

The Middle East & Africa Forum for Sustainability Leaders

Views You Can Use

Fawwaz Alshammari
Country Head of Digital Industries
Siemens Saudi Arabia



Sustainability initiatives are for everyone, regardless of market or geography

We have Saudi Arabia pursuing sustainable initiatives and we have Siemens pursuing sustainable initiatives. My work at the nexus of those otherwise parallel ambitions involves combining both trajectories so that we incorporate best practices at Siemens from other markets into the Saudi market. Working towards sustainability is an endeavor that everyone can be involved with, regardless of market or geography. And in Saudi we see a big push from the government towards sustainability with clearly defined key performance indicators to move us in the right direction. Those KPIs are complemented by the private sector and by Siemens by embedding best practices we've established in other regions and bringing them to Saudi. We work with local government agencies to create use cases for emerging technologies. We partner with academic institutions so that the talent pool that we recruit from already possesses relevant skills for confronting climate change upon graduation.

It's better to build on existing initiatives rather than trying to reinvent the wheel

Collaboration is a key point in sustainability conversations and can manifest in partnerships with government, academia, or the private sector. As a big company, we also partner with small or medium enterprises since sometimes they might have better reach in their more niche markets or to capitalize on existing initiatives rather than trying to reinvent the wheel. Sometimes we see insights from our partnerships with academia that allow us to build upon what's already working in other parts of the world and introduce it locally to provide solutions to our regional needs. Of course, as a big company, we also have our own in-house research and development teams that often share their own insights with our counterparts at other organizations seeking to confront the same global sustainability challenges as us.

A few next steps can be taken to advance the push towards sustainability

For next steps, I think we need several things. Since there's already a push from the government side, it will also be important to have evolving KPIs that remain relevant to market developments. From a societal point of view, it's important to increase awareness into the kinds of sustainability issues we face regionally. And from the university perspective, which is of particular importance since Saudi is such a young nation, we'll need to focus on cultivating the skillset needed to confront climate change.