



NEIGHBORS

Social funding for complex, long lasting and deeply rooted challenges

Ma'an to positively impact UAE citizens, residents

The Authority of Social Contribution – Ma'an recently revealed details of its plans to provide support for an array of beneficiaries through the creation of new social contracting initiatives.

Social contracting is an innovative new financial mechanism to fund solutions to highly complex, long-lasting and deeply rooted social challenges that have a measurable financial impact on our society.

Such mechanisms include Social Impact Bonds, which enable the private sector and individuals to invest in and contract for the delivery of public services that provide measurable impacts on these significant and costly social challenges. Return on investment for companies and individuals is directly correlated to pre-defined measurable social and financial outcomes.

The Authority is planning to support a range of citizens and residents across Abu Dhabi through new programmes that will all focus on the social priority of cohesive families and inclusive communities. While it already has some social investors on board, Ma'an will be seeking support from leading Abu Dhabi organisations.

Divorced parents of children up to 8-years-old will benefit from a programme that will be owned by the Early Childhood Authority, offering counselling support to divorced parents and help them cope with the challenges posed by family conflict issues.

Among the programmes that will be rolled out include tackling the challenge of improving the wellbeing of individuals from low-income families. The program owned by Social Support Authority will aim to empowering individuals with crucial employment skills and transforming members of the community into better all-around skilled people.

Another initiative that will be launched in partnership with Maker Space,

this programme, will enable individual's access to high-quality machines and tools to help them build a wide range of products, and enhance chances of securing a job in the future

Commenting on Ma'an's role as a leader in the field of social impact contracting as well as its commitment to creating positive social impact, H.E. Faisal Al Hmoudi, Executive Director for Social Incubator and Contracting at Ma'an, said: "At Ma'an, we have been pioneers and innovators in this field, having launched the GCC's first Social Impact Bond, 'Atmah' in 2020. We have witnessed first-hand the real-world impact that such sustainable funding mechanisms provide, which is why we have been working on a series of new social impact bond programmes that will help mitigate the effects of many pressing social challenges across Abu Dhabi society. By bringing together key organisational partners from across the community and working hand-in-hand to deliver measurable outcomes, we are just getting started on our social contracting journey."



H.E. Salama

Dr Chih Hoong Sin, Director at Traverse, added: "The way that the social contracting model works, focused on outcomes, has provided a new way of not only supporting wider impact in society, but as platform for furthering government policy goals in Abu Dhabi. As we have seen with Atmah, SIBs don't just have the potential to do good, but to do good 'well'. If we look across the world, many social contracting programmes are being used to tackle some of the toughest issues facing society. To provide real social impact is

not easy, it is a long journey consisting of many steps. In Abu Dhabi, Ma'an has recognised, and is leading the way, when it comes to adding value to society through social contracting across a whole array of programmes. These new programmes will change people's lives for the better, and further cement Ma'an's leadership position in this important new field."

Ma'an launched the first Social Impact Bond in the GCC – Atmah – which saw Aldar Properties, Aldar Education and the Zayed Higher Organisation for People of Determination come together to help young People of Determination to learn key skills that will help them to enter the job market, positively impacting not just them, but their families and the wider community in Abu Dhabi

About Ma'an

Ma'an was established in February 2019 under the Department of Community Development in Abu Dhabi with the aim of bringing together the government, the private sector and civil society to support a culture of social contribution and participation. The authority will deliver solutions for social challenges with five main pillars of work – a Social Investment Fund, a Social Incubator Programme, Community Engagement Programmes and the introduction of a new type of public contracting, Social Impact Bonds, as well as Outreach Management.

Ma'an will support the third sector to flourish in Abu Dhabi, enabling responsible not for profit associations or foundations and social enterprises to contribute to the development of strong, active and connected communities.

Ma'an Authority for Social Contribution is an initiative under the Ghadan 21 accelerator programme, supporting Abu Dhabi to become one of the best places in the world to do business, invest, live, work and visit.



Based on its strategic location, Sheikh Salman bin Ahmad Al-Fateh Fort, also known as Riffa Fort, historically reflects one of the most significant transition of Bahrain's history. Laying in the eastern part of the city of Riffa, the fort was built by Sheikh Salman Al-Fateh in 1795 on a cliff overlooking the low

desert valley between the old town of East Riffa and the new town of West Riffa. The exterior design of the facility is a splendid architectural structure that carries the memory of the kingdom's royal family. (KUNA)

Breaking new ground in space

Collaboration furthers the ambition of future generations

In the field of space, we never stop thinking about the next big thing. Ever since the advent of the space race, humanity has gone above and beyond their capabilities to reveal more, gain knowledge and share more about our universe, galaxies, and the cosmos in general. The recent launch of the James Webb Space Telescope is yet another milestone for humanity in our journey to understand further about the vast unknown. Adding to that, the launch has been made possible due to the unflinching partnership between the American space agency NASA, European Space Agency and the Canadian Space Agency.

Partnerships to the fore

These unifying moments of collaborations is what defines the space sector. It is not just a triumph of the scientists, engineers, and people behind this project, but an inspiration to the multitude of spacefaring nations that are aiming to contribute to the space sector. It furthers the ambition of future generations, to make a mark in the annals of scientific history.

The future of space exploration is the responsibility of multiple stakeholders. From global space agencies to the up-and-coming private sector players and even the general public – each of us has a role to play in guiding the global space journey forward. It will not only push and inspire technological innovations but will further build on the ecosystem to encourage a seamless collaboration between science and academia, large corporations and SMEs and NGOs and institutions, among others.

The UAE space journey

As a young spacefaring nation that is celebrating its golden jubilee this

year, the UAE has made significant strides in space science and exploration, pushing the limits to what we can achieve in this field. From building our first satellite as early as 2007, it has taken us less than a decade and half to go from there to sending a mission to Mars – a first interplanetary mission from the Arab world. This mission has already gathered over 100 GB data about the weather and climate patterns on Mars, which have been made available to the scientific community through our data centres.

But we aren't stopping at that. This year, we also announced the Emirates Lunar Mission to land the Rashid rover on the Moon and study a never before explored region. The findings from this mission will be crucial to future space travel and creation of space suits and vehicles for inter planetary missions.

Beyond this, we are also building on our astronaut corps, and aim to establish a human settlement in Mars by the year 2117. Our projects and ambitions today are guided towards the vision of the future.

The future is collaborative

We have always believed in the power of collaboration and our scientific milestones could not have been realised without our partners. MBRSC's latest satellite project – the MBZ-SAT, which when completed will be the most advanced satellite in the region in the field of high-resolution satellite imagery, has been pivotal in supporting the local space industry, with 90% of the me-

chanical structure and 50% of the electronic modules being built in the UAE. Furthermore, we have partnered with agencies and academia from around the world to collaborate on the mission.

Similarly, the second batch of the UAE Astronaut Programme is currently training with the 2021 NASA Astronaut Candidate Class, while Emirati analog astronauts are currently undertaking the UAE Analog Mission#1, as part of the Scientific International Research in Unique Terrestrial Station (SIRIUS-21), in an 8-month long project in Moscow, Russia.

MBRSC has always encouraged collaborations with the scientific community to continue to encourage scientific programmes aimed at exploring newer research activities and application possibilities in the field of STEM. Our work together with our collaborators will enable scalability, resilience and most importantly deliver unparalleled observations of space, research, and technology for the betterment of humankind.

2022 and beyond will be even better and bigger for the next frontier as the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope has signalled. Understanding the positives of the space industry, the UAE too, has as part of its diversification explored and established itself as a leader in the field in the Arab region through its space missions and programmes. As a country, we are not only celebrating the past 50 years, but also look towards a future of growth, prosperity and unity for 'the next 50.'



H.E. Salem Humaid AlMarri
Director General of MBRSC

editor's choice

