



Bader Al-Kharafi during the final ceremony of Al-Roudhan Football Tournament.



Bader Al-Kharafi with Zain's team during the opening of Nuqat's Regional Conference.

# Zain's sustainability highlights in 2019: Investing in youth and innovation

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, concluded the year 2019 with a plethora of sustainability programs that centered around enriching innovation, supporting education, and pushing the entrepreneurship wheel within the local market.

Throughout last year, Zain's sustainability initiatives sought to offer a valid contribution by shedding light on the community's most relevant challenges. The company's efforts sprung from its comprehensive Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, which Zain considers an essential part of the continuous success of its operations. Zain is extremely keen on making its resources available to serve the community, especially being a leading national company in the private sector.

The year 2019 witnessed many efforts that reflected the core of Zain's Innovation and Entrepreneurship strategy, where the company launched and supported many specialized world-class programs that had positive impacts within the local entrepreneurial community. Such programs aimed at providing young entrepreneurs with the best resources and tools, as well as developing the country's youth in ways which will contribute to making them ready for the nation's future.

Many of Zain's sustainability programs were hosted by the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC), a hub for entrepreneurs and digital investments launched as a platform for the innovations of students, youth, and entrepreneurs. ZINC, located at Zain's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, encouraged young minds to think and act creatively outside of the norm in an open, supportive environment for entrepreneurs to generate new ideas and develop them into viable opportunities. In the following report, Zain showcases the most prominent initiatives and programs it supported during 2019 to achieve the goals of its Corporate Sustainability, Social Responsibility, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship strategies:

**Sharing Kuwait's national celebrations**  
Zain kicked-off the year 2019 by announcing the changing of the name of its network in Kuwait to SABAH ALKUWAIT for the period of celebrations marking the 13th anniversary of the ascendency of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as the ruler of Kuwait. The move reflected Zain's enthusiasm in sharing the joys of this occasion with the people of Kuwait.

Zain customers found the network name updated to SABAH ALKUWAIT on their devices during the celebratory period, as the company commemorated the anniversary of a journey full of giving and benevolence. His Highness the Amir has often called for Kuwait's progress, and the adoption of a kind, loving, and the nurturing of a brotherly spirit based on equal rights for all, and company was keen on sharing such a cherished occasion with the people of Kuwait.

As it does every year, Zain launched a National production, entitled 'Al-Zain Yiblalik Helo', to mark the company's celebration of Kuwait's National and Liberation days. The production's lyrics, which reflected values of national pride, were written by the great Kuwaiti poet Bader Bourisi. The TVC received overwhelming feedback from across the Kuwaiti community, and featured three different eras starting from Kuwait's rich history to its bright future. The televised commercial reached over one million views on Zain's official YouTube channel during the first few days of its launch in February.

The production's idea centered around the importance of the human element in the progress of countries in light of the huge technological advancements witnessed by the world at the present time. Zain's TVC highlighted the significant role played by Kuwait's national talents, especially that this concept coincides with the goals of the Kuwait National Development Plan (New Kuwait 2035) that stems from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's conceptualized vision of a new Kuwait by 2035, which will contribute to the further progress of the nation.



Eaman Al-Roudhan with Zain's team during the Engineering Design Exhibition.



Eaman Al-Roudhan launching 'A Green Dream' initiative.

During Kuwait's National celebrations, Zain launched its huge marketing campaign "All Zainers are Winners" to celebrate with its customers and the people of Kuwait. The campaign, which targeted all Zain's customers of prepaid and postpaid lines, witnessed crowning five lucky winners of five Range Rover EVOQUE 2019 mega prizes, many other valuable gifts, and three mega events held in 360 Mall, Avenues Mall, and Marina Mall.

## Enriching innovation and supporting education

During 2019, Zain was keen on enriching its efforts towards supporting innovation, creativity, and education by strengthening its relations with entities and organizations that aim at developing these areas, ultimately contributing to pushing the national economy wheel. The company hosted the orientation session for the participants of LOYAC's Thailand Program at the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh. The program was organized by LOYAC, a non-profit organization that aims at developing the youth's talents and skills, and came in exclusive sponsorship by Zain.

Zain also announced its Strategic Partnership of TypeCal Symposium 2019

which aimed at developing the youth's talents and skills in typography, design, and calligraphy. The event was held at Yarmouk Cultural Centre - Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyah. Zain also hosted a special talk on science and technology innovation featuring The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States of America in the State of Kuwait. The talk was held at the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, and featured Zainab "Nagin" Cox, a senior engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).

Additionally, Zain also awarded the winning teams of the "Most Innovative Product" category for university and high school students at the INJAZ Company Program Competition as part of its strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait. Zain's participation in the competition came in line with the company's strategic partnership as an Innovation Partner with INJAZ.

As part of its keenness on developing digital innovation within the youth, Zain announced its Strategic Partnership of the CODED Fresh Grad Boot Camp, an intensive educational program that aimed at training fresh university graduates on essential programming skills to make them job ready as programmers. Zain also strategi-



Waleed Al-Khashti with Zain Great Idea entrepreneurs in San Francisco.

ly partnered with the CODED Hackathon, a 24-hour coding challenge that aimed at boosting participants' coding skills in a unique academic and social setting.

Further supporting education and youth, Zain participated in awarding the top three winners of the KON Social Entrepreneurship Program during the closing ceremony held at the American University in Kuwait (AUK). The program, brought to Kuwait in collaboration with Babson College in Boston, came as part of Zain's Strategic Partnership with LOYAC, which continued last year for over 15 consecutive years.

Zain's most notable contributions to supporting Kuwaiti education outside of the country was highlighted in the company's Official and Main sponsorship of the 55th annual conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students in the United Kingdom (NUKS UK), held in Park Plaza Westminster Bridge London. The event attracted distinguished presence from students and national figures alike in the British capital London. Zain also hosted a special talk on science and technology innovation featuring The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States of America (NUKS USA), which was held in San Diego, USA, and witnessed the biggest ever gathering of Kuwaiti students out of the country.

## Zain Al-Shuhoo' Ramadan Campaign

Zain's annual social campaign for the Holy Month of Ramadan, 'Zain Al-Shuhoo', closely focused on giving back to the community and embodied the spirit of giving with various social, charitable, and humanitarian initiatives.

Zain's Ramadan campaign kicked-off before the beginning of the Holy Month, where it delivered 'Ramadan Machla' (supplies) to a number of its strategic partners of

non-profit organizations, who in turn distributed them to underprivileged families in Kuwait. Zain also launched an all-new update to its Quran App, which the company gifts to its customers during Ramadan of every year. The app offered the best Quran reading experience on iOS and Android smart devices, and last year supported Apple Watch, featuring a user-friendly interface and many great features.

As it does every year, Zain launched the iftar Halls initiative, which is a main pillar of the company's Ramadan campaign. Through this initiative, Zain provided fasting individuals with daily iftar meals under the supervision of its volunteering team. The banquets were spread in two main halls in Jleeb and Jahra as part of a strategy to cover the most populated areas of Kuwait in order to assure the maximum number of individuals' iftar needs were covered. Last year, Zain offered nearly 35,000 daily iftar meals in total during the holy month.

In 2019, Zain also launched "Zain Al-Khair", an online donation portal that allowed Zain customers - both prepaid and postpaid - to donate to any of the listed charitable organizations. Customers were simply able to select the preferred organization, pick one of the available projects to donate to, then specify the donation amount. The donated amount was then automatically added to the customer's monthly phone bill or prepaid balance with ease.

Last Ramadan, Zain also launched the third edition of its charitable initiative "Ya Baghi Al-Khair Aqbel" in collaboration with Direct Aid. As part of the initiative, Zain donated 500 Fils (half a KD) each time a customer paid their bill anytime during the Holy Month of Ramadan through one of Zain's electronic or direct channels. The collected donations were used to support Direct Aid's Medical Sciences College

project at Kenya, where 6 classrooms will be built for the Environmental Health section in the college. Zain also collaborated with Direct Aid to support the "2000 Projects" campaign, which was held throughout an entire day and succeeded in collecting over 3 million Kuwaiti Dinars in less than 12 hours.

Zain was the Strategic Partner of the 40th edition of Al-Roudhan Ramadan Football Tournament for the fourth consecutive year, which came under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. On Ramadan of every year, the Kuwaiti audiences, especially young ones, eagerly look forward with great passion to Al-Roudhan Tournament, given the fact that it witnesses high levels of professionalism and excitement through both the competing local teams as well as the international football stars hosted.

Every Ramadan, Zain is keen to reach out to the many segments of the community, including orphaned children, the elderly, and people with special needs, by visiting the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Care Centers to share the joyful blessings of the Holy Month with them. Zain believes in the importance of embracing the beautiful values of the Islamic religion as well as the noble traditions of the Kuwaiti heritage all year round and especially in the Holy Month of Ramadan. Zain also shared the joys of the Holy Month with children and patients in a number of the biggest hospitals in Kuwait. The company's team always visits the hospitals during this blessed time of year to distribute gifts and gifting to children and their families and celebrate the occasion in a family atmosphere full of joy and happiness.

Zain also shared the joys of gifting with special needs children in collaboration with Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center, where the company's volunteers visited the children and their families to distribute gifting and gifts while also organizing many other fun activities.

## ZGI and supporting entrepreneurship

In 2019, Zain launched the fifth edition of its Zain Great Idea (ZGI) tech startup accelerator program, through which the company offered Kuwait's entrepreneurial community the chance to take their startups to entire new levels.

The first phase of the program, the ZGI bootcamp, lasted for 4 weeks at the company's main headquarters, where the participants learned about the tech startup culture and workings from leading mentors from Stanford University, IE Business school, entrepreneurs and regional and international venture capital firms. During the second phase, nearly 100 ambitious entrepreneurs pitched their projects and ideas to the judging panel, who in return selected 10 finalists that took part in the third phase: the international accelerator program in collaboration with Brilliant Lab and Mind the Bridge.

During the third phase of ZGI, Zain's entrepreneurs gained invaluable experiences to develop and accelerate their tech startups by visiting the headquarters of the world's biggest technology leaders. The trips featured visits to the main headquarters of Google, Microsoft, Pinterest, and venture capital firm 500 Startups in Silicon Valley. ZGI's finalists also took part in a seminar presented by Tesla cofounder Marc Tarpenning, which took place at Stanford University, the world's first-ranked university in entrepreneurship.



One of Zain's iftar halls during Ramadan.