

MEDIA INFORMATION
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VFS Global sets new benchmarks in its sustainability reporting

VFS Global the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions shared new milestones in its sustainability journey.

The new findings were published in the fourth edition of the organisation's Integrated Sustainability Report 2022, released on 3 July 2023. The report indicates consistent improvement in the organisation's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance in 2022. The report has been prepared following the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards and Sustainability Accountability Standards Board's (SASB).

"The report documents measurable improvements in our sustainability journey in 2022, as well our continued commitment towards achieving higher targets this year. Based on the five fundamental pillars of our Sustainability strategy – Contributing to Sustainable Economic Growth, Delivering Good Governance, Nurturing our Colleagues, Protecting our Environment, and Supporting our Communities, the report reiterates strong alignment to our business strategy and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals," said Shireen Mistree, Head – ESG, VFS Global.

IR 2022 highlights

Protecting our environment

- More than 200,000 trees have been planted across the globe, as part of our contributions to reforestation and nature regeneration initiatives providing 10,000 tCO_{2e} in VCS carbon credits. This has also resulted in addressing social issues like poverty alleviation while contributing to women's empowerment. Over 70% of the planting staff are women who now have a steady source of income to provide for the everyday needs of their families.
- Marked a reduction in carbon emissions of 40 percent in 2022, compared to the base year of 2019, due to the greater usage of renewable energy, energy efficiency initiatives as well as the use of carbon credits.
- Certified eco-friendly paper was used for more than 90% of our marketing material.
- Continued our commitment to responsible e-waste disposal in accordance with local regulations resulted in 10,035 kg of waste being treated, in India alone.
- Target for 2023 is to reduce our carbon footprint intensity by 10%.

Nurturing our colleagues

- Maintained a strong gender balance with a ratio of 57:43 for women to men in 2022. Women hold 27% of our leadership positions. The goal is to exceed 30% representation of women in leadership in the next 3 years.
- Introduced the inclusive language guide with inclusive terminologies and Dos and Don'ts as a tool to develop sensitivities and enable mindful behaviour among colleagues.
- Globally, more than 129 nationalities work with VFS Global, bringing the benefit of a wide variety of world views.

Supporting our communities

- Undertook over 80 community initiatives touching the lives of more than 59,000 individuals across 35 countries in partnership with more than 40 charitable, social and community organisations.
- Set social priorities of caring with empathy, promoting education, and preserving the environment guide investment in community programmes throughout the global network.

Sustainable Economic Growth

- Visa Application Centres around the world create local jobs, and as of end of 2022, VFS Global employed 8,883 colleagues worldwide.
- Digitise the end-to-end Visa application processing including Digitisation of Visa Application, which leads to reducing our carbon footprint
- In 2022, local suppliers accounted for 86% of total procurement spend for engagement exceeding CHF 20,000.

Delivering Good Governance

- Updated employee and supplier code of conduct to include ESG criteria ensuring that as users and providers of services, all operate in a socially responsible manner.
- Mandatory ESG training for all employees in 2022 and for suppliers in 2023
- RSA Archer, enterprise risk management tool includes ESG questions for suppliers as part of the due diligence process.

Read the full report here: <https://www.vfsglobal.com/en/PDF/CSR/integrated-sustainability-report-2022.pdf>

About VFS Global

VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions. VFS Global is the trusted partner of 68 client governments, operating a global network with more than 3,300 Application Centres in 145 countries. The company has processed over 264 million applications since its inception in 2001. The company manages non-judgmental and administrative tasks related to applications for visa, passport, and consular services for its client governments, enabling them to focus entirely on the critical assessment task. VFS Global has its headquarters in Zurich/Switzerland and Dubai/United Arab Emirates.

VFS Global is majority-owned by funds managed by Blackstone, the world's largest alternative asset manager. Blackstone seeks to create positive economic impact and long-term value for their investors, the companies in which they invest, and the communities in which they work. Blackstone's USD 991 billion in assets under management include investment vehicles focused on private equity, real estate, public debt and equity, infrastructure, life sciences, growth equity, opportunistic, non-investment grade credit, real assets, and secondary funds, all on a global basis.

The Swiss-based Kuoni and HUGENBLOM Foundation and EQT, a global investment organisation, headquartered in Stockholm/Sweden, hold minority stakes in VFS Global.

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