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**YES FULL CIRCLE: MAKING A
DIFFERENCE BY INTEGRATING SOCIAL
GOOD INTO BUSINESS**



Photo: Vincent Kneefel

YES FULL CIRCLE: MAKING A DIFFERENCE BY INTEGRATING SOCIAL GOOD INTO BUSINESS

Harbinder Singh, Chairman, Yes Full Circle, provides an update on the company's vision of becoming a social enterprise by #Doing Good to Do Good. Committed to making a difference, YFC has successfully incorporated social good into the business through its diverse impact activities

Yes Full Circle (YFC) - How and why it started

I started as an entrepreneur and then moved into a corporate environment managing and growing businesses in various countries. Whilst it was interesting holding senior leadership roles in organisations, working in various countries, generating millions of dollars in profits while creating a positive environmental impact, there was still something missing. Starting around 2015, I began asking myself whether I could do more in terms of other social causes such as income inequality, exclusion and supporting humanitarian causes. Corny as it sounds, there is a quote from Optimus Prime that reflects what happened: "Fate rarely calls upon us at a moment of our choosing."

The development of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG), which combined multiple objectives was a tipping point for me. However, having been involved previously in social enterprises, I also realised the importance of recurring revenue to create stability and to fund the growth of a social enterprise. This is when I decided to leverage and combine our experience in environmental, technology and social causes to launch Yes Full Circle (@YFC) – a social enterprise company

based on the principle of Doing Good to Do Good in February 2020.

The team has done very well since then, growing from strength to strength despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year since formation, YFC UAE has registered more than 500 per cent growth in revenue on a compounded basis, and through that, more importantly been able to fund many social and environmental projects. This was made possible thanks to the passion of the team, and the support of our clients.

#Doing Good to Do Good

YFC is run as a for-profit business to ensure financial discipline. However, our activities are NOT solely driven by profits. We are committed to creating positive environmental and social impact and have incorporated social good into the business. For example, half of our staff ranging from board members to management team to our operations staff are women, and we have, from the beginning, implemented an equal pay for equal work policy.

Doing Good to Do Good is about generating social, environmental

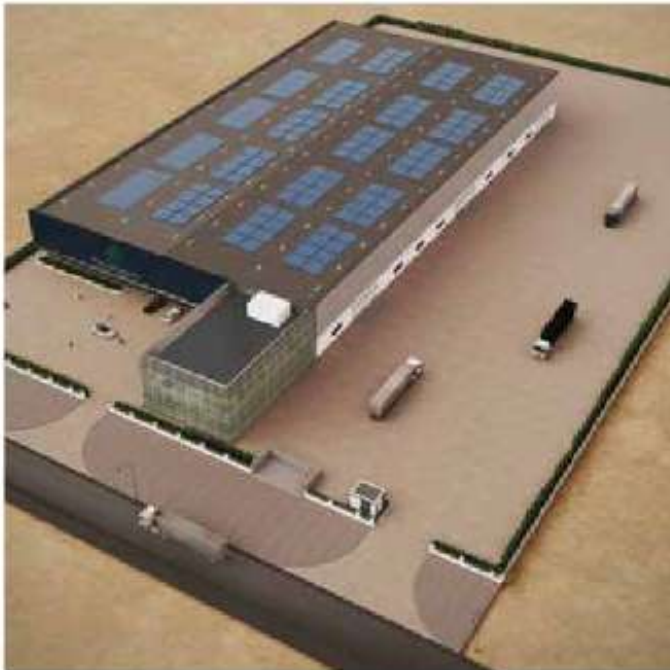


and financial value from waste that is traditionally seen as having no value. Doing Good refers to avoiding landfill. Examples include waste minimisation, or reconversion back into a raw material to support the circular economy. To Do Good refers to what we as an organisation do with the profits we make.

We utilise a substantial portion of the profits on social and environmental impact activities. For instance, YFC contributes to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, programmes and other initiatives that help least advantaged groups.

YFC is also a member of '1% for the Planet' and UN Global Compact. It has also applied for B Corp certification, a private certification of for-profit companies of their "social and environmental performance."

YFC – Pioneers in offering Circularity Solutions



Upcoming YFC #Doing Good to Do Good facility

With an experienced team, having a track record of diverting over six million tonnes away from landfill from 20 million residents and businesses in multiple countries, YFC, together with other stakeholders, has been a pioneer in developing circularity activities.

For example, in 2012, UAE's first zero waste hotel, Ramada Ajman, was launched. It involved, among other things, converting food waste into compost to grow organic vegetables that were used by the hotel. YFC was the first company to work with and develop alternative fuel solutions thereby building landfill avoidance capabilities.

At the group level YFC offers solutions that are country specific. In the UAE, it provides 'End Waste Now' and 'Brand Protection' services. In India, YFC offers 'End Waste Now' and 'Extended Producer Responsibility' solutions, while in Singapore the company provides all the solutions. Under Brand Protection, we

accept various types of materials and products, and ensure that all materials are destroyed and recycled in a secure manner at the advanced facilities.

In 2022 alone, YFC recycled more than 19 million pieces of items. Starting with one location in UAE in 2020, YFC UAE operates six facilities as of 2022. Many of our machines and processes have been developed in-house and proprietary to YFC. We recognise there is no system that fits all solutions so each machine or process is designed for a particular type of material to ensure circularity or to achieve landfill avoidance. We are continuously innovating.

We invest heavily in R&D, and our holding company has invested in a number of startups that involve novel methods of processing such as chemical recycling, to further enhance our solutions capabilities over time.



YFC's CSR programmes

Circularity – Benefits for governments and businesses

YFC's processes are based on the principles of circularity. Circularity, or closing the loop, is respecting the law of Nature. Earth does not need us. We need it. Earth is a self-correcting ecosystem that has been working well for billions of years. Climate change is Nature's way of reminding us to adjust our ways before it is too late for us. In Nature, everything has a purpose from start to end to restart. Everything either adapts, evolves, or gets extinct. Circular economy is simply an extension of how Nature operates.

There are benefits for governments. McKinsey, in a major study with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, in 2015 brought out a report called 'Growth Within: A circular economy vision for a competitive Europe.' It concluded that a circular economy (versus a linear economy model) would result in positive employment effects—0.6 per cent additional annual growth, and 48 per cent reduction of CO2 emissions by 2030, boost Europe's resource productivity by 3 per cent by 2030, generating cost savings of €600 billion a year and €1.8 trillion more in other economic benefits.

Brands are also promoting circularity in their processes for several reasons. First is to be seen as responsible corporate citizens who not only sell their product but also take steps to prevent post consumer products going to the landfill. Second is for the brand to be seen as innovative. This is because smart design and production that reduce waste and recycle materials at the beginning of a product's lifecycle are essential to ensure circularity.

Third is building brand loyalty with a community of consumers, who in their own way, will promote your product. Everyone knows that word-of-mouth marketing is fantastic.

Fourth is improving employee engagement. Circularity requires multiple functions to collaborate towards a common goal. It will boost motivation levels and help them feel engaged that the team is working towards something environmentally friendly. Fifth is disposing of waste from the industrial chain by reusing components to the maximum degree possible ensures production cost savings and less resource dependence.

The circular approach allows developed economies a route to resilient growth, develops a systemic answer to reducing dependency on resource markets, and a means of reducing exposure to resource price shocks.

Awards and recognition

We have come a long way, especially, considering we started our operations during COVID-19. We were less than a month old when the pandemic hit and two months later, the world went into lockdown.

The odds were against YFC's survival in the first year. We had to change our strategy, adapt new work practices to keep staff safe, and repivot our customer acquisition plan as most customers were working from home. It was our team's passion and our clients' support and belief in us that we not only survived but grew from strength to strength. Besides ISO9001, ISO1800 and ISO45000, YFC is also R2 certified as a responsible recycler.

In the last two years, YFC UAE has won numerous prestigious awards such as Middle East Recycling Personality of the Year, Best Waste Electronics and Electrical Recycler in the Middle East two years in a row (2021 and 2022), SME of Merit and Dubai Chamber CSR Labels for Workplace and Environment. The credit and a big 'Thank You' goes to the YFC family and our supportive clients.



Celebrating the YFC Family



Harbinder Singh, a Singaporean, has a LLB (Hons) from the University of Manchester and a MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. He is also the President of the Singapore Business Council in UAE. He can be contacted at harb@yesfullcircle.com or harbinder@sbcuae.org. For business inquiries, please email uae@yesfullcircle.com. YFC's website is www.yesfullcircle.com and UAE call center is +971 4 346 6185. Follow their social media accounts on LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter at [@yesfullcircle.com](https://www.instagram.com/yesfullcircle.com)



The Ocean Story

While our ocean makes up over two thirds of our planet's surface, it largely remains 'out of sight and out of mind' in mainstream media and even at high-level UN negotiations. 2021 marked the start of the UN Ocean Decade – a pivotal 10 years for the future of our ocean. We urgently need to inspire support and much-needed action to save our oceans. This is our last chance; if we don't act now many species will vanish. As an experienced underwater diver and photographer, Vincent Kneefel has initiated The

Ocean Story to capture the beauty and tell the stories of 9 endangered marine species linked to 3 mega-threats (Overfishing, Ocean Warming, and Plastic Pollution) in a unique way. The Ocean Story features the urgent solutions required to save life in our oceans. Photography and the book will be used as an engagement tool at a number of UN events in 2023.

To know more about funding their ventures involving ocean conservation, please contact him at vincent@intothebluefoundation.com

Supporting the Ocean Story to Create a Global Impact

Our ocean covers 70 per cent of the earth's surface and has been called the "lungs of the planet". YFC is proud to be a founding sponsor for "The Ocean Story" supporting Vincent in his quest to promote ocean conservation efforts. We are very proud of how Vincent Kneefel's pictures won 1st prize at the UN Plastic is Forever photo competition in 2022 and that 2 of the 12 calendar pictures featured in the 2022-2023 calendar issued by the UN Environment Program and Basel Convention are from him.

