

# Kunooz Oman Holding steers Omanis into mining sector

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MUSCAT: Kunooz Oman Holding Company (KOH), a leading operator in the Oman mining sector, is taking the lead in training, development and placement of Omanis within its group companies.

## Strategy

By August 2017, total Omanis working across the group totalled 131. Dean Cunningham, CEO, Kunooz Oman Holding, said, "KOH strategy is to work hand in hand with various ministries on training, increase on job training and educate Omanis on the opportunities in the mining sector in various management, technical and engineering areas."

He referred to the fact that 50% of KOH's current senior management are Omanis.

"It is our stated objective to develop local talent who will serve the company, the mining sector and Oman as a

whole."

Kunooz Oman Holding Company's long-term strategy is to encourage and steer Omanis into the mining sector. Cunningham continued, "Our board is keen on training and developing Omanis to be part of the KOH family."

These are not just wished by KOH, but historically proven achievements. Omanisation accounted for 17% of all staff across the KOH Group during 2015. By August 2017, this ratio had increased to 21% of all staff. It is expected to reach 25% of total KOH staff numbers by the end of 2018.

Reflecting upon this ambitious achievement, Adnan Abdulaziz AL Balushi, Group HR manager said, "In April 2016 we launched our first programme for developing Omanis to become future leaders in the mining sector. "Based on our requirements, seven Omani graduates were selected, undertook a one-year programme funded by

KOH through a local training institute. All seven have successfully graduated from the programme and are now working and fulfilling their obligations in various management positions within the group."

## First programme

The methodology practised by KOH Group can be considered as a casebook study to other sectors in the Omani economy on how to successfully integrate Omanis into an experienced workforce. Further, in early 2016 KOH launched its first programme to develop and integrate Omanis in the mining sector by recruiting 24 Omanis for technical positions. These recruits then spent six months on a MOMP funded training and development programme. They have been successfully deployed across the group.

By late 2016, KOH Group launched

its second programme by recruiting a further 15 Omanis and placing them on a 12-month training and development course. This included theoretical and practical 'on-the-job' experience to enable them to perform effectively in technical positions.

Al Balushi explained, "Creating jobs for Omanis and developing their talents is both a national and group goal, we believe in equipping them with the right skill set to perform their tasks efficiently, responsibly and safely."

In 2017, KOH launched its third programme by recruiting a further 10 Omanis to undergo an intensive 12-month course, in the mining sector.

Beyond equipping KOH with highly trained Omanis, Cunningham is keen to emphasise the positive impact the KOH Group is having upon the wider socio-economic sectors in the Sultanate.

"We also support many sectors by procuring more than 80% of our re-



quired materials and services from Oman-owned companies." He added, "It is a KOH Board-led directive to always support SMEs by outsourcing to Omani-owned businesses where possible."

## CSR perspective

In a wider CSR perspective, KOH has played a leading role in supporting the organisation for the advancement of woman, supporting the universities in their blood donations drive, and playing a responsible part in promoting the welfare of all Omani communities within proximity to its operations through CSR and their local Wali Office.

Based on a proven track record of past achievements, the future outlook is highly positive for KOH Group. On this point, the future offers an extremely optimistic outlook for KOH and for the mining sector as a whole. "Our longterm intention will be to offer further programmes to train and develop Omanis in all capacities for KOH, for the mining sector, and especially in engineering and technical specialities for the overall welfare of the Sultanate of Oman," concluded Cunningham