

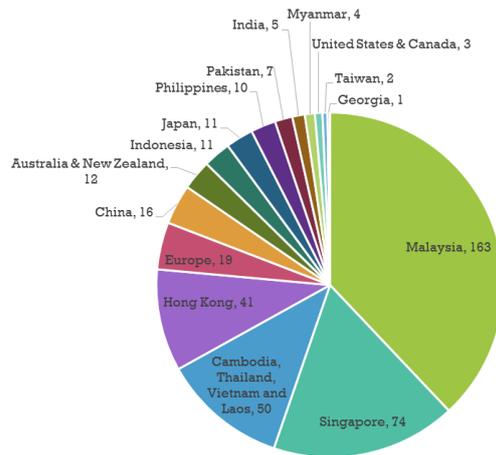


**Strategic Value Creation:
Business leaders engage on responsible business solutions at the 9th CSR Asia Summit 2015**

The CSR Asia Summit, our annual conference on corporate social responsibility in Asia, went ahead successfully in Kuala Lumpur, despite the haze which in itself was a topical point of discussion during the event. The 2015 Summit returned to Malaysia with a focus on sustainable business strategies which bring value to business, community and society. 429 delegates from across 28 countries attended. A unique blend of business, government and civil society representatives attended.

Now in its ninth year, the two-day CSR Asia Summit is recognised as the most innovative and thought-provoking conference on corporate social responsibility in the region. Key supporters and participants in this year's event included Digi, Fuji Xerox, Huawei, Kulim Malaysia, Musim Mas, Nestle Malaysia, Prudence Foundation, Sime Darby, State Street, The Coca-Cola Company, UBS and Visa, amongst others.

Countries represented at CSR Asia Summit 2015



The three main themes covered in this year's summit included 'Development Challenges', 'Human Resources and Workplace', and 'The Environment and Sustainability'. Business leaders were at the Summit to address challenges such as poverty reduction through innovative new business models and solutions to tackle issues associated with disasters, and protecting the environment while contributing to development. Richard Welford, Chairman of CSR Asia highlighted the need for such a focus.

"In the wake of the current economic landscape, companies are now re-evaluating their business strategies in both developed and developing countries. In doing so, sustainability issues have become ever more important and increasingly, companies operating throughout Asia need to integrate their CSR activities into their core business strategy to remain competitive in the global economy."

"By bringing the CSR Asia Summit to Malaysia, we are sharing with business leaders in the region how they can leverage more value through CSR and sustainability strategies. This requires improved accountability and transparency and the development of new and innovative partnerships with NGOs and the investment community," argued Richard.

During the Summit, participants recognised that human resource issues and human rights challenges are an integral part of any company's CSR agenda. Challenges around gender, migrant workers, human rights and modern day slavery are emerging as risks and opportunities for businesses. Involving people in new and innovative community investment initiatives will be of growing importance to companies that want to recruit and retain talent.



The environment also continues to be central to the sustainable development agenda, and the Summit examined business perspectives on some of the biggest challenges over the next decade. In particular, the leading issues of water scarcity, climate change, and conservation were each discussed within dedicated breakout sessions exploring the role of the private sector as well as the public sector.

Other key topics covered at the Summit included shared value, employee engagement, women’s economic empowerment, inclusive business, deforestation, certification schemes, disaster preparedness, and supply chain practices and challenges.

Highlights of 2015 Summit include:

- **The 2015 Channel NewsAsia Sustainability Ranking.** Results for the top performing companies in Asia for 2015 were revealed during the Summit. The Ranking, developed in partnership with Channel NewsAsia, Sustainalytics and CSR Asia, identified the top 100 companies in the region with the highest sustainability performance, based on a broad range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) indicators.

- **A spotlight on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).** With the recent adoption of the of the post-2015 development agenda during the September United Nations Summit in New York, the 17 ambitious SDGs were explored in terms of the role the private sector can play and how to integrate the goals with business. The panel, including senior representatives from the Global Reporting Institute (GRI), Sime Darby and IKEA, discussed the opportunities available to harness private sector capabilities and transformational partnerships to contribute to sustainable development in line with these goals, what it means for businesses, and how it can be translated into action. CSR Asia is also set to release a paper for our [Strategic Partners](#) focused on ‘The role of the private sector in the Strategic Development Goals’; please [contact us](#) for more information if interested.



- **Partnerships.** It was recognised that power for change lies within companies and the private sector through the scale and reach that large companies and businesses have, especially given the global top 500 companies account for more than 40% of the world’s GDP. Engagement, discussion, and partnership between sectors is a vital component in such change. To help facilitate and encourage the fostering of new partnerships, the Summit also hosts the NGO marketplace, this year sponsored by State Street, creating a space for business, NGOs, and foundations to collaborate and engage. Since 2010, UBS have sponsored delegate passes as an NGO Scholarship to attend both the Summit and Pre-Summit training courses.



As with past years, this engagement combined with the opportunity for networking and informed discussions during the breakout sessions was highlighted as one of the key successes of the Summit. Such opportunities are particularly valuable given the highlighted role of partnerships in strategic value creation, particularly with the private sector.

Channel NewsAsia Sustainability Ranking Results: Down to the Details

The Channel NewsAsia Sustainability Ranking for 2015 launched at the Summit provides investors and consumers with insights into corporate sustainability practices, and a way to benchmark performance against other regional businesses. Based on specific ESG indicators and [methodology](#) developed by Sustainalytics, a leading provider of ESG and corporate governance ratings and research, the Ranking highlighted the overall top 20 companies as well as the top three businesses per country. The territories covered include China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and new for 2015 – Japan. The top three for 2015 are listed below, with the full ranking results available [here](#):

- 1st Wipro Ltd, India, Software & Services
- 2nd United Microelectronics Corporation, Taiwan, Semiconductors & Semiconductor Equipment
- 3rd Tech Mahindra Limited, India, Software & Services

The addition of results for Japan greatly changed the ranking lists this year, with 32 of the 47 new companies on the list being as a result of this inclusion. Other talking points included the emergence of Indian tech companies as CSR leaders in Asia, Tech Mahindra's stellar turnaround story into a CSR leader from its scandal-ridden Satyam past, and the high ranking of companies such as UMC that are perhaps not well known publically but that supply many well-known brands with vital parts and technology. This year there is also a notable lack of representation from China and the Philippines in the top 100 companies.

Results were discussed during Channel NewsAsia's Investor Insights programme, where the CEO's of the top three companies in the ranking will be providing insights into the action behind the success. The programme will air on the 16th October 2015.

In closing, Richard provided an interesting view on the analogy 'give a man a fish and feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and feed him for life'. It is a nice story, but just because you teach does not guarantee a move out of poverty, and capacity and education will not guarantee net incomes will grow in a significant way to move people out of dire need. Let's not just 'give a fish', instead let's teach how to fish, then let's open up global markets so the fish can be sold, and then support the business to buy boats and expand, and help the business to develop and employ more people. Only then will there be the scale for real change.

The CSR Asia Summit will be returning next year, with details to be announced shortly. Keep tuned in for updates!