

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2021



بنك الشارقة
Bank of Sharjah

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INTRODUCTION

Bank of Sharjah is committed to responsible business practices, to its employees, customers and its community. Our commitment to society is deeply rooted in our values, and forms an integral part of our strategy. The Bank's drive for sustainable development complements its core strategy of partnering with businesses to contribute to their growth.

Bank of Sharjah aspires to maintain its long-standing reputation, through its current strategies and the primary focus on the interest of its stakeholders remains a key focus.

Bank of Sharjah passionately believes in the welfare of its staff, the satisfaction of its customers and the protection of its local environment. Bank of Sharjah has always been focused on responsible business practice and the development of the Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility policy is a step forward in documenting the Bank of Sharjah's historic financial and social commitment long before the expression CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility – was coined. The policy will not only detail existing practices but will specify new initiatives that are due to be introduced to expand and cement the Bank's commitment to ethical and responsible practices.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Bank recognizes the impact it has on the social community and has accordingly partnered with various entities such as Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS), French Institute and the Ministry of Interior Saeed association, Al Noor amongst other partners.

In 2021, the Bank adopted a different strategy in comparison to other banks. Rather than dividing the contribution budget amongst more partners, the Bank decided to provide extensive support to existing partners with a focus on increasing the impact of its contributions. This strategy enabled the Bank to maintain various commitments. The Bank has pledged AED 30 million over 10 years for the construction of new buildings for Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services and has fulfilled the commitment for 2021. The Bank has also extended its support for various events such as Autism Awareness Day and People of Determination Day.

The Emirate of Sharjah has always been well regarded for its commitment to arts and culture, which is why the Bank supported the Art For All Centre at events for people with disabilities from various artistic fields such as music, painting, theatre, singing and dancing. The Bank also awarded scholarships to many such artists in 2021.

EMPLOYEES

The development of human resources lies at the heart of the Bank's strategy. The Bank seeks to expand and attract employees with good experience who share its values and goals.

The Bank believes that maintaining a comfortable and pleasant working environment as well as promoting a respectful atmosphere is crucial in building employee loyalty and contentment. This can be seen in our ability to retain the personnel of the Bank for many years.

A Bank, like most businesses, can only be successful if it has professional, committed employees. Bank of Sharjah is not different; employees are valued and are always a key focus in the Bank's strategy decisions and plans.

All employees are committed to comply with the core values of the bank as well as the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Staff development is crucial in maintaining best practices in all functions within the Bank. This is recognized by the Board of Directors and Senior Management by developing new training initiatives.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

CUSTOMER



Your Partner in Progress.

The Bank's aim is to provide financial solutions that deliver results. The Bank believes in proactively assisting customers and clients with measures that focus on their individual needs and provide unparalleled service. The Bank's Mission Statement addresses the Bank's commitment to its customers and its drive to assist them in realizing their aspirations and objectives.

Because every corporate vision is unique, Bank of Sharjah believes in going the extra mile, offering all of our customers a personal, professional, tailored service, offering assistance and advice whenever requested.

One of the pillars we are proud of at Bank of Sharjah is the community-focused initiatives we lead and participate in, which contribute to building a prosperous society based on cooperation and care.

We have always been committed to seizing the opportunity to perform good deeds and launch initiatives that highlight the importance of corporate social responsibility that is deeply rooted in the Bank's core values and forms an integral part of its strategy.

COMMITMENT TO CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Philanthropy has always been at the heart of Bank of Sharjah since inception. Supporting those in need within our community and beyond has always been a clear objective. Our Corporate Social Responsibility programmes often go far beyond what we report; being socially responsible and focusing on our local community is part of the Bank's culture.

Bank of Sharjah supports various charitable organizations and local community groups; including organizations which advocate for environmental responsibility and public health, among others, through sponsorship, donations or contributions which amounted to approximately AED 8 million in 2021.

The Bank supports a range of institutions and local community, educational institutions, and a range of organizations focused on caring for People of Determination and many communal and cultural associations.

OUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2021

We at Bank of Sharjah more than ever, remain steadfast in our belief that how we act is just as important as what we achieve. As such, our approach to sustainability also consists in managing our business in a balanced and responsible way, with our values of integrity and accountability, as well as a commitment to diversity and inclusion in the decisions we make every day. As a purpose-driven Bank, we clearly understand that the legacy we leave for the next decades is also determined by our social impact, just as much as our economic impact.

The Bank is also passionate about training and the development of education for UAE Nationals and supports various endeavours in this regard.

During the year 2021, and as part of the deployed efforts made to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and its repercussions, Bank of Sharjah continued its community and humanitarian support at various levels.

1. SOLIDARITY AND HUMANITARIAN



Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services

We at Bank of Sharjah are proud of our commitment to Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS). According to a cooperation agreement signed in November 2019 between H.H. Sheikha Jamila bint Muhammad Al Qasimi, Director General of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services, and Mr. Varouj Nerguizian, Group CEO of Bank of Sharjah, to contribute financially in building 17 buildings that varies between educational, rehabilitative and service buildings for the target group. In addition, the infrastructure includes roads, facilities and open spaces for activities and external coordination. Bank of Sharjah has pledged a donation of AED 30 million over 10 years. Our partnership with SCHS comes from our commitment to social responsibility by contributing to the establishment's restless efforts to advocate and empower persons with different abilities.

Listed below various activities conducted throughout the year 2021 in cooperation with Bank of Sharjah:

World Physical Therapy day

The Physical Therapy Department of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services organizes a group of activities every year in order to raise awareness of the services that the city provides and the importance of maintaining physical and mental health. In addition, the city organizes many free medical consultations, examinations and exercises for its employees.

Used Book Festival

An activity organized by Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services every two years. The idea depends on raising cultural, social and voluntary awareness among social groups and supporting this effort by spreading the values of volunteerism in words and actions. The activity depends mainly on volunteers' efforts from schools and universities, public benefit societies and societal and economic institutions concerned with the rise and development of society. The city was a pioneer in organizing such festivals Assistive Technology Month

Assistive Technology Month

Assistive Technology Center of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services organizes the event during the month of November by holding a series of events and awareness workshops to integrate persons with disabilities with their colleagues to inform them about some of the devices and tools that promote greater independence and empowerment

Summer Centre for the Disabled and their Friends

Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services is the first institution that deals with people with disabilities, to organize a summer centre at the state level. This started in 1986. One of the centre's most important goals is to increase persons with disabilities self-confidence. The city dedicated the idea of work to benefit from children's free time. The centre aims to develop a spirit of cooperation and enhance the love of participation among students and their peers.

Inclusive Education Month

The integration unit of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services organizes an inclusive education month every year. The city aims at activating inclusive education and educating the community about its importance, empowering people with disabilities within the school environment, and supporting their families in addition to introducing the concept of inclusive education

Early Intervention Week

Early intervention centre celebrates this occasion every year through a group of educational and cultural activities, screenings and early detection of disabilities in schools and kindergartens, as well as hosting a large number of doctors and consultants to provide free consultations to families. It also organizes informative lectures for specialists inside and outside the city.

Art For All Centre (FALAJ)

Art for All Centre of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services is considered one of the most important platforms that support persons with disabilities in the region, as it is keen to develop the skills and enhance the capabilities and talents of its affiliated artists with disabilities in all areas of creativity. Those who benefit from the services of the centre, which was opened in 2017, in several artistic fields, such as theatre, acting, music, singing, drawing and plastic arts.

Sanabl Al Mahabah Festival

Sanabl Al Mahabah" Festival is an annual activity that includes many recreational activities. SCHS allocates the proceeds of the festival for developing school's programs offered to people with disabilities.

World Autism Awareness Day

Sharjah Autism Centre of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services organizes in April every year a week to raise awareness of this disorder and highlight the capabilities of students and the services, programs and activities offered to them. It aims at developing their talents and artistic creativity and other fields as

well as integrating them into society while providing support and assistance to families and brothers as much as possible.

International Day of People of Determination

In conjunction with the celebration of the International Day of People with Disability, which falls on the 3 December, and the Gulf Day of the Disabled, which falls on 10 December of each year, Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services and its branches and schools celebrate this occasion. The celebration aims to raise awareness of intellectual disabilities and the capabilities of this segment of society. Each year, the activities focus on specific theme that becomes the foundation of all activities and events held on this occasion with the participation of the Mothers and Brothers Councils.

Self-Advocates (One Step Closer) Summit

Self-Advocates Summit, which Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS) and Inclusion International for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) organized for the first time in UAE under the title One Step Closer. SCHS organized this summit, which took place in the Act Hotel Sharjah, with participation of 14 self-advocates accompanied by their supporters and nine mothers.

Music Therapy Program

Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services is the first institution in the Arab world to cooperate with the University of EWA, which has a history of more than 150 years, in the application of the music therapy program, which is one of the most important and most advanced methods of treatment for people with disabilities to develop their motor, social, linguistic and educational skills, as well as the development of sensory and cognitive skills for students.

Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services new buildings project

under the patronage and support of His Highness Sheikh Dr. / Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services has proven its pioneering role locally, regionally and internationally in serving people with disabilities and their families, and in his belief in the importance of the city's role, he recommended granting The city is an area of land to be reconstructed and the establishment of an integrated future complex to complete its vision of being a leading institution in advocacy, inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the UAE and the Arab world through its services and activities.

Al Noor Rehabilitation and Welfare Association for People of Determination



Bank of Sharjah believes that every student with determination deserves the right to education, for that the Bank has associated itself with foundations that work towards education for People of Determination. Al Noor Training Center is one of the foundations that Bank of Sharjah continuously support. This year and as a result of the pandemic and the health concerns, it was essential for the Al Noor organization to purchase a bus to safely commute students and staff to the Center. Bank of Sharjah contributed with a 25-seater bus for AED 166,500 in addition to AED 100,000 for the development of students and special equipment.

Ministry of Interior - Saaed Association



In the scope of its leading CSR activities, Bank of Sharjah which is the official partner for safety and social responsibility of Saaed Association, UAE Ministry of Interior, Traffic and Patrols Directorate organized a range of humanitarian initiatives, traffic awareness campaigns, publications and awareness social media campaigns during 2021.

Unified Traffic Awareness campaign for 2021

Within the unified plan at the state level for traffic safety, in response to the keenness and interest of the rational leadership to reduce traffic accidents, an annual work plan for awareness was prepared with the support of Bank of Sharjah and in partnership with the Directorate of Traffic and Patrols through the distribution of leaflets and the conduct of awareness lectures for workers and bus drivers.

- The first campaign: (Sudden Deviation) and its dangers to the lives of motorists and road users, started in January 2021 for a period of three months.
- The second campaign: (Preventive driving is a requirement and a goal) and aims to emphasize the need for drivers to adhere to the application of traffic regulations on the road, which was launched at the beginning of April until the end of June.
- The third campaign: (Safe Traffic Summer), focused on the most important safety issues, including (road travel, vehicle and tire safety). launched in July until the end of August.
- Fourth campaign: (Traffic safety for school students).

The charitable initiative on Zayed Humanitarian Work Day

Saed Association continued its annual humanitarian bids and initiatives. This year, it organized two initiatives within the framework of the state's directions to establish the values of giving and loyalty.

The first initiative was under the slogan "Zayed the Spring of Giving", in coordination with the Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination, the Al Noor Center for People of Determination in Abu Dhabi, and the Future Center for Rehabilitation.

During the initiative, smart and educational in-kind and electronic gifts were distributed to children of determination and the distinguished among them were honored to instill a spirit of optimism and happiness in their hearts, thus enhancing the community partnership between the association and that important group in society. Financial support was also provided to the management of the Al Noor Rehabilitation Center.

The second initiative was under the slogan "Ramadan Blessing" and was carried out in coordination with the Emirates Red Crescent, by distributing foodstuffs during the holy month of Ramadan to families with limited income.

The Society's work team distributed the Ramadan Mir to some families with limited income, which was food items, under the supervision of the Emirates Red Crescent, and home visits were made to some families with low incomes to provide support to them and distribute gifts to children.

In cooperation with the Traffic and Patrols Directorate of the General Command of Abu Dhabi Police and with the support of the Bank of Sharjah, Saed Association participated in organizing a field campaign to protect pedestrians from the dangers of run-over accidents while crossing the street at pedestrian crossings, under the slogan (Pedestrians have the right to cross the road).

The campaign was held in conjunction with the 50th UAE National Day, as part of the efforts made to develop the traffic safety system and focus on preventive traffic awareness programs and campaigns that aim to spread traffic culture to the largest segment of society.

Spreading traffic awareness on the social media of the association by designing awareness publications annually sponsored by the Bank of Sharjah (the safety and social responsibility partner). And the issuance of the book (The Golden Jubilee of the Emirates) on the National Day to document 2021 CSR initiatives.

Emirati-French Dialogue 2021



As a major advocate for inter-cultural dialogue, Bank of Sharjah has the privilege of being a primary partner of the French Embassy by sponsoring the events organized by its Institut Français des EAU in the scope of the 2021 Emirati-French Dialogue. Through this partnership, Bank of Sharjah reaffirms its commitment to promoting knowledge, expertise, diversity, balancing tradition, innovation and tolerance. Bank of Sharjah proudly sponsored 26 events in 2021 below listed key activities:

The Night of Ideas - January 2021

The Institut Français in the UAE organized "The Night of Ideas" in partnership with New York University Institute for Public Programming and Abu Dhabi Youth Hub. This event revolved around social spaces and solidarity. The roundtable "Making social spaces" brings together scholars and practitioners to discuss urban planning, public spaces, and social and cultural practices in Abu Dhabi.

Abu Dhabi Culture Summit - March 2021

The Institut Français in the UAE partnered up with the the Department of Culture and Tourism as part of the 4th edition of Culture Summit. This leading global forum explores creatives cultural solutions with the main theme "The Cultural Economy and the Economy of Culture". This year, SACEM gave a case study on "The strategic role of Collective Management Organizations within the Creative industries ecosystems".

Women Gaze - May 2021

The Institut Français in the UAE organized a conference in partnership with Villa Gillet, Alliance Française Bahrain and Alliance Française KSA around the theme of "women gaze". Three Gulf female writers gathered to discuss their own personal perspectives, the social conditions of women writers in the region and their position in a saturated publishing market.

Youth Hackathon - June 2021

The Institut Français in the UAE and TotalEnergies have joined forces with Khalifa University, Sorbonne Abu Dhabi & UAE University Abu Dhabi to launch a youth hackathon dedicated to the UAE's energy sector in partnership with the French Strategy Consulting Agency Circulab. The workshop's purpose was to help students to reflect on the evolution of the energy sector in the UAE with the help of circular economy theory.

Demos Project - October 2021

In cooperation with the Demos Project of the Philharmonie de Paris, France, and Abu Dhabi Classics, with the support of DCT Education Department, will present the result of 4 weeks of work with specialized teachers and Public-school kids from all the Emirate including Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Dhafra Region. 10 teachers travelled from Paris to Abu Dhabi to teach kids musical instruments (violin, cello, viola, wind and brass instruments, timbal, oud, qanoon, darbouka). The first intensive instruments training took place late October. The final concert will take place in May 2022.

Sharjah International Book Fair - November 2021

More than 200.000 visitors attended the 2021 Book Fair with the participation of more than 300 publishers at the Sharjah Expo Centre.

Dubai Airshow - November 2021

Round table in the presence of Campus France UAE, Dassault

Aviation and France Alumni – Promoting academic programs and internships in aerospace field.

World conference on creative economy - December 2021

World conference on creative economy - second edition hosted by UAE. For three days, a large global community of entrepreneurs, creatives, and policymakers gathered in person and virtually, where they were joined by leading speakers, thinkers, and policymakers.

Poetry Night - December 2021

In celebration of the international day of Arabic language, the Institut Français in the United Arab Emirates, and Arabic Language Center, in partnership with Louvre Abu Dhabi, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, and Institut du Monde Arabe have organized "Poetry Night 2021" at Louvre Abu Dhabi. This event enabled to highlight the French and Emirati artistic scene thanks to a multi-format poetic and artistic evening. From music to digital visual arts, artists took us on a journey around the poetic arts of France and the Arab World.

2- EDUCATION

St. Joseph University – Dubai

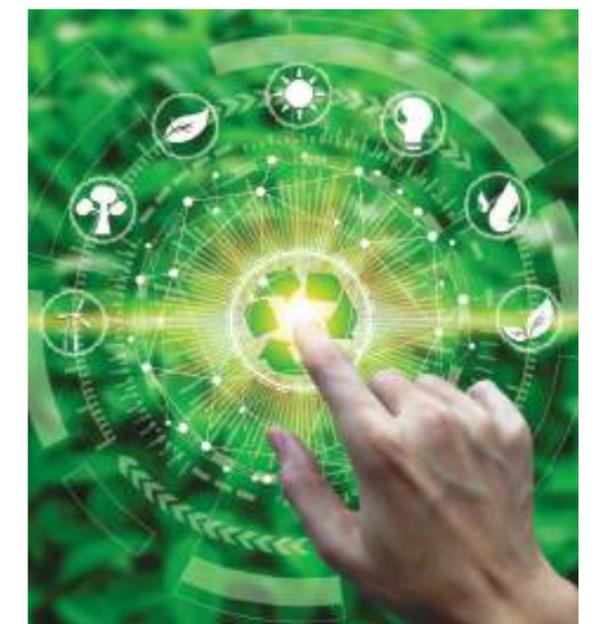


The Bank offered 10 scholarships for a total of AED 552,000, sponsoring UAE students at the Law and Translation School at Universite Saint Joseph's (USJ) Dubai. This further demonstrates Bank of Sharjah's role and contribution for promoting the legal know-how of the young Emirati generation.

3- TRAININGS & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In the same spirit, we do our best to be purposeful in the way we support our own colleagues on all fronts, more particularly through skills transitions. This includes focusing on continuous learning, and ongoing training and development. It also means boosting our people's engagement by empowering them with opportunities to learn, grow and lead change. This year trainings were persued online and virtual ones such as

- o E-learning through Intuition
- o Educational Sponsorship



Other Contributions

Bank of Sharjah also focuses on the preservation of our local environment. The Bank believes that taking small steps and making small changes make a big difference. The Bank is also active in supporting local awareness and advancement through both membership and involvement in various organizations focused on building Environmental and Social and Corporate Governance awareness in the Region.

4 – SPONSORSHIP

The Bank is a founding sponsor and key supporter of:

The Institute for Corporate Governance



Bank of Sharjah has partnered with Hawkamah since its inception. With its core values of reliability, objectivity, professionalism, respect and honesty, Hawkamah is recognised for working with national and regional taskforces in developing regionally relevant corporate governance frameworks that help foster home-grown communication and policy dialogue. Hawkamah has served as a natural bridge for institutions promoting corporate governance in the region.

The Pearl Initiative



Bank of Sharjah has partnered with the Pearl Initiative since 2011 to create a business case for improved corporate governance, transparency and accountability in Gulf organisations, across various programme focuses. The Pearl Initiative is the Gulf region's leading independent, non-profit organisation, set up by Gulf regional business leaders and the United Nations Office of Partnerships to collectively embrace the business case in adopting higher standards in corporate governance, accountability and transparency to enhance innovation, opportunity and value creation in the Gulf region. Through its flagship programmes, the Pearl Initiative brings together business, government and civil society decision makers to share best practices and help maximise the economic opportunities available to companies within the region. The Pearl Initiative also helps Gulf-based university students to identify and embrace strong ethics as they embark on their future careers. Bank of Sharjah has been actively involved in conducting Business Pledge sessions that raise awareness on regional corporate governance frameworks, while also convening business leaders and students to share insights on ethical organisational practices and network with industry luminaries. Since 2011, with the support of their corporate partners, including Bank of Sharjah, the Pearl Initiative has engaged with 12,000+ business leaders across different governance-related matters as well as over 8,300 students across the Gulf countries.

Sustainability initiatives: Looking to the future at the Bank of Sharjah

Eco-friendly policies, practices and initiatives are core values at the Bank of Sharjah (BOS). Since the bank's inception in 1973, BOS has held six principles at the center of all operations. Known within the company as PETICQ, the acronym stands for Performance, Ethics, Transparency, Initiative, Commitment and Quality. Through each of these commitments, the bank strives for a holistic 360-degree approach to better business, from employee wellbeing to customer satisfaction and of course, environmental impact.

Being a bank, our environmental footprint consists mainly of the use of electricity and water for our offices. We are constantly looking to improve We take our environmental impacts very seriously and have internal policies that reflect this. In 2021, for the first time, the annual assembly general meeting was conducted virtually. All Board & management meetings were conducted on 'Convener' platform which reduced drastically the use of paper. The Bank did not print and distribute the Annual Report to the shareholders and instead posted links of the relevant documents on the Bank's website and encouraged everyone to access that document virtually. This was a pivotal follow-up to the 2020 policy where e-statements were released to the customers instead of physical documents.

The Bank also continued its agreement with BEEAH Recycling for the shredding and recycling of used paper. In 2021, the Bank recycled 14,450 kgs of paper with the assistance of BEEAH. Since the pandemic, the Bank has also opted for more virtual meetings, thereby decreasing travel emissions and distribution of physical documents.

Apart from these measures, employees at the Bank make sure to switch lights off in empty rooms and monitor their personal water consumption as far as possible. The general culture with regards to environmental footprint from the employees is always in line with the sustainability vision from the leadership of the Bank.

The Paris Agreement

Bank of Sharjah is committed to the aims of the 2016 Paris Agreement, which calls for governments, businesses and financial networks to tackle the environmental challenges faced by climate change. These aims include the ambitious goal of limiting and reducing global warming as well as supporting countries around the world to better deal with the impacts of climate change. Bank of Sharjah realizes that the long-term health of the bank is directly connected to preventing further climate change, as well as helping to preserve the environment through sustainability initiatives. This commitment has led to a complete rethinking and reengineering of the bank's methods of business, to support sustainability and the wider environment across the bank's global network.

The Bee'ah initiative

One of the key ways the Bank of Sharjah has developed sustainable practices throughout its network is through its engagement with Bee'ah. Based in Sharjah, the award-winning Environmental Waste Management Company was founded in partnership with the UAE government in 2007 in order to address waste management and environmental issues across the Middle East. Through the bank's work with Bee'ah, BOS has achieved multiple sustainability goals across the company, from the recycling of paper and plastics used in day-to-day business practice, to the safe recycling of electronic waste and cartridges and more. It's a policy which is in place across the Bank's 6 branches across

the UAE, along with its management headquarters and BOS machines across the UAE, allowing the bank to play a key part in positively contributing to the UAE's sustainability goals including the country's ambitious Vision 2021 programme.

Digital transformation

As a key part of the bank's sustainability plan, the Bank of Sharjah has initiated a digital transformation programme across its branches in the UAE. BOS believes that no matter how small, every environmental initiative can make a difference. As such, digitization and choices made by each member of staff within the bank have become an intrinsic part of the bank's strategy.

Although in its early stages, the Bank has made impactful steps towards achieving its goals, through initiatives within each branch, promoting the use of electronic data formats over using paper, and where paper is used, BOS encourages recycling through the many points throughout the bank's network of branches. Moreover, the Bank of Sharjah has enhanced the electronic services offered to customers, promoting the use of e-statements over paper records amongst the bank's network of around 12,000 customers. This seemingly small step dramatically reduces the amount of paper used annually at the Bank of Sharjah, and in turn, significantly reduces the bank's environmental footprint.

Our commitment to all these organizations is on a long term basis. However, Bank of Sharjah also supports several Sports, Education, Humanitarian activities and Awareness campaigns of interest to the community.