



AW Rostamani
مجموعة عبد الواحد الرستamani Group

Legacy ESG Report 2024

Embrace generation next

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Introduction



AW Rostamani Group is a progressive UAE-based family-owned conglomerate comprising exceptional products and services across core verticals – Automotive, Real estate, Logistics, Lifestyle, Lighting solutions, Travel, Agritech, and Packaging. We have a simple, impactful purpose:
To build purposeful businesses that enrich the lives of every generation we touch.



Purpose is embedded in AWR Group's culture, strategy, and operations. It defines how we do business. For the past few years, the Group has embarked on an ambitious Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme – the 'Enriching Communities' programme – that includes initiatives to support communities where we operate in. The introduction of our Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) framework in 2024, represents the next step in our journey towards responsible social and environmental stewardship. We believe in the power of actions over words and strive to continuously improve the way we do business to deliver real value to communities, our employees, and stakeholders.

AWR Group is dedicated to environmental and social sustainability and has developed an ESG framework that defines its commitment to corporate responsibility. The ESG framework was designed to recognise the centrality of sustainability in AWR Group's business model and to build tangible metrics to support the Group in further achieving its sustainability goals.



Our legacy report explores our social and environmental impact that has shaped AWR Group into the responsible business we are today. We reflect on our past and current position in the sustainability journey and outline our future commitments, highlighting the evolution of our CSR activities within a well-defined strategic framework.

Our backstory

A strong legacy of social and environmental impact



The positive reach of our CSR programme highlights AWR Group's commitment to enriching the lives of our customers, our people, and the community at large. This desire to make a difference is at the heart of what makes AWR Group the company it is today. We believe that none of this would have been possible without the unrelenting support of our partners, our staff, and stakeholders.

As a family-owned business that was set up in Dubai in the early 1950s, it gives us great pride to call the fastest growing metropolis in the world our home. Over the years, we have grown to become one of the most progressive and innovative business houses in the region – a beacon for excellence in the Middle East and beyond.



Over 3,000 employees call AWR Group their professional home. We welcome men and women from all backgrounds, abilities, and skillsets. We are proud that our staff comprise more than 65 nationalities, reflecting our strong belief in the power of inclusivity and diversity.

Our four pillars of CSR

Community

- Education
- People of determination
- Well-being
- Entrepreneurship
- Philanthropy
- National identity

Environment

- Carbon footprint
- Environmental stewardship
- Climate change mitigation
- Care for biodiversity

Workplace

- Work life balance
- Well-being in the workplace
- Volunteerism

Stakeholders

- Green supplier policies
- Anti-corruption
- Stakeholder engagement
- Stakeholder satisfaction

1,000+

Employees involved

50+

Activities rolled out

Impressive milestones

Since we launched our Enriching Communities programme in 2018, more than 50 activities have been rolled out with the active involvement of more than 1,000 employees. All our employees are eager to participate in community activities; there is a never a shortage of appetite to help. There have also been remarkable achievements in protecting the environment through a number of activities, including training by AWR Automotive (see “A creative take on environment”, page 21) while our IT department’s exciting work on greening operations is truly paying off (see “Our green approach to tech”, page 23).

We are as committed to enriching communities by acting as responsible stewards of society and the environment, creating new pathways for growth through sustainable initiatives that truly improve and develop the world around us. This is not only a company strategy, but an ethos which is deeply embedded within the DNA of every decision we make across the business – no matter how large or small.



Pillar 1 — Community

Elevating hearts and minds



Education
People of determination
Well-being
Entrepreneurship
Philanthropy
National identity

As a large corporation based in the UAE, we take pride in the positive impact we have created and our contribution to both economic and societal value. Community is a core part of the human experience and enriching those experiences is vital to our collective well-being. Enriching hearts and minds in communities does not happen overnight. It takes years of dedication and passion to create the positive building blocks for members of society from all walks of life. AWR Group is fully committed to this long-term journey and will devote the necessary resources and staff engagement to deliver tangible impact.



Taking action

Our people have dedicated their time to many community initiatives over the last decade. These have included inviting children from Beit Al Khair Society for Iftar, team visits to the Seniors' Happiness Centre, and helping raise donations for those affected by crises worldwide – incidents ranging from earthquakes to floods.

The team at AWR Group have also distributed thousands of Iftar boxes to drivers and passers-by who would not have reached home in time to break their fast. Other activities included raising awareness of breast cancer prevention, celebrating International Women's Day, team trips to Wadi Shawki in Ras Al Khaimah, and completing free safety check-ups for Dubai Police's fleet vehicles. These activities demonstrate the broad scope of support we offer to our communities. Whether our support is linked to education, inspiration, emotional support, safety, or other factors, the primary goal is always the same: enriching lives.

Inspirational smiles

Groups of employees had the privilege of spending time with children at the Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital in Dubai in 2023, giving them gifts to celebrate Eid. In the spirit of inclusivity and diversity, there was an equal split of men and women, different nationalities, and volunteers from all levels of seniority within the AWR Group. Each of our staff, regardless of seniority, have shown keenness to engage with these extraordinary children and their families.

Healthy body, healthy mind!

The link between body and mind is undeniable and we want our employees to be happy and healthy. In 2023, we offered eight types of Health and Wellness Activities to help our team get their blood – and their minds – moving!

- Layaka padel
- Yoga sessions
- Layaka cricket
- Layaka football
- Office workouts
- Dubai fitness challenges
- Breast cancer awareness
- Nutrition talk for exercise and performance



Employee insights: every action counts



Racha Khalil

Senior Manager – Family office,
AWR Family Affairs Office

Through consistent involvement in community service, I have witnessed the tangible impact small and collective efforts can have. This has reinforced my belief that individual contributions, no matter how modest, create a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of others. Serving the community is a deeply emotional commitment for me, as it allows me to forge genuine connections with those facing challenges. So far, I have participated in many events ranging from gifting Iftar boxes to the community, to visiting Seniors' Happiness Centre, to spending time with incredible youngsters at the Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital. Every activity has been a pleasure.



Mohamad Ied

Manager – Corporate Excellence,
Corporate Services

Being part of an organisation that prioritises social impact is truly uplifting. It has been an immense privilege to be involved since 2018 and it is incredibly rewarding to witness our impact firsthand. From planting Ghaf tree seeds with the Dubai Autism Centre to distributing Ramadan Iftar boxes, plus many others, leaves me feeling so inspired to create positive change within our community. I am deeply grateful to AWR Group for fostering these impactful opportunities. I am committed to continuing this incredible journey of contributing to society and driving positive change.



Hind Fayyad

Senior Manager – Compliance,
Group Internal Audit

I value our company's CSR initiatives for their meaningful contributions to the community. Engaging in events like Children's Iftar at the Al Majlis Dubai World Trade Centre and participating in campaigns like the Donations Drive for the Turkey and Syria Earthquake highlight our devotion to social responsibility. Engaging in these activities supports important causes, as well as fostering a sense of purpose and community amongst our people.

Pillar 2 — Environment

Propelling our sustainability

An abstract graphic showing a thick, translucent, light-colored liquid flowing in a circular, wave-like pattern across the middle of the page. The liquid has a glossy, reflective surface with highlights and shadows, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. It curves from the bottom left, goes up and around the right side, and then curves back down towards the bottom left.

Carbon footprint
Environmental stewardship
Climate change mitigation
Care for biodiversity



We believe that urgent action is needed to protect the environment and we are committed to playing our part. Climate and weather-related disasters worldwide have surged five-fold over 50 years, causing more than two million deaths and \$4.3 trillion in economic losses.¹ The Middle East is particularly at risk of water shortages, extreme heat, and loss of land from rising sea levels.

At COP28, held in Dubai in December 2023, the imperative for all stakeholders to tackle rising temperatures and biodiversity loss was highlighted. As a Group, we have dedicated years to minimising our environmental impact through various successful initiatives, including reducing single-use plastic, implementing e-waste greening measures, engaging in solar projects, and more.

Furthermore, we unveiled a pioneering report aimed at examining the role of family-owned companies in fostering a more sustainable future. Among its findings, the report emphasises that family businesses consider sustainability integral to long-term value creation and potentially influential in combating the climate crisis.



1/2 million

Single-use plastic bottles saved

3,000+

Recyclable water bottles given to employees

Drop it!

Plastic is a major environment crisis worldwide. Of the seven billion tons of plastic waste generated globally so far, less than 10% has been recycled.² We launched the Drop It campaign in 2023 to play our part in addressing this crisis – and the results were astounding. Our plans to raise awareness involved a digital communications campaign across our companies, encompassing customised screensavers, and information in our monthly newsletter. Employees' immediate appetite to support Drop It was a meaningful reflection of our collective desire for a 'new normal' – a healthier, cleaner planet.

More than half a million single-use plastic bottles were saved due to our Drop It campaign in 2023 alone, which also saved the company AED400,000. Plus, more than 3,000 recyclable water bottles were given to staff, each personalised with their name. In a unique move, the company placed one supersized fishnet at our headquarters where employees could dispose of their plastic bottles – a powerful gesture of support to protect the environment.

1,000

Electrical items were recycled by AWR Group in 2023.

2

Large servers that we used before migrating our data to the cloud were moved and recycled by specialist teams in 2023.

107x

The weight of e-waste worldwide every year is equivalent to more than one hundred empty Burj Khalifa's,⁴ the world's tallest building. This clearly illustrates the scale of the global challenge.

Tackling our e-waste

E-waste is the fastest growing solid waste stream in the world, with 53.6 million tons produced every year.³ We are determined to play our part to help address this global challenge. Recycling e-waste bolsters mineral and material efficiency and helps us comply with regulations, highlighting our environmental stewardship and our support of the UAE's push for a greener future.



2.85_{GWh}

Clean energy generated annually

2,000+

Metric tons of CO² emissions
to be offset each year

33%

Reduction in carbon emissions was
achieved across 10 AWR Group properties
through the strategic partnership with
Siemens in 2023.

Catching the sun

We embarked on a solar energy initiative in partnership with SirajPower. The landmark moment in our environmental journey will see the establishment of solar solution span sites along Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai Industrial City (DIC), and Deira, covering showrooms and service centres. Overall, it generates 2.85GWh of clean energy annually.

This solar initiative underscores our dedication to environmental sustainability and aligns seamlessly with the UAE's strategic vision for environmental progress as it strives for Net Zero by 2050 – the first nation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to set such a goal. The project is expected to offset over 2,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions each year, reducing the company's carbon footprint. For context, 10,000 trees would need to be planted and grow to achieve this same offset volume.⁵

Another example of our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions is AWR Properties' partnership with Siemens to pursue green initiatives. Through this collaboration, AWR Properties achieved a significant milestone in energy efficiency and emissions reduction, recording a 15% decrease in Annual Energy Consumption across 10 properties.





“Doing what we can to protect the environment is not a ‘nice to have.’ It directly impacts our communities and our employees and is a core part of how we operate as a business every single day. It is becoming second nature in how we all think as a team, no matter our seniority, job, age, gender, or nationality. We are all united on giving back to the environment where we can because we believe that every step counts. The healthier the planet, the healthier we are.”

Yousef Abu Alaish

Director — Aftersales, AWR Automotive



A creative take on environment

Our automotive business is a powerhouse in auto distribution and service in the UAE. With 50 years in the business, it represents one of the leading automotive dealers in the GCC and this commitment for pushing new boundaries extends to environmental protection. Our automotive business has focused on reshaping its daily operations – from water use, to recycling, to paintwork, and more – to dramatically reduce its environmental impact wherever possible. The results for the last five years are astounding.

13

Million litres of water is recycled through our recycling system across our locations every year – equivalent to 5.2 full Olympic sized swimming pools.

8,500+

Batteries were recycled in 2023 alone with the support of recycling company Dubatt. This is equivalent to recycling a battery nearly every single hour of the year.

1st

The purchase of our first electric forklift in 2011 was long before the majority of companies in the Middle East were considering electric vehicles.

54%

Cut in the amount of paint thinner use after the decision to buy waterborne basecoats only last year – a remarkably quick improvement.

1st

The launch of our first EV Club Car Carrier in 2018 was followed by our first EV Bike Carrier in 2022.

100%

Water recycling system in our workshops with an Auto carwash in Dubai Internet City (DIC). Five other workshops have a water recycling system for car washes that recycles 75% of the water.

650,000+

Paper car floor mats are recycled every year, and we use recycled materials in our workshop.



2011

Raising Awareness

We started the process in 2011 by raising awareness about the cloud across the business.



2018– 2019

Hello cloud

The move to the cloud begins in earnest.



2022

Mission complete

Nine year journey comes to an end with migration completed.

Our green approach to tech

Technology has vast potential to dramatically help reduce CO2 emissions. The launch of our Green IT initiative in 2016 was considered ahead of its time, with our team of 60-plus professionals dedicated to evolving this crucial service. Smartly leveraging technologies, including digital tools, can significantly improve time management, cost management, and very importantly, it can boost energy and waste efficiency.

If scaled across industries, digital technologies can deliver up to 20% of the 2050 reduction needed to hit the International Energy Agency's (IEA) Net Zero trajectories in the energy, materials, and mobility industries.⁶ We have focused on rolling out impactful initiatives that will move the needle of progress across the Group, benefitting our customers, colleagues, and communities.

Hello cloud

We moved all our digital processes to the cloud in 2022. This nine-year journey has certainly paid off environmentally, significantly reducing paper use and improving energy efficiency. We started the process in 2011 by raising awareness across the business and understanding the key benefits. In 2018–2019, the move to the cloud began in earnest and it was completed in 2022.



1million+

Pieces of paper saved annually

Goodbye paper

Improving workflow systems by migrating to the cloud encouraged new and sustainable processes and behaviours, such as going paperless. We started this initiative by removing paper from internal processes then gradually reduced paper use from customer-facing activities. Today, we save more than 1 million pieces of paper from being printed every year.

Knowledge is vital

The IT team is part of the Oracle Middle East Group, sharing the Group's experiences with the rest of the tech community and vice versa. This valuable two-way exchange means all stakeholders can learn from each other and originate innovative solutions. We believe in the power of cross-industry learning, especially with peers on a similar journey toward sustainable practices. The importance of knowledge building and sharing is also practiced by the IT team at many events and conferences throughout the year.



“At AWR Group, we view the transition to a circular economy as a fundamental pillar of our future success. By moving beyond a linear ‘take-make-dispose’ model, we are creating opportunities for resource optimisation, waste reduction, and the development of innovative solutions. This not only strengthens our bottom line and enhances our operational efficiency but also fosters a more sustainable future for our communities and the environment we all share.”

Mahesh Rohra

Chief Strategy &
Business Development Officer
AWR Group

150

Trees planted at our Community
Tree Planting experience

Get planting!

‘Doing and learning’ was the core focus of our Community Tree Planting experience. The team had a stimulating day planting 150 trees and enjoying a teaching session on the plants’ ecological value.



Pillar 3 — Workplace

Supporting future champions

Work-life balance
Well-being in the workplace
Volunteerism

Our passion for building future champions is reflected in our history. Our founder, Abdul Wahid Al Rostamani, started a small Dubai bookstore in 1954. His entrepreneurship, passion and vision enabled this single bookshop to morph into AWR Group — one of the most progressive and innovative conglomerates in the Middle East. This inspirational story is woven into the fabric of AWR Group's messaging to others who are keen to learn and thrive.

We live in the most dynamic period of modern human history, but with that comes a non-negotiable need to keep pace with new skills and flexible mindsets. This is even more pertinent in the UAE, one of the most dynamic and vibrant nations globally. However, this cannot come at the sacrifice of employee well-being, work-life balance, and having time to help others. Happy, fulfilled, and committed employees are more productive employees. Integrity, Commitment, and Innovation form the foundation of our ethos and culture.



Focus on education

Continuous learning is integral to our collective journey, transcending age, educational backgrounds, and departments. As a cornerstone of our CSR initiatives, substantial resources, encompassing time, energy, and financial investment, have been dedicated to fostering an environment where our teams are constantly learning and focused on professional growth.

From 2017 to 2023, we achieved...

35,000 Training hours

5,834 Working days

3,602 Delegates

222 Courses

17 Business school courses and certifications

Emirati talent shines through

Launched in 2017, Wa'ed meaning 'promise' in Arabic, is our pledge to Emiratisation and our commitment to nurturing UAE National talent. The programme aligns with the UAE's national agenda, including Vision 2030, by strengthening the participation of Emiratis in the private sector and building a sustainable pipeline of future leaders.

Through Wa'ed, we aim to identify, develop, and retain top Emirati talent by offering structured learning, real-world experience and clear pathways for career progression. Our one-year graduate programme includes orientation, department rotations, and on-the-job training across various disciplines such as engineering, marketing, and finance. Graduates complete the programme with new roles, revised titles, and enhanced responsibilities, prepared to thrive within the organisation.

To support their continued development, we offer a range of ongoing learning opportunities. In 2024 alone, over 25 online and in-person training sessions were delivered to upskill our Emirati employees and prepare them for future leadership.

We collaborate closely with these budding champions to ensure they gain maximum benefit from their experience with us, which is why many choose to stay and build their careers with AWR Group. Our commitment to these 'minds of tomorrow' is reflected in our high retention rate: more than half of our Emirati graduates have taken permanent roles within the Group. Some of our earliest participants now hold leadership positions. We also recognise excellence through the annual Wa'ed Award, celebrating top-performing Emirati employees who demonstrate exceptional contribution and growth.



1,500+

Training sessions held since 2021

83k

Training hours recorded 2021 – 2023

500

Training programmes rolled out

Investing in the power of education

A determined approach to employees' knowledge and opportunities through education is clear across our automotive business. Nearly 83,000 training hours were recorded between 2021–2023 – equivalent to 9.4 years' worth of training. More than 1,500 training sessions have been held since 2021, with 500 training programmes rolled out, and the team's excellent standards mean they have won 26 external competitions over the last three years.

The focus on learning is shared with interns, with many participating in our programmes since 2020. Each completed a two-month course with approximately eleven areas of study. These included Planning, Marketing, Mechanical Operations, Bodyshop Operations, Parts Operations, Procurement, Customer Experience, Technical and Warranty Operations, and Standards and Processes. That nearly a quarter of interns became full-time employees on completion speaks volumes to the quality of the course and training.

Employee development

Our AWR WAYAK sessions are closed-door meetings with employees to understand how we can improve the business. All employees meet with their director or General Manager to share their views, with 262 actions based on feedback drafted so far. Of these actions, 77% have been completed, highlighting the Group's proactive approach to improving well-being and productivity across the board.

Supporting employees' well-being and their ability to reflect and refresh their minds has been helped by the launch of three Employee Lounges. A staff gym was also recently renovated, and the shift pattern was reduced from six working days to 5.5 days.

262

Actions based on feedback implemented

Diversity and equal opportunity

We actively encourage women to pursue various job roles aligned with their passion and expertise. We were delighted to welcome Aisha Syeda as our first female technician at AWR Mobility and Floredeliza Sangabol Valdez won our award for Best Aftersales Service Manager in 2022, having joined us as a Data Entry Operator in 2009. We also recently welcomed a female intern into our Aftersales division, providing her with extensive training and industry experience.

Inclusivity is a key focus of the AWR Group. Steps have been taken to offer women a clearly defined pathway and access to join the team. Facilitating such career growth includes comprehensive training for women, encompassing both role-specific technical and non-technical skills, and supporting work-life balance through tailored working hours.



Pillar 4 — Stakeholders

The art of collaboration



Green supplier policies
Anti-corruption
Stakeholder engagement
Stakeholder satisfaction

Prompt implementation of our CSR initiatives has been paramount to our mission. Collaborating with like-minded companies that align with our core values is a pivotal strategy. We are pleased to have committed partners spanning the spectrum of our CSR initiatives. Each partner contributes a unique service, facilitating the swift enrichment of lives.





We express our appreciation to Goumbook and Companies for Good for their continued support in licensing and orchestrating our CSR initiatives, averaging approximately two activities per month. No More Bottles and Liquid of Life have been instrumental in the installation of water dispensers across our premises to replace the use of plastic bottles. Eradicating plastic bottles has been a major achievement for the whole group and both companies' support has certainly enabled us to progress quickly (see "Drop it", page 17).

Ecotec's expertise in e-waste reduction and recycling has been invaluable in navigating this relatively new area. Their support has expedited our progress in achieving sustainable disposal practices. (see "Tackling our e-waste", page 18). Additionally, our collaboration with SirajPower to install solar panels across four AWR Group locations – our first venture into solar energy – also strengthens our progress in greener energy (see "Catching the sun", page 19).

Emirates Red Crescent has supported us with several social events and activities in our CSR journey. From liaising with labour camps to volunteering during crises, distributing meals for Iftar, visiting hospitals, and beyond, their support has played a vital role in our community engagement initiatives.

Our journey Where we are today



Building on a strong track record in community activities, the Group expanded the scope of its responsible business commitment by launching a new pledge, aligned with purpose, and an environmental, social, governance (ESG) framework.

Purpose and positive impact are embedded in our culture. The **Purposeful Business Pledge** concretely links our purpose with seven concrete pledges on our commitment to being a responsible business:

Pledge 1

We must be financially sustainable by responsibly driving growth, innovation, and profits and deliver value to our staff, customers, other stakeholders, and society at large.

Pledge 2

We will responsibly manage the full spectrum of existing and emerging ESG risks across our operations and maintain the highest governance standards.

Pledge 3

We recognise that climate change is a major global challenge and will play our part in responsibly managing and mitigating our carbon footprint.

Pledge 4

We are committed to diversity and inclusion and to foster a work culture where staff are motivated to give their best and are treated equitably, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, language, and disability.

Pledge 5

We place the highest priority on health and safety and in building a workplace which is safe and secure for our employees.

Pledge 6

We will always adhere to the highest ethical standards and do the right thing in how we do business, treat our people, customers, and suppliers fairly, and in protecting human rights.

Pledge 7

We will be responsible in fulfilling our business and societal obligations by working with governments and by supporting the communities we operate in.

AWR Group has been implementing CSR initiatives that highlight the Group's commitment to enriching lives. This drive has been the beating heart of what makes AWR Group the company it is today.

ESG Framework

A relevant and purposeful framework

To ensure a seamless integration across AWR Group, the ethos and goals of our future CSR framework pillars will align with the pillars of our ESG framework. This will help build a new chapter in AWR Group's ESG commitments to our communities, employees, and stakeholders — enriching as many communities as possible, and the environment.

Our ESG proposition is built on four pillars with a well-defined ESG proposition, objective, and metrics:



We are agents of positive change for the economies we serve. This reaffirms our organisational purpose, one that sets us apart, when it comes to sustainability and community building.

“AWR Group’s journey, enriched by years of dedicated CSR engagement with our valued colleagues, communities, and partners, now evolves with the integration of our comprehensive ESG framework. This represents a powerful commitment to creating enduring positive change for people and planet. We are more invested than ever in making a meaningful difference, wherever our influence extends.”

Sara O’Hara

Chief Marketing &
Communications Officer
AWR Group



Content resources

- 1 Investopedia
- 2 United Nations (UN)
- 3 World Health Organization (WHO)
- 4 Burj Khalifa Official Website
- 5 Climate Neutral Group
- 6 Accenture and World Economic Forum (WEF)



If you have any questions regarding the
AWR Legacy CSR Report, please email:
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