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Arabia CSR Network®

CSR ARABIA

Arabia CSR  
Network newsletter

January 2014 Issue 29



## *GRI Training (GRI G3.1-G4 Bridging Module)*

*- read article inside*



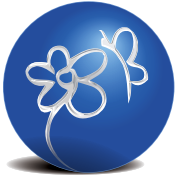
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## Note by the President & CEO Arabia CSR Network

Habiba Al Mar'ashi



### **New Year's Greetings from the Arabia CSR Network!**

In December we concluded the year with two trainings, the first of which was the Carbon Reporting one-day training organized by the Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence. The other was the GRI training sets for G3.1 and G3.1-G4 Bridging Module. The trainings offer an excellent opportunity to enhance our knowledge about issues and challenges in CSR and Sustainability viewed by companies in our Region. They also offer unique insights into various types of organizations and industries operating within typical economic and social environments, and where they think CSR and Sustainability can add value. In 2013 we were able to organize five GRI training sessions covering the two segments mentioned earlier, which have collectively been undertaken by more than 50 delegates from nearly 30 organizations. We will continue to deliver GRI training sessions this year, including full trainings on the GRI G4 version.

We will also undertake a series of generic trainings on CSR and Sustainability covering an interesting mix of relevant topics such as Budgeting, Implementation, Strategy, Leadership and Social Returns on Investment or SROI. We will continue to explore opportunities to provide customized GRI and CSR trainings, and will conduct the first in-house GRI training of the year in Bahrain in the coming month. I look forward to a more pro-active engagement with the members of the Arabia CSR Network in 2014. Please share your activities and achievements with us so that we can talk about it in our publications and presentations. The objective of the Arabia CSR Network is to provide a platform for knowledge sharing and dialogue, so do utilize the opportunity to network among yourselves, share good practice, discuss challenges and fertilize collective solutions. Let the Arabia CSR Network become your active partner in the Sustainability journey, we are very happy to hold your hands and move forward to actualize common dreams of a better and more sustainable world.

We wish all of you a very happy, fulfilling and successful 2014, with many milestones and historical moments. I look forward to meeting many more Sustainability leaders, champions and innovationists this year. I hope that the Arabia CSR Awards 2014, to be launched next month, will set the stage for this, and I invite all of you to join the leadership brigade and participate in the award.

I also invite you to join the conversation on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and forward us your ideas, opinions and comments. Come, Join, Talk and Spread the Word!

## Events

### **Dubai Carbon Workshop on Reporting**

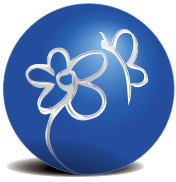
The Arabia CSR Network has established credentials as a reliable training provider in the Middle East, particularly in respect to sustainability reporting and the two leading international frameworks, - the GRI and the Global Compact COP (Communication on Progress).

ACSRN, through its strategic alliance with Emirates Environmental Group (EEG is a Global Compact participant, convener and host of the Global Compact's local network for GCC States, is uniquely positioned to offer deep insights into reporting framework of the COP, level of COP reporting, trends and challenges for companies in the Region.

As the GRI training partner in Arabic speaking countries, membership in GRI's Stakeholder Council and a GRI Organizational Stakeholder, ASCRN brings to the table composite knowledge and expertise on the GRI reporting framework.

Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence recently invited ACSRN to facilitate a Carbon Reporting training with special emphasis on the GRI, UNGC and COP. Held on December 9, the one-day training was dedicated to providing delegates with a quick and competent understanding of sustainability issues in the Region, the value of reporting, GRI and UNGC as global frameworks, and key characteristics of each.

DCCE took care of a segment on the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) that completed the scope of the training on carbon reporting.



## **GRI Training in December**

Arabia CSR Network concluded the GRI training series of 2013 with a session on GRI G3.1 conducted on December 17 and 18, and a G3.1-G4 Bridging Module session on December 19. Both sessions were held in Dubai and included participants from the UAE and Sudan. The certified G3.1 course offers a detailed training on GRI reporting fundamentals, process and phases, while case-based and other exercises help to demonstrate practical implementation of the GRI framework.

The intensive training is aimed at facilitating clear understanding of sustainability reporting and in-depth know how about the technical aspects of developing a GRI report. The components of the training include introduction to sustainability and reporting, overview of Global Reporting Initiative (both the organization and the framework), and the five phases of GRI G3.1; - Prepare, Connect, Define, Monitor and Report.

The GRI G3.1-G4 Bridging Module is aimed at people familiar with or conversant in GRI G3.1, since it illustrates how companies can make the transition from G3.1 to the newly updated G4 version. The training was open to anyone with an interest in CSR, Sustainability, Reporting and GRI. It was attended by delegates from various backgrounds, mostly with a pre-understanding of CSR and Sustainability, which resulted in intense discussions and constructive engagement. The delegates represented industries such as O&G, food and agriculture, hospitality, construction and real estate, financial services, etc. They spoke about sustainability challenges within their business and their industry, and shared



perspective on issues like corruption, regulation, compliance and standards within local and regional environments. Discussions also centered on the technical rigour of the G3.1 and G4 frameworks, and how it elevates sustainability reporting to a very high and globally recognized standard.

Apart from the course materials, delegates were also presented with two issues of the Best Practices Compilation that the Arabia CSR Network publishes after each cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards. The outcome of the training is immensely encouraging for the Arabia CSR Network and gives a boost to its effort to mainstream transparency and ethics within corporate responsibility. ACSRN will organize the first GRI certified training of 2014 next month, details of which can be found in the upcoming events section of this newsletter and from the ACSRN website <http://www.arabiacrnetwork.com/home>

## **ACSRN members in Clean Up UAE 2013**

The EEG-led Clean Up UAE national campaign once again took place last month with huge numbers of participants across numerous locations all over the country. Traditionally held on the 12th of December, this year the campaign went historic with a week-long slew of events and activities starting on the 5th of December.

The results of the campaign were truly outstanding, - 112,000 participants (individuals and institutions), 102 sites, and 90 tons of waste was collected in the seven Emirates. People from all sections of the community joined to exercise their social responsibility towards the Environment.

Arabia CSR Network members McDonald's and SC Johnson were on the list of corporate sponsors, with SC Johnson also sponsoring the participating team from a school. Members SC Johnson, ABB UAE, Dubal, du and McDonald's participated in the cleaning up programs in various locations. Dubal organized a cleanup drive for its team and drew in 400 people from the community. Du sent a

100 member team to the main clean up site in Dubai, as did the other ACSRN members. Special activities conducted under the umbrella of the Clean Up UAE national campaign included tree planting and recycling drives. Corporate support to the event also came in the form of crucial logistical support and infrastructure, as well as refreshments, water, milk and juice.







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## Awards

الجائزة  
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للمؤسسات



ARABIA  
CORPORATE  
SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY  
AWARDS

### **The Arabia CSR Awards 2014: To be Launched in February**

The seventh cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards will be launched next month. A press conference has been planned on the 10th of February where the 2014 awards will be officially declared open by ACSRN President & CEO Habiba Al Marashi. She will be joined by some of the past winners of the 2013 cycle, who will discuss their experience in applying for and winning the coveted award.

The results of the 2013 cycle will be presented in the form of a special best practices publication featuring the outstanding applications of the sixth cycle. Structurally, the 2014 award will be no different from the previous cycle. It will continue to have the same criteria and other requirements as before. However by launching it early in the year, ACSRN aims to give companies more time to review the application and prepare submissions.

This year ACSRN will also concentrate more efforts to reach the award across companies in the GCC, Levant and North Africa through partnerships and other platforms. Please save the date and write to the Arabia CSR Network regarding queries on participation or collaboration.

### **GRI offers Materiality check for G4 Reports**

In December, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) launched a new service aimed at companies issuing a sustainability report complying with G4 requirements. The GRI G4 or the fourth generation guidelines, was launched in May 2013. It is widely viewed as a demanding and discerning framework that is geared to revealing only the most important economic and social impacts of a company and how it manages them.

G4 came in response to the feedback from reporters, report readers and report users across the world who were concerned about the lack of targeted information on only the key CSR issues relevant to a business, the updated framework has an overriding focus on Material Aspects (material issues that are linked to core business). Under G4, detailed disclosures are required on how, why and where material aspects are seen and addressed.

To validate the Material Aspects in a G4 report, GRI offers a "Materiality Matters" check for a fee. The first twenty G4 reports were offered the service free of charge, and it will be complimentary for GRI Organizational Stakeholders. According to GRI, the 'Materiality Matters' check verifies that at the time of publication of the G4 Guidelines-based report, the General Standard Disclosures G4-17 to G4-27 were correctly located in both the Content Index and in the text of the final report.

## Upcoming Events

### **GRI training of sustainability reporting – February 25-27th – Dubai, UAE**

The Arabia CSR Network is organizing the first GRI certified training for 2014 on sustainability reporting from 25th to 27th February in Dubai, UAE. This GRI-certified training will be divided into 2 components:

- The first will focus on the GRI G3.1 reporting framework. This session is for officials interested to obtain a detailed understanding of GRI.

- The second component will cover the Bridging Module (between G3.1 and the recently launched G4). To attend this component, participants should have passed a previous G3/G3.1 training session.

Participants will receive separate certificates for each training component. As always, the certificates will be issued by the GRI headquarters in Netherlands.

The GRI G4 is significantly different from G3.1 in that there are no A/B/C application levels, a greater focus on the supply chain and more. The Arabia CSR Network urges you to utilize this opportunity to stay up-to-date with the latest in sustainability reporting.

*For more information about events in 2014, please write to [toadmin@arabiacsrn.com](mailto:toadmin@arabiacsrn.com)*



## Feature Article

# From Zakat to business transformation

- Matthias Stausberg



For the past five years I've had the privilege of serving on the jury of the Arabia CSR Awards (ACSRA) – the oldest and probably most rigorous award scheme recognizing sustainable business performance in the Arab World. The latest cycle of the awards has just concluded, and I travelled to Dubai a few weeks ago for this year's Gala and Forum.

Launched in 2008 and hosted by the Dubai-based Arabia CSR Network and Emirates Environmental Group, the ACSRA seeks to instill a greater sense of environmental and social responsibility among Arab businesses by recognizing some of the inspiring and encouraging work that is already being done throughout the region.

The broader understanding of corporate sustainability in this part of the world has gone through a good number of transformations. Traditionally, most businesses have focused on community investment and other forms of philanthropy, in line with the principle of Zakat, or charitable giving – one of the five pillars of Islam.

It's a familiar pattern that is not unique to the Arab World: writing a cheque to charity seems much easier than fundamentally transforming your business to minimize negative environmental and social impacts. And with regulators not pushing the issue, consumers not demanding change and governance often lagging behind, many businesses in the region lacked clear incentives for positive change.

Much of this has shifted in recent years, as Arab businesses have gone global, building widely recognized brands and facing the expectations of investors, regulators and consumers elsewhere.

This is perhaps most evident when it comes to the situation of thousands of migrant workers throughout the Gulf States, particularly in construction. In recent years, allegations of horrendous working and living conditions, of widespread abuse and forced labour have embarrassed political leaders, triggered calls for boycott (e.g., of the

FIFA World Cup in Qatar) and divestment, and have left many of us wondering if rapid growth and development always have to come at such a high cost.

As usual, there is no easy answer, as many of these problems are hard to pin on one culprit (especially in the case of the highly publicised labour issues). The good news is that more and more businesses – from the Maghreb to the Arab Peninsula – now understand that sustainability is not about how you spend your money, but how you make it. And if the award is any indication, many are beginning to see the enormous opportunity in being a force for good.

One of the ACSRA's primary goals is to highlight the compelling business case for greater sustainability using best practice in the region as guidance. It's why the ACSRA secretariat hosts a number of implementation clinics throughout the year. The award is as much a celebration of good performance as it is a call for continuous improvement. This year, the jury received 111 applications from 10 Arab countries, covering 22 industry sectors.

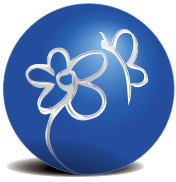
Our methodology, refined repeatedly throughout the years, reviews corporate performance against 46 indicators, based on self-assessments and checked against supplementary documentation. We crowned winners among large, midsize and small companies, and in the public sector (In fact, public sector organizations have notably emerged as unlikely frontrunners in the sustainability space, especially in the Gulf States). To honour the long tradition of community investments, we also gave an award to the best business-NGO cooperation.

This year's winners couldn't have been more diverse: For instance, Dutco Balfour Beatty (winner among large companies) demonstrated that sustainable operations in the construction industry are not a contradiction in terms, while Dubai's Blossom Nursery convinced us that the limited resources and capacities of small businesses don't have to be an obstacle to sustainable performance.

Procter & Gamble UAE took the prize for best business-NGO collaboration for their successful One Pack = One Vaccine programme providing vaccines against Maternal and Newborn (neonatal) Tetanus (MNT) in Yemen.

While serious and often dramatic challenges remain throughout the region, it has been reassuring to see that good practice doesn't just flourish in those countries where legal frameworks and governance are the most advanced.

- Matthias Stausberg, Advocacy Director, Virgin United & Member of Jury, Arabia CSR Awards



## Members Update



### **Dutco Balfour Beatty**

#### **DBB wins another accolade for CSR performance**

Winner of Arabia CSR Award 2013, Dutco Balfour Beatty has once again made to the headlines for its winning CSR initiatives. DBB was conferred with the Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year award for a month-long internal stakeholder engagement initiative involving all staff.

The award was presented during the recent Construction Week. The initiative drew inspiration from DBB's Vision 2020 commitments on sustainability. DBB was also shortlisted in two other categories, - Constructor of the Year and Infrastructure of the Year. DBB expressed its satisfaction at winning this award and that it "re-enforces our commitment to sustainability and social corporate responsibility."

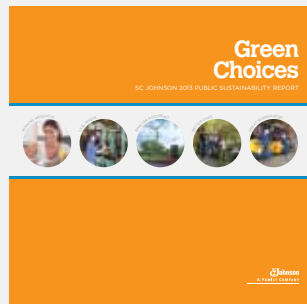
Source: <http://arabianindustry.com/construction/news/2013/dec/12/>

### **SC Johnson**

#### **Releases 2013 Sustainability Report**

**Aluminium giant is an active supporter of the UAE's efforts to optimise energy consumption**

SC Johnson's global public sustainability report is out. As has been the practice, the company focuses on a five yearly set of environmental goals and reports back on its efforts. The 2013 report tracks the company's performance in waste management and minimization, greenhouse gas reduction and



footprint management, product improvement and contribution to the communities. Some milestones for the company are:

- Lowering GHG emissions by 40.2% and cutting manufacturing waste by 62% since year 2000
- Investing in 10 major renewable energy initiatives globally over the past ten years
- Installation of two new 415-foot-tall wind turbines at its largest global manufacturing facility that helps to cut 6,000 metric tons of GHG emissions
- Recycling 8.6 million pounds of waste at its largest global manufacturing facility
- Achieving zero landfill in seven company sites
- Outreach to 1.65 million households and more than 4000 communities in the Philippines to fight dengue
- Launch of new products that minimizes plastics and resins in packaging

Source: <http://www.scjohnson.com/en/press-room/press-releases>

### **DEWA**

#### **Bunch of activities in December**

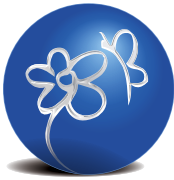
Dubai Electricity & Water Authority (DEWA) is known for its enthusiasm, commitment and pro-action when it comes to sustainability issues. Leading environmental initiatives within the organization and in the community, DEWA continues to step up efforts to be a responsible citizen.

DEWA recently celebrated winning the coveted Sword of Honour Award from the British Safety Council for the sixth time and also organized a Health and Safety Week during which programs were held to raise awareness and bring to the light international standards and best practices in Health and Safety.

DEWA also teamed up with Emirates Green Building Council (EGBC) and hosted an inter- school competition on the theme of sustainable buildings and green technology. It showcased DEWA's LEED Platinum rated building in Al Quoz. During the same month, DEWA also organized a Creativity and Innovation Conference.

With the objective of meeting customer needs and enacting the directives of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai; ,DEWA also launched a Government Innovation Lab. A representative said of this initiative, - "These Innovative Labs will enhance interaction with the audiences with the purpose of getting them involved in the continuous process of development of DEWA's services through innovative and cutting-edge methodologies as part of DEWA's keenness to respond and meet customers' expectations."





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## Best practices from the archive



### *An overview of DLA Piper*

A global law firm, DLA Piper employs 4,200 lawyers over 30 countries worldwide. It aims to be as a trusted advisor to help companies best achieve their operational and strategic needs. Based on an in-depth understanding of the region, its regulatory environments, market drivers, legal practices and customs and worldwide experience of large-scale projects and transactions DLA Piper offers a seamless service; local capability, on-the-ground support and guidance on local, regional and global transactions, and commitment to assisting clients in achieving their commercial objectives.

DLA Piper has CSR/Sustainability entrenched in the way that it does business. It is the first law firm in the region to have a dedicated CSR team on board that leverages CSR and sustainability to create value for employees and clients. This is done by taking a strategic approach and creating alignment between financial and non-financial objectives, based on annual Materiality Assessments that greatly help in calibrating the system and processes used to manage impact in economic and social areas, with special relevance to the local context.

#### **Pro Bono**

DLA Piper has a pro-active pro-bono policy aimed at providing access to justice and legal advice to communities, non-profits, NGOs and social entrepreneurs, which is equivalent to \$108 million worth of donations and makes it the world's largest provider of pro bono legal services.. This is especially productive in delivering free legal assistance, of the same standard as offered to commercial clients, for the non-profit sector working with disadvantaged people. Locally the firm has a full time team for this practice.

#### **Community Investment Projects**

DLA Piper supports and develops initiatives that fit within the themes of Education, Equality and Economic Empowerment. INJAZ Al-Arab, in partnership with education providers and business, uses corporate volunteers to engage Arab students on programmes that raise their understanding of the skills necessary to succeed. DLA Piper serves as INJAZ Al-Arab's pro bono legal services provider across the

whole of the Middle East and North Africa. Examples of initiatives include producing start-up business guides for young entrepreneurs across sixteen Arab countries, intellectual property, trademark protection and governance advice. DLA Piper engages with the UAE University's Faculty of Law to unlock local talent and provides access to international experience for UAE students.

#### **Workplace**

An equal opportunity employer, DLA Piper has developed a diversity strategy at the board level, which is implemented across its 77 offices by local teams that have responsibility for ensuring the firm-wide diversity objectives are met. Employees that are active in pro bono programs are rewarded through wider contribution equaling 10% of employee bonus and low salaried employees in the Middle East offices whose families are affected by natural or other calamity are given access to a Care Fund.

#### **Environmental Sustainability**

Believing strongly in responsible environmental care, DLA Piper has developed an environmental management system globally and locally, which is compliant with the ISO 14001 international standard. It started in 2007, the year in which the firm also introduced a Global Sustainability Initiative. Its environmental objectives sit in four areas; - energy efficiency, waste minimization, reducing travel related carbon footprint and offsetting, and sustainable procurement. From equipment to products and services, DLA Piper's strive to become environmentally responsible is clearly visible in its purchasing and procurement decisions.

#### **CSR as a strategy**

CSR is definitely a part of its strategic thinking. Evidenced in a public vision statement, reviewed annually and saying "Everything Matters", and integrated into a strong value framework, CSR is guided by top management mandate, oversight and engagement. The framework works under three components, - People, Clients and Communities. The Board has CSR champions in four areas that include Environment, Workplace Diversity, Pro bono and CSR overall. 16 KPIS related to CSR and 14 environmental performance indicators have been developed. Due training on social and environmental risks and opportunities are offered for all corporate functions and responsibilities have been clearly defined for CSR. The board and the regional leadership review the progress of the firm's CSR agenda at regular intervals. CSR performance of the firm is communicated to all employees.

#### **Conclusion**

DLA Piper has earned distinction for its innovative approach to social responsibility and its consistency in being a committed CSR practitioner. Recently DLA Piper ME was rewarded with the Arabia CSR Award, winning in the Medium Company category. Its steadfast focus and continuous improvement of CSR has led to this and other positive outcomes.

### **Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2012**

This abstract has been taken from the ACSRN publication titled 'Arabia CSR Best Practices: 2012'. For more details on DLA Piper and other companies that have been recognized for their innovative and effective CSR strategies write to us at [admin@arabiacsrn.com](mailto: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](mailto:admin@arabiacsrn.com)  
For more information on the Arabia CSR Network visit [www.arabiacsrn.com](http://www.arabiacsrn.com)