Digital Transformation for a Sustainable World" highlighted the growing role of artificial intelligence, digital technologies and data-driven solutions in strengthening operational efficiency, environmental performance and informed decision-making.

A special fireside conversation with Dr. Agnes Kalibata offered valuable reflections on leadership, climate resilience, sustainable food systems and the importance of strengthening livelihoods through transformative action. Adding a dynamic dimension to the Forum, the programme concluded with an engaging undergraduate debate titled "Sustainable Packaging: Recycling Reform or Material Revolution – What Should Be Prioritised?" Students from Sohar University, Oman, and Heriot-Watt University Dubai presented contrasting perspectives on improving recycling systems and accelerating innovation in packaging materials and design.

Following an interactive audience vote, Sohar University emerged as the winning team, demonstrating the importance of youth participation, critical thinking and constructive dialogue in shaping future sustainability solutions. Reflecting on the Forum, Dr. Habiba reinforced the central message that sustainability ambitions must be matched by decisive action, responsible investment and measurable outcomes.

She emphasised that the interconnected nature of today's environmental, social and economic challenges requires equally interconnected responses, with governments, businesses, academia, civil society and communities working together to deliver systemic change.

The successful delivery of the Forum was made possible through the valued collaboration with Dubai World Trade Centre, which hosted the event alongside the 3rd edition of DWTC Sustainability Dialogues. ACSRN was also the recipient of further support from MAJRA – The National CSR Fundand Tristar Group; as Exclusive Partners, McDonald's UAE; as Strategic Partner, while it got RAK Municipality (REEM) as the Government Partner, and Emirates Environmental Group as the environmental partner.

Farnek was amongst the entities that got recognised for certifying the Forum as a carbon-neutral event, as well as the supporting business councils, organisations, media partners and associates whose contributions strengthened the programme's reach and impact.

As the 14th Cycle draws to a close, the Global Sustainability & CSR Forum leaves behind a powerful message: meaningful sustainability is not measured by the promises organisations make, but by the progress they deliver.





Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards Celebrates Excellence Across the Arab Region

The Arabia CSR Network (ACSRN) proudly concluded the 19th Cycle of the Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards on **14th October** at the Millennium Plaza Downtown Dubai, celebrating organisations demonstrating outstanding leadership in corporate social responsibility, environmental stewardship and sustainable development across the Arab region. The prestigious ceremony was held under the patronage and presence of H.H. Engr. Sheikh Salem bin Sultan bin Saqr Al Qasimi, President of the Ras Al Khaimah Civil Aviation Authority and Member of the Executive Council of the Government of Ras Al Khaimah, reaffirming the importance of recognising organisations that are driving meaningful sustainability progress.

Established in 2008, the Awards have evolved into one of the region's leading platforms for benchmarking sustainability excellence, encouraging organisations to integrate environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles into their strategies and operations.In her opening address, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder & CEO of ACSRN, emphasised that sustainability must now move beyond commitments towards measurable outcomes, stronger accountability and tangible environmental and social impact. She highlighted the Awards' continued role in encouraging organisations to critically assess their performance, identify opportunities for improvement and raise their sustainability standards.

The 19th Cycle received 109 applications, with 70 reaching the independent jury evaluation stage, representing 6 Arab countries and 38 sectors. Notably, 44.5% of applicants were first-time participants, reflecting the Awards' expanding regional reach. Despite regional economic and geopolitical challenges, the quality of submissions continued to improve, with the independent jury observing generally higher scores than in the previous cycle. This encouraging development demonstrated the increasing maturity of sustainability practices and the growing integration of ESG considerations into organisational strategies. The Awards recognised outstanding organisations across business, public sector and specialised industry categories, celebrating their achievements in responsible leadership, innovation, environmental management and community impact.

Name of Organisation	Country	Position
SMALL BUSINESS CATEGORY		
Transworld	UAE	Winner
Labotel Workers Village	UAE	1st Runner Up
Kharayf Altomour	UAE	2nd Runner Up
MEDIUM BUSINESS CATEGORY		
Atyab Group	Oman	Winner
CANPACK Middle East One Person Company LLC	UAE	1st Runner Up
Lucy Middle East FZE	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
OQ Base Industries	Oman	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
PUBLIC SECTOR CATEGORY - SMALL ORGANISATIONS		
Fujairah Environment Authority	UAE	Winner (Tie)
Sharjah Self-Defense Sports Club	UAE	Winner (Tie)
Ajman Statistics Center	UAE	1st Runner Up
PUBLIC SECTOR CATEGORY - MEDIUM ORGANISATIONS		
Sharjah Housing Department	UAE	Special Recognition
PUBLIC SECTOR CATEGORY - LARGE ORGANISATIONS		
Dubai Electricity & Water Authority (DEWA)	UAE	Winner
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS CATEGORY		
Dubai Municipality	UAE	Winner (Tie)
Sharjah Self-Defense Sports Club	UAE	Winner (Tie)
Friends of Football Players Charity Association	KSA	1st Runner Up
Emerge Limited	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
Les Eaux Minérales d'Oulmès	Morocco	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
Stella Di Mare Dubai Marina	UAE	Special Recognition (Tie)
Sfanah Charity Organization for Health Services	KSA	Special Recognition (Tie)
Farnek Services LLC	UAE	Special Recognition (Tie)
FINANCIAL SERVICES CATEGORY		
First Abu Dhabi Bank	UAE	Winner
HEALTHCARE SECTOR CATEGORY		
Aster DM Healthcare	UAE	Winner
Al Hussein Society Jordan Center for Traning and Inclusion	Jordan	1st Runner Up
HOSPITALITY SECTOR CATEGORY		
FIVE HOTELS	UAE	Winner
FIVE HOTEL -FZE	UAE	1stRunner Up (Tie)
Movenpick Hotel Jumeirah Beach	UAE	1st Runner Up (Tie)
Dubai World Trade Centre DWTC	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
FIVE HOTEL JUMEIRAH VILLAGE LLC	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
Stella Di Mare Dubai Marina	UAE	Special Recognition (Tie)
FIVE LUXE HOTEL LLC	UAE	Special Recognition (Tie)

Name of Organisation	Country	Position
ENERGY SECTOR CATEGORY		
Saudi Aramco - Western Region Distribution Department	KSA	Winner
Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC) - L.L.C	UAE	1st Runner Up
Emirates District Cooling (EMICOOL) - LLC	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
National Central Cooling Company Tabreed	UAE	2nd Runner Up (Tie)
CONSTRUCTION CATEGORY		
Innovo	UAE	Winner
Dutco Construction Group (DCG)	UAE	1st Runner Up
NMDC Group	UAE	2nd Runner Up
China State Construction Engineering Corporation (Middle East) L.L.C	UAE	Special Recognition
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CATEGORY		
Friends of Football Players Charity Association	KSA	Winner
Savola World Foundation	KSA	1st Runner Up (Tie)
Palestine for Development Foundation - PsDF	Palestine	1st Runner Up (Tie)
Sfanah Charity Organization for Health Services	KSA	2ndRunner Up
AUTOMOTIVE CATEGORY		
Galadari Brothers	UAE	Winner
Al Shirawi Equipment Company	UAE	1st Runner Up
EDUCATION SECTOR CATEGORY		
Hebron University	Palestine	Winner
Heriot-Watt University	UAE	1st Runner Up

Beyond recognition, the Awards continue to serve as a valuable capacity-building platform. Through their rigorous independent assessment process, participating organisations receive detailed jury feedback identifying strengths, gaps and opportunities for continuous improvement. The successful delivery of the 19th Cycle was made possible through the valued support of Silver Sponsors McDonald's UAE and China State Construction Engineering Corporation Middle East, alongside Farnek, whose contribution enabled the Awards to be delivered as a carbon-neutral event. ACSRN also expressed its appreciation to Emirates Environmental Group (EEG), Environmental Partner; Gulf News, Official Communication Partner; and media supporters Biz Today International, Climate Control, Pan Asian Media and Green Sustainability. Special thanks were extended to Dabur and One Hive for their thoughtful contributions to the ceremony. As ACSRN prepares to celebrate the landmark 20th Cycle of the Awards in 2027, the occasion presents an opportunity to reflect on two decades of sustainability excellence, recognise the organisations and partnerships that have shaped this journey, and further strengthen the Awards' role in advancing responsible business practices across the Arab region.



CEBC Renewables & Sustainability Seminars

The Arabia CSR Network continued to strengthen its contribution to regional sustainability dialogue as its Founder & CEO, Dr Habiba Al Mar'ashi, delivered a keynote presentation at the Renewables & Sustainability Seminars, organised by the Clean Energy Business Council (CEBC) MENA, during WETEX 2026 on **21st October** in DWTC. Titled "Nature, Biodiversity, and the Climate Science – Foundations for a Changing World," the keynote explored the interconnected relationship between biodiversity conservation, climate science and sustainable development, highlighting the importance of protecting natural ecosystems as a fundamental component of climate resilience.

During her address, Dr. Habiba emphasised that climate change and biodiversity loss cannot be addressed independently. She highlighted the increasing pressures facing natural habitats, including rising temperatures, pollution, land degradation and rapid development, underscoring the need for science-based decision-making, responsible environmental governance and sustained cooperation across sectors. Drawing on her extensive experience in sustainability leadership and environmental advocacy, Dr Habiba highlighted how collaboration between governments, businesses, academic institutions and civil society can translate environmental awareness into measurable action.

The keynote reinforced the importance of integrating biodiversity considerations, climate-related risks and scientific evidence into corporate sustainability strategies and ESG decision-making. As organisations navigate increasingly complex environmental challenges, responsible leadership and long-term planning remain essential to protecting natural capital and strengthening resilience.



World Green Economy Summit 2026

The Arabia CSR Network reinforced its commitment to advancing sustainable development and responsible business leadership as its Founder & CEO, Dr Habiba Al Mar'ashi, attended the opening of the World Green Economy Summit (WGES) on **21st October** in DWTC. The Summit provided an important platform for bringing together policymakers, government representatives, business leaders, financial institutions and sustainability experts to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with accelerating the transition towards a green and climate-resilient economy.

Discussions highlighted the importance of climate finance, clean energy, sustainable investment, innovation and international cooperation in strengthening economic resilience while responding to pressing environmental challenges. Dr. Habiba's attendance reflected ACSRN's longstanding mission to promote the integration of corporate social responsibility, environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles and sustainable development considerations into business strategies and decision-making.

As the sustainability landscape continues to evolve, the transition towards a green economy presents both responsibilities and opportunities for organisations to strengthen governance, improve resource efficiency, encourage responsible investment and create long-term value for stakeholders.

The Summit also reinforced the importance of partnerships between governments, the private sector, academia and civil society in translating sustainability ambitions into measurable outcomes. Through its knowledge-sharing platforms, capacity-building programmes and strategic partnerships, the Arabia CSR Network continues to encourage organisations across the Arab region to move beyond commitments towards responsible action, measurable impact and lasting sustainable development.

EmiratesGBC Annual Congress 2026

The Arabia CSR Network continued to reinforce its commitment to sustainability leadership and cross-sector collaboration as its Founder and CEO, Dr Habiba Al Mar'ashi, participated in the Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC) Annual Congress 2026, held on **27th October** at Dusit Thani Dubai. Celebrating 20 years of EmiratesGBC under the theme "20 Years, Beyond the Sandbox: From Benchmark to Breakthrough," the Congress brought together government representatives, business leaders and sustainability professionals to examine the evolution of sustainable construction and the priorities shaping its future.

In her capacity as Co-Founder, Vice Chair and Treasurer of EmiratesGBC and Board Member of the World Green Building Council (WorldGBC), Dr Habiba joined Ghayda Salameh, Executive Manager of Jordan Green Building Council, for a fireside chat titled "Building a Regional Movement: MENA's Green Building Journey and Its Next Chapter." The conversation traced the UAE's green building journey from the early 2000s, when rapid urban development was transforming the construction landscape and sustainability was still emerging as an industry priority. Dr Habiba reflected on the establishment of EmiratesGBC in June 2006, highlighting its pioneering role in promoting environmentally responsible building practices.

She also revisited the formation of the MENA Regional Network in September 2010, initiated by EmiratesGBC and supported by JordanGBC and QatarGBC, which established an important platform for regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and collective advocacy. Reflecting on the Network's achievements, she emphasised how collaboration among national Green Building Councils has strengthened regional capacity, encouraged knowledge-sharing and supported initiatives such as the MENA Green Building Awards. Looking ahead, she stressed the importance of moving beyond voluntary commitments towards measurable building performance, stronger sustainability governance and market-wide transformation.

Engaging in Leadership Dialogue at Discovery Series 2026 Report Launch

The Arabia CSR Network continued to strengthen its engagement in thought leadership, knowledge-sharing and responsible business practices as its Founder & CEO, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, participated in the Launch of the Discovery Series 2026 Report, held on **28th October** at One Central, Dubai. A key highlight of the event was an engaging fireside chat between Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi and Professor Dame Heather McGregor, bringing together two distinguished leaders for an exchange of perspectives on leadership, organisational transformation, innovation and the importance of collaboration in navigating an increasingly complex business environment.

The conversation provided a valuable opportunity to explore the role of visionary leadership, knowledge-sharing and strategic thinking in strengthening organisations, encouraging innovation and fostering long-term sustainable development. Drawing on her extensive experience in sustainability and green building leadership, Dr Habiba reflected on the evolution of the UAE's built environment since the early 2000s, highlighting the transformation of the construction industry, the growing importance of sustainability and the evolving role of women in shaping the sector. She also shared her perspectives on the future of women in the built environment, emphasising the importance of greater representation, equal opportunities and leadership across architecture, engineering, construction and sustainable development.

EKFC Sustainability Forum 2026

The Arabia CSR Network strengthened its engagement in responsible business leadership as its Founder & CEO, Dr. Habiba Al Mar'ashi, moderated the "Innovation & Infrastructure" panel at the Emirates Flight Catering Sustainability Forum on 29th October in Dubai.

Held as part of EKFC's Sustainability Month 2026, the Forum brought together industry professionals and sustainability experts to explore practical approaches to waste reduction, resource efficiency and circular economy practices. Featuring representatives from ReFarm, The Waste Lab, eCyclex and Dubai Municipality, the panel examined solutions including food waste treatment, composting, recycling, resource recovery and waste-to-energy, while highlighting the importance of stronger waste segregation, sustainable operations and collaboration with environmental solution providers.

Upcoming News

Fundamentals of CSR & Sustainability 2nd –3rd November '26

Build the Foundation. Understand the Principles. Drive Responsible Change. Every successful sustainability journey begins with a strong understanding of its fundamental principles. This training programme introduces participants to the evolving landscape of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices and sustainable development, providing essential knowledge to navigate today's increasingly complex business environment.

Participants will explore the importance of stakeholder engagement, corporate accountability, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the integration of sustainability considerations into organisational decision-making. Whether you are beginning your sustainability journey or looking to strengthen your foundational knowledge, this training will help you understand how responsible business practices create long-term value for organisations, society and the environment.

Register

CSR Advanced Training | 10th –12th November '26

As sustainability expectations continue to evolve, organisations must move beyond isolated CSR initiatives towards comprehensive strategies that deliver meaningful and measurable results.

As sustainability expectations continue to evolve, organisations must move beyond isolated CSR initiatives towards comprehensive strategies that deliver meaningful and measurable results. This advanced training programme focuses on strategic CSR integration, sustainability governance, stakeholder management, impact assessment and performance measurement, enabling participants to strengthen the effectiveness of their organisation's CSR programmes. Participants will gain valuable insights into aligning CSR objectives with business priorities, developing meaningful performance indicators, strengthening accountability and translating sustainability commitments into strategic action.

Register

Sustainability Reporting | 21st –22nd December '26

In an era of increasing stakeholder expectations, credible sustainability reporting is no longer simply a communication exercise. It is an essential instrument for demonstrating performance, strengthening trust and supporting informed decision-making. This programme explores the key principles of sustainability reporting, ESG disclosures, materiality assessment, performance indicators and internationally recognised reporting frameworks.Participants will develop a stronger understanding of how to identify material sustainability issues, communicate environmental and social performance, strengthen data quality and present sustainability achievements and challenges with greater transparency and credibility.

Register

ACSRN Member Spotlight

Tristar Group Embarks on a New Chapter of Global Growth with Aegis Logistics

The Arabia CSR Network is delighted to highlight a significant milestone achieved by its valued Platinum Member and longstanding partner, Tristar Group, following the announcement of a strategic agreement with Aegis Logistics, one of India's leading integrated oil, gas and chemical logistics companies. Announced on **14th October**, the agreement will see Aegis Logistics become the majority shareholder of Tristar Group, in a transaction valuing the company at an impressive USD 1.5 billion in enterprise value. This development marks an important chapter in Tristar's growth journey, strengthening its international presence and creating new opportunities for expansion across global energy logistics markets. The partnership brings together Tristar's extensive international expertise in petroleum, chemical, aviation fuel and LNG logistics with Aegis Logistics' established infrastructure and capabilities in LPG, bulk liquid terminals and distribution networks across India. By combining their complementary strengths, the two organisations aim to enhance operational efficiency, diversify services and build a stronger, more resilient global energy logistics network.

Mr. Eugene Mayne, Founder and Group CEO of Tristar Group, welcomed the partnership as an opportunity to support continued growth while reinforcing the company's commitment to safety, operational excellence and long-term customer value. Operating across more than 30 countries, Tristar has established a strong global presence in energy logistics.The Arabia CSR Network extends its warmest congratulations to Mr. Mayne and the Tristar team on this important milestone and wishes them continued success in this new chapter of international growth and collaboration.

Feature Article

The Role of Governance in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives: Aligning CSR with governance structures

Excerpt from World Development Corporation Directors' Institute

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved from a mere buzzword to a fundamental aspect of modern business practices, reflecting a company's commitment to ethical behaviour, social impact, and environmental stewardship. As societal expectations grow and stakeholder demands intensify, organisations increasingly recognise CSR's strategic importance in building sustainable and resilient business models. Governance is crucial in shaping and guiding these initiatives, ensuring that CSR efforts align with a company's broader objectives and regulatory requirements.

One of the ideas that commercial firms utilise to give back to different communities and societies wherever they operate freely and without being required by law is the notion of corporate social responsibility or CSR. CSR is a new idea that is becoming increasingly well-liked in corporate settings. CSR also describes how businesses consider their impact on the environment and society in addition to the bottom line. According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) (2022), corporate social responsibility (CSR) is how a business balances the demands of shareholders and stakeholders with the needs of the economy, environment, and society (the "Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach"). CSR is a cooperative, voluntary act.

The social duty of enhancing the social well-being of people in the communities where CSR operates should be carried out. The contemporary corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement, according to the World Bank Group (2004), is proof that companies are a part of society and may positively impact societal objectives. Essentially, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the process of allocating the costs and benefits of company operations to both internal and external stakeholders, including consumers, suppliers, civil society, workers, shareholders, and investors.

The European Commission (2006) asserts that while the CSR agenda and its associated activities are based on voluntary company activity and serve as a tool for accountability and responsibility, the government's involvement in promoting the CSR agenda is crucial. Although CSR is voluntary, governments play a crucial role in establishing and promoting it in developed and developing nations to ensure that everyone has access to practical well-being via partnership.

The COVID-19 epidemic served as a reminder for cooperation between industrialised and poor nations. Accordingly, He and Harries (2020) contend that the uncertainty brought on by COVID-19 has taken the whole globe by surprise, drastically altering how people view the world and will probably influence CSR in future years. According to Bapuji et al. (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic's effects have forced the private sector to adapt through CSR initiatives. By incorporating social and environmental concerns into its operations and eschewing unethical practices like price increases, these initiatives test businesses' commitment to ethics.

Accordingly, Idemudia (2009) contends that the community is a company's best neighbour because of their interconnectedness. Companies and communities are partners with shared interests that operate on a win-win basis. Communities grant businesses social licenses to conduct business in society, as Boadi et al. (2019) attested to. Numerous businesses have demonstrated their commitment to helping those affected by natural catastrophes, such as the Asian Tsunami and the Ebola epidemic in Africa. According to Droppert and Bennett (2015), numerous companies are adapting to different epidemiological and demographic changes, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and HIV/AIDS, Middle East Reparatory Syndrome (MERS), Severe Acute Reparatory Syndrome (SARS), and Ebola in Africa.

According to Droppert and Bennett (2015), corporations globally are adapting and enlarging their corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies to align with the ever-changing global landscape. This is attributed to mounting demand from civil society to behave as a socially responsible organisation. Mahmud et al. (2020) claim that CSR is regarded as a great instrument for achieving sustainable development by providing a win-win approach. Using a win-lose strategy is not a sustainable company model. Therefore, it is undeniable and praiseworthy that companies impact our neighbourhoods and society as a whole. Because most companies involved in gas and oil exploration and the production of forest products came from the north and because we are all in this together, the World Bank Group developed good practices for developing countries to emulate regarding corporate social responsibility (CSR). According to research by Sindakis and Minhas, communication between participants is necessary for teamwork. Thus, governments in rich and developing nations must cooperate to exchange best practices for corporate social responsibility.

Thus, even if corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a voluntary tool corporations use without legal requirements, the government's involvement in promoting CSR needs assistance to guarantee that regulations, obligations, and accountabilities are taken seriously. The government may make sure that businesses abide by the laws and customs of any country or community. Governments can enact laws, cultivate commercial partnerships, and support ethical company practices to promote CSR development.



Read More

Best Practice

COOPERATIVE & AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANK
Financial Services Category

WINNER
Arabia CSR & Sustainability Awards 2024

Brief

Established in 1982, Cooperative & Agricultural Credit Bank (CAC Bank) is a government-owned financial institution in Yemen with a workforce exceeding 500 employees. It has consistently championed sustainable development through pioneering efforts in environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices. Notable achievements include financing over 174 solar-powered irrigation systems, supporting sustainable agriculture across 300 villages and leading the development of Yemen's largest solar power station with an investment of 1.2 billion Yemeni rials in 2023.

CAC Bank's focus on social equity is evident in initiatives such as the "Balqees Banking Product," designed to empower women, who now represent 28% of the workforce.

Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the bank prioritises renewable energy, gender equality and community development. Its partnerships with organisations like the Green Climate Fund and adherence to globally recognised frameworks such as GRI and UNGC underline its commitment to responsible banking.

This case study explores the bank's innovative strategies, measurable impacts and lessons learnt, solidifying its role as a transformative force in Yemen's financial sector.

CAC Bank envisions becoming Yemen's leading financial institution by providing diverse and high-quality banking services. Its mission is centered on fostering economic growth through advanced financial systems, professional service delivery, and a wide-reaching network that caters to individuals, corporations and institutions. The bank's strategy integrates sustainability across 5 key dimensions, with a strong emphasis on social responsibility and community development.

Core values such as teamwork, human capital development, community welfare, customer focus and the continuous pursuit of excellence shape CAC Bank's operations and organisational culture. These principles align closely with the UN SDGs and are reflected in initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, improving access to education, supporting livelihoods and promoting clean energy solutions. Examples include the financing of solar-powered irrigation systems and the development of specialised banking products tailored to women.

By embedding sustainability, ethical practices and social responsibility into its core values and strategic direction, CAC Bank is contributing to the transformation of Yemen's financial landscape while responding to pressing socio-economic and environmental challenges. Its approach illustrates how financial institutions can play a broader role in supporting sustainable development, strengthening communities and creating long-term value beyond traditional banking services.

Summary & Lessons Learnt

CAC Bank's journey highlights the critical importance of aligning sustainability with core business objectives. Through its large-scale renewable energy projects, such as financing over 1,200 solar irrigation systems and the country's largest solar power station in 2023, the bank has learnt valuable lessons in project implementation, resource mobilisation and stakeholder collaboration. One key insight is the importance of building strong partnerships with local and international stakeholders, including government bodies and organisations like the Green Climate Fund. These partnerships have proven essential in mobilising resources for large-scale initiatives and ensuring successful project execution.

Additionally, CAC Bank has refined its stakeholder engagement strategies, understanding that effective communication and involvement of local communities in project planning are essential for the success and sustainability of initiatives. The bank's transparent approach to governance, supported by regular sustainability reporting and adherence to international frameworks like GRI, has reinforced its credibility and trust with stakeholders. The bank's experience also emphasises the need for continuous adaptation and innovation in the face of evolving socio-economic and environmental challenges. By integrating lessons learnt from these experiences, CAC Bank has positioned itself as a model for other financial institutions striving for sustainable growth and community development.

CAC Bank exemplifies the transformative role of sustainability in banking, demonstrating how financial institutions can drive positive change. Through its comprehensive strategies, such as financing solar irrigation systems for villages and the country's largest solar power station, the bank addresses Yemen's environmental and social challenges. Its community-focused programmes, like the "Balqees Banking Product" for women entrepreneurs, help promote inclusivity and economic empowerment. By engaging with stakeholders through transparent governance, partnerships with organisations like the Green Climate Fund and regular sustainability reporting, CAC Bank fosters trust and accountability.

