

Local

Zain in 2021: Empowering youth, innovation and entrepreneurship

Social programs and national efforts to empower post-COVID life



KUWAIT: Bader Al-Kharafi and Asimah Governor Sheikh Talal Al-Khalid inaugurate the Capital renovation project.



Eaman Al-Roudhan with Zain executives during Zain Great Idea 6 conclusion.



Zain was keen on advocating vaccination efforts.



Zain is a main supporter of frontliners during the pandemic.



Zain building in blue to support the UN climate change campaign.

KUWAIT: The year 2021 was a turning point in the COVID-19 pandemic, as Kuwait took hopeful yet careful steps towards the gradual return to normal life after months of strict health measures, lockdowns, and enormous efforts from frontliners to curb the spread of the virus. Zain, being one of the Kuwaiti private sector's biggest players, was at the forefront of national institutions that contributed to empower this careful return by supporting many community programs, enriching innovation in entrepreneurship, and empowering the ambitions of the nation's youth for a post-COVID world.

Throughout the year, Zain has launched and supported an array of programs that centered around its comprehensive corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategy. The company's contributions covered some of the most vital sectors within the community, including health, environment, education, youth, entrepreneurship, sports, and more. In the following report, Zain showcases its most notable community projects and programs during 2021:

Advocating environmental awareness

During 2021, Zain took part in the official inauguration of the greening and renovation project of one of the Capital's main entrances (islet between Abdullah Al-Salem and Al-Shamiya areas). The event witnessed the attendance of Al-Asimah Governor Sheikh Talal Khalid Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi.

Zain, the national operator in Kuwait, was selected to renovate and maintain this main entrance to the Capital, a step that reflected the role of private sector companies in achieving social sustainability projects in partnership with the public sector.

The project was the fruitful result of a joint collaboration between the public and private sectors and will contribute to renovating the capital's entrance as a first step into beautifying all of the district's areas. Zain will build a unique monument in the location, and the company has invited Kuwait's creative youth to propose their designs and ideas. The company will select the most unique design that reflects Kuwait's rich heritage and history and cover the costs of building the monument in the location.

During October 2021, Zain Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan took part in the Global Digital Power Summit 2021, organized by Huawei on the sidelines of GITEX in Dubai. The event aimed at enabling organizations to seize the opportunities inherent in renewable energy by relying on digital technologies to achieve sustainability goals.

Zain participated in the global efforts that tackle digital energy business, as hopes are pinned on advancing the digital transformation in the energy sector to eliminate carbon emissions. The company looks forward to the success of such efforts that seek to integrate digital and electrical technologies to generate safe energy, which is accelerating greater after the pandemic. Tech sectors are currently looking to rely on safe energy, especially with the stage of economic recovery as a contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, Zain launched #ActivateYourRole, an online awareness campaign on its official social media platforms that aimed at raising public awareness towards climate change, sustainability, and preserving natural resources. The company used its social media platforms to spread facts that many people might not have known before, which showed the shocking impacts of climate change on our health and the environment.

The campaign came as part of Zain's corporate

Zain's key contributions in 2021

- Zain was selected to renovate Capital main entrance, achieving sustainable development in partnership with public sector.
- Company vaccinated staff and their families, supported frontliners, and encouraged vaccine efforts.
- Environmental efforts to preserve natural resources and reduce carbon emissions.
- Zain supported Kuwaiti athletes, partnered with Kuwait Olympic Committee to develop gaming and esports ecosystem.

sustainability and social responsibility strategy towards the environment, through which the company commits to building climate change scenarios that are aligned with the Paris Agreement (2015) to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate physical and environmental risks.

Zain also supported the United Nations campaign, "Youth for Climate Action", that aimed at raising public awareness towards the environment and preserving natural resources, on the occasion of United Nations International Day, which coincides with the 24th of October of every year, as part of Zain's strategic partnership with the UN.

The company celebrated the United Nations International Day by lighting up its main headquarters building at Shuwaikh in blue along with the country's many institutions from both the public and private sectors.

Empowering innovation and entrepreneurship

In 2021, Zain premiered the region's first Startup Innovation Digital Video Report, concluding the sixth edition of its renowned digital startups accelerator program: Zain Great Idea (ZGI) in collaboration with Brilliant Lab.

The event gathered Zain's executive management and the region's investment community along with 25 startups who made it to the final phase of Zain

Great Idea 6. The Digital Video Report was screened at VOX cinemas in the Avenues mall, and saw the finalists, who represented seven Arab countries, pitch their startups to investors and potential business partners from across MENA.

During 2021, Zain celebrated over 10 years of Zain Great Idea, which has been one of the most successful initiatives the company presented in the Kuwaiti market as part of its innovation and entrepreneurship strategy.

Throughout a decade, ZGI has empowered, trained, and invested in over 1,500 passionate Kuwaiti and Arab youth, and the program contributed to creating numerous job opportunities in the regional tech-startups arena by accelerating over 100 businesses.

Digital transformation was the prevailing success story for the vast majority of ZGI's alumni throughout the program's history. At its core, ZGI is a tech-startup accelerator program, and the huge demand for this area of entrepreneurship across Kuwait and the region only proved that Zain's vision of achieving digital leadership was on the right track.

Supporting safe education and encouraging vaccination

Zain partnered with the National Safe Education Campaign (Safe Education) in joint col-

laboration with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Information. The campaign aimed at raising public awareness of the necessary health and traffic safety measures on the occasion of the new academic year, which started last year with physical attendance in classes.

The company was also present at Jaber Causeway Vaccination Center in collaboration with the Ministry of Health throughout a period of three days. The initiative aimed at easing the hot weather conditions on medical and administrative frontliners at the center, as well as encouraging the public to support the nation's efforts into achieving social immunity during the pandemic.

In addition, Zain organized two COVID-19 vaccination campaigns for its staff at its main headquarters in Shuwaikh in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The company vaccinated its employees and their families with the aim of supporting the efforts exerted by the authorities in immunizing the community during the pandemic.

Zain has also launched an awareness campaign on its social media platforms through which the company encouraged the public to vaccinate and achieve the nation's goals in reaching social immunity. In addition, Zain distributed "VACCINATED" stickers at Kuwait Vaccination Center in Mishref, Jaber Causeway Vaccination Center, as well as on Snap, Instagram, and WhatsApp to promote positivity about vaccination.

Supporting sports and powering esports

During the year 2021, Zain partnered with the Spain-based Rafa Nadal Academy at Sheikh Jaber Al Abdullah Al Jaber International Tennis Complex in collaboration with Tamdeen Sports. The academy is considered the first of its kind in the Middle East, and only the second branch of the most famous tennis center in the world: Rafa Nadal Academy - Majorca, Spain.

The company also continued to support Kuwait's National Jet Ski team for the tenth year. The team received 10 medals (8 Gold medals, 2 Silver medals) as part of their participation in the second round of the World Jet Ski Championship 2021 held in the United States. Zain welcomed the champions at Kuwait International Airport upon their triumphant return to Kuwait. Zain proudly continued to sponsor Kuwaiti champion and Jet Ski world No. 1 Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq, who the company sponsored throughout his professional career for the past 13 years. During this time, Al-Abdulrazzaq has achieved a long list of accolades and international success, where the Kuwaiti champion faced the world's top pro racers from around the world and raised Kuwait's flag high.

The company also sponsored Street Football League (SFL), the country's biggest street football competition. SFL aims at creating a community for street football enthusiasts and encouraging them to showcase their skills and talents within a professional setting, as well as supplying talents to professional clubs, offering a pro setting for enthusiasts, as well as spreading positive values through awareness campaigns.

During 2021, Zain Esports, Zain Group's esports brand, partnered with the Kuwait Olympic Committee to manage a four-weekend esports event. The partnership and competition were the first-of-their-kind to be held in Kuwait and took place at the Olympic Committee's headquarters, with the ultimate goal of unlocking the potential of local talent and create the Kuwait esports team that will participate in future Olympic Games and other competitions across the globe.



Zain supported Kuwaiti athletes in regional and international arenas.



Zain's headquarters building.