



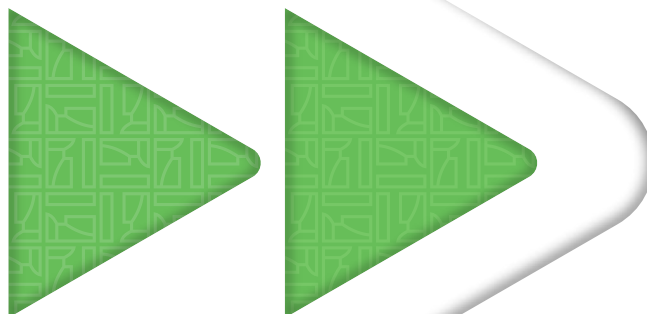
الهيئة الاتحادية  
للتنافسية والإحصاء  
FEDERAL COMPETITIVENESS  
AND STATISTICS AUTHORITY



United Arab Emirates

# Policy in Action

International Humanitarian City  
The Competitiveness of Compassion



Fast-Forwarding the Nation  
Issue 10 | 2017

Federal Authority | هيئة اتحادية



“

Foreign aid and 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.

”

The late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan



## Policy in Action Series

The Policy in Action Series is published by the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (FCSA). The series is intended to raise public awareness and stimulate discussion on key areas of competitiveness & policy work related to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (FCSA), is a UAE federal government entity created by Presidential Decree No.6 of the year 2015. The authority's mission is to strengthen and enhance UAE's national data and competitiveness capacities. The FCSA is one of the official government sources for national statistics and is one of the government representatives on matters related to national competitiveness. The FCSA aims at improving the UAE's global competitiveness performance by working with stakeholders on defining and implementing reforms and policies across sectors.



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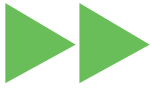


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# 1. Introduction: Achieving Prosperity and Sharing it

Competitiveness is all about creating wealth through increased productivity. Amongst its many definitions, the United Arab Emirates has adopted a view where competitiveness should lead to prosperity by translating into higher quality of life for its inhabitants. Despite having achieved strong economic success since it has gained its independence in 1971, the UAE has held steadfast to its values and traditions, especially that of generosity. In particular, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founder and first President, was well-known for his concern for the well-being of the population of the UAE, as well as that of other countries. He initiated a foreign policy based on aid and cooperation that is still influencing the country's international relations policy and joint development to this day.

This issue of Policy in Action, International Humanitarian City: The Competitiveness of Compassion begins with an examination of the roots of generosity and altruism

in human societies, and attempts to shed light on the inception of the International Humanitarian City, which may be viewed as an initiative at the intersection of competitiveness and compassion. The article then explores how structurally, the International Humanitarian City stands as another vivid testament to the Nation's ability to develop economic clusters<sup>1</sup> in various sectors, which is a hallmark of competitive economies. We take a close-up view of the many dimensions and attributes of the International Humanitarian City that are typical of clusters as defined by Michael Porter, and which place the International Humanitarian City squarely on the world map. The article concludes with a view to the future, as we attempt to identify a few emerging technology trends in the UAE and internationally, that will likely have an important impact on the Humanitarian sector.

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<sup>1</sup> A business or industrial cluster is a concentration of businesses and institutions in a particular sector that are closely interconnected. Typically these firms and institutions are physically located in close proximity, allowing networks to develop with opportunities to share knowledge and create for value added goods and services.



## 2. Altruism

### **A shared value, from individuals to international organizations**

Altruism is deeply rooted in human nature, viewed unanimously as a positive value among countless cultures and religions. Scientists have explored the reasons why individuals would undergo the cost of being altruist, while not deriving immediate or certain rewards for their deeds. Neuroscientists have found that such behavior is engrained in humans, and more specifically, they uncovered that being altruistic induces a positive response in primal parts of the brain.<sup>2</sup> Such altruistic behavior has even been defined as a marker of the so-called Millennial generation, whose quest for purpose distinguishes them from previous generations, leading them to pursue meaning in several spheres of their lives, including influencing their choices for employment.<sup>3</sup>

This trend of altruism is not merely an individual phenomenon—it may be observed across several layers of society, including its institutionalization in the private sector. The emergence of social entrepreneurship is evidence of an increasing emphasis given to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs by more established companies. Underscoring the importance of a sense of corporate responsibility, mainstream business media such as Forbes, which ranks companies according to their commitment to CSR.<sup>4</sup>

In a similar vein, governments dedicate significant resources to foreign populations, sometimes without even possessing significant links with the recipient countries.

In the case of the UAE, on top of its generous international aid programs and many homegrown NGOs, has leveraged a finely honed ability to create free zones for economic development, and parlayed it into the humanitarian sector. In an interesting approach, the government

has adopted the same method to the non-profit and international organization sector through the creation of International Humanitarian City. With the aim of creating a humanitarian ecosystem, the International Humanitarian City has been created on the basis of blueprint of a cluster, to benefit from efficiencies and advantages that such a structure provides the players that constitute it.

At the International level, the Sustainable Development Goals constitute a major platform, and a policy umbrella to channel international development aid efforts. SDGs propose long-term solutions for humanitarian aid linked to poverty alleviation and national development. The SDG framework also encourages countries to develop contingency plans for catastrophic events to complement the longer-term development efforts. 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 in 2012. The UAE was a member of the UN Open Working Group, which developed the SDGs<sup>5</sup> and created a Committee for SDG, which mission is it to ensure participation from every strata of society in promoting sustainable development in the UAE. To track performance, it has already allocated ownership for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to different government entities.

2 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/27/AR2007052701056.html>

3 <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/sep/14/millennials-work-purpose-linkedin-survey>

4 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/karstenstrauss/2017/09/13/the-10-companies-with-the-best-csr-reputations-in-2017/#2d6ec68c546b>

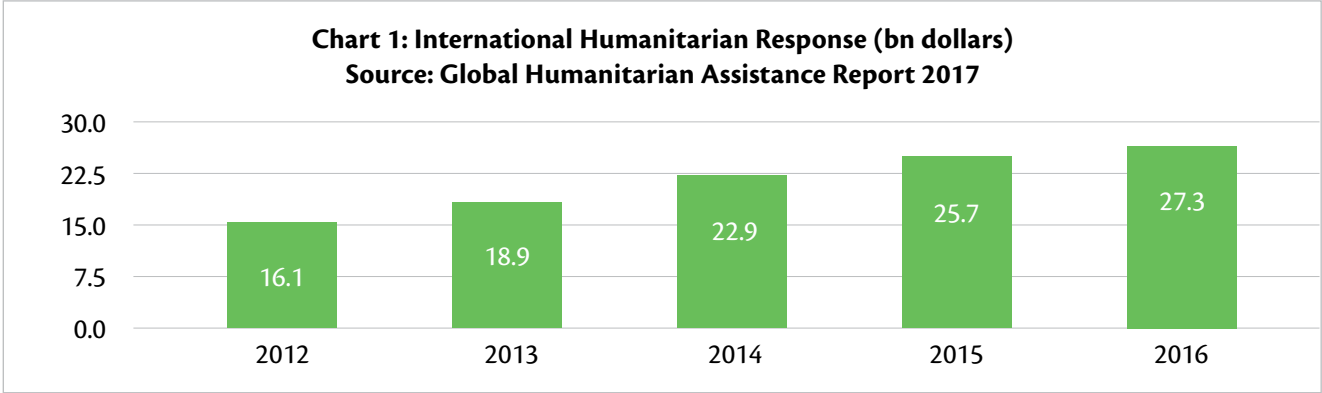
5 Promoting Global Prosperity and Peace "UAE Policy for Foreign Assistance 2017 – 2021", Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, United Arab Emirates

**The different forms of aid**

International assistance comes in a variety of forms. The spectrum ranges from immediate assistance to help populations facing unpredictable threats, to technical and assistance and aid for longer-term development. The prevailing wisdom is to contribute to a country’s long-term development through programs tackling a broad range of issues such as basic infrastructure development, education, health care, agriculture, and other areas of a country so as to allow countries become more resilient when struck by disasters.

Despite this general consensus on a long-term approach, there is often a need to react to crises in an expedient way.

Humanitarian crises, either natural or man-triggered, of unprecedented proportions in recent times, necessitate rapid action. The global humanitarian assistance has grown at a 15% yearly rate between 2012 and 2016 (See Chart 1). In the aftermath of a crisis, for instance, emergency teams are mobilized from different countries to assist in rescue efforts and provide disaster relief. In light of the need to respond to a variety of crises’ there has been a global network of organizations operating under the United Nations and whose mission it is to provide humanitarian aid, disaster relief and other types of assistance.



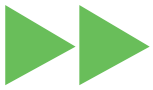


### The Sustainable Development Goals

After the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations have followed suite and launched the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a universal call to action to end poverty, reduce all forms of inequalities, protect the planet and ensure that all people live in peace and prosperity. The Program identifies 17 broad human development goals that all countries should strive to reach by 2030. These 17 goals are ranging from access to basic human needs such as food, water, education ... to preserving the environment and achieving balanced economic development. Each goal is then associated and cascaded into Key Performance Indicators that support tracking the progress and define specific objectives to be reached by each country. The two first goals are related to humanitarian causes and aim at eliminating poverty and

hunger. Many other goals are also related to humanitarian, such as ensuring access to clean water and sanitation or to health and education. It even highlights the necessity to develop a more peaceful equitable world as conflicts are often the source of humanitarian tragedies. Overall, there are 28 KPIs that are related to a humanitarian theme such as eliminating extreme poverty, or reducing the number of victims of conflicts. This is more than 10% of the 230 indicators, reflecting the importance the international community is giving to the humanitarian sector. Another salient feature is the promotion of collaboration and knowledge sharing between countries. The SDGs thus constitute the overarching platform for aid and cooperation at the international level and symbolize the universality of Altruism at the highest level of human organizations.

	<b>Goal 1:</b> End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
	<b>Goal 4:</b> Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.
	<b>Goal 5:</b> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
	<b>Goal 8:</b> Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
	<b>Goal 9:</b> Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
	<b>Goal 10:</b> Reduce inequality within and among countries
	<b>Goal 16:</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
	<b>Goal 17:</b> Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.



### 3. UAE's Culture of Giving



Historically, altruism and generosity have consistently been at the core of the Bedouin tradition and identity. Magnanimity, hospitality and providing succor to distressed individuals, despite the scarce resources, has long been one of the major traits of Bedouin culture, likely springing from a necessity to improve the chances of people's survival in the harsh and unforgiving desert environment. These cultural traditions are buttressed by a religious obligation and social imperative to perform tithe known as Zakat, whereby a portion of an individual's wealth is given to provide charity and care for the less well off. This ingrained tradition of benevolence underpins

the factors that have led the UAE to become a generous donor and provider of international aid and development assistance. At the individual level the leaders of the country have maintained the ancient tradition of the "diwan" whereby they would receive individuals in need for assistance and help them solve their issues. Likewise, the development of many government related charities have been inspired by this culture. At the international level, the UAE has generously awarded funds to build hospitals, schools or infrastructure to help other countries.

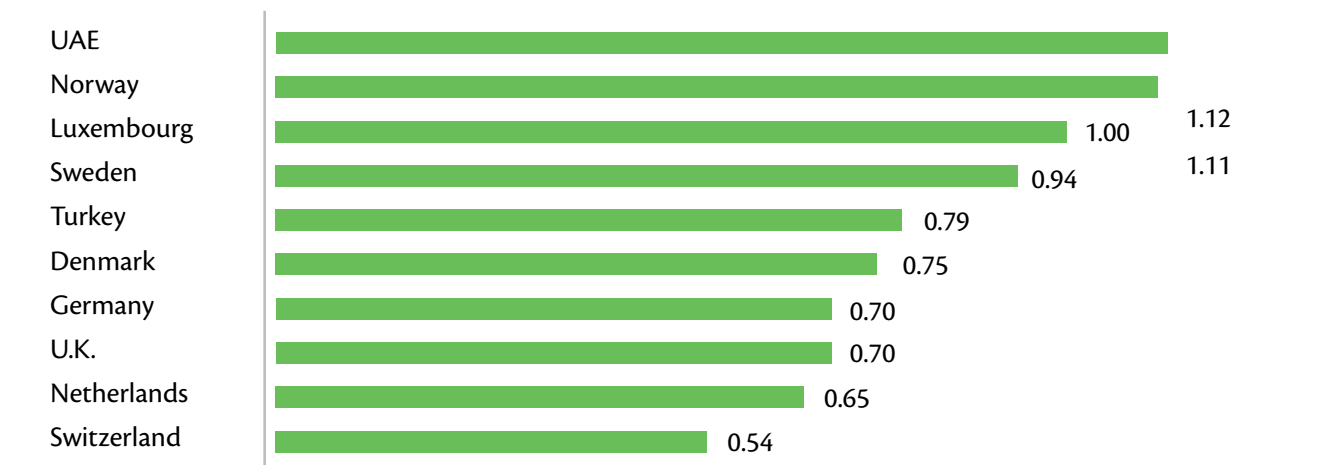


## 4. From Culture to Institution

Given the strong culture of sharing, and giving, it is not surprising that the UAE embedded these values in its intuitions —institutionalizing a culture of generosity and giving through many initiatives. His Highness Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founder and first President of the UAE, is a figure of generosity and under his leadership, the oil windfall was not only used to develop the country. Rather, significant amounts were deployed abroad in a generous bid to help struggling countries. UAE made international aid and assistance a pillar of the nation’s foreign policy. Today, the UAE is the number

one country in generosity in the world as recognized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Moreover, conscious of the increased need for aid the UAE has announced that it will augment its aid 15% yearly for the four years to come, to double its non-earmarked assistance by 2020. These different commitments have been formalized in the 2015-2020 strategic plan.<sup>6</sup> The UAE is present in one way or another across the spectrum of donations, from long term development to emergency relief.

Chart 2: Net overseas development assistance as a percentage of GNI 2016 (OECD)



Moreover, the UAE has launched two unique and distinct initiatives to encourage and celebrate generosity. Since 2015, UAE has made a movement in dedicating every year to a cause. The year 2017 has been announced as the “Year of Giving” and the whole nation was invited to contribute to the cause. In alignment with the program government entities, companies, schools and individuals were encouraged to donate to charities, to care for the deprived and to create initiatives serving the theme. The leadership has indeed made this a priority and included specific Key

Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the strategic level of each Federal Government organization to ensure proper implementation. Furthermore, the 19th day of Ramadan was announced as the “Zayed Humanitarian Day” to pay a tribute to the founder of the nation in order to highlight the importance of acting with generosity in the spiritual month of Ramadan. During this day, national and international entities celebrate giving.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.un.int/uae/news/uae-set-aside-15pc-projected-4-year-budget-humanitarian-assistance>

The Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (FCSA) responded immediately to the occasion and dedicated this day for a food donation campaign in which the entire staff of over 100 people assembled and filled boxes with food for those in need, and then distributed them in different communities around the city. This was a great opportunity for collaborated team work that reinforces the sense of unity within the organization and lifts up even more the spirits as everyone brings in his own little contribution.

Finally, the Government and its leaders have often enacted the creation of organizations whose aim is to carry out humanitarian works locally and internationally. Dubai Cares and Noor Dubai are examples of such initiatives. Moreover, the International Humanitarian City is a major player in planting the seeds of compassion on fertile soil with the optimization of government support. International Humanitarian City has become a major base for the outreach efforts of several United Nations Organization that it hosts.



Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority and national statistics centers' employees preparing food boxes during Zayed Humanitarian Day 2017.



## 5. The Creation of International Humanitarian City

The International Humanitarian City was launched in 2003 and merged with Dubai Aid City following the issuance of Law Number (6) of 2007 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid, Vice President of UAE and Ruler of Dubai. The International Humanitarian City (IHC) is the one and only humanitarian free zone worldwide hosting a community of more than 60 humanitarian entities, International NPOs, Intergovernmental organizations and commercial companies. The International Humanitarian City takes advantage of Dubai's excellence in transport, logistics, trade and innovation, and enables aid agencies to reach victims of crises. The Dubai government leveraged its experience in free zone development to build, what, can in many ways be seen as a humanitarian cluster. The following points summarize the main services provided by the IHC:



### Facilitation Of Emergency Preparedness, Response & Evacuation

- Coordination with all members to respond together to selected worldwide emergencies
- Provision of selected airlifts free of charge to transport aid and evacuate staff members
- Provision of an evacuation centre to host staff evacuated from emergencies



### Licensing

- A free-zone authority, which provides cost efficient licensing to UN Agencies, Non Profit Organizations, Intergovernmental Organizations and Commercial Companies
- One-stop-shop for all government services, including assistance with customs formalities and visas issuance
- Many benefits and special discounted rates with suppliers offered to IHC's licensed members



### Facilities

- A 120,000 sqm secure, state of the art, and cost efficient warehouse and office space
- Meeting, conference and training facilities accommodating up to 300 individuals



### Visibility And Partnership Support

- Potential access to strategic partnerships with private sector and government entities, which benefit our members, and assist them with their fundraising.
- Assistance with awareness to major initiatives.
- Support from the UAE leadership to major humanitarian projects and initiatives

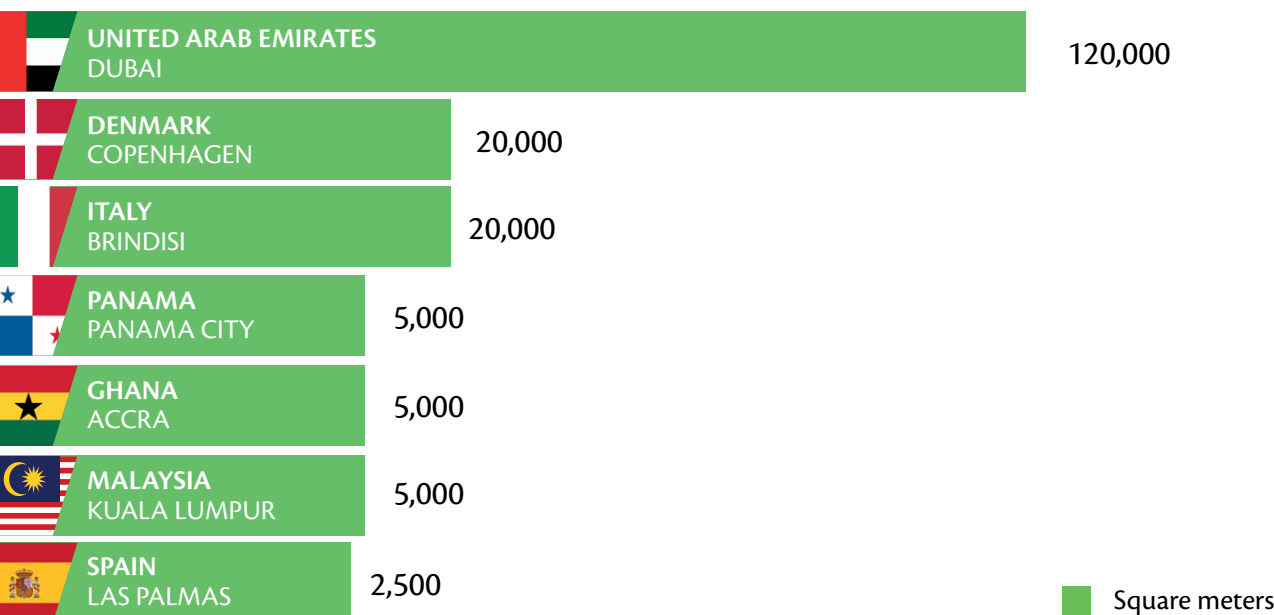


### A Humanitarian Community

- A City gathering together humanitarians, foundations, commercial companies, young entrepreneurs, innovators and talents emerging from Masters and Humanitarian Studies
- Opportunity to coordinate, network, and exchange information with the best humanitarian intelligence
- The development of a humanitarian data bank & innovation lab



Chart 3: The IHC is the largest humanitarian logistics center in the world



International Humanitarian City, Dubai, Annual Report 2016

Due to the sharp rise in the need for aid globally, the needs of IHC members have grown respectfully. To accompany their demands, the International Humanitarian City have embarked on an expansion plan, which will result in tripling the size of the City to reach 360,000 square meters making it the largest IHC in the world. Consequently, the IHC hosts the largest stock by value. Their stock includes their member’s items, including food, health, agriculture, protection, emergency shelter and telecoms, and a wide range of other logistics supplies, to respond to the world’s natural and/or man-made disasters.

The IHC contains a wide range of significant members, such as MSF UAE, which is the primary logistical hub providing medical assistance to people based in Afghanistan. The World Food Programme, which dispatched through HRD Dubai 240 MT of needed relief items, most shipped thanks to a Boeing 747 flight generously donated by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai which was

later shipped to areas in need. Another member is the World Health Organization, which provided Iraq with 27 mobile medical clinics and 30 ambulances. The agency also trained health personnel to ensure provision of quality health care. In addition to many international organizations such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Jordan Health Aid, UNHCR, AL-Basar International Foundation, DFID and many more.

The total number of shipments delivered for emergency responses by IHC’s community members from 2011 to 2016 climbed to 8,211 worth AED 2,298 billion - \$625.9 million 19. Moreover, one of many examples of IHC work in 2017 was the aircraft sent to Haiti which carried more than 90 metric tons of key relief items, valued at more than USD 194,000 (AED 712,500). This was made available by the International Humanitarian City in association with the World Food Programme, the Catholic Relief Services, and CARE during the hurricane Irma.

**Chart 4: The number and value of shipments of the International Humanitarian City Members' Emergency Responses**

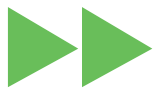


International Humanitarian City, Dubai, Annual Report 2016

The concentration of players in this field attracts expertise in this domain and can benefit from UAE's diverse work force blending over 190 nationalities. When evaluating a country according to the power of the languages that are spoken in it,<sup>7</sup> the UAE comes on top due to the significant and diverse expatriate population that is welcomed in

the country. This could provide all sort of benefits for humanitarian aid, to start with, organizations from the International Humanitarian City can hire staff with the requisite knowledge of the areas and culture, as well as language proficiency of the different countries where they need to operate.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/12/these-are-the-most-powerful-languages-in-the-world/>

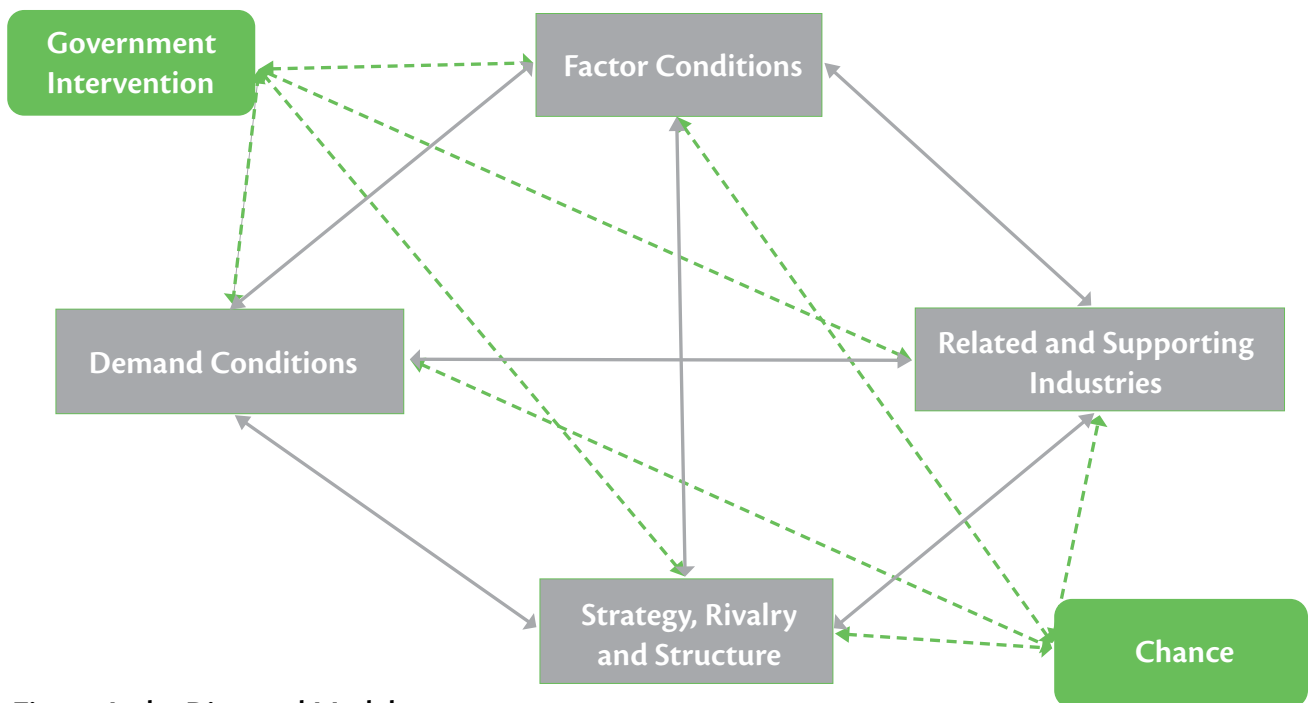


## 6. Clusters as a Pathway towards Competitiveness

### a. Porter's Diamond Model

Economists have discovered that in terms of competitiveness the world, far from being flat, was on the contrary, spiky. Instead of uniform distribution of companies across geographies, competitive companies tend surprisingly to rise in limited geographic areas with a high concentration of rivals and talent. Notable

examples are the media cluster in New York, the Silicon Valley, and the Milano textile and fashion cluster to name a few. Michael Porter in particular studied this phenomenon and identified the key factors determining the development of such an organization and developed the Diamond model which provides a framework for understanding and analyzing the factors underpinning the evolution and the performance of clusters (Figure 1).



### Figure 1: the Diamond Model

Factor conditions correspond to the elements that govern the inputs either directly such as human capital and finance or indirectly such as quality of infrastructure that affects the industry. Regulations are also important and can hinder competition and create rents, or, on the contrary trigger competition and lead to the establishment of efficient markets. An important factor is the availability of academic institutions that provide training in fields useful for the given sector as well as

researchers whose work and know-how can be captured by companies and become the source of innovative products and services. Moreover, the linkages between academia is an important and source of continued innovation. Finally natural endowments (natural resources, location, etc.) constitute an important element to understand the difference that could arise through two seemingly identical clusters.



Strategy, rivalry and structure capture the intensity of competition and the relationships at the firm level. Intense competition creates an edge for firms willing to export as they can reach higher levels of efficiency and develop better management practices. The presence of giants might also provide an anchor around which a whole ecosystem of providers develops. It allows as well entrepreneurs to find buyers for their companies that can take it to the next level, once they prove the worthiness of their ventures.

Demand conditions are key in shaping an industry through either the sophistication of customers or the size of the market for instance. Sophisticated users drive the improvement of good and increase their quality so as they dominate local products when they are exported to a foreign market. Brand managers can also use the sophistication of a market to promote it abroad especially in fashion and luxury products. French perfumes and Italian shoes are but two examples. Likewise, supplying to the Army can be used as a seal of approval for quality. For instance Jeep vehicles owe their reputation to the fact that they were used by the US army. Market size, allows economies of scale, which make the products cheaper to produce and more competitive when exported. It can also provide an advantage as it offers the ability to serve niches that are big enough to be worth serving. Similarly as more emerging consumption trends may emerge in bigger markets, companies can learn to serve better and earlier before they become mainstream and develop abroad, thus getting a head start and honing their capabilities.

Relating and supporting industries the development of certain product require all sort of consulting and professional services, from product naming to legal and marketing. The availability of financial service from basic banking to advisory and investments is also important. In areas where entrepreneurial activity is significant many companies help the inception and incubation of startups and provide them with all sort of specialized services such as virtual front desk, webhosting, leasing of all required

equipment etc. thus making the initial phases requiring less fixed costs and improving their chance of success.

Chance, also called path dependency, highlights the fact that certain clusters develop historically as a consequence of events that would be difficult to recreate. For instance, the Swiss watch industry benefited from Huguenots immigration as they fled persecutions they were subjected to in France in the 16th century<sup>8</sup>. They brought with them their craftsmanship in jewelry, however since Switzerland's Calvinist culture frowned upon luxury goods they plied their trade to mechanical devices such as watches and helped their country of adoption become a leader in watchmaking.

Government intervention is also influential since government can intervene and influence the development of a cluster, whether through regulations or by being a consumer of products. This later role of the government is important for strategic industries such as aerospace and defense. In many countries, including the UAE, this took the shape of the development of specialize economic zone as an attempt to diversify the economy.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/21/style/international/what-enabled-switzerland-to-dominate-watchmaking.html>



Freezones in Dubai

**b. Free Zones: UAE’s interpretation of clusters**

The UAE has adopted a very specific approach to cluster development in a bid to reduce its dependency on hydrocarbons. Given the laws restricting foreign ownership, to attract foreign investment several Emirates decided to create free zones where international companies and foreign entrepreneurs could set up an establishment as a base to serve the local, regional and international markets. A key feature was the specialization of these free zone in specific sector such as trade and logistics, industrial production, healthcare, education, financial services, media and IT to name a few. The Authorities operating these free zones developed

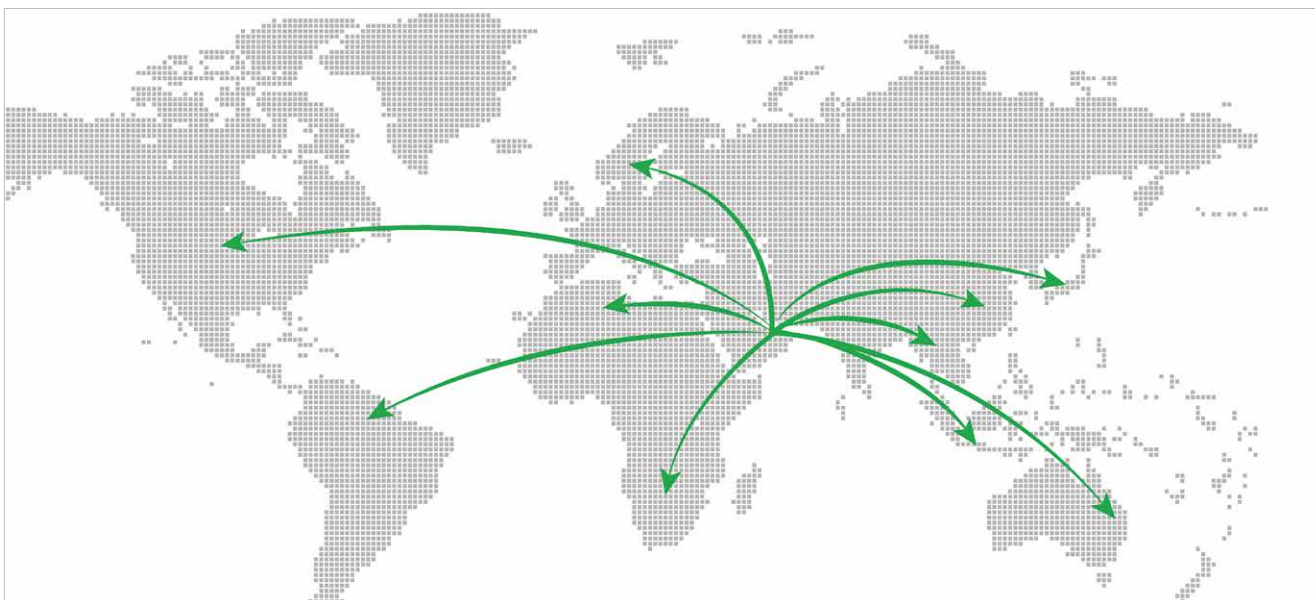
facilities and infrastructure second to none and quickly managed to attract top players in their field motivated by the ease of conducting their business in a politically stable and safe environment and benefiting from non-existing taxes and world class infrastructure. These free zones had all the features of clusters and soon evolved as such given the concentration of players in the sector and the combination of favorable factor condition, primarily the availability of talent, the environment framework and the pro-business regulations. Many such free zones were created over the years and cemented the UAE’s position as both a regional and international business hub.



## 7. The UAE's Advantage: Pan Clustering

### The UAE's strategic location

The UAE is centrally located and two thirds of the world's population are within 8 hours flight .



International Humanitarian City developed beyond being just a real estate development for NGO's and International organization as it benefited it benefited from all the factors from the Diamond model as they exist in the UAE.

Factor conditions International Humanitarian City members can take advantage from a dynamic and highly skilled world forces as well as from some of the most dynamic trading platform allowing access to the best goods and services necessary for their operation. Furthermore, like many other clusters, International Humanitarian City benefits from the centrally located geographic position of the UAE whereby two thirds of human population, including those in most parts of Africa and South Asia, live within an eight-hour flight, making it an ideal place to set up a base of operations.

Strategy rivalry and structure: In the case of NGO's the concentration and co-location facilitates knowledge

diffusion through the movement of employees. Furthermore, the presence of many players in the sector allows to reach the critical mass to attract talent. This form of coopetition is beneficial to all as it pushes firms to efficiently allocate resources and streamline their operations.

Demand conditions: The UAE is strategically positioned between Europe, Africa and Asia and its central location constitutes an ideal base to project intervention teams should anything happen in the region covered by the UNHCR based in the UAE. The numerous NGO's could benefits from the donating culture and fund their projects abroad as well as find volunteers.

Relating and supporting industries: The International Humanitarian City benefits not only from some of the best infrastructure—both hard and soft— but also from the existence of other clusters, in particular the Logistics,





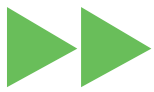
Images of aid shipments sent by IHC to various locations around the world.

Finance and trade Clusters. For example, managing the movement of goods and equipment necessary for humanitarian assistance internationally is a complex process involving a variety of institutional actors and would bring together government entities ranging from customs, various ministries, licensing and regulatory authorities that may take time. However, goods can be swiftly shipped by sea or air thanks to the many efficient ports that make the UAE one of the top maritime trade hubs. In Dubai alone, trade reached AED 1.3 trillion on 2016.<sup>9</sup> In particular, the flagship Jebel Ali Port, through Dubai Trade offers an integrated and extensive expressway system. Shipments can be processed in an expedient

way so that merchandise is not unduly delayed, risking spoilage and wastage. For sending teams on theatres of operation, organizations can avail the many airlines serving or based in the UAE. The later directly connect the country to around a combined 200 international destinations.

The International Humanitarian City has been an initiative entirely driven by the Dubai government and is part of several initiatives that promote development and aid. In fact, even the Vision2021 asserts the nation’s ambition to carve itself a positive role at the international level.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/business/economy/dubais-non-oil-foreign-trade-reaches-dh13-trillion-in-2016>



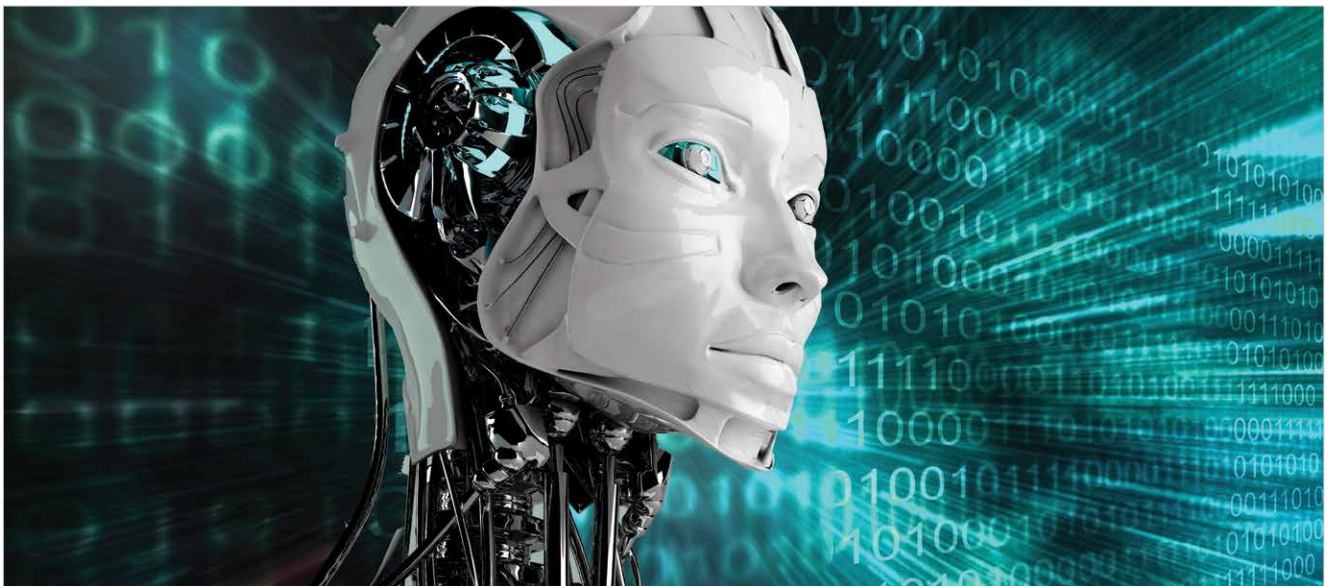
## 8. The Future of Humanitarian Assistance

The UAE will aim to become a major center for research, knowledge-sharing and dialogue on various humanitarian issues. Many conferences and forums will be organized to gather humanitarian community to discuss emerging issues, challenges and solutions, as well as exchange of skills and expertise in the humanitarian field. These forums include the Annual Dubai International Conference on Relief and Development (DIHAD), which can play an important role in keep tracking of progress on the action plan from the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. The UAE will also support innovation and research in humanitarian assistance, including new technologies for use in humanitarian situations. UAE's commitment to innovation is not limited to mottos; in fact, it extended to launching several initiatives that support a plethora of economic activities and contribute to humanitarian aid.

One promising example is the Drones for Good award, which is a one million dollar competition dedicated to innovative solutions and application for social innovation. This award could have various contribution in humanitarian activities and programs. The winners of the

inaugural first prize was a Swiss team which developed a drone with an ability to fly in confined and highly hazardous environment such as a collapsed building and identify whether there are survivors. The latest edition of the award witness further improvement in that direction with one of the contenders developing a drone that can defuse mines without human intervention.

Another initiative is the Robotics & Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Good award; with the continuous development in AI and Robotics, it is not surprising that now they can be utilized in humanitarian scenarios as well. Numerous applications are providing valuable complements to disaster relief efforts. Recently, a team developed an AI capable of beating professional players in different games. While this may sound futile and irrelevant, it is actually a very important development. This contribution might be applied in to make decision in uncertain environment such as the aftermath of a catastrophe. Likewise, robotics can be used to reach inaccessible places in dangerous situation and lessen victims.



The development of new technologies is seen in the UAE as a potential positive enabler for humanity

Finally, another technology called blockchain has proven to be successful in providing aid to refugees. For instance, the UN has used it to provide aid to Syrian refugees<sup>10</sup>. Finland, for their part, is using it to help unbanked refugees entering the digital economy.<sup>11</sup>

Dubai is a frontrunner in adopting blockchain technology. With Emcash, they have been the first state to issue cryptocurrency and set a goal of becoming the world's first government to execute all implementable transactions by 2020.<sup>12</sup> There is no doubt that all these initiatives will find their way to establishments based in International Humanitarian City and eventually help

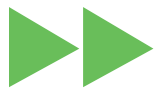
streamline and secure their operations and improve their productivity. Additionally, Artificial Intelligence can help operations and tracking activities at all levels.

By operating in the UAE, the International Humanitarian City members are granted access to the latest technology, which would maintain lower costs and increased productivity. They'd be operating at the juncture of the world's most unique structure of competitiveness and compassion.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.coindesk.com/united-nations-sends-aid-to-10000-syrian-refugees-using-ethereum-blockchain/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/608764/how-blockchain-is-kickstarting-the-financial-lives-of-refugees/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.cryptopoint.nl/nieuws/219871\\_emcash-is-dubai-s-first-official-state-cryptocurrency](https://www.cryptopoint.nl/nieuws/219871_emcash-is-dubai-s-first-official-state-cryptocurrency)



## 9. The Big Picture: UAE Sustaining World's Goodwill



With the bang of a gavel, UAE among world leaders approved a 15-year plan to abolish one of the world's biggest worries: poverty. The UN established the Sustainable Development Goal 1, alongside 17 others, on September 2015 so the world contributes together in making a better future for everyone living on Earth. 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 contributes to global efforts to achieve the SDGs. Its assistance will likely contribute to most of the goals and particularly directed towards particular number of them, shown below.

UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has set the goal to do "Partnerships for Development Program", which is a series of full-scale foreign assistance programs between the UAE and selected partner countries, guided by UAE strategies that contribute to national development priorities and 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 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. (UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2017)

The program also encourages 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. At the same time, UAE-based companies can benefit from new export markets, new sources of imports, and investment opportunities. Therefore, for relevant partner countries, the Partnership for Development will include building a trade and 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. (UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2017)

UAE's focus partners are countries, which are fragile, and conflict-affected states. 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, analyzed 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.

### **Philanthropy Dimensions: A Reflection of SDG Practices in UAE**

According to the UN, poverty is defined as “the inability to get opportunities and choices, a violation of basic human rights and dignity”. It translates to the lack of capacity to participate in society effectively. It is the inability to provide health care to ones' family, the lack of enough food and clothe for the children, the lack of a job to earn a living or enough land to grow food, and the inability to access credit. It means powerlessness, insecurity and individual, household and community exclusion. It implies vulnerability to violence, and it often means living in fragile or marginal environments, short of clean water and sanitation.

There are 836 million people who still live in extreme poverty and sadly about one in five persons in developing regions lives on less than \$1.25 per day. The majority of people living in less than \$1.25 live in two major territories, which are Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. High poverty rates are often found in small, fragile and conflict-affected countries. (UN.org, 2018)

As part of UAE international contribution to SDG and the good in this world, the UAE has been providing financial provisioning to cater for the needs of about 1.5



million households among 40 countries contributing to SDG Goal number 1 to a world with no poverty. Subsequently, UAE takes responsibility in making millions of lives better in different countries as UAE is a global leader in food donations. About 795 million humans are undernourished around the world. Poor nutrition causes nearly half of deaths in children under five, which is about 3.1 million children each year. Moreover, one in four of the world's children suffer stunted growth. In developing countries the proportion can rise to one in three. UAE has played a key role as well as a participant toward many international humanitarian initiatives, especially those caused by natural disasters and conflicts. Between the years of 2011 to 2017, UAE directed a lot of its donations towards vanishing poverty with an estimated donations of AED 8.9 Billion. In 2016 alone, the UAE spent AED 15.23 Billion worth of development assistance. (government.ae, 2017)

Several government-financed organisations in the UAE provide humanitarian assistance across the world. These include:

- o Emirates Red Crescent (ERC) - Since 1983, the Red Crescent of UAE has been a pioneer in promoting different aspects of domestic and international philanthropic work, irrespective of race, ethnicity, geographic or religious aspects. In 2001, UAE Red Crescent was chosen as the second best humanitarian authority in Asia.
- o Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) - Established in 1971 to support developing countries



achieve sustainable economic growth and curb poverty.

- o Sheikh Khalifa Foundation - Since its inception in 2007, its contribution to various fields of infrastructure, health and education and has reached more than 87 countries across the world.

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages is indispensable to sustainable development worldwide. Significant advances have been made in increasing life expectancy among children and mothers during giving birth. The world witnesses today a significant growth in obtaining clean water, sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, many more efforts are needed to fully exterminate a such diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues. 17,000 fewer children die each day than in 1990, but more than six million children still die before their fifth birthday each year. (UN.org, 2018) Although UAE is ranked as number 1 in healthy expectancy at birth by Human Capital Report, World Economic Forum, but exporting this endeavor to the world was a responsibility that the country took.

High illiteracy rates in any country contribute to poverty among the populations. This is because majority of

them are not skilled to embark on entrepreneurship to create more jobs. The SDG Report stated that about 103 million youths in the global space lack requisite literacy skills and women constitute about 60% of the number. However, UAE has 95% literacy rate including men and women equally in the country. This means majority of the populations in UAE can read and write or have the basic literacy skills. The implication is that the country tackles poverty by educating its people. Hence we see tremendous examples of UAE donations goes to the education, probably one of the latest examples is the donation of 55 million AED to support education in Gaza. (Emirates News Agency, 2017)

According to the UN water, scarcity affects more than 40 percent of people around the world, which is an alarming figure with the consideration of Global Warming. Despite the fact that 2.1 billion people have now access to improved water sanitation since 1990, declining numbers of supplies of safe drinking water is a major problem affecting almost every continent.

The UAE has established a global responsibility in global efforts to combat human agony in many aspects, as well as having a solid presence in the areas of emergency and longstanding humanitarian aid in all parts of the world. HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice





President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, issued a law establishing “Suqia”, the UAE Water Aid Foundation as non-profit organization. The UAE Water Aid Foundation is an entity that works under the “Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives Foundation”, and is primarily focused in research and development as regards to water shortage solutions

The United Nations addresses the Sustainable Development Goal 9 from three important aspects of sustainable development: infrastructure, industrialization and innovation. Infrastructure provides the basic physical amenities essential building societies and supporting businesses; urban development pushes economic growth and jobs diversity, thereby reducing income inequality; and innovation expands the technological capabilities of industrial sectors and leads to the development of new skills. In terms of infrastructure, UAE is ranked fourth among countries of the world with a state of the art infrastructure (The Global Competitiveness Index, World Economic Forum, 2017-2018). This means that the country is committed to providing what the workforce needs in terms of infrastructure to facilitate

the achievement of the economic, social and political goals of the country. Quality infrastructure is critically needed for the development of a country. Lack of such vital structures impede the smooth development of a country. Therefore, the UEA is committed to building supplementary infrastructure to enhance growth in UAE and across the globe.

Central to the s Agenda for Sustainable Development is SDG 16, which stands for the need to endorse peace practices and societies that are just and inclusive based on mutual respect for human rights, the rule of law and transparent, operative and liable institutions. A number of regions have enjoyed increased and sustained levels of peace and security in recent decades. Nevertheless, the UN states that many countries still face violence, armed conflict, injustice acts to human being living there. Global efforts are always keen to make national and international organisations more effective. Today, more than half the world has internationally recognized human rights institutions. However, significant challenges remain, including lack of information on forms of violence against children and other minorities. (UN.org, 2018)

One among many examples is UAE commitment towards refugees of Life-saving aid shipped from International Humanitarian City to more than 500,000 Rohingya refugees fleeing from mass violence in Myanmar.

Aid including 24,670 plastic tarpaulin sheets that was estimated to provide help to 123,350 people at Bangladesh refugee camps. The first flight, a UNHCR-chartered Boeing 777, delivered 1,671 tents that is estimated to cost around 2.7million dirhams, which provides shelter for about 8,355 refugees. The plane carried 91 tonnes of aid including much needed shelter materials, jerrycans, covers, sleeping mats and other essential items.

HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, sponsored the second trip of the flight, which carried almost 827,000 AED worth of emergency aid to Bangladesh, supported the second flight.

UAE has also sent the first mobile-hospital to relief Rohingya refugees, which provided diagnostic, therapeutic and preventative medical services. (Nick Webster, The National , September 25, 2017)

As a country, which has developed itself over the past few decades, the UAE recognises well that real improvements can only come through the efforts of a country's leadership and people. Our foreign aid has always been "demand-driven," and 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 and to realize human rights and dignity for all. As such, UAE works with other nations on joint initiatives and will always ensure that our activities are complementary.

Addressing 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 aid from other donors, towards sectors and SDGs that get less attention, and towards neglected humanitarian emergencies.

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### Abbreviations

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- MSF** Médecins Sans Frontières
- UAE** United Arab Emirates
- DFID** Department for International Development
- UN** United Nations
- HRD** Humanitarian Response Depot
- UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees
- IHC** International Humanitarian City

### Disclaimer

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“

I openly call upon all those who wish to join us in our march towards serving humanity and I extend my hand, so that we may be united as ONE for Humanity.

”

**HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**  
Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE  
and Ruler of Dubai



”  
إنني أدعو كل من يرغب بالانضمام إلينا في مسيرتنا  
لخدمة الإنسانية وأمدّ يدي، لعلنا نتحد معاً لأجل  
الإنسانية

”

صاحب السمو الشيخ محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم  
نائب رئيس الدولة رئيس مجلس الوزراء حاكم دبي