

EMBASSY OF THE
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سفارة
الإمارات العربية المتحدة
واشنطن

Foreign Aid

Since its founding, the UAE has provided significant aid to developing countries and has been a major contributor of emergency relief to regions affected by conflict and natural disasters.

As UAE founder and former President HH Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan said, “Foreign aid and assistance is one of the basic pillars of our foreign policy. For we believe that there is no true benefit for us from the wealth that we have unless it does not also reach those in need, wherever they may be, and regardless of their nationality or beliefs.”

In 2008 the UAE established the Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid (OCFA) to track and document the country’s annual contribution to international aid. OCFA’s 2010 report, released in mid 2011, found that in 2010 the UAE contributed a total of AED 2.80 billion dirhams (USD \$762.2 million) in grants and loans to development, humanitarian and charity programs worldwide. In addition, UAE donors committed another AED 2.81 billion dirhams (USD \$765.3 million) to development programs beyond 2010.

The UAE supported projects in more than 120 countries in 2010, Asia was the largest recipient of UAE aid in 2010, followed by Africa and the Americas. The top four sectors to which donors directed their funds in 2010 were commodity aid and general program assistance, humanitarian aid, infrastructure development and health.

The UAE was recognized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as the 14th most generous donor in the world in donations as a proportion of gross national income. Furthermore, the UAE became the first non-member country of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee to report to the OECD in such detail.

The UAE’s primary aid and relief agency is the Red Crescent, one of the world’s top ten Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in terms of the volume of aid provided. The Red Crescent actively collaborates with the United Nations Office for Project Services, (UNOPS), responsible for providing urgent technical, logistical and administrative support to other United Nations (UN) programs.

In 2010 the Red Crescent ranked as the country’s third most significant donor behind the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and the Government. The Red Crescent gave a total of 364.1 million dirham (\$99.1 million) in more than 50 countries, mainly to development projects and humanitarian projects.

The UAE Red Crescent organized the Emirates Heart Group, a voluntary collective of cardiologists working in the UAE, and from several countries, including the Emirates, France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and South Africa. Started by five UAE cardiologists, and now boasting over 200 participants, the group's members volunteer their time to carry out surgery in countries where there is a lack of such skills. Their missions have included trips to Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Kenya.

Other organizations also sponsor aid and relief. One major initiative, launched by Vice President and Prime Minister HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in September 2007, was [Dubai Cares](#), which seeks to provide primary education for at least a million school children in the poorest countries of the Middle East, Africa and Asia. The Al Maktoum Foundation, the Sharjah Charity Association, and the Dubai Charity Association are among other leading UAE aid relief organizations.

The Zayed Foundation responds to emergency needs and also contributes to infrastructure projects, like hospitals, healthcare institutions and schools. The scope of the foundation is perhaps the most active in global terms of all the UAE agencies. In 2010 the foundation gave grants totaling 72.9 million dirham (\$19.8 million). The main sectors supported by the Zayed Foundation in 2010 were education, health, charity and social infrastructure and services. Over half of the funds were disbursed to countries in the Middle East, including Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, Egypt and Afghanistan.

Development Aid

Besides emergency and other humanitarian relief, the UAE provides development aid. The oldest of the UAE's development agencies, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) was established in 1971. Since its inception, ADFD has provided almost 13 billion dirham (\$3.54 billion) to 207 projects across 53 countries. In 2010, the ADFD contributed or administered 798.8 million dirhams (\$236.8 million) in grants and loans, making it the UAE's second largest donor that year.

While much of the UAE's development assistance is provided on a government-to-government basis, the country is also a major contributor to international agencies. During the course of the last 30 years, for example, over 100 billion dirhams (\$27 billion) has been made available through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, according to the UAE Ministry of Finance and Industry. In addition, the UAE supports various UN development funds, including UNICEF, UNDP and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the UN Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

The UAE Government and Emirati donor organizations also participate in a number of other multilateral aid-giving institutions, including the International Development Agency (IDA), and other bodies like the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Arab Gulf Fund for the UN (AGFUND), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). In 2010, almost 15 percent of UAE aid was coordinated through multilateral organizations.

A main initiative of the OCFA is to document all foreign aid contributions made since the formation of the UAE in 1971. While this study is not yet complete, during the announcement of the inaugural 2009 report, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al

Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai stated a provisional figure of 163 billion dirham (\$44 billion) as the amount given by the government and Emirati donor organizations since 1971.

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