

Press Release

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Training Course and Workshop on CSR Reporting held in Beirut, 3rd – 4th July 2012

CSR LEBANON hosted a two-day training course and workshop at the Riviera Hotel in Beirut on the 3rd and 4th July, 2012. The topic of the workshop was CSR Reporting and provided participants with the essential tools and understanding to be able to produce CSR reports which meet international standards and support their business development. The workshop was facilitated by two leading UK-based CSR consultants; Dwayne Baraka, from Business in the Community (www.bitc.org.uk), and Oliver Dudok van Heel, from Radley Yeldar (www.ry.com).

Trainers focused on the first day on defining CSR in general as well as CSR reporting, the history behind it, main drivers and international trends including integrated reporting. They also highlighted the role of the report in the broader communications strategy, the business case for it, and the importance of linking business strategy, CSR Strategy and the CSR report in increasing impact and competitiveness.

The second day mainly covered good practice in CSR reporting in terms of international standards and guidelines, setting measurable objectives and planning a CSR report. Exercises were backed by key case studies of best practice in the field.

Founder and Chief Executive Officer of CSR LEBANON, Khaled Kassar said: “CSR Reporting in Lebanon remains in its infancy but many companies are realizing that reporting is now an integral part of the CSR strategies of their international counterparts.” “Leading international companies, including a number of major companies in the Middle East, are now submitting annual CSR or sustainability reports which provide a transparent insight into the company’s social and environmental impact and how it is being managed,” he added.

Whilst most elements of CSR reporting remain technically voluntary, in reality it is becoming an essential part of business management, particularly brand and risk management. International standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) provide clear frameworks to promote transparency and comparability between companies and to facilitate the assessment and measurement of CSR progress and achievement.

The training highlighted the significant business benefits to CSR and CSR reporting. Research into the business case for CSR have identified the following as the major benefits: a stronger brand based on clear values, new business opportunities, cost savings, improved employee performance and retention and a better ability to identify and manage risks to the business.

Representatives from leading companies in Lebanon, including those from the banking, manufacturing and accountancy sectors, attended the workshop. The event was supported by the Association of Banks in Lebanon (ABL), the American Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, and corporate sponsors KAFALAT, BLOM Bank and INDEVCO.

Please contact Ghada Hassan at CSR Lebanon for further information:

Email: ghada@csrlebanon.com

Tel : +961 1 355111 | Fax : +961 1 355110