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Arabia CSR
Network newsletter

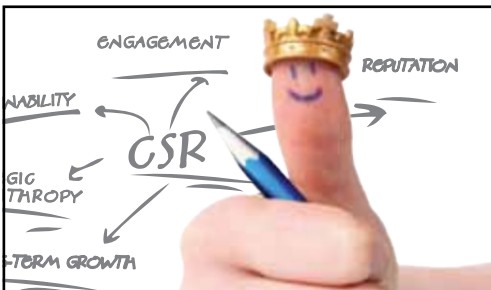
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Note by the CEO / President Arabia CSR Network

Habiba Al Mar'ashi



As-Salamu Alaykum and greetings from the Arabia CSR Network!

Last week, I was reading the recently published 2012 Edelman Trust Barometer study, which focuses on what drives trust in four key institutions - government, business, media, and NGOs. According to the study, skepticism has taken over the world in a very big way. The credibility of CEOs and big companies to play an active role in addressing society's problems seem to be at a new low.

While it is pleasing to read in the study that "NGOs are the most trusted institutions in the world, and in 16 of the 25 countries surveyed, more trusted than business", it really brings us to the bigger question, how can corporate institutions improve their credibility? I really believe that corporations – large, medium and small – need to revisit the fundamentals of CSR and sustainability. It is not just about paper recycling and blood collection drives, it is about the impact that each business activity is having on society and the environment. Each business has an impact, and everyone has a role to play.

This is why the Arabia CSR Network has introduced a CSR Strategy & Leadership course to really dig deep into what companies should be doing to be a catalyst for positive change in this world. I am very hopeful that this training will help create that critical mass of CSR professionals and practitioners that we need. For more details please see page 5.

And there is much more that the Arabia CSR Network has to offer. The Arabia CSR Awards is still up for grabs for organizations that truly understand and implement CSR effectively. We are also actively pushing the agenda for sustainability reporting through our GRI trainings. Lastly, we are working hard to publish our second set of CSR best practices publication later this year.

We can be found on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). See you there!

Training & Workshops

Arabia CSR Network continues to push forward the sustainability reporting agenda

Arabia CSR Network conducted its fifth training on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Framework at the Millennium Plaza Hotel in Dubai on 21st - 23rd May.

Thirteen participants from important public and private sector organizations from Egypt, UAE, and KSA took part in the training. Previous trainings were held in February and March of this year. The Arabia CSR Network has facilitated valuable networks between the training participants through a LinkedIn group.

"As the first body certified by the GRI headquarters in The Netherlands to offer training services to organizations and individuals in the MENA region, Arabia CSR Network has relied on its long experience of promoting sustainable development through its various programs to design and deliver its training course in such a way as to ensure that participants receive optimal benefit from the course" said Habiba Al Marashi, President of Arabia CSR Network and the UN Global Compact GCC Network.



The Arabia CSR Network is very well placed to provide this training to build the capacity of organizations and businesses in the region, mainly because it is a regionally rooted organization that has acquired an in-depth understanding of the benefits and challenges faced by organizations in their efforts to meet their Corporate Social Responsibility within the region's unique limitations and possibilities.

The GRI training aims to help companies take the next step of reporting on the results of their CSR strategy. The Arabia CSR Awards, which will be receiving applications till the end of June, represent the final step in the cycle and aim to evaluate, promote and improve on the achievements of companies in the area of sustainable development and CSR.



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The GRI training is open to organizations from all sectors including Transportation, Accounting, Human Resources, Health, Supply Chain, Banking, Hospitality, Government and many more.

“The GRI Framework is about more than simply writing a sustainability report. Reporting is the end result of a long process of examining, modifying and developing a comprehensive internal system which enables the organization to incorporate sustainability into their core operations,” emphasized Al Marashi.

The GRI has emerged as the leading reporting framework designed specifically for companies that wish to report on their sustainability strategies and initiatives. It complements the traditional business practice of developing financial reports.

The GRI also address the non-financial aspects of economic, environmental, and social performance of organizations.

Testimonials from trainees of the GRI sessions organized by the Arabia CSR Network

“The GRI training was very diverse in terms of attendees and industries. I learned about CSR in different sectors and my knowledge is enriched. The course is of an “added-value” to know where you stand and where to go.”

- Perihan Abdelghalu, Arab African International Bank

“Excellent training session; fully describes how to start reporting, its process and how to assess what is important to write about.”

- Daxita Rajcoomar, HSE Compliance Manager du

“A great training to structure the approach of CSR/sustainability of the organization and to frame the steps to each efficient reporting. Don’t miss the last hour! It all comes together and looks easy then.”

- Sandrine Le Biavant, Division Manager Avireal Consulting Farnak Avireal

Awards

Arabia CSR Awards 2012

A month has passed since the Arabia CSR Awards 2012 cycle was launched. We request organizations that feel they are responsible businesses to come up and tell us what they are doing and how they are doing it. Our international panel of judge will then decide if you deserve to be a part of the family of the prestigious Arabia CSR Award winners.

In the past four years, the Arabia CSR Awards program has strived to build its credibility and reputation to stand above the scores of CSR, PR and marketing awards in the region. This has been done by creating an application that is challenging to complete and requires you to closely understand and communicate your CSR/sustainability strategy.

The application of the Arabia CSR Awards - held under the patronage of HH Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority; Chairman and CEO of Emirates Group; & Chairman of Dubai Airports, and supported by the United Nations Global Compact - is closely aligned with international frameworks such as UNGC’s principles, GRI’s reporting framework, the Principles for Social Investment and more.

This year’s Awards cycle – sponsored by Petrochemical Industries Company-Kuwait, a subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation - will carry the theme ‘Embracing Sustainability in Times of Instability.’ All companies that have CSR projects and sustainability initiatives in their organizations are encouraged to apply for the Arabia CSR Awards at www.arabiacsrnetwork.com. It is only when we all start sharing our experiences that we will be able to better learn from each other and improve our impact.

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العربية
للمسؤولية
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Events & Meetings

Etisalat Social Investment Summit

To host an event to bring together professional attendees and experts in CSR the Etisalat Academy organized an “Etisalat Social Investment Summit”. This event invited a number of experts in the sustainability field and enriched learning through the panel discussion and opportunities for networking and more.

Ms. Habiba Al Marashi also spoke at this event in the opening panel titled “Perspectives on social responsibility and principles of reporting”. Mrs. Al Marashi’s speech focused on CSR in the Arab world and in the telecom industry. She also mentioned a number of best practices from the region that Etisalat and other telecom companies could learn from.

The Summit also invited experts such as Mr. Rob Steele, ISO Secretary General; Zaki Sirelkhathim, Manager, Information Management Unit, UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid; Fairuz Taqi-Eddin, Regional Director of Development, Care International and many other directors and vice-presidents from Etisalat and its partner companies in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.



Tristar Transport Breakfast Meeting

Tristar Transport – an integrated liquid logistics company serving the petroleum industry – invited Ms. Habiba Al Marashi as the keynote speaker at their breakfast forum for the month of May. At this meeting, titled “Responsible Business and Sustainable Development” Ms. Al Marashi spoke about the importance and upcoming trends of CSR and sustainability, with a focus on the logistics industry.

Tristar is a winner of the Arabia CSR Awards and has also received a number of international awards for its focus on prevention of accidents and labour safety. The event, headed by Group CEO Eugene Mayne, and Ms. Al Marashi’s presentation, was appreciated by all managers as it sought to understand what CSR meant to Tristar and how it can help drive business continuity and growth.

Global Reporting Initiative

Arabia CSR Network had a phone meeting with the Network Relations team at the Global Reporting Initiative Secretariat in Amsterdam. During this meeting, the GRI team learnt about new developments at the Arabia CSR Network, discussed new developments at GRI and also gave an update on new activities within the Organizational Stakeholder program.

Since this meeting was organized immediately after ACSRN’s GRI training in May, Ms. Al Marashi also brought up the various issues that the trainees had raised concerning GRI’s framework and its credibility. The GRI team responded to these concerns and stated that it was pleased that the Middle East was quickly catching up with its regional counterparts in terms of sustainability reporting. The GRI team also assured that most of the concerns raised were valid ones and were being actively addressed in the upcoming G4 guidelines.

World Forum Lille

The World Forum Lille is an international event organized by Alliances Network, a regional CSR network in the North of France. Every year, this Forum gathers 4000 people (students and professionals) during three days to present CSR best practices. Recently, the Director of World Forum Lille – Ms. Climène Koechlin – contacted the Arabia CSR Network to see how they could encourage Arab-based companies to be a part of this international event.

During the call the weak participation of Arabic companies at the World Forum Lille was highlighted. A partnership between the Alliance Network and ACSRN was discussed to actively contribute to sharing CSR best practices and analysis from the Arab world to the World Forum Lille.

Community Development Authority

The Community Development Authority (CDA) - a government authority belonging to the Government of Dubai – recently met with the Arabia CSR Network as part of their study on initiating a policy proposal on CSR in the private sector in the Emirate of Dubai. As part of this study, the Research and Policy department of CDA is conducting a series of interviews with government and non-government officials as part of its data collecting process of the ‘Current Situation Analysis’ study.

During the discussion between CDA, the Arabia CSR Network spoke about the CSR landscape in the UAE. ACSRN also spoke about the Awards and explained how this program has helped understand CSR trends in the country.

The CDA will be responsible for setting up and developing frameworks for social development. The Authority aims to achieve the goals outlined in the Dubai Strategic Plan 2015 (DSP) as declared by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai.



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Upcoming events

A Strategy & Leadership Course for CSR (June 11-12, 2012 - Dubai, UAE)

Do you wonder why sustainability is so crucial? Or have you asked yourself how your organization can achieve sustainability?

To address these common yet fundamental questions the Arabia CSR Network is introducing a CSR Strategy & Leadership Course, with a focus on the Middle-East context. This training will coach you to incorporate CSR into the company strategy in an innovative way. It will also discuss the creation of the future by accomplishing the seemingly impossible: driving profit and growth while being in synch with a greater contribution to social development.

This two-day training - with its mix of CSR theory, case studies and group exercises - is aimed towards building capacity of CSR managers and officers, as well as planning and development officers, chief financial officers and board members who work closely with corporate sustainability issues.

Some of the important course details are:

Trainer: Dr. Grace Ugut, Associate Dean of the Executive Education and Life Long Learning, Asian Institute of Management

Dates: 11th-12th June, 2012

Venue: Millennium Plaza Hotel, Dubai, UAE

Training fee: AED 4000 per participant (for discounts, please contact the Arabia CSR Network)

Please remember, there are very limited seats available for the CSR Strategy & Leadership Course. To register yourself, please send the filled registration form (attached) to admin@arabiacsrnetwork.com or call us at +971-4-3448622.

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

A STRATEGY and LEADERSHIP COURSE

Dubai, June 11-12, 2012

Learn how your organization can implement Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and simultaneously drive profits and growth.

This course offers a deep understanding on critical sustainability issues and progressive CSR practices from various companies in the world, including the Middle-East.





Feature Article

Fair Trade: Giving a Heart to Conventional Trade

Nadia Rinawi and Ulrike Broich shed light on the new breed of conscious traders and consumers who are doing their bit to uplift the often-exploited producers

Free markets and the ensuing competition resulted, for example, in the decreased costs for consumer goods such as coffee and chocolate that can be bought today in discounters and large supermarkets for a lower price than 20 or 30 years ago. For the developing countries and their producers, free trade has, in many cases, led to great dependencies that weakened the economy and resulted in poverty among producers.

Farmers, at the beginning of the value chain, do not often get a fair share of the benefits of the trade. Most of them are smallholders in the developing countries and subsist on less than USD 2 a day, typically living in the remote areas, faced with the rising input costs and little access to any credit to invest in the production process or their children's education, which results in a cycle of poverty that most are not able to escape from.

The concept of fair trade enables the consumers to put this right through their everyday shopping by buying the products that are produced and traded under fair conditions. Fair trade offers the farmers and the workers in the developing countries a better deal – the opportunity to improve their lives and plan for their future.

income.

While Fairtrade Mark is widely recognised among a number of ethical labels globally, its recognition is the highest in the UK. Forty seven per cent of the UK consumers think that it is important to choose a grocery product that supports fair trade. Fair trade food items and drinks are regularly bought by 14% of the people, while nearly half of the UK consumers buy them occasionally. Similarly, 14% of the people in the UK believe that the fair trade concept has a high influence on their food and drink shopping decisions.

This was probably one of the reasons behind Nestlé's decision in 2010 to produce all the Kit Kat bars that are sold in the UK with Fairtrade-certified chocolate, which supports more than 6,000 cocoa farmers and their communities in Ivory Coast. On the occasion of the Fairtrade Kit Kat launch, Nestlé chief David Rennie affirmed that the UK consumers were increasingly interested in how the company sourced and manufactured its most popular products.

Besides foodstuff such as coffee, cocoa and banana, there is a growing interest in the fair produce and trade in the fashion industry. A growing number of fashionistas do not want to wear

Fair trade has grown dramatically in the recent years in many developed countries and has entered the mainstream markets through the supermarkets, such as the coffee retailing chains (for example Starbucks) and the mail order catalogues. The quality labels, such as Fairtrade, Fair Wear Foundation, Transfair and many others, assure the consumers that the product they are buying meets the social, economic and environmental standards of the certifying body. One of the most recognised fair trade labels is Fairtrade Mark.

One of the most important conditions of the Fairtrade Mark is that the producers have to be paid a minimum price. For example, Fairtrade Minimum Price for coffee is USD 1.40 per pound for the Fairtrade-certified, washed Arabica and USD 1.35 for the unwashed Arabica, or the market price, whichever is higher. In addition, USD 0.30 per pound is paid if the coffee is certified organic. The minimum price ensures that the producers can cover their average costs of sustainable production even when the world markets fall below a sustainable level. When the market price is higher than the Fairtrade minimum, the buyer must pay the higher price.

Over 900 farmers and workers' organizations and 1.2 million individual farmers and workers are part of the Fairtrade system. Six million people, producers and their family members, benefit from Fairtrade Mark. The premiums that are paid on top of the agreed prices are typically invested in education, healthcare, farm improvements or the processing facilities to increase their

clothes that are produced under inhumane conditions or involve child labour. A growing number of young designers and fashion labels specialise in the fair trade or commonly called ethical fashion. In the framework of Berlin Fashion Week 2012, the first Ethical Fashion Show Berlin was launched in January 2012. After organic fashion, ethical fashion is considered to be the next big trend.

The huge growth in the number of the consumers who buy fair trade products is sending a clear message – people want to see the producers in the developing countries receive a fair deal. Companies from all sectors should be aware of this and not only look into fair trade because it is ethical and the right thing to do, but also in order to not miss the new consumer demands and therefore the growth potentials.

And, as a consumer, we should think twice before buying the next bargain item in the retail store – the low price might be possible only on the expense of the health and future of the farmers, the producers, and their families in the developing countries.

This article was reprinted with permission from Free Spirit Magazine



Members Update

Coca Cola



Oman and UAE-based Ahlia Gulf Line (AGL Coca-Cola) General Trading Company, was nominated amongst the Top10 of the 'Best Country Bottling Operations' as part of Coca-Cola's Eurasia and Africa Group's Annual Sustainability Awards. AGL Coca-Cola reduced

the amount of water used in the production of beverages by 43.4%, and the energy used since 2004 by 56%, the statement said.

"Constantly innovating and working towards making our business more environmentally beneficial to the communities in which we serve, from light weighting beverage packaging to supporting sustainability-focused initiatives, AGL Coca-Cola UAE and Oman's goal is to make a long term, holistic and positive impact on its local communities," concluded Deepak Kaul, managing director of AGL Coca-Cola.

Coca-Cola Enterprises has detailed its sustainability progress in its seventh "Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Report". The report outlines the company's delivery against 37 targets in seven focus areas, with special attention to Energy and Climate Change, and Sustainable Packaging and Recycling. It also describes CCE's plans for future innovation in those categories.

Dubai Aluminium (DUBAL)



Dubal recently conducted its annual Beat the Heat and Be Safe campaign to emphasize worker safety in summer. As part of the campaign, more than 400 employees from across the company participated in a 1.8 km Brisk Walking Marathon held on the company's Jebel Ali site. Hosted

by DUBAL's Environment Health Safety & Technical Services ("EHST") department, the campaign encourages employees to improve their physical fitness by engaging them in an enjoyable activity, while emphasising the importance of early acclimatization in adapting to working in a hot environment without developing heat-related illnesses.

Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA)



The female employees at DEWA visited the Botanical Museum and the Arabian Wildlife Center. Fatima Demas, the Vice -chairman of the Women Committee, explained that such trips are meant to enhance the social relations

and ties among DEWA's female employees within and outside the work environment.



"We are keen to select various educational sites that contribute in increasing the awareness and information of female employees and therefore, to achieve positive influence in increasing the knowledge of their children," she added.

The Women Committee strives always to organize such social activities to put in a friendly work environment in addition to provide cultural information. The WC has organized a large number of events, activities and lectures in different cultural, social and religious issues". This visit to Sharjah Natural History Museum is one of the efforts to enhance the positive interaction and social relations among the female employees of DEWA in a multi-cultural work environment.



As part of its strategy to implement the best integrated administrative systems in the field of occupational health, safety and environment, and in compliance with the best and most up-to-date international practices, DEWA organized the Contractors' Health & Safety Awareness Day for contractors and consultants at Al Busman Rotan hotel, Dubai, under the supervision of the Health & Safety section at DEWA, with senior employees, contractors and consultants in attendance.

"DEWA is always keen to implement the best integrated administrative systems in the field of occupational health, safety and environment as part of a strategy that encompasses the best international practices to promote a culture of maintaining high standards of health, safety and environment and mitigate negative environmental effects on society. DEWA remains committed to providing a healthy atmosphere and work environment for everyone," said H.E. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD and CEO of DEWA.



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McDonalds



Following the launch of its biodiesel initiative last year, McDonald's UAE has been named 'Planet Champion' in the logistics category of the '2012 Global Best of Green' report. McDonald's UAE is one of nine McDonald's markets from across the world recognized for its efforts within environmental best practice.

Initiated and overseen by McDonald's Global Environmental Council, the 2012 Best of Green reports is a collection of best practices that focus on the environment and provide tangible positive impact for the company's business and brand. The report includes more than 20 energy-efficient initiatives including carbon-reduction practices, and green building advancements in more than a dozen markets around the world.

McDonald's collaborated with key external stakeholders to recognize the best of the best by selecting 'Planet Champions' in eight categories: energy, packaging, anti-littering, recycling, logistics, communications, green building, and greening the workplace. Based on the level of innovation, environmental and business impacts, scalability and business integration, the selection committee recognized McDonald's UAE as this year's 'Planet

Champion' of the logistics' category for its Biodiesel initiative. Launched in 2011, the initiative enables McDonald's UAE's entire fleet of supply trucks to run on 100 percent biodiesel made from vegetable oil recycled from McDonald's restaurants.

Securitas U.A.E. LLC



A labour cricket cup tournament was organized consisting of 32 teams (each team consists of 11 members) from different companies participated for a 15 days long tournament. It was first time in the history of UAE that such a big tournament was organized free of cost. The Labour Cricket Cup 2012 was won by El- Seif Engineering Contracting Company team. The winning and the runner-up team were facilitated by trophies, medals and cash prizes. The final match was observed by more than 2,000 labourers with free refreshment juices and there was also a television raffle draw competition which was won by one of the labourers living in the Nuzul camp.

Organization(s) that have recently joined the Network:

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We welcome you to the Arabia CSR Network!

General News

GRI invites nominations for four new G4 Working Groups

Four new working groups have been formed at GRI. These include 1) Anti-corruption, 2) Biodiversity, 3) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and 4) Occupational Health and Safety. The Terms of Reference for these new G4 Working Groups have been posted on 9 May 2012 on the GRI website.

All interested parties are invited to read the Terms of Reference and nominate themselves to be part of these Working Group. Interested candidates are requested to submit their CVs in English, along with this Application Form, to G4WG@globalreporting.org. The deadline to submit an application is Thursday 7 June 2012.

Policy has big impact on reporting, suggests new GRI statistics

Measures taken by stock exchanges, governments and other regulators are having a positive effect on sustainability reporting worldwide, suggests statistics from GRI's Sustainability Disclosure Database. Many sources of evidence reflect the positive effect policy has on transparency – in Denmark, impact assessments following legislation in place to encourage companies

to report their sustainability performance or explain why not suggest that almost all companies under this legislation opt to report rather than provide an explanation for not reporting. In 2007, the Swedish government announced that all state-owned companies are required to report their sustainability performance using the GRI Guidelines. Statistics from GRI's Database reflect this, showing that Sweden is leading the sustainability reporting pack. When calculated against GDP, companies in Sweden produced the highest number of reports in 2011; 43 percent of GRI reports registered in 2011 from Sweden came from state-owned companies.

The future of GRI's sector guidance

Different sectors face specific sustainability challenges, from event legacy to media literacy and emergency preparedness. GRI is now working on a new project to address sustainability reporting in many different sectors, including research on what topics are most relevant or material for those sectors.

GRI currently has ten Sector Supplements – GRI reporting guidance tailored for different sectors. Supplements are available for NGOs, Airport Operators, Electric Utilities, Construction and Real Estate, Oil and Gas, Mining and Metals, Financial Services, Food Processing, Event Organizers, and, as of this month, Media. For more information, visit www.globalreporting.org



Iraqi Companies Trained on UNGC Principles

Despite difficult circumstances – from security road blocks to sand storms – a training on implementation and reporting of the Global Compact principles concluded in Baghdad recently. The training was conducted in Arabic by the Global Compact Local Network Iraq and Deloitte's local office in the country. Twenty-five business participants from the Local Network participated in the training, with additional representatives from the UN Development Programme.

“Participants were satisfied especially as the meeting gave an opportunity to exchange problems, experiences and possible solutions among Network members,” said Arouna Roshanian of the Local Network Iraq. Following the launch of the Local Network Iraq in October 2011, this event represents the first training session on implementing and reporting the Global Compact principles, while also playing a key role in strengthening ethics, transparency and human rights. For more information, visit www.unglobalcompact.org

IUCN's blue carbon policy framework 2.0 published

Development and implementation of blue carbon-based activities requires strategic policy and incentive mechanisms to achieve coastal conservation, restoration and sustainable use, and

provide disincentives to drain or damage coastal systems. This revised Blue Carbon Policy Framework – prepared by IUCN, Conservation International and the Linden Trust for Conservation - updates the previous version and adds a detailed coordinated program of policy objectives and activities.

It also details a timeline and identifies the possible stakeholders for further development. To read the complete document, please visit www.iucn.org

Green Economy Coalition

The Arabia CSR Network recently participated in a consultation on the key principles of a green economy. This consultation, conducted by the Green Economy Coalition, collected feedback from over 250 people and organizations around the world.

The Green Economy Coalition has listed 9 principles of a green economy. These include: 1) The Sustainable Principle, 2) The Justice Principle, 3) The Dignity Principle, 4) Healthy Planet Principle, 5) The Inclusion Principle, 6) The Good Governance and Accountability Principle, 7) The Resilience Principle, 8) The Efficiency and Sufficiency Principle and 9) The Generations Principle. For more information, visit [www.http://greeneconomycoalition.org](http://www.greeneconomycoalition.org)

Updates from the UAE Foreign Aid Sector

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan city opened in Balakot, Pakistan

The UAE has handed over to the authorities in Pakistan the 'Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan City' in Mansehra in Balakot. The AED 12 million city, consisting of 211 houses and other utilities, was built to replace the township which was destroyed by the earthquake in 2005.

Dubai Cares programme to help 320,000 children in Ghana

More than 320,000 school children and 80,000 families in Ghana will benefit from a school feeding programme launched by Dubai Cares, the UAE-based philanthropic organisation. The four-year Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programme in Ghana will improve the education, health and nutrition of primary schoolchildren and the livelihoods of rural households.

Dubai Charity Association spends AED 6 million on projects in the Philippines and builds a mosque in China

The Dubai Charity Association has spent a total of AED 6.02 million on projects in the Philippines last year, to fund three orphanages, eight schools and eight mosques, among other projects. The charity has also taken the first steps to build the Dhiab Awana Mosque in China.

Sharjah Charity Association gives out milk to 120,000 Somali children

The Sharjah Charity Association (SCA) delivered the first tranche of its emergency aid to displaced Somalis affected by famine. The SCA team gave out children's milk to 120,000 Somali families.

For more information, visit <http://www.ocfa.gov.ae>



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Best practices from the archive



An overview of Standard Chartered

As a major international bank in the Middle East, Standard Chartered employs more than 2,000 employees in the UAE representing a very diverse group of people across approximately 70 nationalities.

With its wide network of branches and ATMs, Standard Chartered is the third largest bank overall and the largest of the international banks. Standard Chartered has been an integral part of the growth of UAE's financial services industry and in the year 2008, the UAE became one of the Bank's top four performing markets, measured by overall profitability.

The Bank's sustainability initiatives are embedded in the organizational philosophy that the biggest contribution Standard Chartered can make to society is by being a successful business. Standard Chartered began focusing on re-establishing the sustainability of banking after the global economic crisis in 2007-09. Therefore, at the global level, the Bank works towards building a sustainable strategy that would address responsible selling and marketing, sustainable finance, community investment, environmental protection and employee well-being.

Standard Chartered's sustainability initiatives also focus heavily on promoting a working culture in which employees feel valued, can develop their talents and can work together effectively. This is crucial, as globally, the Bank employs around 75,000 people of 115 different nationalities. As a company policy, every employee in Standard Chartered UAE is provided a cultural training course, to increase understanding of the variety of different cultural practices in the country. As much as the Bank encourages diversity, it also encourages all employees to demonstrate common values of "Responsive, Trustworthy, Creative, International and Courageous".

In consultation with its stakeholders, Standard Chartered has been able to identify specific priority areas that help define its sustainability strategy. These are: 1) Environment and climate change, 2) Social contribution and 3) Governance. These priority areas, which are supported by the Bank's global human rights policy, are translated into appropriate business practices and policies. In the UAE, the Bank has used these priorities to invest in areas such as health and education.

Employee participation in voluntary activities is also an area that Standard Chartered is building upon. The Bank feels that the engagement of the workforce to positively contribute to the community is one that leads to greater employee productivity at work.

In the UAE, Standard Chartered's commitment to CSR has translated into setting high standards for employee training (with an emphasis on capacity building of the locals in the banking sector), product development and contribution towards government excellence in providing financial services.

Standard Chartered believes that in the current difficult market conditions, such as the recent economic crisis in which banks suffered the most, the most powerful expression of commitment to sustainable business is to continue to perform core activities of providing banking services well.

Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2008-2010



This abstract has been taken from the ACSRN publication titled 'Arabia CSR Practices: 2008-2010'. For more details on Standard Chartered and other companies that have been recognized for their innovative and effective CSR strategies write to us at admin@arabiacsrn.com and book your copy now! Please mention "Arabia CSR Best Practices" in the subject.

The Arabia CSR Network welcomes new members to be a part of its CSR journey. To learn how you can be a member, and how your organization will benefit from it, call us at +971-4-3448622 or write to us at admin@arabiacsrn.com
For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit www.arabiacsrn.com