



## MBRF Signs New 10-Year Agreement with UNDP

*The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF) has signed a new 10-year agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that covers the 2021-2030 period, at a special ceremony held at the UN Headquarters in New York City, renewing the two parties' partnership on the Knowledge Project.*

The agreement enhances both parties' thought leadership, and boosts their ability to conduct evidence-based policymaking for sustainable development in the Arab region and the world.

The event was organised by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, with high-profile representatives in attendance, including the UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner; MBRF's CEO H.E. Jamal bin Huwaireb; H.E. Saud Al Shamsi, Chargé d'Affaires and Deputy Permanent Representative of the UAE to the United Nations; and Laurent Probst, Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in Luxembourg and Global Lead of PwC's Accelerator Network.

"The lessons of the past must inform the development policies of the future, making knowledge a critical ally as we strive to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and shift to a more sustainable and resilient path," said UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner. "In today's fast-paced world, gaining knowledge, sharing it, and applying it develop capabilities and expands opportunities in every aspect of people's lives, enriching the nations to which they belong – from education to the economy, from technology to the world of work."

From his side, MBRF's CEO H.E. Jamal bin Huwaireb highlighted the necessity to measure knowledge within the Arab region and around the world, as "there is no development without knowledge, the Global Knowledge Index, which we launched in partnership with the UNDP, addresses this need and takes into account the pivotal role of youth as one of the most crucial elements needed to build knowledge societies. Our constant attempts to spread knowledge and achieve its goals for development can only be seen through the empowerment of youth."

*The Knowledge Project is dedicated to promoting the measuring and enhancement of knowledge across the Arab region and the world. Its key outputs are the Global Knowledge Index, the only global index that measures knowledge across 134 countries.*



Meanwhile, H.E. Saud Al Shamsi, Deputy Permanent Representative of the UAE to the United Nations, said: "A remarkable socio-economic transformation has occurred in the UAE since the UNDP first opened its doors in 1977, and our relationship with the Programme has evolved along with it. The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation and UNDP found each other in 2008 and have been releasing one great product after the other – publications that really document the best thinking on development. With the signing of this agreement, we look forward to witnessing the outcomes of the next decade as this partnership continues to grow."

#### Cooperation in the next decade

The event showcased tangible results of the UNDP-MBRF partnership in promoting knowledge for development across the Arab world and globally, in addition to exploring opportunities to be achieved in the upcoming decade.

In addition to the 10-year agreement, the event

#### Above:

Jamal bin Huwaireb and Mourad Wahba during renewing the two parties' partnership for 10 years.



**Above:**

Achim Steiner speaks about the importance of the partnership with MBRF in promoting the knowledge and its role in development

saw the signing of two other agreements, one charting a plan to engage youth from UAE as interns with UNDP, and another, between the Programme and PwC, to produce the new Future of Knowledge Foresight Report 2019 – one of the outputs envisioned in the 10-year agreement between UNDP and MBRF.

It is worth mentioning that The Knowledge Project is dedicated to promoting the measuring and enhancement of knowledge across the Arab region and the world. Its key outputs are the Global Knowledge Index, the only global index that measures knowledge across 134 countries, and the Future of Knowledge Foresight Report, which presents a pilot study, covering 20 countries, on the future fields of knowledge that will shape the future of knowledge societies.

**Achievements**

Over the past ten years, the project contributed to driving active conversation and raised awareness on the importance of knowledge and knowledge-based

policies for sustainable development.

Outputs of the Knowledge Project are: The Arab Knowledge Report 2009: Towards Productive Intercommunication for Knowledge, The Arab Knowledge Report 2010-2011: Preparing Future Generations for the Knowledge Society, The Arab Knowledge Report 2014: Youth and Localization of Knowledge, Arab Knowledge Index 2015, Launching of the Knowledge4All portal, Arab Knowledge Index 2016, Arab Reading Index 2016, Launching of the Knowledge4All Mobile App, Global Knowledge Index 2017, Knowledge and the Fourth Industrial Revolution 2018, Global Knowledge Index 2018, The Future of Knowledge: A Foresight Report 2018.

**Knowledge Reports**

The Arab Knowledge Reports focused on contribution to establishing the knowledge society and economy in the Arab region, i.e. a society where knowledge is the ultimate tool and medium of effective integration between ICT, expertise, and governance capacities towards maximizing the



**Left:**  
Signing the  
agreement  
between UNDP  
and PwC until  
2020

gains and sustainability of human development.

One of the most important reports is “The Future of Knowledge: A Foresight Report” which presents a pilot study, covering 20 countries, on the future fields of knowledge that will shape the future of knowledge societies.

The purpose of this report is to have a better understanding of today’s strong and weak signals in the next wave of (technology) disruption by testing a new way to capture and analyse real-time data associated with five key future fields of knowledge: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity, Blockchain, Biotechnology, and Future Skills; and to accelerate knowledge development by helping country leaders to benchmark their performance against that of front-runners.

### **Knowledge Indexes**

This agreement led to the development of the Arab Knowledge Index, reflecting knowledge from a development perspective in the Arab region while taking into consideration the Arab region’s specific context, needs and challenges, and focusing as well on the critical role of Arab youth in the establishment of the knowledge society in the Arab region.

Under the wider vision of the Arab Knowledge Index, the Arab Reading Index was published providing an objective assessment of the state of reading in the Arab region.

The positive impact of the Arab Knowledge Index promoted the development of the Global Knowledge Index, which is the only index that measures knowledge on the global level as a broad concept that is intricately related to sustainable development, hence to all aspects of modern human life, in a systematic approach that builds on solid conceptual and methodological principles.

### **Knowledge4All**

Knowledge4All portal is a bilingual digital hub dedicated to all researchers, professionals, students, stakeholders, and the public. It offers easy access to the different knowledge products achieved within the Knowledge Project and to various data and publications on knowledge-related topics.

The importance of such hub stems from the central role of knowledge in the development of modern-day societies, and from the deficiency in data and publications about the knowledge scene and its various components, mainly in the Arab region. We anticipate that the establishment of such a hub will facilitate and further promote research about knowledge in the Arab region and beyond, thus contributing to the sustainable development.

The Knowledge4All hub is an open non-profit initiative. Submissions are welcome in different forms including article submissions, links to publications, data files, and event sharing – with reference to topics directly related to knowledge in the Arab region and beyond.