**Pearl Initiative and NAMA Engage in Research on Women’s Participation in Gulf Workforce**

* *Industry leaders bring first-hand insights to ongoing region-wide research being conducted by the Pearl Initiative as part of its Diversity in Business Leadership programme*
* *The Pearl Initiative’s* Women in the Economy report *will be out this December, offering an evidence-based and consolidated outlook on women’s experiences in the workforce across the Gulf Region*

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[Pearl Initiative](http://www.pearlinitiative.org/partners), the leading non-profit organisation fostering corporate accountability and transparency across the Gulf Region, recently held a stakeholder meeting in collaboration with NAMA Women Advancement (NAMA) under its Diversity in Business Leadership programme in Sharjah, UAE.

The objective of the stakeholder meeting is to provide qualitative data to research that is currently being undertaken within the Pearl Initiative’s [Diversity in Business Leadership](https://www.pearlinitiative.org/programmes/diversity-in-business-leadership) programme. The research includes an online [survey](http://tiny.cc/vko77y) that will be used to build a report on ‘Women in the Economy: The Gulf Region Outlook’, to be published in December 2019.

Prominent business and industry leaders participated in the meeting, examining the current status of women in the workplace in the Gulf Region, the contemporary state of gender diversity in the economy, as well as the quandaries commonly faced by women at work. Among the topics of discussion was how organisations across all sectors can help increase diversity and encourage women in their chosen careers.

Key topics of discussion at the meeting included the obstacles faced by women in entering the Gulf Region’s workforce, their challenges in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, and how organisations may help address these issues and support women in the workplace. Other issues discussed by the participants included suggestions on how organisations could eliminate such obstacles such as unconscious biases and implement policies that would support increased diversity in their operations.

HE Reem BinKaram, Director of NAMA, said: “Along with our longstanding partner, the Pearl Initiative, NAMA is committed to advancing women’s participation in the economy and enabling them to become key influencers in society and economy. The stakeholder meeting has helped identify key issues impacting the Gulf Region’s female workforce, which can support the shaping of gender-inclusive policies and strategies to be applied to economic sectors across the board.”

She added: “There is a notable lack of data on this subject, the generation of which will be instrumental to efforts in field. The information gathered at this stakeholder meeting will add tremendous value to the Gulf-wide research being conducted within the Pearl Initiative’s Diversity in Business Leadership programme at present. The study covers a broad range of economic sectors and is in line with our mission to also support one of the key goals of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is to promote gender equity.”

Yasmine Omari, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative, said, “The findings of this stakeholder meeting and the feedback of all the attendees have fuelled further insights about the status of women in the workforce, and have greatly enhanced the understanding of the impact of diversity and inclusion across the region’s economy.”

She noted: “The research findings, when published, will be of great economic value to the Gulf Region’s businesses. Our continued partnership with NAMA reflects the Pearl Initiative’s enduring efforts to expand the reach of its programmes and heighten awareness around corporate governance best practices in collaboration with local and regional leading institutions.”

The new research under the Diversity in Business Leadership programme follows on from the legacy of a report that was launched in 2017 focusing on women in the UAE economy. Key findings of this report include the facts that gender-based biases and stereotypes served as barriers to women’s workforce engagement, and that a supportive organisational workplace was the top factor encouraging women’s entry into the workforce.

The new iteration of the programme builds on this initial report and seeks to cover women’s involvement across the Gulf Region’s workforce.

Founded in 2010, the Pearl Initiative develops programmes and publishes regional research reports and case studies, with aims to influence the regional business and student communities towards implementing higher standards of corporate governance within the Gulf Region.

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**Note to Editors:**

The public is encouraged to take the survey by [clicking here](http://tiny.cc/vko77y) and contribute to the ongoing research, which in turn will support a stronger regional economy.

**Photocaptions:**

During the meeting between PI and NAMA

**About the Pearl Initiative**

Prominent business leaders from across the Gulf Region formed the Pearl Initiative in 2010 to create a non-profit vehicle for the Private Sector to collectively take the lead in adopting higher standards in corporate governance, accountability and transparency to enhance business innovation, opportunity and value creation. With over 40 regional and international partners, the Pearl Initiative brings together business, government and civil society decision-makers to share best business practices and to help maximise the economic opportunities available to companies within the region. The Pearl Initiative also supports Gulf-based university students to identify and embrace strong ethics as they embark on their future careers.

The Pearl Initiative seeks joint collaborative action between regional and global business leaders, international institutions, government bodies and wider initiatives within the Gulf Region, exhibiting positive leadership and sharing knowledge and experience in order to influence the entire regional business and student community. For more information, please visit [www.pearlinitiative.org](http://www.pearlinitiative.org) or contact us on +971 6 515 4605 or via email at enquiries@pearlinitiative.org

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**About NAMA Women Advancement Establishment**

Established by His Highness Sheikh Dr. [Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi](https://www.zawya.com/mena/en/in-the-news/Sultan%20bin%20Muhammad%20Al%20Qasimi/818148461/), the NAMA Women Advancement Establishment is chaired by his wife, Her Highness [Sheikha Jawaher](https://www.zawya.com/mena/en/in-the-news/Sheikha%20Jawaher/4191606253/) bint [Mohammed Al Qasimi](https://www.zawya.com/mena/en/in-the-news/Mohammed%20Al%20Qasimi/1073694062/). NAMA’s core philosophy is to raise awareness that women are an indispensable human resource for the development of every nation. NAMA was conceived to go beyond the remit of supporting women and ensuring gender equality to a broader scope that aims to see women become influential key members of society, thereby enabling them to climb the ladder of success.

It encourages policies and legislation to support women and actively pursues programmes that support gender integration into all sectors. Three entities, namely Sharjah Business Women Council (SBWC), Irthi Contemporary Crafts Council and Badiri Education and Development Academy, fall under the umbrella of NAMA Women Advancement Establishment.