AFSD 2022 Special Event: The ESCWA Digital Arabic Content Award (Wed 16 March 2022)

Summary

The special event on ESCWA Digital Arabic Content (DAC) Award was held as part of AFSD2022 thematic discussions on multi-stakeholder efforts in driving digital transformation for sustainable recovery, and it featured the announcement of eight winner products in two categories - Institutions and Young Entrepreneurs. Aimed at recognizing efforts to develop DAC for sustainable development, the Award was launched during AFSD2021 and was implemented in partnership with the World Summit Awards (WSA).

The event included a briefing on the process of the Award in its first cycle, a commemoration of the Late Gabriel Deek who contributed to both the Steering Committee and Jury, interventions by representatives of the Steering Committee and the Jurors, and a ceremony for the announcement of winner products. The selection was based on evaluation criteria and from around 100 submitted products from 15 Arab countries. The winner products in each category are as follows:

- **Institutions category:** Easy Laws and KamKalima from Lebanon; Mahara-Tech and Jeel App from Egypt; and Madrasa e-learning Platform from the United Arab Emirates.

- **Young Entrepreneurs category:** Alkhattat Platform from Saudi Arabia; Soundeals from the UAE; and Basma-Smart Education System (formerly Follow-Up Student App) from Kuwait.

Report

The special event on ESCWA Digital Arabic Content (DAC) Award was held during the 2020 Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD2022), as part of the thematic discussions on multi-stakeholder efforts in driving digital transformation for sustainable recovery, and it featured the announcement of eight winner products in two categories - Institutions and Young Entrepreneurs. The Award aimed at recognizing efforts to develop DAC for sustainable development, the Award was launched during AFSD2021 and was implemented in partnership with the World Summit Awards (WSA).

The event commenced by a briefing and a video on the ESCWA DAC Award and its process of implementation in the first cycle 2021-2022, and a commemoration of the Late Gabriel Deek who contributed to both the Steering Committee and Jury evaluation and selection of the 2022 winner products.

Before delivering the ESCWA DAC Award trophies to winners, the ESCWA Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr Mounir Tabet, gave a brief statement in which he pointed to the existing generation gap in digital skills and the crucial role of young digital entrepreneurs in developing the digital Arabic content in the Arab region, towards mobilizing talents for the future of development in the region while to working on the roots. This was followed by the announcement of winners by the Award Manager, Ms Nibal Idlebi, as follows:

- **Institutions category:** Easy Laws and KamKalima from Lebanon; Mahara-Tech and Jeel App from Egypt; and Madrasa e-learning Platform from the United Arab Emirates.

- **Young Entrepreneurs category:** Alkhattat Platform from Saudi Arabia; Soundeals from the United Arab Emirates; and Basma-Smart Education System (formerly Follow-Up Student App) from Kuwait.

Following the delivery of trophies, Ms Nibal Idlebi briefed on the winner products with a video run on each and pointed that most winner products were in the education sector. A briefing on each of the 8 winner products is provided below:

Easy Laws: Explains the Lebanese laws, legislation, rules, and regulations, using a simple language and a comprehensive question and answer format

KamKalima: Supports education systems and schools teaching Arabic, providing innovative and student-centered solutions that are aligned with local curricula and international standards.

Mahara-Tech: Offers rich online learning content, career awareness talks and freelancing opportunities to link between talents and market demand, within a community of experts in different specializations.

Jeel App: Offers educational and entertaining mobile content for 3- to 9-year-old children and their parents.

Madrasa e-learning Platform: Provides free educational content in Arabic on various subjects, including mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and science, in addition to Arabic language.

Alkhattat Platform: Online learning of Arabic calligraphy and arts, covering different types of calligraphy for different uses and levels of learning.

Soundeals: Produces high quality DAC and voice over services for businesses in the region, providing recordings and content services in Arabic and other languages with various dialects and accents.

Basma-Smart Education System (formerly Follow-Up Student App) (Links on Google play or Apple store) Enables school administrations to monitor the learners' statuses and performance and support teachers' work in classrooms.

In addition, two interventions were made by representatives of the Jury members in the two Award categories. Ms Hoda Baraka highlighted the importance of knowledge, digital technologies and investments in DAC for sustainable development; and pointed to a number of challenges facing the DAC and potential new digital solutions that support its development. She also commended on the ESCWA DAC Award, its application process, and the linkage with WSIS action lines and SDGs, and encouraged all to participate in both of its categories. As for the representative of jurors in the Young Entrepreneur category, Mr. Ramy Souliman, who commended on the Award in its first cycle and invited all entrepreneurs to focus on the DAC as it is the best means to allow their start-ups reach out to customers and the community and build their trust in their services.

Finally, a statement by Mr Peter Bruck, Chairman of World Summit Awards, was delivered in which briefed on their work with the United Nations towards achieving the SDGs and the partnership with ESCWA on the Award that brings with it opportunities to young entrepreneurs to connect with peers in the international community of the WSA through its global congress.

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