



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
& INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



Promoting Global Peace and Prosperity

UAE Policy for Foreign Assistance 2017 - 2021

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**The late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan
(may God rest his soul in peace)
Founder of the United Arab Emirates**

Foreign assistance is one of the basic pillars of our foreign policy. For we believe there is no true benefit for us from the wealth we have unless it also reaches those in need, wherever they may be, and regardless of their nationality or belief.

Foreword

Since its formation in 1971, the United Arab Emirates has delivered unconditional foreign assistance globally to support economic growth in developing countries, and to provide basic social services to communities in need to improve their quality of life.

The policy aims to support partner governments and assist vulnerable communities to realise their development goals, thus achieving their priority Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It will guide coherent planning amongst stakeholders in our foreign assistance sector, expand our multilateral partnerships, and enhance our international cooperation and trade exchange with partner countries.

The fundamental purpose of UAE foreign assistance is to reduce poverty, promote peace and prosperity, and foster mutually beneficial economic relations through expanding trade and investment ties with developing countries. At the same time, it will focus on specific segments of society with a special attention to women and children during natural disasters and in conflict areas.

We will support national development, humanitarian, and charity organisations, whose work in foreign assistance complements that of the UAE government and its institutions; we will expand our partnerships with relevant and effective multilateral organisations; and we will seek out opportunities for private sector engagement, as a key element to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

Generosity towards the people in need has always been a distinctive hallmark of the foreign relations of the United Arab Emirates. The UAE government and UAE development, humanitarian, and charity donor organizations work tirelessly to improve the lives of countless people around the world. In recent years, the UAE has topped global charts in terms of the amount of assistance as a share of gross national income, of any country in the world. This generosity emerges from the nation's Arab-Islamic heritage, and reflects the UAE value of unconditional support for humanity.

The United Arab Emirates is deeply connected to the developing world. We will be stronger and safer if there is peace and prosperity across our region and the wider world. We are a vital financial, commercial and logistical hub for the Middle East, Africa and South Asia – so our economy will grow if these regions can realize their potential of becoming the engines of global growth over the next few decades. The UAE started as a developing nation, and our experience can be an encouragement to others, showing what progress is possible with visionary leadership, dedication to the interests of the nation and its people, careful investment, and hard work.

UAE Vision 2021, the national agenda for progress up to the golden jubilee of the Union, sets as one of its goals for the UAE to grow its international standing. The UAE Cabinet, led by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, with the endorsement of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, decided to formulate a comprehensive national policy for foreign assistance.

By the time we celebrate the anniversary of our union in 2021, the UAE will be a more effective donor, in addition to being a generous one. Emiratis will have helped other peoples to emulate our development – and we will be able to celebrate our contributions to the world together with our achievements at home.

A Brief History of UAE Foreign Assistance

UAE foreign aid is as old as the country itself. The founding father of the UAE, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (may his soul rest in peace), institutionalized UAE aid as early as 1971, the year the Union was formed, with the creation of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development as the country's principal development agency.

Civil society joined the effort to deliver aid overseas in the late 1970s, with the emergence of such organizations as Dar El Ber and the Dubai Charitable Society. The nation's leadership further supported this momentum during the 1980s and 1990s by creating and sponsoring aid organizations and charities in every emirate. These included the Zayed Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation, the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation, the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Establishment, Al Maktoum Foundation and Sharjah Charity International.

The creation of the UAE Red Crescent in 1983, as the country's principal humanitarian agency, marked an important milestone for UAE foreign assistance.

In the past decade, specialized organizations have emerged. Dubai Cares, Noor Dubai, and the International Humanitarian City – all now part of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives – are global leaders, respectively, in education, eradication of preventable forms of blindness, and humanitarian logistics. Ewa'a Shelter supports victims of human trafficking.

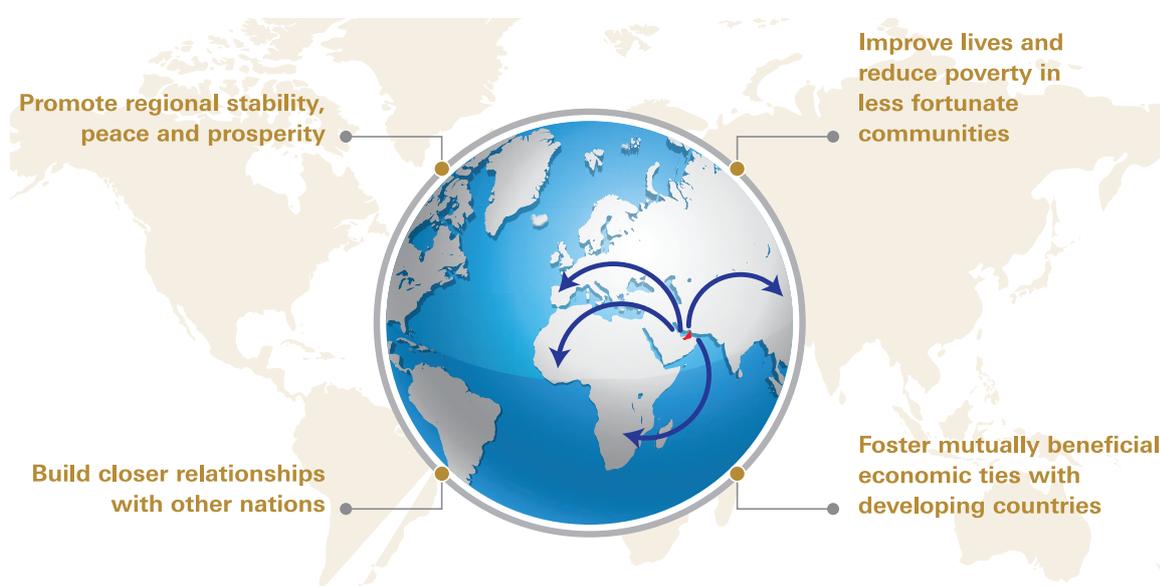
The UAE has also sought to deliver more aid through larger-scale efforts planned in coordination with partner countries. Particularly notable examples of this trend are the ongoing UAE-Pakistan and the UAE-Egypt programs, as well as support programs to Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Afghanistan, Yemen and others.

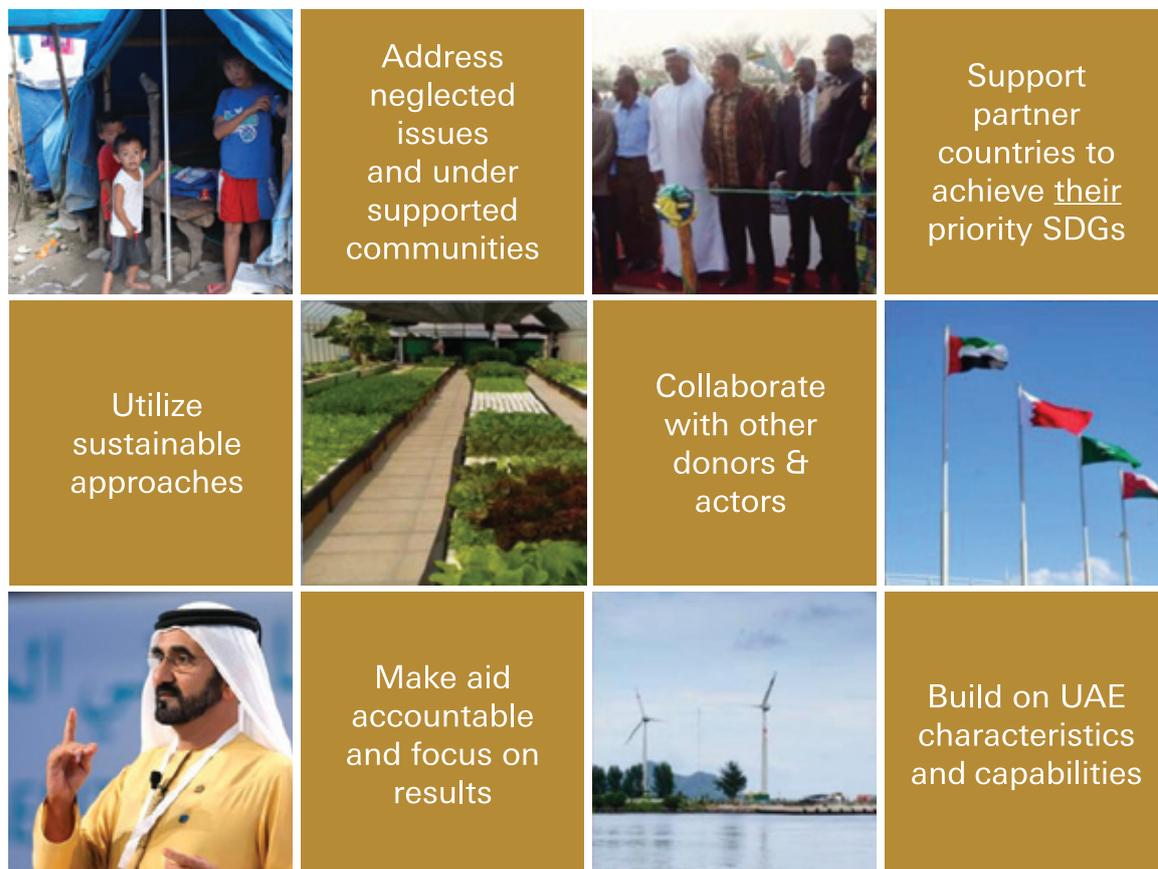
In 2008, the Cabinet of the UAE created the Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid (OCFA), signifying the government's commitment to supporting the transformation of the UAE aid sector. OCFA was assigned the responsibility to document and coordinate UAE foreign aid, assess its impact and support capacity building in UAE organizations. In 2013, OCFA's mandate evolved to become bigger, which resulted in the creation of the Ministry of International Cooperation and Development (MICAD), mandated to continue the responsibilities and in addition to develop the UAE Foreign Assistance Policy. Subsequently in 2016, MICAD has been merged into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to become the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC). In 2017, the UAE policy for UAE foreign assistance was launched to ensure the effectiveness of the assistance.

Build strong relationships with other countries, both those to which the UAE gives assistance and other donor countries with which we collaborate. The society and economy of the UAE have grown and flourished thanks to a welcoming stance towards all nations. The UAE continues to expand its network of diplomatic, economic, and other ties to all parts of the world. Our foreign assistance can support this effort, and can also enhance the UAE's standing in the international community as a contributor to solving global challenges by hosting international events which have development and humanitarian themes, such as Expo 2020.

Foster expanded trade and investment ties with developing countries, thereby promoting economic growth in the developing world. Economic growth lifts people out of poverty, and UAE investment and trade can help developing countries to grow. As a major business, financial, logistics, and trade hub for the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia; the UAE stands to benefit if economic and social development in these regions accelerates..

In summary, UAE foreign assistance will help communities reduce poverty, enhance peace and stability, and protect the planet. Our lives get better when we help others.





Guiding Principles

Support partner governments and communities to achieve their priority Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a country that has developed itself over the past four decades, the UAE knows well that real improvements can only come through the efforts of a country's leadership and people; they cannot be imposed from the outside. Our foreign assistance has always been based on human need, understanding of the inherent importance of dignity to the individuals who are affected by crises and poverty. This will continue to be a defining characteristic of our assistance.

Collaborate with other donors and development organizations. We are part of the global effort to address the world's most vital problems. As such, we will work with others on joint initiatives, including Triangular and South-South Cooperation, and will always ensure that our activities are complementary. The UAE has committed to spending 0.7% of our gross national income (GNI) on aid every year.

Address neglected issues and under-supported communities. Not all issues, and not all countries receive the same attention. The UAE will direct activities towards countries that receive little assistance from other donors, towards sectors and SDGs that get less attention, and towards neglected humanitarian emergencies.

Build on the UAE's unique characteristics and capabilities by prioritizing technical assistance. The UAE has recent experience in developing and diversifying its economy. Our geographical location places us within a few hours of most of the developing world. Unlike most donors, the UAE is Arab and Islamic. We are global leaders in trade and logistics, finance, tourism, renewable energy, infrastructure, and public sector effectiveness. Technical Assistance, therefore, will form a core part of our foreign assistance and international cooperation, helping partners through a combination of expert missions, training courses and scholarships, and customized programs.

Utilize sustainable approaches. Our programs and investments will be designed to create positive, and avoid negative effects on communities and the environment.

Make aid transparent, accountable and focused on results. As in all aspects of government, the UAE will set targets and measure results from its foreign assistance. The UAE government will rigorously monitor and evaluate its programs, and their impact on beneficiaries, and will support other UAE organizations to improve their systems.

Overall Shape of the Foreign Assistance Program

The UAE plans to use a portfolio of different types of programs to provide foreign assistance. Through this approach, which is consistent with best international practice, the UAE will allocate resources in seven major categories: country partnerships, global thematic programs, humanitarian aid, stabilization, private sector engagement, foreign assistance partners (UAE organizations, foundations, and charities; and international multilateral organizations), and technical assistance.

The largest share of UAE aid will be allocated to Country Partnerships for Development, which are tailored to contribute to each country's development plan and implemented in close collaboration with those countries' governments. Across the Middle East & North Africa region, and in selected countries outside the region, the UAE will deliver aid through multi-year programs, and in sectors chosen to meet each country's greatest needs, to utilize unique UAE capabilities and to complement the work of other donors. The UAE will adopt specific strategies for partnering with fragile and conflict-affected states and will build "trade and investment bridges".

The UAE will create three global thematic programs in transport and urban infrastructure, government effectiveness, and empowerment and protection of women. These programs, through which the UAE will provide assistance around the world, will build upon existing UAE foreign assistance priorities. All three areas are vital international development issues and will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Humanitarian assistance will form an important part of the UAE's overall foreign assistance, and the UAE will expand on its role as a hub for humanitarian assistance. The UAE contributes generously to responses to humanitarian emergencies and plans to expand these efforts and to pay particular attention to neglected or "forgotten" crises. The International Humanitarian City in Dubai is currently the world's largest hub for humanitarian goods.

UAE stabilization will help conflict-affected countries move on from situations of acute crisis and large-scale violence. UAE stabilization covers civilian actions that give people the basics required for life, e.g. mine removal and reestablishment of essential service. UAE stabilization includes the transition phase to post-conflict that paves the way for longer-term recovery. UAE stabilization occurs only in conflict-affected countries and comprises a cross-government approach – nationally and internationally, which requires close coordination between development, diplomacy, security and justice.

UAE foreign assistance will seek opportunities to work with the private sector, in particular, UAE-based companies, and to encourage them to trade with and invest in developing nations. The UAE will help companies to overcome barriers to specific commercial opportunities – sometimes through financing or guarantees for trade or investment, sometimes by helping to improve public infrastructure or services in a developing country to make business success more likely and positively impact communities in developing countries. The UAE will create regional innovation centers, which are aimed at promoting innovation and entrepreneurship among local businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs). UAE regional innovation centers are designed to strengthen the partner government’s efforts to create a stable and balanced economy while also opening job opportunities for youth, empowering women, and building the capacity of entrepreneurs and local institutions.

The UAE will partner with relevant and effective international multilateral organizations. The UAE will form strategic partnerships with a number of systematically selected multilateral organizations, which are relevant to UAE foreign assistance and have a track record of achieving results.

Technical cooperation will share UAE knowledge and experiences with other countries. In the past four decades, the UAE has accumulated a wealth of knowledge and expertise that could be valuable to our partner countries. The UAE Technical Assistance Programme (UAETAP) will, therefore, form a core part of our foreign assistance and international cooperation, helping partners through a combination of expert missions, training courses, customized programmes, and study visits.

UAE Foreign Assistance, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Principles

In September 2015, at the United Nations world leaders established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an agenda for reducing poverty, improving lives and putting the world on a sustainable path, and achieving it by 2030. UAE leaders made significant contributions to the deliberations that led to the SDGs. His Highness Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, served on the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability. The UAE was a member of the UN Open Working Group, which developed the SDGs.

The UAE's foreign assistance policy will contribute to global efforts to achieve the SDGs. UAE foreign assistance will likely contribute to all of the goals, with particular emphasis directed towards the following ten goals:

	Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.		Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
	Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.		Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
	Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.		Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
	Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.		
	Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.		Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.
	Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.		

International principles and best practices will guide the UAE's assistance. The UAE is subscribed to the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and its targets for aid effectiveness. The "New Deal for Engagement in the Fragile States" will guide its work with fragile or conflict-affected states. The UAE humanitarian assistance will adhere to the Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship.

Country Partnerships for Development

Approach

Country Partnerships for Development will be full-scale foreign assistance programs between the UAE and selected partner countries, guided by country strategies that contribute to national development priorities, delivered in collaboration with the government and other relevant partners. Focusing efforts in selected countries will allow for larger-scale programs with increased funding, as well as dedicated staff and expertise, for each country. This approach also helps the governments of developing countries, which have limited capacity to coordinate donor activities and hence usually prefer to have fewer, deeper relationships with donors. The UAE is already providing assistance to several countries through multi-year assistance efforts, and its future Country Partnerships for Development will build upon these experiences.

The UAE will provide sustained and predictable support to partner countries. It will create multi-year country strategies and be guided by the principles articulated in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and promoted by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

Country strategies will be tailored to each partner country according to its national development priorities, identifying themes for UAE assistance, types of assistance to offer, key partners and performance indicators. Each country's strategy will be shaped by several factors, including the priority issues identified in national development plans and external analyses of obstacles to development, where UAE capacities seem most relevant to country needs, the level of fragility of the country, and the effectiveness of government. Country strategies will be co-developed with the partner country government, will incorporate views from civil society and other donors, and will be discussed and approved by appropriate national decision-making mechanisms. They will include roadmaps to success and layout systems for evaluating progress and adjusting programs as necessary so that the UAE's foreign assistance can become more effective over time.

Foreign assistance will take the form of aid in all of the partner countries; the UAE will also create "trade & investment bridges" to promote trade and investment between partner countries with high potential for economic engagement to contribute to the country's development. Almost all countries which have achieved significant increases in GDP per capita in the past 50 years have done so through trade and/or foreign investment. Therefore for relevant partner countries, the Partnership for Development will include building a "trade & investment bridge" between the UAE and the partner country. That is through packages of measures including trade, double taxation and investment protection agreements, capacity-building to help partner countries apply World Trade Organization agreements, support for reform of business and customs rules and processes, and organization of trade and investment missions.

Many of the UAE's partner countries will be fragile and conflict-affected states, and it will incorporate specific practices in those countries. Ineffective governance, economic collapse, a breakdown of legal systems, corruption and violence, can reverse past development progress and undermine the success of current and future assistance. Development programming in fragile states must take account of the

country context, analysed through fragility assessments. Furthermore, activities in all sectors should be designed in such a way that they strengthen institutions and alleviate conflict, and vetted to ensure that they do not inadvertently make fragile situations worse.

Implementation

Country Partnerships for Development will be implemented by dedicated teams, mostly based in the partner countries. It will be necessary for the UAE to have dedicated staff in the partner country to coordinate implementation of the country strategy, and to ensure sustained collaboration with the government, communities, and other donors.

The UAE will work closely with the local government, and also with other donors and local actors whenever such partnerships can contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of UAE development programming. Potential implementing partners will include regional and municipal governments, NGOs, relevant UN agencies and multilateral development banks and funds. The UAE will join donor coordination mechanisms where they exist and will seek to complement the efforts of other donors.

Selection

As a global donor, UAE aid programming will encompass a wide geographic reach through its global thematic programmes, humanitarian assistance, support to multilateral organizations, and engagement of the private sector. In efforts to reduce aid fragmentation, the UAE has prioritized its country programmes according to the following categories.

The majority of the UAE's country programs will be in the Middle East and Arab World. The welfare of all the countries in this region, and of their citizens, is a key priority of the UAE. Other donors have been neglecting the region, and the UAE, unlike most other donors, shares a common culture and language with most countries of the region. Furthermore, the UAE will benefit itself if its neighbours become more prosperous, as an economic hub for the region. Development and prosperity will also strengthen those states in the region that are fragile or unstable – which will enhance the security of the UAE. Within the region, the UAE will direct much of its efforts to countries and communities whose need for development assistance is high and not fully met by other donors.

As a global donor, the UAE will partner with a select number of countries outside the region. This group will include a mix of least developed countries, countries that are neglected by other donors, and countries with which the UAE has diplomatic or economic ties. These countries will be prioritized based on poverty level, and human development needs, effectiveness, relevance to the UAE, and a potential for economic cooperation – and will together represent a geographically diverse set of countries across Africa and Asia.

The UAE will select a number of “aid orphans” with which to establish Country Partnerships for Development. “Aid orphans” are a set of least developed countries that, based on standard benchmarks for need and performance in using aid, do not receive their fair share of bilateral aid. The High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness in Accra (2008) and Busan (2011) both resulted in commitments to “address the issue of countries that receive insufficient assistance”; by helping “aid orphans,” the UAE will play a leadership role in helping the international community live up to these commitments.

Global Thematic Programs

Three Global Themes

The UAE will provide assistance globally – not only in priority partner countries – in three areas: transport and urban infrastructure, government effectiveness, and women’s empowerment and protection. These are areas in which the UAE can provide unique capabilities, meet important needs in developing nations, or contribute in substantial ways to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

While these themes are likely to be important in many countries, the Country Partnerships may address other issues – for example, access to water, education, food security or youth unemployment – according to the needs of each partner country.

Transport and Urban Infrastructure

Government Effectiveness



Empowerment and
Protection of Women

Transport and Urban Infrastructure

There is a large transport and urban infrastructure deficit in low and middle-income countries, which is one of the most significant barriers to economic growth and to reducing inequality. A billion people in the developing world live more than two kilometers away from an all-weather road. Transportation costs are estimated to account for 77% of export value in landlocked African countries, and African firms could achieve productivity gains of up to 40% with better urban infrastructure. Rapid urbanization in recent years has not matched with sufficient infrastructure for housing, healthcare, energy, communication, water, and sanitation. In Asian cities, more than 500 million people live in slums with little access to urban services; in Africa, significant amounts of urban dwellers experience worse living conditions than people living in rural areas.

The infrastructure gap can only be met through innovative mixtures of public and private financing. Required infrastructure cannot be built with public financing sources alone. Therefore, it is vital to find innovative public-private financing mechanisms which allow private capital to get returns without creating vast debt burdens for developing countries. However, infrastructure projects in Africa, for example, have attracted less than 10% of developing-world public-private partnership investments in the past decade. Tapping into more private financing requires robust project preparation and selection, clear policy frameworks and sound project management.

The UAE has both domestic and international experience in world-class infrastructure development. In just four decades, we have rapidly built some of the most modern examples of transport infrastructure, including the national road system, global hubs for air transport and world-class ports.

The UAE program on infrastructure will align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and have the following components:

- **The expansion of investments in transport and urban infrastructure projects.** The UAE will place particular emphasis on infrastructure that can accelerate economic growth in developing countries.
- **Technical cooperation with developing countries, offering an opportunity to learn from the UAE's experience with infrastructure development.** One of the UAE Technical Assistance Programme (UAETAP) priority areas is transport and infrastructure. Mechanisms may include hosting study visits by officials from developing nations, seconding experienced UAE experts to advise on project designs, and organizing triangular partnerships and meetings to enable learning between developing countries facing similar situations.
- **The participation in development banks and funds such as the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and African Development Bank, including co-investments with them on important infrastructure projects.**

Government Effectiveness

Governance and public administration are critical enablers of development. Research shows that better development results – including higher income per capita, greater competitiveness, and reduced child mortality – are associated with stronger governance and public institutions. Good government has also been shown to foster more equality of happiness, and greater happiness, which contributes to good citizenship and social stability, thus creating a virtuous cycle. Being rich is not a prerequisite for strengthening government effectiveness; therefore, it is possible for low-income countries to achieve improvements in government and public services, which can, in turn, lead to rapid improvements in people's lives.

An ineffective government, however, remains a challenge across the developing world, and especially in the Middle East and North Africa region. More than two-thirds of the countries in the region have experienced a decline in the quality of governance over the past two decades, according to the World Bank Government Effectiveness Index.

The UAE is a global and regional leader in government effectiveness, as a result of dedicated efforts to improve public sector performance. The UAE has consistently received top tier recognition on the Government Effectiveness Index and has significantly improved over the past decade. This achievement is the result of concerted efforts directed by the UAE's leadership and implemented through organizations and initiatives promoting government excellence. The UAE will share its knowledge through technical assistance activities.

Women's Empowerment and Protection

The UAE believes that women and girls are powerful agents of change, with the ability to transform their households, their societies and their economies. We believe this is the best way to eradicate poverty and build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world aiming to leave no one behind. The UAE considers that development assistance, poverty eradication and women empowerment is not a debate between technicians and engineers, or a financial debate. It is a political imperative, which must be championed at the highest level.

Women's inclusion will be ensured through foreign aid policy priority themes and align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), positioning gender mainstreaming, empowerment and safety at the core of the UAE's aid programing and projects. In particular, women's views, interests and needs will increasingly shape the UAE's thinking to achieve its goals of:

- **Equality:** Removal of barriers that hold women and girls back, including accessing education, health, social services.
- **Empowerment:** Women and girls empowered economically, politically and socially.
- **Protection:** Women and girls are protected from all forms of violence, including sexual violence in conflict.

UAE women have made enormous progress in the past 40 years, thanks to the leadership of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founder of the UAE, and Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, who founded the General Women's Union in 1975 to be the official representative of UAE women. The UAE was the first Arab country to close the educational attainment gender gap. Today, Emirati women have access to high-quality tertiary education and have become valuable members of the country's workforce.

Empowering women is often a driving force for broader social and economic development. A recent International Monetary Fund study suggests that raising the women's labour force participation rate to male levels would raise GDP by 10% to 35% in some Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries.

However, there are few women workers, managers or entrepreneurs in low- and middle- income countries, particularly in the OIC. The women's employment rate in developing countries is only 39%, and in OIC countries it is even lower at 26% – well below the general employment rate of 62%.

Violence against women, especially sexual violence, is the most fundamental affront to women's rights, and yet such violence remains common, especially in conflict situations. His Highness Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, told the UN General Assembly that "we can no longer accept that such crimes will be an inevitable result of conflicts in the 21st century". Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, launched the Big Heart Campaign and the 'Investing in the Future' Conference, both of which raise awareness of violence against women and children refugees.

In 2018 the UAE launched our 100% women policy, which resolves by 2021, the UAE foreign assistance policy will commit up to 100 percent to bilateral and multilateral international development investments to either target or integrate gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and girls.

Through its International Cooperation agenda the UAE will achieve women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming, through three main action areas:

- *Social services and human dignity*: education, health and nutrition
- *Prosperity*: inclusive governance, economic empowerment, and vocational training
- *Protection*: continued efforts to speak out against women's sexual violence in conflict zones, women peace and security.

One way in which the UAE will support prosperity is through funding such programmes as the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), a collaborative partnership among governments, multilateral development banks (MDBs), and other public and private sector stakeholders, hosted by the World Bank Group.

We-Fi supports women entrepreneurs by scaling up access to financial products and services, building capacity, expanding networks, offering mentors, and providing opportunities to link with domestic and global markets. It is also assisting governments in creating enabling environments for women in business. WeFi seeks to address financial and non-financial constraints faced by women-owned/led small and medium enterprises in developing countries.

Humanitarian Assistance

Overview

The United Arab Emirates provides humanitarian assistance to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in crisis situations. The UAE has contributed to a wide array of humanitarian emergencies through the multilateral system, as well as through direct assistance. Over 40 UAE charities, foundations, government entities, and private companies have provided humanitarian assistance for those in need. Dubai established the International Humanitarian City as a free zone authority in a strategic location to host humanitarian organizations and commercial companies, creating the world's largest humanitarian hub.

Humanitarian challenges have grown to unprecedented proportions in recent years. Each year, there are over 20 major emergencies and hundreds of small crises and disasters, for many of which the response is still underfunded and inadequate. The MENA region is particularly afflicted: in recent years it accounted for more than half of the world's refugees and displaced people and faces all-too-frequent natural disasters from earthquakes and flooding.

The UAE will increase our humanitarian relief efforts in the years ahead, to help people both close to home and across the world. The UAE committed to devoting at least 15% of its total foreign aid to humanitarian purposes, which would make the UAE one of the donors most dedicated to humanitarian assistance.

The UAE humanitarian strategy will include both direct responses to emergencies, as well as contributions to multilateral organizations for strengthening the global humanitarian system.



The Humanitarian Principles

In particular, the UAE will:

- Deliver aid in conformity with the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- Allocate funding in proportion to needs, responding to crises anywhere in the world based on where it can have the greatest impact.
- Link the UAE humanitarian assistance to its development assistance in countries where it has existing partnerships, and to the development work of others in places where it is not present.
- Support governments and communities in responding to crises, and help them to be more resilient when emergencies happen.
- Coordinate its efforts with other active humanitarian actors through the UAE Committee for Coordination of Humanitarian Aid, through the United Nations System and the humanitarian cluster system.
- Ensure accountability for its aid, and involve beneficiaries in the design and evaluation of humanitarian responses.

Response to Emergencies through UAE Humanitarian Organizations and Support for Multilateral Efforts

Responding to emergencies as they happen, will form the largest component of the UAE's humanitarian response – and indeed is a major pillar of the nation's dedication to helping those most in need. Since 1971, the UAE has reached millions of people by providing humanitarian assistance.

UAE official humanitarian aid will increase, and will be deployed both through UAE humanitarian organizations and through international and multilateral organizations, depending on the circumstances of each situation.

UAE humanitarian organizations will be principally responsible for the UAE's bilateral response to emergencies. Humanitarian organizations such as the UAE Red Crescent Authority, the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation, the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Establishment, International Humanitarian City, Dubai Cares, and Sharjah Charity International have been at the forefront of UAE assistance to people threatened by crises and natural disasters. The UAE will continue to rely on UAE humanitarian organizations to be the primary implementers of assistance provided by the UAE government on a bilateral basis.

Government and humanitarian organizations will coordinate their activities through the UAE Committee for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid, and establish joint mechanisms to increase their effectiveness. These mechanisms will include the Committee's operational manual and the UAE Relief Team, which has members from several humanitarian organizations that can be deployed during a crisis. In the coming years, they will take further steps, including forming a joint UAE Field Assessment and Support Team which can quickly create practical plans for the UAE response following an emergency.

Multilateral organizations and pooled funding mechanisms will become increasingly important channels for UAE humanitarian aid. Currently, the UAE supports UNRWA's work with Palestinian refugees, funds the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies to help victims of natural disasters and food insecurity, and partners with UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and OCHA. The UAE contributes to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, as well as Country-Based Pooled Funds and Emergency Response Funds administered by OCHA for specific crises.

The UAE will seek opportunities for international and UAE organizations to work closely together. Such interventions can build the capacity of UAE humanitarian actors and their familiarity with international norms and good practices; they may also help international partners in contexts, especially within the region, where UAE actors might be afforded greater access or have deeper local knowledge.

Forgotten Emergencies

"Forgotten emergencies" are situations which receive less international attention. This negligence can happen because an emergency is not large enough to be noticed abroad, or because a protracted crisis has fallen off the headlines. These emergencies usually fail to attract funding from donors or the general public, and consequently, humanitarian actors are often unable to meet even the most basic human needs of the affected populations.

The UAE will pay special attention to those affected by forgotten emergencies. It will support the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which has a funding window dedicated to underfunded emergencies, as well as other pooled funding mechanisms for neglected crises. Where appropriate, the UAE will also fund UAE or international organizations to provide aid to victims of forgotten emergencies.

Allocation of funding for forgotten emergencies to different channels, i.e., CERF, pooled funds, and direct contributions, will adjust over time based on the performance of each. Current evaluation of humanitarian assistance tends to focus on funds raised or volume of relief goods sent – but it is the hope of the UAE to also measure actual impact, such as the number of lives saved or economic damage diverted. In doing so, the UAE will encourage recipients of UAE funding to be more rigorous and impact-focused in their performance measurement.

Protection of Children

Children are particularly vulnerable during displacement brought on by conflict and natural disasters. Especially in the case in which they are separated from their primary care givers, children can become the target of violent attacks, be forced into military recruitment or trafficked, or simply neglected. Over half of the world's refugee and internally displaced population is made up of children.

The UAE will support programmes that assist and protect children in humanitarian crisis situations, including from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. We will work with families, civil society, government authorities, and the international community to support health, nutrition, child protection and education in emergencies; including psychosocial support and rehabilitation of educational facilities in emergencies and situations of protracted crisis. The UAE strives for a world in which children are safe.

Logistics Hub for Humanitarian Services

The International Humanitarian City (IHC) in the Dubai World Central Logistics District and at the Al Maktoum International Airport has made the UAE into a vital hub for logistics in emergency response. IHC has over 85 members – comprising UN agencies, NGOs, donors and private companies – which mobilize goods and people from the UAE in response to emergencies in all parts of the world. When a disaster strikes, the IHC activates its Emergency Task Force to coordinate and facilitate the response. It also supports the operations of its members and partners through its Global Humanitarian Impact Fund (GHIF). The fund is used by the Emergency Task Force for emergency preparedness and response, to fill humanitarian gaps, and support humanitarian initiatives where IHC and its members can make a difference and can positively impact both the humanitarian community work and the beneficiaries.

While the IHC and other initiatives have improved storage and dispatch of humanitarian relief items, the most difficult challenges are in receiving and distributing goods in the locations where emergencies take place. These are the most difficult logistical challenges due to lack of transportation resources, damages to transport infrastructure, and lack of coordination among relief actors.

The UAE's contributions to humanitarian logistics will be enhanced by:

- Expansion of the membership and services of the International Humanitarian City.
- Support for better logistics to receive and distribute aid in emergency locations, through the deployment of a fleet of emergency response vehicles – especially trucks and helicopters– that are often in short supply during crises, and through a logistics team that can be deployed rapidly to where a crisis is happening.
- Provision of technologies to support responses to disasters and conflicts, which could include the use of geographic information systems to monitor developing humanitarian crises and plan responses, satellite telecoms for humanitarian workers, solar energy mini- grids for remote refugee camps, or applications of drones in humanitarian situations.

At the 2018 World Government Summit, the UAE created and launched the Humanitarian Logistics Data Bank. The information-sharing platform facilitates the collection and sharing of data in real-time on prepositioned aid and humanitarian assets, dedicated to emergency preparedness and response, helping to make emergency responses more timely and cost-efficient. The Databank will employ automated tracking of aid movements based on customs data from ports, airports, and other entry points. It will provide the global humanitarian community with information on the exact positioning of critical relief items such as food, medicine and shelter, making them accessible to all cooperating parties. This platform will improve collaboration and will help avoid bottlenecks in ports and airports.

The UAE will aim to become also a centre for research, dialogue and knowledge-sharing on humanitarian issues. It will organize forums and conferences aimed at bringing together the humanitarian community to share experiences, build relationships and discuss emerging challenges and solutions. Forums will include the annual Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference (DIHAD). The UAE will also support innovation and research in humanitarian assistance, including new technologies for use in humanitarian situations, identification of emerging needs and trends, and best practices for managing humanitarian organizations.

Local Capacity-Building for Emergency Response

Crisis-affected developing country governments frequently are left outside the international humanitarian architecture, for lack of confidence in their capacities. Less than 5% of humanitarian aid from international donors goes to crisis-affected governments. However, more and more countries are building disaster management capabilities to respond to crises within their borders.

The UAE will support governments and other local actors in building their capacity to respond to emergencies and work with other donors to enable more international humanitarian aid to flow through national emergency response agencies. This work requires capacity-building programs for national and local emergency response agencies; channelling some UAE humanitarian aid through local governments and actors, who have demonstrated capabilities and accountability.

The UAE will develop academic programs on humanitarian and international development. This will be in collaboration with UAE universities and academies like UAE University and Emirates Diplomatic Academy, which will benefit the UAE as well as the region and the international community.

Stabilization

UAE stabilization activities help conflict-affected countries move on from situations of acute crisis and large-scale violence. Stabilization activities occur as the initial response to violence, in circumstances where the capacity of local political structures to manage conflict are unable to function.

UAE stabilization activities cover civilian actions that give people the basics required for life. This includes: mine removal and restoration of essential services. UAE stabilization activities also include the transition phase to post-conflict that paves the way for longer-term recovery. UAE stabilization activities occur only in conflict-affected countries and comprise a cross-government approach – nationally and internationally, which requires close coordination between diplomacy, humanitarian, development, security, and justice. UAE stabilization activities are not conflict prevention methods or antidotes to longer-term state fragility issues. UAE stabilization activities do not include reconstruction or development activities. UAE stabilization activities do not occur in countries with some degree of political instability or economic challenges.

UAE stabilization activities adhere to internationally recognized principles of central stabilization:

- **Protecting the means of survival:** UAE stabilization activities address any immediate security deficit to build space for peaceful political processes and – in time – support the restoration of long-term security, the rule of law, and access to justice. The direct provision of security by external actors alone will not in itself achieve stabilization. Stabilization activities should focus on addressing key obstacles to the emergence of a stabilizing political deal. Essential service delivery is a vital part of protecting the means of survival and forms an inherent part of stabilization activities. Such engagement must be coordinated with other actors, including humanitarians.

- **Promoting and supporting a political process to reduce violence:** Stabilization activities must work to support and foster political deals and bargains among key conflict elites and actors. These are vital to securing reductions in violent conflict, building support for more formal peace agreements, and facilitating stable transitions out of conflict. Stabilization activities should be locally owned and require the buy-in of local elites to be effective. The selection of parties supported, however, carries risks, in that it may empower some warring parties to ‘capture the state’ and exclude wider political, social and economic participation in the post-conflict state.
- **Preparing a foundation for longer term stability:** There is no set period for stabilization activities—they can range from months to years – but are always transitory activities contributing to the wider goal of creating the conditions for long-term stability. Shorter-term stabilization interventions and other activities to build longer-term stability will often run simultaneously and overlap with other approaches.

Additionally, UAE stabilization activities adopt a conflict-sensitive approach, which ensures that activities do not inadvertently fuel or exacerbate conflict, or sow the seeds for future conflict. As well as a gender-sensitive approach, which accounts for how gender norms and roles shape the effects, causes, and drivers of conflict.

The UAE will support international alliances and mutual funds to restore stability in countries within conflict zones in order to achieve internal and international stability and recovery after war and destruction. This comes with the support of the affected countries to move to the stage of reconstruction and development. The United Arab Emirates participates in the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh and co-chairs the Stabilization Support Group with both the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America. Other important tools for stabilization include the Syrian Recovery Trust Fund (SRTF), established by the United Arab Emirates, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America to support reconstruction projects and develop the stabilization plan in Syria; and the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) in Iraq administered by UNDP.

Countering Violent Extremism

Foreign assistance will play a vital part in the nation's efforts to counter extremism, by helping to remove conditions that allow extremism to take hold. Country Partnerships in fragile states will change people's lives for the better, giving them hope for the future, through reducing poverty, stimulating economic growth, providing protection, education, and employment opportunities, improving public services, enhancing access to justice, and strengthening national authorities in partnership with UN agencies and other donors.

These efforts will complement other UAE initiatives to tackle extremism, including Hedayah, the first-ever international centre for training, collaboration and research on countering violent extremism, and the Sawab Center, a US-UAE partnership to produce counter-propaganda, especially online, to reduce the appeal of extremists among young people.

Private Sector Engagement and Strengthening Economic Ties to Developing Countries

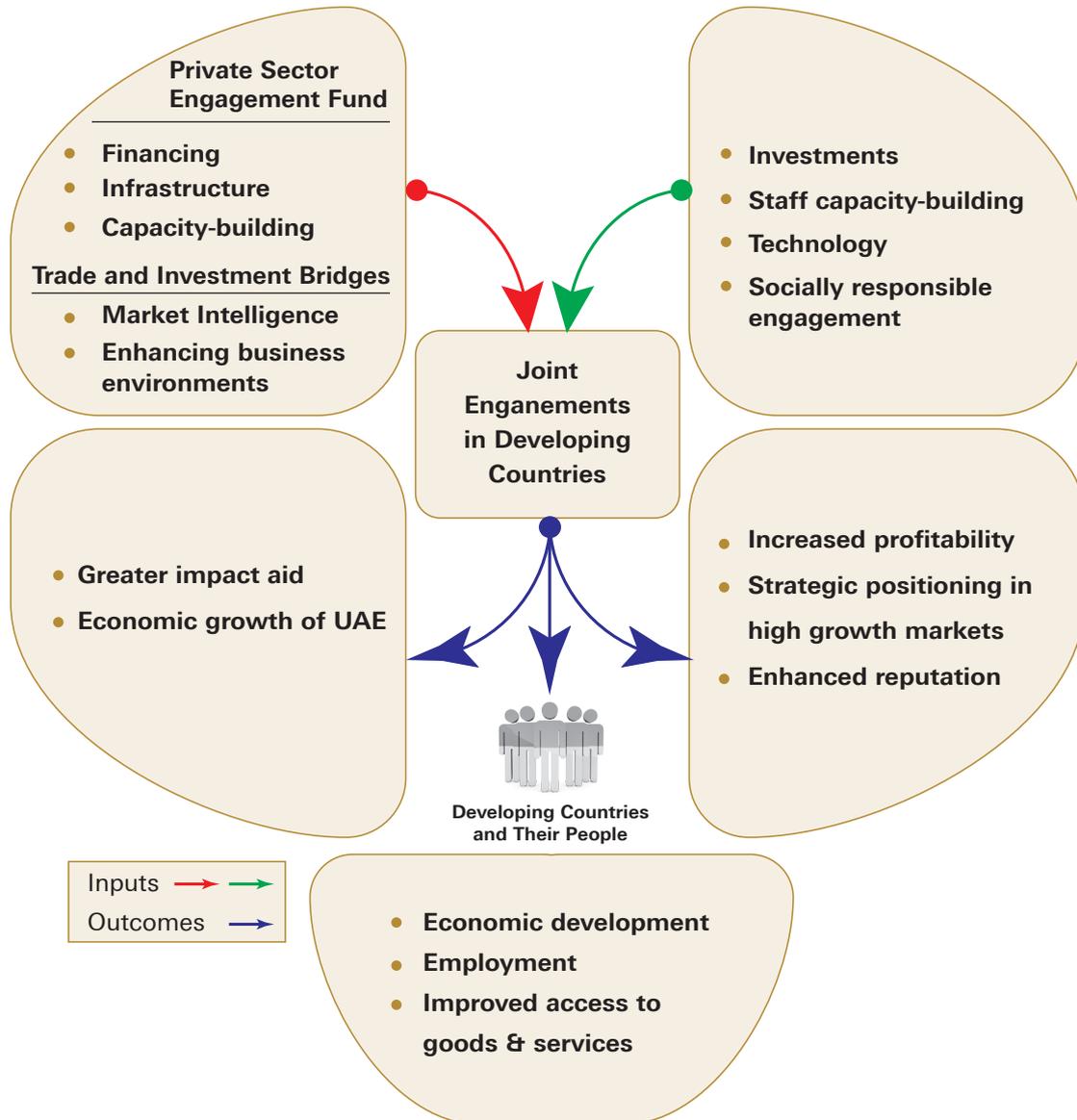
Barriers to Private Sector Engagement

Economic growth generated by the private sector is essential to truly sustainable development

– UAE-based companies can complement the foreign aid given by the UAE government. No country has escaped poverty with development aid alone. Businesses, including foreign companies, provide jobs, training and knowledge transfer; develop and introduce new technologies; and create wealth in a community through purchases and greater tax revenues. In recognition, the Sustainable Development Goals include objectives to increase foreign direct investment to and expand aid for trade programs in, developing countries.

UAE foreign assistance will encourage trade and investment by UAE-based companies in the developing world, by addressing the barriers cited by businesses:

- Political and operational risks – both actual risks and perceptions, which often over- estimate the actual likelihood of the risk.
- Lack of access to financing for investments in emerging markets.
- Absence of local knowledge about market demands and good partners.
- Inadequate infrastructure – e.g., reliable electricity supply, good roads, efficient ports, and airports – to enable the business to succeed.
- Unavailability of sufficient numbers of trained or educated workers.
- National regulatory systems that make it hard to operate efficiently.



Trade and Investment Bridges

In relevant partner countries, the UAE will strengthen bilateral business links and work to overcome systems-level barriers to trade, and investment. These “trade and investment bridges” will form part of the Country Partnerships, described earlier, for selected developing countries where there is a strong potential for economic engagement. This will be the UAE’s primary approach to provide “aid for trade.”

The main mechanisms will fall into two categories:

1. Enhancing the environment for business, trade and investment, through supporting the reform of business regulations, negotiating trade agreements, double taxation and investment protection treaties, helping to improve the partner country’s customs processes and capacity to implement World Trade Organization agreements; and supporting adoption of import/export specifications for commonly traded items.
2. Exchanging information between businesses in the UAE and the partner country, through trade and investment missions, including missions from the partner country to the UAE, and forming joint economic committees involving the national governments and relevant companies. Some of these missions can be organized through the UAETAP.

Trade and investment bridges will be designed in close consultation with the UAE private sector. UAE-based companies will be asked to list the most important barriers to investment and trade in each country, and also to identify future developing countries with which to create trade and investment bridges.

Small and Medium Enterprises

The UAE will be promoting innovation and entrepreneurship among local businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs). UAE will strengthen the partner government’s efforts to create a stable and balanced economy while also opening job opportunities for youth, empowering women, and building the capacity of entrepreneurs and local institutions. UAE will also create regional innovation centers that will contain business incubators focusing on accelerating technology. The centers will also provide training and consulting services on topics such as hosting companies and securing financing. UAE regional innovation centers will bring dignity to our partner countries by promoting of a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the developing world. The first UAE regional innovation center was announced in 2019 by the Khalifa Fund for Enterprise Development (KFED); the Mohamed bin Zayed Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Dakar, Senegal, which serving West Africa.

Foreign Assistance Partners

UAE organizations, foundations, and charities have led the way in foreign assistance. They represent the UAE's culture of generosity and serve as ambassadors for the UAE vision of a peaceful and prosperous world through foreign assistance. There are now more than 45 such foundations and charities, and they have capabilities and experience in many sectors and are working on vital issues as varied as emergency response, women's empowerment, infrastructure, blindness, disability services, children's education, sponsorship of orphans, and promoting the teachings of moderate Islam.

The UAE government will support UAE organizations in their development, humanitarian, and charity work abroad, in multiple ways:

- Engaging organizations in planning and delivering the UAE's official assistance, in countries and sectors where they are well-positioned to contribute effectively.
- Developing a UAE Foreign Assistance brand and coordinating its use by UAE organizations – in conjunction with their brands – to maximize the visibility of their and the UAE's aid.
- Producing an annual report on the work of UAE organizations, and including information on their activities in a database which is accessible online.

Multilateral Institutions and International Partnerships

The multilateral system is an essential instrument for coordinating international action in the face of global challenges; consequently, the UAE is an active participant in, and contributor to, the multilateral system. As a result, the UAE contributes to UN agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), and regional organizations. Additionally, the UAE is a shareholder in a number of development banks and regional financial institutions.

As part of its foreign assistance strategy, the UAE will expand engagement with relevant and effective multilateral organizations. The UAE will double its core contributions to multilateral organizations in the coming years. Also, it will create strategic partnerships with selected organizations whose work is relevant to UAE foreign assistance priorities and which are effective in supporting developing countries.

For these partnerships, the UAE will:

- Define a strategy, including clear objectives for what to achieve from the partnership.
- Seek to join the Boards and donor liaison groups for these organizations, to influence their strategic direction positively.
- Provide funding, including voluntary core contributions and support for specific activities.
- Make the partnership go beyond the purely financial – for example, seconding Emirati staff to the organization or pursuing joint initiatives.

In addition to the larger-scale partnerships, the UAE will maintain its current memberships of regional and international organizations.

The UAE will actively seek to deliver its foreign assistance in concert with other government donors. Three mechanisms will be used:

- Where the UAE has a large-scale Country Partnership for Development, it will design the Country Partnership to complement the activities of other donors and will deliver its aid closely with others; the UAE country team will participate in donor coordination mechanisms at the national level.
- Many of the important initiatives that the UAE plans to undertake under this policy will require multi-donor partnerships.
- The UAE will also participate in multi-donor funds and initiatives launched by other countries, where relevant to UAE foreign assistance priorities, or where it can contribute particular expertise.

The UAE will also work with selected INGOs and civil society where they can enhance the effectiveness of its development and humanitarian assistance. INGOs and civil society are effective partners and well-informed about political, economic, and social realities on the ground, and hence better able to design and implement at the project level. The UAE will conduct careful reviews of potential INGO partners – especially smaller ones at local levels – to select those that are effective and accountable.

The UAE will host international initiatives and events which have development or humanitarian themes. Vision 2021 directs that the UAE will build on its track record of hosting international institutions and events. The country hosts the International Renewable Energy Agency, the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture, and the Arab Monetary Fund. Many global events take place here. For example, the annual World Government Summit brings together public sector leaders to discuss how to make governments more effective and responsive to citizen needs. The Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, including the World Future Energy Summit, the International Water Summit, and the World Green Economy Summit are important events in the ongoing debates on creating a sustainable future. Expo 2020 will take place in Dubai, and Expo Live will identify and support social innovations that are connected to the Expo themes of opportunity, mobility, and sustainability and that have the potential to benefit communities.

Expo 2020 Dubai's Social Innovation Programme: Expo Live

Expo Live is an innovation and partnership programme launched by Expo 2020 Dubai to make a lasting social impact by funding, accelerating, and promoting creative solutions that improve lives while preserving our planet.

With a firm belief that "innovation can come from anywhere, to everyone", Expo Live has the mandate to showcase the impact of social innovation from around the world, giving a voice to grassroots solutions that improve lives.

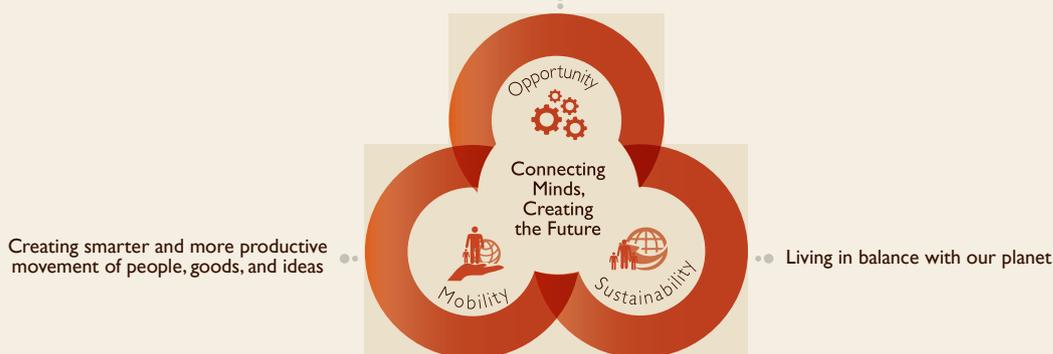
Expo Live taps into the convening power of a World Expo to enable problem solvers from around the world to come together to promote innovation and build partnerships, creating a social impact leading up to, during, and after Expo 2020 Dubai.

Expo Live sees innovation not as the process of generating ideas, but as the relentless commitment to solving problems that impact communities and the progress of humanity.

To date, Expo Live supports 120 Global Innovators coming from 65 countries.



Unlocking the potential within individuals and communities to shape a better future



Technical Cooperation

Knowledge sharing and building human and institutional capacity are essential in addressing global challenges. Consequently, technical assistance will form an important part of the UAE's foreign assistance – including in-country partnerships, global thematic programs, humanitarian assistance, and private sector development.

Technical assistance activities will be organized and coordinated through the United Arab Emirates' Technical Assistance Program (UAETAP). This program, which aims to build upon the UAE's existing efforts, seeks to harness key learnings from the UAE's development experience. UAETAP brings together a range of relevant UAE government agencies and companies, across five priority areas where the UAE has comparative advantages and unique expertise: mobility and infrastructure development, energy and sustainability, government effectiveness, services (including finance, free zones, telecoms and tourism), and women and girls' empowerment, which is cross-cutting.

The UAE will share its experiences in building an effective government through the UAETAP along the following priority areas:

- **Expert missions:** To countries where technical assistance is required in particular areas, focusing on the partner country's needs and priorities. The missions will conduct a comprehensive study of the needs of the partner country to deliver the UAE's best practices that are most relevant to the partner country's needs and priorities.
- **Training courses and scholarships:** The UAETAP encourages partner countries to participate in the training courses and workshops to learn from the UAE's experience. Additionally, UAE universities and colleges will offer scholarships to selected government officials.
- **Customized programmes:** To meet the needs of partner countries. In addition to the four main priority areas, the UAETAP will make tailored courses and training programs upon request to meet the needs of the partner countries.
- **Consultations and study visits: In collaboration with partner entities,** the UAETAP will organize training tours in various fields of expertise for the partner country delegations to observe the UAE's best practices directly.
- **Align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),**
- **Facilitate south-south cooperation and triangular cooperation,** by working with multiple countries together so that we can learn from each other, as well as from the UAE's experience.
- **Collaborate with international organizations and other donors,** which focuses on helping to improve the quality of governance and public services.

Governance, Organization, and Performance Measurement for UAE Foreign Assistance

Governance and Organization

The UAE Cabinet will determine the overall direction for UAE foreign assistance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) will be responsible for oversight and coordination. Committees with other entities will be created also for this purpose..

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) is charged with leading the planning and coordination of UAE foreign assistance. MOFAIC will lead in developing policies, coordinating implementation of the UAE foreign assistance policy, conducting evaluations, and reporting on UAE assistance. UAE donor organizations will be responsible for directing funds to programs in accordance with the key priorities outlined in the foreign assistance policy, and implementing development and humanitarian programmes. Implementation of these programs will require MOFAIC and other organizations to increase their technical staff capacity gradually as the scale of foreign assistance increases.

Performance Measurement

The UAE Cabinet will monitor closely the performance of UAE foreign assistance in delivering its purposes and guiding principles. Through a set of objective indicators for each of the four purposes of UAE foreign assistance – improving lives and reducing poverty in less fortunate communities; promoting stability, peace, and prosperity in the region; building closer ties with other countries and enhancing the UAE’s reputation; and deepening economic ties with developing countries.

Each major component of the policy will have an associated set of performance indicators. There should be clear, logical frameworks linking the outputs of these program components and the overall objectives and goals.

Evaluations of results and impact will be conducted regularly for each component; these will be informed by monitoring key data on and conducting evaluations of, specific projects and activities. All activities will be tracked through standardized monitoring processes so that data can be aggregated across all UAE foreign assistance. Evaluations will be required for all programs or projects above a certain value, and for a sample of smaller programs and projects.

Abbreviations

CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
DIHAD	Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference & Exhibition
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHIF	Global Humanitarian Impact Fund
IHC	International Humanitarian City
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IT	Information Technology
MICAD	Ministry of International Cooperation and Development
MoFAIC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OCFA	Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAETAP	United Arab Emirates Technical Assistance Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization