

## **Quadrennial Periodic Report**

### **2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression**

#### **General Information**

#### **Executive Summary**

The government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) significantly increased its efforts to implement the convention on the protection and promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression since deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO its instrument of accession to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions On 6 June 2012.

Diversity of Cultures is a real challenge to the UAE , as it needs to save and protect its own identity and in the same time to allow other cultures express themselves within a safe and protective environment.

On 2 December 2016 the United Arab Emirates will celebrate its 45th National Day to commemorate its formation in 1971. The occasion provided the country and its people, led by the President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, with an opportunity both to look back over four decades of achievement and to look forward to a promising future.

While much of that achievement relates to the country's economic and social development, it is appropriate to also pay attention to the remarkable progress that has been made in investigating the country's culture and heritage, stretching back into the distant past.

The country's founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, frequently emphasized the importance of this, saying that "He who does not know his past cannot make the best of his present and future, for it is from the past that we learn".

## **Overview**

Once almost a terra incognita in terms of its heritage, the UAE is now known to have played an important part in the evolution of human settlement and history in the region. UAE has a fascinating history, and one of which we are immensely proud.

The United Arab Emirates is constantly undergoing change, and since Federation has been part of a great evolution. Following the vision and guidance of the Father of the Nation, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the rulers of the nation, wisely led by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, have continued to support and develop the nation. Consequently, we live in a land that makes us proud, a land that inspires us to do great things, a land of remarkable innovation and excellence. Culture, and its development, is of enormous importance. Without it, country not only struggles to flourish, but also finds it difficult to hold on to its roots. The UAE has proved itself, even as it welcomes individuals from across the globe, to be culturally strong and independent – a world leader in preserving heritage, diversity in Culture and to prompt freedom in speech.

The aim of The Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development is to promote national identity, history and culture among UAE citizens.

Through this Ministry and many other local entities around seven Emirates that form the UAE , there is a wise and strong vision with a very well formed strategy to make the UAE the hub of culture in the middle east and to present by its initiatives the strengths of our culture land, brought on by the determination of our country's most prominent leaders.

This is an invitation to take anyone who is reading the report in a cultural journey through the UAE that happens to be one of the most complicated multicultural societies with more than two hundred (200) nationalities settled and working in it .

To Look through the window of history, and take a glance in the direction of its geographical wonder, be inspired by community and social developments and admire the excellence of art and architectural expansion everybody will come to know that this small country , was able to achieve large projects and to give the world an example about success .

### **Challenges and Ambitions**

UAE faced more than a challenge culture wise , but it was able to develop such challenges into a great innovative future that leads it to become a real example for that.

In the UAE, the government looks at culture as a main factor that enhances development and civilization. There have been a chain of projects that translates the importance of culture from words into real activities .

The most recent project was focusing on reading and language skills that are set among the key performance indicators of the National Agenda leading to the UAE Vision 2021, which says, "Education is a fundamental element for the development of a nation and the best investment in

its youth.” For that reason, the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda emphasizes the development of a first-rate education system, which will require a complete transformation of the current education system and teaching methods.

The National Agenda aims for all schools, universities and students to be equipped with Smart systems and devices as a basis for all teaching methods, projects and research as an innovative policy to make reading and education build the future of students in the UAE from all nationalities and different cultures.

Furthermore, the National Agenda has set as a target that our students rank among the best in the world in reading, mathematics and science exams, and to have a strong knowledge of the Arabic language and culture .

President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan declared 2016 as the year of reading in the UAE to create a generation of book lovers and consolidate the UAE’s position as a global capital for culture and knowledge.

The Cabinet approved the declaration of 2016 as the year of reading and instructed the competent authorities to start preparing a national framework that promotes reading among Emirati generations, in a quest to create a generation of book lovers and lifetime readers.

"We gave our directives that the year 2016 be the year of reading because reading the basic skill for a new generation of scientists, intellectual, researchers and innovators," the President said.

He added: "Establishment of a knowledge-based economy and changing the path of development is based on science and innovation. This requires nurturing a generation of readers and fully

aware of developments happening around them in the world as well as of and the best ideas and the latest theories."

The President underlined the importance of reading in broadening one's intellect and knowledge, as well as in promoting tolerance, openness and intercultural communication.

"Our goal is to consolidate the UAE as a global capital of culture, bring about lifelong behavioral change and immune next generations culturally," His Highness Sheikh Khalifa said.

Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, on September 2015, launched the "Arab Reading Challenge", the largest Arab project to encourage students in the Arab world to read, with more than a million students committing to read 50 million extracurricular books during every academic year.

The Arab Reading Challenge aims to encourage reading on a continuous basis through a comprehensive system of incentives and follow-up mechanisms throughout the academic year. A large number of monetary and motivational incentives are also offered to participating schools, students, their families, and supervisors from various parts of the Arab world, with the overall awards value estimated at US\$3 million (around AED11 million). The challenge also includes several rounds of evaluation and qualification at the level of each school, educational zone, country, and finally the Arab world. The challenge seeks to create a new generation with excellent reading skills and a thirst for knowledge.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said, "The Arab world is suffering from a reading crisis whose consequences we see and feel every day in this region. The 50 million book

challenge is the first of many steps we are taking in the hope of creating a long-term impact that would change this reality."

He added, "Reading opens minds, magnifies hunger for knowledge, and instils the values of openness and moderation that define great civilizations."

"The first book a child reads opens the first door in that child's brighter future. The 50 million book challenge is the first of many steps. It will be followed by many initiatives. The goal is to create a new generation, a new hope and a new reality. Today we set this challenge for the Arab educational sector, Arab parents, and Arab children and youth. We have every faith in their abilities to achieve the goal."

His Highness also visited Dubai's School of Research Science, set to become the headquarters for the challenge. To mark the launch of the 50 million book challenge, His Highness read the first pages to a group of students. The challenge will be the largest Arab initiative to encourage reading in various schools throughout the region.

His Highness stated, "In the UAE, we have always realized the importance of reading and developing Arabic language skills. These have been included as indicators in the UAE national agenda for 2021."

Reports and studies have shown significantly low reading levels in the Arab world. The average reading time for an Arab child is six minutes a year compared with 12,000 minutes in the West, according to the Arab Thought Foundation's Arab Report for Cultural Development.

The reading rate of an Arab individual is a quarter of a page a year compared with 11 books in the US and seven books in the UK, according to a study conducted by the Supreme Council of Culture in Egypt.

The Arab Reading Challenge has been launched in collaboration with the MBC group and the help of key national broadcasters and newspapers. The execution phase starts in September with coordination efforts between the various participating schools in the Arab world, after which the 50 million book reading challenge will be initiated, extending from early October until the end of March 2016. The challenge contains five stages, each of which entails the reading and summary of 10 books by participating students. This is followed by qualification stages at the level of schools, educational districts, Arab countries, and the final qualifications for winners on the Arab world level set to be held in Dubai at the end of May 2016.

The Arab Reading Challenge has a comprehensive system for incentives and monetary rewards: US\$ 150,000 will be awarded to the winning student, of which US\$100,000 will be in the form of a university scholarship and US\$50,000 in the form of a cash reward to the student's family for their encouragement. US\$1 million will also be granted to the school with the highest level of participation in the Arab world.

The Challenge grants rewards worth a total of US\$300,000 to excellent teachers participating in the Challenge as supervisors, in addition to motivational incentives and prizes to participating schools and students exceeding a total value of US\$1 million.

In May 2014, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched Mohammed bin Rashid Arabic Language Award.

The award aims to encourage exceptional contributions in serving the Arabic language and honoring its patrons besides highlighting successful and outstanding experiences in disseminating and educating the Arabic language.

Sheikh Mohammed said: "The language of the Holy Quran is protected by Allah, and our goal behind launching this award is to serve it and contribute to its dissemination."

He added: "To contribute to the preservation of the Arabic language through honoring its pioneers and distinguished persons consolidates our identity and preserves our heritage, our thinking and our culture, and is protection for our new generations from losing the most important cultural, educational and linguistic tool we possess."

The award includes five branches, whereby outstanding initiatives will be honored along with the exceptional contributions to support the Arabic language in the areas of education, media, Arabisation, technology, preservation and dissemination of the Arab linguistic heritage.

The prize includes 10 categories to be honored on an annual basis and aims to reinforce the status of the UAE and its leading position as a center of excellence for the Arabic language, promote its usage in public life and to facilitate its learning and teaching.

It also affirmed the keenness of Sheikh Mohammad to celebrate the Arabic language by honoring its researchers and professionals, whether they are individuals or institutions.



In another qualitative initiative, H.H. Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, has approved the new identity for the initiative that aims to support school-aged children to learn Arabic the smart way. The first-of-its-kind initiative was originally launched in 2013, targeting students to make learning Arabic easy and more accessible to them.

The new identity for the programme is launched as "Lughati" and will assist students in government schools in Sharjah utilizing the latest technology and apps to make learning fun. Through Lughati, Arabic for "My Language", 25,000 students and 1000 teachers in Sharjah's government schools will receive tablets that have been equipped with specially designed Arabic language educational programmes and applications.

The new identity for the initiative will see it fulfill its aim, in line with the vision of the Ruler of Sharjah, to instill a way of learning for children and help them utilize modern technology.

The purpose of the educational programme is to improve the educational system and provide students with the necessary skills to use the modern technological tools in Arabic. It also seeks to preserve and protect the Arabic language, increasing its usage and students' proficiency, through modern and scientific means.

UAE's leadership continuously seeks to support educational initiatives in general and the Arabic language in particular, in order to provide modern tools in educational programs that not only work by connecting the children with the syllabus but also motivates them to think scientifically and access information they need.

International Mother Language Day was proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1999.

In a resolution issued on 16 May 2007 the United Nations General Assembly called upon Member States "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world". By the same resolution, the General Assembly proclaimed 2008 as the International Year of Languages, to promote unity in diversity and international understanding, through multilingualism and multiculturalism.

International Mother Language Day has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. The date represents the day in 1952 when students demonstrating for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka, the capital of what is now Bangladesh.

Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. All moves to promote the dissemination of mother tongues will serve not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education but also to develop fuller awareness of linguistic and cultural traditions throughout the world and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue.

UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan address to the UN General Assembly to lay out the political parameters of UAE human rights policy in 2014 , he said that

moderation and tolerance are basic principals in guiding our political orientation and represent lofty values to the citizens of the United Arab Emirates and to our society as a whole.

In this sense , the United Arab Emirates has been and will remain committed to moderation in its approach , and accepts other communities as part of a diverse world built on mutual respect. It is these human values which have informed our convictions with regard to many issues such as counterterrorism , human rights , the empowerment of women , and coexistence among peoples and communities.

Today the citizens of the UAE are reaping the benefits of substantial investment in infrastructure, housing, education and health services. In addition, the UAE's remarkably open and tolerant society has attracted over 200 nationalities to live and work here in harmony . The high standard of living experienced in the UAE is reflected in the inclusion in the 2014 UN Human Development Index's list of countries with very high human development, and its ranking of fortieth out of total of 187 countries worldwide.

## **TECHNICAL INFORMATION**

Name of Party: Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development

Date of ratification: 6-6-2012

Organization(s) or entity(es) responsible for the preparation of the report:

Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development

Officially designated Point of Contact:

## **About The Ministry Of Culture & Knowledge Development**

The Ministry was first established under the name of the Ministry of Information and Culture, according to Article 58 of the temporary constitution of the United Arab Emirates, and under Federal Decree No. 1 of 1972, regarding the functions of the Ministries and the powers of the Ministers. In 2006, Federal Decree-Law No. 1 of 2006 for amending some provisions of Federal Law No. 1 of 1972, was issued, upon which the Ministry of Information and Culture was canceled and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development was developed. This Ministry took the following functions:

- Terms of reference which was appointed to the Ministry of Information and Culture, in relation to matters of culture on the effective date of this decree-law.
- Terms of reference which was appointed to the Ministry of Education, in relation to youth affairs on the effective date of this decree/-law.
- Affairs of community development and formation programs and plans to do so.
- Any other terms of reference to be vested by virtue of the laws, regulations and decisions of the Council of Ministers.

### **Laws relating to Ministry Affairs**

- Federal Decree-Law No. 1 of 2006 for amending some provisions of Federal Law No. (1) of 1972 regarding the functions of the Ministries and the powers of the Ministers.
- Federal Law No. 1 of 1972 regarding the functions of the Ministries and the powers of the Ministers, as amended.

### **Ministry Terms of Reference**

Representing the state in outside and inside cultural and artistic conferences and establishment and supervision the artistic festivals so as not to fall within the other entities' terms of reference.

Establish cultural seasons to benefit from the outcome of human thought and to open knowledge horizons for citizens.

Provide library services to the public through public libraries across the state.

To protect and develop all forms of arts so as to maintain the artistic heritage of the state, to encourage and achieve a suitable environment for growth of the creative faculties, to show new talents and to encourage authoring and translation in the various aspects of literature.

To explore and maintain the historical heritage of the country.

To take part in revival and documentation of the Arab history and national heritage to be a historical reference and a source for the level of progress of literature and arts.

To preserve national identity, strengthen the sense of belonging, permanent investment of young people's abilities, embrace charity and direct them towards full community development to achieve these goals.

To create a unit interested in preparing the younger generations for leadership, reconnaissance and communication through the applied programs.

To raise the level of community cultural awareness, improve practices and innovations, enrich cultural exchanges in order to serve the cause of development of the community by promoting behaviors and to devote the method of civilization as a practical approach between the different categories of society.

To coordinate with various involved entities to find methods that lead to integrate the incoming categories in the community fabric of the State, making them effective and positive elements in maintaining the fundamentals of this community and its interests.

To coordinate activities between the federal government, local governments and media organizations to protect the cultural heritage of the state and sponsor initiatives that aim to create channels of communication with civil society organizations and the private sector to serve these issues.

To disseminate cultural investment values so the culture becomes a productive sector for the national economy.

Any terms of reference to be assigned to the Ministry under the laws, regulations and decisions issued by the federal authorities.

### **Vision And Mission of The Ministry of Culture & Knowledge Development**

Leadership in cultural and societal development for the prosperity of the UAE.

To elevate cultural and societal awareness, enhance the national identity and revive local heritage; through effective coordination with partners and excellence in both service and human resources, utilizing innovative and modern methods.

Its Values are : Patriotism Competence Knowledge Responsibility Excellence Effective.

Strategic Objectives are :

1. Elevate the level of cultural awareness within the community.
2. Preserve and promote the national identity and its components.
3. Enhance the abilities of talented Emirati youth and nurture their potential.
4. Preserve and spread intangible aspects of UAE heritage.
5. Ensure the availability of all administrative services, in accordance with quality, efficiency and transparency standards

## **Overview of UAE Cultural Policy Context**

The UAE is an innovative social investor, seeking ways to expand opportunities for UAE citizens and residences help address regional and global challenges. Among top UAE priorities are educational reform, improving healthcare, expanding the role of women, and preserving the environment along with promoting cultural identity in a multicultural environment.

In 1975, the rate of adult literacy was 54 percent among men and 31 percent among women. Today, literacy rates for both genders are nearly 95 percent.

The UAE's values of tolerance and openness are best reflected in the progress of Emirati women in education. Less than forty years ago, few women attended school but His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founder of the UAE, personally spearheaded movements to provide education to all women. Today, more Emirati women complete secondary education and enroll in university and post-graduate institutions than men. New initiatives have been launched across all educational levels with US partners playing a key role.

Health care delivery in parts of the UAE is undergoing a significant transformation, and the UAE is working with leading global institutions to enhance its health care system.

In January 2011, the Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation, founded by Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, made a record \$150 million donation to the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in January 2011. The donation will fund research and the building of the Institute for Personalized Cancer Therapy.

In 2012, Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai, announced a \$5 million gift to the Cleveland Clinic to establish a chair in cardiothoracic surgery research. Part of the grant will support specialized training and capacity building measures for Emirati doctors.

The UAE Constitution guarantees equal rights for both men and women. Under the Constitution, women enjoy the same legal status, claim to titles, access to education, the right to practice professions, and the right to inherit property as men. Women are also guaranteed the same access to employment, health and family welfare facilities. The international community has recognized the UAE's commitment to advancing women's rights in the region and across the globe. The UAE leads the Middle East and North Africa in gender equality, ranking highest out of the region in the World Economic Forum's 2013 Global Gender Gap Report. Further, the UAE is an active participant in the global dialogue on women's rights - and was elected to serve on the Executive Council of UN Women for a three-year term from 2013-2015 and re-elected to continue in its role until 2018.

Eight women serve in the UAE Cabinet—including Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of State for Tolerance, who was recognized by *Forbes* magazine as one of the 100 most powerful women in the world. She also served as economic minister, foreign trade minister and introduced sweeping economic and trade reforms in the UAE. Women fill two-thirds of public-sector posts, and 30 percent of those are decision-making positions. Women make up 20 percent of the diplomatic corps. In October 2008, the first female judge was appointed.

In November 2015, Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi became president of the Federal National Council (FNC), making her the first woman in the region to lead a national assembly. She previously served as the FNC's deputy speaker.



Emirati female ambassadors have been appointed in Sweden, Spain and Montenegro. In 2013 Lana Nusseibeh presented her credentials to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Ambassador Nusseibeh is the first Emirati female permanent representative to the UN.

The UAE has four women fighter pilots, the first to serve in UAE military forces, and has also trained dozens of women to work with the country's special security forces.

Women finance one-third of the transactions in the financial and banking sector and as of 2014, over 20,000 companies in the UAE are owned by Emirati women.

The UAE has worked with global partners to further the success of its professional women. Vital Voices. The Dubai Business Women's Council is among the network's seven founding members. Their aim is to build a network of businesswomen, increase the number of women in business, increase the value of their businesses, advance the role of women overall in society, and promote a regional culture of women's entrepreneurship.

Art and culture also play a central role in enhancing international relations and developing a deeper understanding between the UAE and the world.

The UAE understands that ensuring a clean environment is critical to sustainable economic growth and intergenerational equity. With a long-standing commitment to sustainability and conservation, ongoing efforts have been made to minimize the UAE's impact on the overall global environment. In 2005 the UAE became one of the first major oil-producing countries to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Convention on Climate Change.

In addition, the Government of Abu Dhabi created the Masdar Initiative, a \$15 billion program supporting the development and commercialization of clean energy technologies, a world-class

research institute and initiating projects like Masdar City, the world's first zero-carbon, zero-waste green community.

Masdar has been at the forefront of research, investment, and efforts to promote sustainability and to lessen the impact of global climate change.

Recognizing the UAE's leading efforts to combat climate change, in 2009 Abu Dhabi's Masdar City, was selected as the headquarters for the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

IRENA is an intergovernmental organization that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation.

IRENA is a center of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.

The UAE is blessed with a rich heritage that encompasses architecture, sports, occupations, traditions, arts, crafts, food, places of historic and archaeological importance, lifestyle and values imbued in Islam.

Some of the distinct features of the UAE heritage are hospitality, tolerance, family cohesion and solidarity among members of the society along with honor and pride associated with being part of this heritage.

The city of Al Ain in the emirate of Abu Dhabi is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The cultural sites include six oases and the archaeological sites of Bida bint Saud, Hafeet and Hili.

The emirate of Sharjah has gained two prestigious titles for bearing the torch of the UAE's culture and heritage. In 1998, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) named it 'The Cultural Capital of the Arab World'. In 2014, it was named the capital of Islamic culture for 2014 by Organization of Islamic Countries.

Government entities have taken and continue to take several measure not only to preserve the heritage but also to create awareness about it. It has achieved this through:

In UAE , holding a number of cultural events and activities helps to promote the diversity of cultural expressions in several ways such as :

Holding annual Festivals and events that become very popular and draw huge crowds.

Forming Clubs that organize activities to promote awareness about culture and heritage.

Establishing Heritage villages that are a complex of structures include traditional houses, schools, markets and public spaces. All emirates have at least one heritage village. The heritage villages offer a peek into the different aspects of the lives of Emiratis in the olden times.

Establishing and maintaining museums that have contributed a lot towards preservation of the culture of the UAE. There are several museums in the UAE. They house artwork, rare pictures, utensils, armoury, maritime equipment, currencies etc. Museums that have opened in original structures that served as forts or palaces in the olden days reflect the heritage of the UAE in a unique way.

Each of these museums will have a state of the art building. The Louvre and Guggenheim will exhibit unique collections from all over the world.

The Convention been integrated into the cultural policy development process as the UAE enhances in its policies , visions and strategies democracy, tolerance, social justice, and mutual respect for all religions , nationalities .

Cultural Policy in UAE, refers to different and many initiatives undertaken by the government aimed at achieve certain goals in cultural content. UAE ambition is to develop a cultural infrastructure that allows it to establish itself as a reference point for culture locally by Sustaining traditions and heritage locally in a way that preserves the Emarati identity. It also aims to focus on a leading cultural role among the Arabs in the Middle East while working on a large global role in becoming a world cultural hub able to attract foreign creative talents .

UAE has a diverse cultural history with a rich heritage of traditions and customs that is largely subsumed to the so-called UAE Vision 2021. The plan, a comprehensive set of strategic policies for the development of the UAE.

Cultural Policy in the UAE is also rooted in Islamic Traditions that form UAE National's lifestyles. UAE is known as the innovative country in the Middle East and it attracts different and many visitors who come to enjoy watching the future happening in it.

The government in UAE follows a policy of tolerance towards non –muslims and this allows them to practice their religious activities in their places .

UAE Vision 2021 was launched by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, at the closing of a Cabinet meeting in 2010.

The Vision aims to make the UAE among the best countries in the world by the Golden Jubilee of the Union. In order to translate the Vision into reality, its pillars have been

mapped into six national priorities which represent the key focus sectors of government action in the coming years.

## **POLICIES AND MEASURES**

### UAE Vision 2021

The UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda strives to preserve a cohesive society proud of its identity and sense of belonging

Thus, it promotes an inclusive environment that integrates all segments of society while preserving the UAE's unique culture, heritage and traditions and reinforces social and family cohesion. Furthermore, the National Agenda aims for the UAE to be among the best in the world in the Human Development Index and to be the happiest of all nations so that its citizens feel proud to belong to the UAE. **The National Agenda also sets an ambitious plan to increase the UAE's achievements and medals won in international and Olympic games**

See index 1

The UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda aims for the UAE to be the safest place in the world

Therefore it seeks to reinforce its citizens' sense of security and achieve leading positions in the areas of security, emergency preparedness, reliability of police services and road safety.

Furthermore, the National Agenda reinforces the importance of a fair and active legal system that guarantees the rights of individuals and businesses, and makes the UAE's judicial system among the most efficient in the world.

See index 2

The global economy will witness significant economic changes in the coming years and the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda aims for the UAE to be at its heart. As a result, it focuses on the UAE becoming the economic, touristic and commercial capital for more than two billion people by transitioning to a knowledge-based economy, promoting innovation and research and development, strengthening the regulatory framework for key sectors, and encouraging high value-adding sectors. These will improve the country's business environment and increase its attractiveness to foreign investment.

The National Agenda also aims for the UAE to be among the best in the world in entrepreneurship as this plays a key role in unlocking the potential of nationals and enables them to be a driving force of the UAE's economic development through small and medium enterprises in the private sector. Furthermore, the Agenda strives to instill an entrepreneurial culture in schools and universities to foster generations endowed with leadership, creativity, responsibility and ambition. This will allow the UAE to be among the best in the world in ease of doing business, innovation, entrepreneurship and R&D indicators. Moreover, the government aims not only to achieve leading positions in global reports, but to also provide a good life for its citizens. Therefore the National Agenda seeks to place the UAE among the top countries in the world in income per capita and ensure high levels of national participation in the private sector workforce.

See index 3

Education is a fundamental element for the development of a nation and the best investment in its youth. For that reason, the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda emphasizes the development

of a first-rate education system, which will require a complete transformation of the current education system and teaching methods. The National Agenda aims for all schools, universities and students to be equipped with Smart systems and devices as a basis for all teaching methods, projects and research. There will also be significant investments to promote and reinforce enrollment in preschools as this plays an important role in shaping children's personalities and their future. Furthermore, the National Agenda has set as a target that our students rank among the best in the world in reading, mathematics and science exams, and to have a strong knowledge of the Arabic language. Moreover, the Agenda will aim to elevate the rate of graduation from secondary schools to international standards and for all schools to have exceptional leadership and internationally accredited teaching staff.

See index 4

Since success requires an open mind and healthy body, the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda aims to achieve a world-class healthcare system.

The Government will work in collaboration with all health authorities in the country to have all public and private hospitals accredited according to clear national and international quality standards of medical services and staff. Furthermore, the National Agenda emphasizes the importance of preventive medicine and seeks to reduce cancer and lifestyle related diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases to ensure a longer, healthy life for citizens. In addition, the Agenda aims to reduce the prevalence of smoking and increase the healthcare system's readiness to deal with epidemics and health risks. This will result in the UAE becoming among the best countries in the world in terms of quality of healthcare.

See index 5

The UAE Government wants to ensure sustainable development while preserving the environment ,and to achieve a perfect balance between economic and social development.

To do that, the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda focuses on improving the quality of air, preserving water resources, increasing the contribution of clean energy and implementing green growth plans. Also, the National Agenda highlights the importance of infrastructure and aims for the UAE to be among the best in the world in the quality of airports, ports, road infrastructure, and electricity. And leading telecommunications infrastructure will allow the UAE to become a forerunner in the provision of Smart services. Finally, seeking to further improve the quality of life of its citizens, the Agenda has set a target to provide suitable housing for eligible UAE nationals within a record timeframe.

See index 6

### **Gender Equality :**

Women in the UAE have been encouraged and empowered since the foundation of the state. This policy is spearheaded by the country's leadership and backed by the UAE Constitution, which guarantees equal rights for men and women in accordance with the precepts of Islam. As a result, the role of women in society has evolved considerably over the years. Today, the economic and social benefits of diversity are universally recognized and embraced and women are viewed as partners in achieving sustainable development

Five women today hold ministerial positions in the Cabinet, including the position of Secretary General of the Cabinet, and women constitute 20 per cent of the UAE's partially elected representative body, the Federal National Council. Of these, one was elected as Speaker in November 2015, the first time that a woman has held such a post anywhere in the Gulf region.



Three of the UAE's ambassadors, one consul general and the UAE's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York are women. Four women have been appointed as judges, two as public prosecutors and 17 as assistant public prosecutors and marriage officials. Women also serve in the armed forces (one at Brigadier level), customs and police. In fact, women constitute 66 per cent of the public sector workforce (the average globally is 48 per cent), with 30 per cent in senior and decision-making positions, close to the level in advanced countries.

According to the 2014 WEF Global Gender Gap Index, the UAE ranked first (out of a total of 142 countries) on the report's literacy rate indicator and on its enrolment in secondary education index. Educational attainment also played a major role in the UAE achieving a ranking of 43 (out of 185 countries) in the Gender Inequality Index, section of the 2014 UN Human Development Report.

95 per cent of female high-school graduates pursue further education at tertiary-level institutions, compared with 80 per cent of males. Women constitute almost two-thirds of students attending government universities and over half at private tertiary-level institutions. Women also regularly outperform their male counterparts academically and are making major inroads in faculties that were previously considered to be a male domain. ( 46 per cent of the country's graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) are women) . At the prestigious Masdar Institute of Science and Technology in Abu Dhabi, 60 per cent of Emirati graduate students are female The reasons for this are complex and are related more to employment conditions, personal choices and cultural norms than government policy.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai said 'We have moved beyond the phase of empowering women. Indeed,

we are empowering society through women. H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union, Supreme President of the Family Development Council and President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood has also launched the Strategy for the Empowerment of Emirati Women 2015–2021 that provides the framework for federal government institutions and organizations in developing work programmes to empower women in all areas of sustainable development.

The strategy concentrated on eight main areas: education, health, the economy, law-making, the environment, the social domain, information, political participation and decision-making.

The UAE is also a party to other international instruments that seek to protect women and children. In particular, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention) and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol). The UAE is also party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the amendment to Article 43(3) of the Convention on the Rights of the child.

The UAE's election to the membership of the Executive Council of UN Women for the period 2013 to 2015 is an indication of the progress made in gender equality in the UAE and the UAE's commitment to the empowerment of women worldwide. This commitment is underlined by a UAE pledge of US\$5million between 2014 and 2016 to the UN Commission on the Status of Women to support gender equality, women's empowerment and peace and security programmes, with a particular emphasis on the effects of climate change on women.

Ministry of Happiness, Tolerance, and the Future, and appointing a 22-year-old Minister of Youth

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed' has made such changes in the government to reflect what the UAE have learned from events in the region over the past five years. Failure to respond effectively to the aspirations of young people, who represent more than half of the population in Arab countries, is like swimming against the tide. Without the energy and optimism of youth, societies cannot develop and grow; indeed, such societies are doomed.

This is what H.H Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid said and worked for , and it is reflected by the UAE as a young country and It's best investment will be in empowering the youth precisely because they are the future.

UAE as H.H. Sheikh Mohammed said provided beacons of science, knowledge, and civilization, because human values were the basis of Arabs relationships with all civilizations, cultures, and religions. Tolerance is no catchphrase, but a quality to cherish and practice. It must be woven into the fabric of the society to safeguard the future and maintain the progress that have been made. There can be no bright future for the Middle East without an intellectual reconstruction that re-establishes the values of ideological openness, diversity, and acceptance of others' viewpoints, whether intellectual, cultural, or religious.

More than 300 billion dirhams (\$81.5 billion) – in establishing a focus for the UAE's path ahead, with the aim of preparing for a diverse economy that frees future generations from dependence on the ever-fluctuating oil market.

Achieving that goal requires reconsidering our legislative, administrative, and economic system fully to move away from dependence on oil. That's why the UAE is looking at a strong and

appropriate regulatory infrastructure to build a sustainable and diverse national economy for the future children and their children.

The UAE , seeking the achievement of moral perfection and happiness for individuals according to the United Nations that is now calling for changes in the criteria used to measure governmental success from economic indicators to measures related to human happiness and wellbeing. It has dedicated a UN World Day for Happiness to emphasize the importance of this shift.

Sheikh Mohammed said that( Focusing on happiness is both feasible and fully justified. Happiness can be measured, and its evaluation is already the subject of many programs and studies. Moreover, it can be developed and its achievement linked to material objectives. Studies have shown that happy people produce more, live longer, and drive better economic development in their communities and countries.

The happiness of individuals, families, and employees, their satisfaction with their lives and optimism for the future, are crucial to our work, which cuts across every sector of government. That is why there must be a minister to guide and follow up with all government institutions (as well as provide leadership to the private sector).

### Youth Empowerment Strategy

For the purpose of the UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy youth is defined as UAE Nationals between the ages of 15 and 34. This age range is further separated into 1-19, 20-24, 25-29, and 30-34 for the purposes of the research being conducted.

While there is no single internationally agreed upon definition of youth, the 15-34 years age range is consistent with international best practice. For most Emirati in the UAE this age range will include the significant life transitions from secondary to post-secondary education, from postsecondary education to employment, from being single to getting married, acquiring independent housing, and starting a family.

The UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy will be a policy document that spells out three things. It will:

1. identify the problems, challenges and issues confronting UAE youth currently;
2. provide recommendations for implementation aimed at empowering UAE youth to help them realize their full potential; and
3. Identify benchmarks, standards and performance measures that enable ongoing evaluation of the success of the UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Vision 2021 begins with the following statement: “In a strong and safe union, knowledgeable and innovative Emiratis will confidently build a competitive and resilient economy. They will thrive as a cohesive society bonded to its identity, and enjoy the highest standards of living within a nurturing and sustainable environment.”

Achievement of Vision 2021, will require the skills, energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the country’s young people. To help the country’s young men and women actively engage in delivering Vision 2021 H.E. Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development, wisely launched a countrywide youth policy engagement process; the UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy.

The UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy and its Implementation Plan will be major, new policy documents that will enable the Government and young Emiratis to work together to help deliver Vision 2021.

This Youth Empowerment Strategy will identify the priorities, directions and practical support that the UAE government intends to give to assist the development of its young men and women aged 15-34. It will emphasize the value and importance of young people to the country.

Importantly, it will, to a substantial extent, be created by young people themselves and emerge from a process that will involve thousands of UAE young nationals from across the country.

A Youth Empowerment Strategy is a powerful way for the country's young people to engage with their peers, their leaders and key decision makers as they work together to help deliver Vision 2021.

The UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy will

- Align youth initiatives with Vision 2021;
- articulate the importance and value of young people to the UAE's development;
- identify gaps in policy and propose strategic policy interventions;
- define the nature, targets and expectations of new policy interventions;
- strengthen cooperation, collaboration and communication between all youth development stakeholders; and
- Monitor youth empowerment progress using key performance indicators and accountability measures.
- 
- The UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy will provide:

- a powerful symbol of the UAE Government’s commitment to its young citizens;
- a practical response to the current “youth bulge” in demographics showing 15-34 year olds represent approximately 40% of UAE’s national population, and approximately 400,000 persons;
- An integrated and common vision and framework for young Emiratis based on opportunities, needs and priorities;
- a framework for equitable and strategic distribution of resources to meet the needs and aspirations of young people; and
- An opportunity to demonstrate how young Emiratis can productively work together in all phases of the formulation of the UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy.

The UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy development process comprises the following key components:

1. engaging with young UAE nationals across the country;
2. undertaking key youth-related research projects;
3. undertaking an environmental scan to identify all the youth related assets in the country;
4. undertaking a survey of international best practice in youth service delivery; and
5. Identifying the best possible organizational structure for the implementation of the UAE Youth Empowerment Strategy and management of youth related matters.

## **Civil Society**

The most important civil society institutions in the UAE number is estimated at around 132 associations whose activities vary between cultural, educational to professional activities.

They are divided into: - Religious associations (6 associations) - Women societies/ associations (5 societies) - Professional associations (10 associations). - Arts and theatre associations (38 associations). - Charity associations (13 associations). - Cooperative associations (26 associations). - Cultural associations (8 associations). - Foreign communities associations (17 associations) - Sports associations (15 associations).

There are also several organizations and NGOs concerned with environment and economic, social, humanitarian and cultural affairs. The environment organizations aim at the protection of environment, individual safety against environmental hazards and promoting environmental awareness, in addition to urging the agencies in charge of environment affairs to lay down legislations necessary for the protection and safeguarding the environment. Among the most important NGOs in the UAE are: the Environment Friends association, the Emirates Group for Environment, the Emirates Group for Maritime Environment.

In 1975 the UAE Women's Federation (UAEFW) was founded to be the cornerstone in promoting the activities concerned with women.

Among the UAEFW various activities are:

- Encouraging female education.
- Carrying out programs for the eradication of illiteracy among women.
- Providing training opportunities for women.

UAEFW has participated in many international conferences on women. It has prepared a draft strategy on "women development in UAE" in cooperation with UNDP and the UN Fund for the Development of Women. The strategy focused on raising the health, educational, cultural, economic and environmental standard of women.



There are five cultural, social and scientific associations working in promoting and encouraging social and cultural activities and research in addition to the Consumer protection association.

There are also 12 humanitarian NGOs working in providing financial support to and taking care of the social affairs of orphans, the aged people and the disabled and other persons having special needs (the handicapped).

## **United Arab Emirates Strategies and Initiatives :**

### **Heritage and Culture**

Heritage and culture are central to the UAE's national identity and there is a deep awareness of the need to preserve the indigenous culture on which Emirati society is based. But there is also a renewed emphasis on the evolution of art and creativity in a region that has traditionally focused more on the spoken word than other forms of artistic expression. In particular, there are some exciting developments taking place in the arts at a government level. The private sector is also thriving and young Emiratis are laying claim to their artistic future, expressing themselves in a way that reflects the enormous cultural diversity of the UAE and the region.

### **Cultural Renaissance in Abu Dhabi**

Abu Dhabi 2030, includes the establishment of a series of world-class museums in the Cultural District on Saadiyat Island close to the centre of Abu Dhabi. Its visionary urban development plan, capital as a world-class cultural destination: 'a gateway and beacon for cultural experience and exchange.

Sheikh Zayed National Museum /Gehry-designed Guggenheim Abu Dhabi,/Louvre Abu Dhabi  
Abu Dhabi Art Fair /Art Hub Abu Dhabi/Abu Dhabi International Book Fair / Sheikh Zayed  
Book Award/Sharjah International Book Fair/UAE Board on Books for Young  
People (UAEBBY)/Emirates Airline Festival of Literature/Poet of the Million  
competition/Dubai Community Theatre and Arts Centre(DUCTAC)/Abu Dhabi Festival/Abu  
Dhabi Film Festival (ADDF/Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF),

### **Public Libraries in the UAE**

As Public libraries are important repositories of human knowledge and heritage and they play an increasingly critical role by satisfying the societal needs and aspirations for inexpensive and easily accessible sources of self-development and continuing education. They also provide an excellent alternative for children and young people who want to spend their pastime in reading, research and other useful activities in a favorable environment.

Public libraries in the UAE can be divided into three categories in terms of their affiliation: libraries that belong to federal entities, such as public libraries of the Ministry of Culture and knowledge Development (MCYCD), libraries set up by local entities such as the National Library in Abu Dhabi and libraries owned by private clubs and organizations.

In addition, there are libraries that serve certain target groups, such as university and college libraries that primarily cater to the educational and research needs of students and faculty members. All major universities in Abu Dhabi such as UAE University, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi University and Paris Suborn University boast large and state-of-the-art libraries with thousands of titles, reference books and specialized database.

The National Library

Established in 1981, the National Library is responsible for collecting, keeping and organizing all national literary information. The National Library comprises nearly 2 million volumes covering books, periodicals, manuscripts and electronic materials. It also contains more than 300,000 titles in Arabic and 100,000 titles in foreign languages.

The library offers its services to researchers and readers 14 hours a day. It is also open on weekends.

To know more about the National Library, please find the relevant link in the right column of the page.

#### The UAE Federation Library

The UAE Federation Library at the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) is one of the largest libraries in the country specialized in disciplines such as military, politics, economic and social affairs.

The library is mainly focused on collecting literary materials on the UAE in particular and the Gulf region in general. The library comprises a large number of Arabic and English books, references, encyclopedias, periodicals, important documents, official reports, maps and electronic database, among other materials.

Public libraries of Ministry of Culture and knowledge Development that boast a wide variety of printed and electronic information resources in Arabic, English and a number of foreign languages. It offers membership opportunities to both UAE nationals and residents after obtaining the membership card which enables them to access the services offered by the library.

The library also provides group membership service to institutions and schools subject to meeting certain requirements.

#### Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Library

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque houses a unique library dedicated to Islamic books. Located in the third floor of the mosque's northern minaret, the library contains 3000 titles in various Islamic cultural and scientific disciplines written in over 12 languages. The library has sections for rare books, priceless Arabic manuscripts and rare editions of the Holy Quran printed in Europe between sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is open to researchers, academics and the public.

#### Alliance Francaise

The Alliance Francaise has a multimedia library comprising more than 12,000 books, 2,500 videos and hundreds of CD ROMs and CDs, as well as a selection of French periodicals. The library is accessible to all, however a membership fee is required if you want to take any book or material out.

#### Daly Community Library

Daly Community Library, opened in 1978, has nearly 7,000 books covering fiction and non-fiction for both children and adults, including new publications and bestsellers that are added regularly.

#### Kitab Bus – The National Mobile Library

Kitab Bus, the National Mobile Library, is a project launched by “Kitab” to facilitate easy access to books by taking them right to people's doorsteps across the Abu Dhabi Emirate. The well-

equipped Kitab Bus tours a number of locations across Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Gharbia including primary schools and public places.

#### Neighborhood Libraries

The National Library of Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (TCA) is currently opening new branches across the emirate of Abu Dhabi to expand library services to all areas and spread cultural awareness.

The four-story Corniche Library is the largest among this new breed of neighborhood libraries which offer a wide range of audio-visual materials, viewing screens and internet facilities, as well as self-service options such as self-checkout service. Dedicated areas for children's book and books on the UAE and Arabian Gulf, exhibitions areas and areas for live performance are some of the main features of these libraries.

In addition to the Corniche Library, new libraries are coming up at Abu Dhabi Mall, Mezyad Mall, Al Raha Mall, Al Nahayan Camp and Al Ain Mall.

#### **Sources:**

TCA Website

ECSSR Website

MCYCD Public Libraries Portal

Daly Community Library

Alliance Francaise Website

St. Andrews Centre Website

**Reading Nation:**

An educational campaign, part of Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, in Ramadan 2016 aiming to distribute 5 million books to children in refugee camps and schools in need around the world. This campaign is yet another initiative through which the UAE expresses its passion for serving humanity. It represents the UAE's transition from feeding the hungry and quenching thirst, to nurturing the mind and the soul during the holy month of Ramadan.

**Building Inclusive Green Economies****The UAE Approach**

"Green growth" is the UAE vision and initiative towards Greener Community and it is a pathway which enhances the country's economic growth ambitions, its social development priorities and its vital environmental goals together. United Arab Emirates shall further enhance its significant economic development whilst at the same time addressing wider environmental and social issues and therefore realizing sustainable development. This would enable a wide range of benefits for the country which are key to delivering various federal and emirate-level visions and development plans.

The Vision2021 as mentioned before highly corresponds with the globally emerging concept of "green growth" or "green economy", which refers to the practice of encouraging economic growth and development while ensuring that ecosystems remain in place and providing the services upon which social welfare depend over time.

"A Green Economy for Sustainable Development" initiative

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice-President and Prime Ministry of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched in January 2012 a long-term national initiative to build green economy in the UAE under the slogan A Green Economy for Sustainable Development. Under this initiative, the UAE seeks to become a global hub and a successful model of the new green economy so as to enhance the country's competitiveness and sustainability of its development and preserve its environment for future generations.

### **Unified industrial strategy for UAE**

The UAE Cabinet, chaired by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has endorsed the launch of the Industrial Coordination Council to boost the industrial sector in the country that will be tasked with developing a national strategy to boost the industry sector in the UAE, set key performance indicators and follow up on implementation, proposes initiatives to boost cooperation, and share experiences among government entities as well as with the private sector. It will cooperate with various federal and local government entities and industrial union in developing relevant legislations supporting the sector.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid stressed the importance of having a vision and a unified national industrial strategy that meets local and global markets, and coping with global challenges facing the sector.

**Happiness & Positivity are lifestyle, government commitment and a spirit uniting UAE community**

UAE Cabinet stresses commitment to make community happy through happiness and positivity Charter. Creates CEO and Council for Happiness in all Federal Government Entities

The UAE Cabinet, chaired over by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, endorsed the launch of corporate happiness and positivity initiatives in the UAE Federal Government.

The UAE Cabinet endorsed The National Happiness and Positivity Charter which stipulates the UAE Government's commitment, through its higher policies, plans, projects and services, to provide a nurturing environment for the happiness of the person, family and community, instill positivity as a core value in them so that they are able to achieve their goals and ambitions.

**The UAE strategy on care for the elderly and expanding its coverage of home care.**



UAE Officials from the Ministry of Health and Dubai Health Authority (DHA) recommended to the World Health Organization (WHO) on how to improve elderly home care services in the country.

The UAE aim is not to admit elderly patients in hospitals but to help them stay with their families and the families to learn how to care for them. It is following a study conducted by the ministry in Ras Al Khaimah in 2007 which found that 50 per cent of the elderly patients who are permanently admitted to hospitals can be discharged if home care is available.

There are 656 UAE nationals - both male and female - enrolled in the programme from across the UAE. For an elderly person to be eligible for the home care programme, he/she has to be referred from hospital and then the hospital dispatches a team of nurses, a physician and a pharmacist to see the condition of the patient and assess how many home visits are required.

### **UAE Cabinet launches ‘Cohesive Family 2021’**

The UAE Cabinet, launched a national campaign entitled: ‘Cohesive Family 2021’, to strengthen family ties and endorse the family’s core role in preserving the identity and culture of society.

Family cohesion is a national area of focus in the UAE as families are a key priority for all government projects, strategies and policies related to various sectors said by His Highness the president of the UAE Sheikh Khalifa Ben Zayed Al Nahyan.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid said, "We aim to be among the best countries in the world, and this can only be achieved by strengthening families which form the nucleus of society. Cohesive families constitute the most definitive path to a strong community."

## **Dubai Cares**

It is a UAE-based global philanthropic organization working towards providing children in developing countries with access to quality education through the design and funding of programs that aim to be integrated, impactful, sustainable and scalable. Education is more than a human right, it is an irrevocable asset. Yet, 124 million children and young adolescents around the world don't go to school and a further 250 million children cannot adequately read and write.

### Focus Areas

To increase children's access to quality education guided by a common principle: children ready for schools, schools ready for children, parents and community ready to play their role.

### Achievements

Over the past 9 years, Dubai Cares has successfully launched education programs reaching over 14 million beneficiaries in 41 developing countries in partnership with UN aid agencies and international and local NGOs such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Plan International, World Food Program, Pratham, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi, Associates in Research and Education for Development (ARED), CARE International and Save the Children among others.

Through programs that are based on, or contribute to the evidence base, Dubai Cares drills down to the essence of the issue, taking the lead in dealing with lesser known obstacles to education such as lack of gender-sensitive sanitation facilities or adequate student nutrition or health.

As a result, the organization has managed to increase the level of enrollment in schools, reduced dropout rates, improved the quality of education, assured gender equality across all programs and contributed to the global body of evidence-based best practices.

With the support of the UAE community, Dubai Cares is making a difference in the lives of children and their communities by:

Building and renovating over 2,100 classrooms and schools

Providing more than 1,400 water wells and potable water sources and constructing over 3,400 latrines in schools

Providing nutritious food every day to 505,000 children in schools

Training over 42,000 teachers

Keeping more than 2.75 million children free from intestinal worms through its de-worming activities

Distributing over 2.2 million books written in local languages

Establishing over 6,750 Parent-Teacher Associations

By end of 2015, Dubai Cares has supported education programs in Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia.

### Helping Shape the Global Education Agenda

Globally, Dubai Cares plays an important role in advancing the education development agenda. For instance, Dubai Cares has been supporting the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF), contributing to the development of learning metrics for delivering quality education and establishing a defined mechanism to influence the post-2015 education framework. In February 2012, the UAE-based global philanthropic organization hosted the second LMTF meeting in Dubai to identify common learning goals in order to improve learning opportunities for children and youth across the world. Convened by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution, the LMTF works within the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Education for All (EFA), and Global Education First Initiative (GEFI). Currently, Dubai Cares is supporting developing countries with the adoption of LMTF recommendations, enabling them to measure a more holistic set of learning outcomes.

Dubai Cares was also selected by UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon to join as a partner in his 5-year Global Education First Initiative which was launched in September 2012 during the week of the UN General Assembly in New York to ensure quality, relevant and transformative education for all children across the world.

As part of the London Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Paris during April 2014, Dubai Cares joined a global alliance led by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, with 13 leading pharmaceutical companies, global health organizations, private foundations and donors, and governments pledging support to reduce the global burden of NTDs. One of Dubai Cares' strategic approaches to improving student enrollment and learning outcomes is through an integrated school health and nutrition model that is made up of school-based deworming activities, school feeding and WASH (Water Sanitation & Hygiene) in schools.

On the sidelines of the week of the 70th United Nations General Assembly in New York during September 2015, Dubai Cares joined United Nations representatives and other relevant agencies in New York to discuss the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the next 15 years. The organization sees the transition from Millennium Development Goals towards the design and adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals as a time to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past fifteen years, and an opportunity to develop goals that can act as a realistic frame for all countries to aspire to. Education is a central component that binds all these goals together.

### Education in Emergencies

In order to address the critical need to provide quality education to children affected by crisis, in September 2015 Dubai Cares co-hosted an event titled "Education: A Lifeline, Not a Luxury" on the sidelines of the week of the 70th United Nations General Assembly in New York. During the event, Dubai Cares highlighted the importance of education in crisis areas, and announced that it will be championing education in emergencies by providing quality education to children and adolescents who have been forced out of school by conflict and emergency.

## UAE Community Engagement

In the UAE, Dubai Cares engages residents through a series of volunteer, awareness and fundraising initiatives that are linked to its global mandate. These initiatives include the annual Walk for Education, Volunteer Emirates, Volunteer Globally and the Ramadan Campaign.

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