

Helping drive transformational change

Unilever's sustainability initiatives for its regional operations positively impact the world due to the brand's global influence and reach



As a multinational packaged goods company, Unilever is not just in the business of getting its expansive brand portfolio to meet the home care, ice-cream, nutrition, beauty and personal care needs of its consumers and get them to feel good, look good and get more out of life. It is equally committed to making the world look and feel good as well, enabling a more sustainable ecosystem for future generations to enjoy and celebrate.

LEADERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Unilever's global mandate on keeping its supply chains sustainable sees regional impact in the GCC and MENA in line with its commitment to achieving Net Zero across its value chain by 2039. Despite a substantial

growth in its manufacturing production volumes in the GCC, Unilever has since 2008 reduced the environmental impact of its operations across several levels, with their factories achieving a 90 per cent kg/ton reduction in CO2 emissions. Unilever was also the first in the UAE to have 100 per cent of renewable electricity through International Renewable Energy Certificates achieved in partnership with DEWA.

Unilever factories in Jeddah and Dubai have also reduced their energy consumption by 43 per cent (vs 2008) and 34 per cent (vs 2016) per ton of production through absolute energy efficiency improvements. Unilever's Dubai Personal Care factory (DPC) produces 20 per cent of its onsite energy between solar PV and solar thermal plants. At the time of set-up in 2016, DPC was the largest private sector solar PV plant in MENA. The manufacturing facility was also the first in the UAE and first FMCG factory in MENA to be recognised by the World Economic Forum as an Advanced 4th Industrial Lighthouse. It



● The Unilever Dubai Personal Care factory produces 20 per cent of its energy between solar PV and solar thermal plants

also received Leeds Gold Certification in 2016 and the Dubai Green Industrial award for 2019.

Pioneering unique regional waste management efforts, Unilever was among the first regional companies to send zero waste to landfill as early as 2014 and its DPC factory has reduced its waste generation by 14 per cent. With an eye on water conservation, DPC has also reduced its water use by 28 per cent (last 5 years) with 100 per cent of the water effluent from the factory treated, recycled and used in cooling towers and irrigation facilities.

Not one to rest on its laurels,

Unilever looks to set the bar on future achievements and push forward the sustainability story.

SETTING TARGETS

Unilever's ambition to reduce logistics carbon emissions has seen the brand launch several pioneering initiatives. In March this year, for instance Unilever launched the UAE's first electric city van. The small city van delivers goods to its customers (around 170+T), driving up to 300 kilometres on a full charge, allowing the reduction of around 250kgs of carbon dioxide equivalent or CO2e, per day, per truck. Later, in June it launched the first 25-ton payload electric heavy-duty truck in the UAE and MENA. Unilever has also introduced the use of alternate fuels into its logistics, such as the use of used cooking oil from UAE restaurants and hotels, given that 90 per cent of this oil is not utilised locally and is instead exported. This used oil is processed for use in trucks and helps reduce carbon footprint. Unilever has also initiated the use of biodiesel this year in two of its shuttling trucks, reducing primary transportation carbon emissions by 10-15 per cent.

Regionally, Unilever's sustainability footprint has been strong. In Saudi Arabia the company consolidated its warehouses from eight into one large warehouse with Maersk, resulting in route optimisation, reduction in the number of trucks and trips, accordingly reducing carbon emissions. In Egypt too it followed a similar transformation in network design while additionally implementing backhauling with suppliers, eliminating waste by

improving load fill across the chain. In Morocco the route-to-market transformation has allowed Unilever to move into 1 drop point against an earlier 50 with its Marjane customers. Unilever's control tower revamp in Arabia and Maghreb as well as its launch in Egypt turned around the results of its core logistic KPIs by maximising utilisation, improving route planning, reducing the number of trucks needed and accordingly reducing emissions.

ALTERNATE TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Unilever is also trialing new modes of transportation including the first multimodal cross-border product offering between the UAE and KSA, with potential expansion to other GCC regions.

For instance, Etihad rail trial shipments recently commenced between the UAE and KSA, with Unilever being one of the first companies to participate. Along with reducing lead times, the initiative is also expected to improve service and reduce carbon emissions by up to 80 per cent vs truck delivery options. Unilever also globally outsourced all import and export operations to virtual ocean control tower (Maersk), optimising operations E2E such as improving container utilisation, using alternate fuels as well as less carbon emitting vessels while improving lead times, reducing waste and carbon emissions by ~70 tons.

Besides its vision and ambition to contribute positively towards climate action, Unilever credits a large number of its above achievements to the power of collaborative regional partnerships. ■



● Unilever factories in the region achieved 11 per cent kg/ton reduction in CO2 emissions