

## DIHAD 2008 Report

### Humanitarian Challenges of the Future

The Fifth Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development Conference & Exhibition which was held from 8-10 April 2008, at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Center, United Arab Emirates

The event was held under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Dubai and was officially supported by Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian & Charity Est., The United Nations and UAE Red Crescent and was organized by INDEX Conferences & Exhibition.

DIHAD 2008 was officially inaugurated by H.H. Sheikh Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, Son of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum in the presence of Sir John Holmes, Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs & Emergency

Relief Coordinator, United Nations, H.E. Dr. Ali Abdulla Al Kaaby, Chairman of the Board of Directors, UAE Red Crescent and other dignitaries.

Sir John Holmes presented H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum with a token of appreciation towards his exemplary humanitarian contribution through the "Dubai Cares" initiative.

In his keynote address, Sir John Holmes, spoke about the Humanitarian Challenges faced around the world and in particular the Middle East. He praised the role of the Donors from the Middle East in contributing towards Humanitarian Relief, while also appreciating the role of Humanitarian actors in coping with the relief challenges.



He also stressed that in order to meet the growing array of humanitarian needs, the energies and goodwill of all humanitarian actors, including those of NGOs from Muslim and other nations, as well as regional partners, including the OIC, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the GCC need to be harnessed to strengthen and coordinate with the existing Global Humanitarian Systems.



### Conference

The overall objective of the fifth DIHAD conference was to begin a dialogue within the humanitarian sector about what it will take to be ready to meet the challenges of the future. Over the three days, speakers from a range of disciplines and geographical regions discussed what perspective 'futures' might look like and what might be required to meet each scenario. Of particular significance was climate change, new and emergent diseases and migration patterns, with particular emphasis on the effects of urbanisation. The DIHAD conference was structured to support the participants in their roles to anticipate to what might be and to foster their adaptive capacities in addressing the future crises. In line with the conference's theme to highlight the "Humanitarian Challenges of the Future", the sessions were used as a platform to discuss:

**“** We are all gathered here in Dubai today for the same reason: because we want to strengthen humanitarian action, whether as humanitarians, working on the frontlines of war and disaster, or as vital partners, working behind the scenes to make this kind of life-saving assistance possible.” - Sir John Holmes, Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs & Emergency Relief Coordinator, United Nations

- Asteroids, pandemics, climate change, nuclear incidents and resource scarcity: The dynamics and dimensions of humanitarian threats by 2020
- Reflecting on tomorrow's humanitarian challenges from regional perspectives
- Science, technology and humanitarian policy: New threats, new solutions and new innovations
- Today's hotspots, tomorrow's crises and the role of prevention and preparedness
- The urban challenge: lessons-learned to date
- The humanitarian roles of non-state actors: advantages and limitations
- Principles and practice in tomorrow's world: emerging realities for humanitarian organisations
- The future of food: prospects and challenges
- The corporate sector as a humanitarian actor: dimensions of commitment, sustainability and innovation
- The corporation as a humanitarian innovator: a panel of experts
- Reflections from the field: working with the corporate sector
- Preparing for the future: the humanitarian organisation in the 21st century





The three day conference was addressed by 25 internationally renowned speakers. Some of the speakers were:

**Dr. Abdulla Bin Qala Hashim** - Assistant Secretary for Humanitarian and Environment GCC, **Professor Sir David King** - Director, Smith School of Enterprise and Environment, University of Oxford, **John Powell** - UN World Food Programme, Deputy Executive Director, External Affairs and Resource Development, Italy. The conference presented a preview of the changing dynamics, dimensions, actors and instruments of humanitarian action which will change considerably in the coming years.

**4000** Participants  
**\$200** million worth of Business Deals Signed  
**450** Exhibitors  
*from* **60** Countries



*Very Valuable. The structured meetings with vendors are informative and allow us to move beyond the standard quick "Sales Pitch". I have made contacts that will be of great use in diversifying our supplier base. I was even able to get a quote from an emergency purchase already - met the vendor yesterday, and the need came up today. Thanks for all the help with this.*

**- Liz Critchley, American Red Cross**

## The Exhibition

With the exhibition spread over an area of 7500 sqm. that comprised of NGOs, UN Agencies, Governmental agencies, relief suppliers and related service providers, DIHAD 2008 provided an ideal platform for networking between various sectors of the humanitarian industry.

DIHAD 2008 hosted key decision makers, procurement and logistics officials from NGOs and UN agencies. For the first time DIHAD organized direct B2B meetings between the

Exhibitors and Representatives of NGOs/ UN Agencies. Over the period of 3 days around 800 meetings were held that led to attractive deals being closed by exhibitors participating at the event

The increased interest from our regular visitors and the new interests from key figures in several prominent international organizations, act as a testament to the success of DIHAD on an international scale.

[www.dihad.org](http://www.dihad.org)

## Workshop (IHRS)



DIHAD hosted a mini - workshop which was led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA).

The workshop was addressed by UN officials, NGOs, Red Cross official who introduced the International Humanitarian Response System to the attendees (IHRS).

The workshop was held for one day and attracted high level delegates from different international organizations, government institutions, academic institutions and even private companies.



## Humanitarian Youth Forum

For the first time DIHAD opened doors to the Youth of the country, wherein school students were provided with an opportunity to recruit with NGOs/ UN Agencies as part of their volunteer programs.

This program was endorsed by the Knowledge & Human Resources Development Authority of the Government of Dubai.



## DIHAD CONCLUSIONS – 2008

Under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, and Ruler of Dubai, the fifth Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference and Exhibition (DIHAD) took place from 8-10 April 2008 in Dubai - UAE. Organized by INDEX Conferences & Exhibitions and generously supported by its strategic, humanitarian and corporate partners, especially Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Est. and UAE Red Crescent Society and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs-OCHA. DIHAD, more than ever before, brought together and created vibrant synergies among a wide range of players involved in and concerned with the provision of assistance to those affected by emergencies and disasters. As before, Dubai's commitment to good causes, its strategic location and multi-faceted regional and international hub-function played a formidable facilitating role in this regard.

**[1]** The Conference recognised that the international community has become increasingly aware that the dimensions and dynamics of future humanitarian crises will be exponentially different from those of today. In noting this growing awareness, the Conference calls upon those with humanitarian responsibilities to develop longer-term analyses about future threats such as climate change and its various negative impacts and ways to offset them;

**[2]** In urging responsible organisations to develop long-term strategic analyses, the Conference also strongly believes that those involved in the humanitarian sector need to look more actively for substantive innovations to enhance prevention, preparedness and response capacities. This means that these organisations should become increasingly engaged with - amongst others - the scientific community;

**[3]** The Conference took note of the significant demographic shift that the world is witnessing as more and more people move from rural to urban areas. This shift will continue steadily over the next two decades, and the spectre of the unprecedented growth of slums led the Conference to urge all relevant humanitarian and development organisations to orient their expertise

to meet growing demands arising from complex urban vulnerabilities;

**[4]** Though at this stage there is adequate food for the world's burgeoning population, the Conference urges that much greater emphasis be placed on promoting solutions to potentially severe nutritional stress in the future. This means that economic inequalities as well as the need for new agricultural processes and food products are to be addressed;

**[5]** The need for the humanitarian sector to prepare now for the future makes it imperative that one looks at humanitarian-sensitive development. The Conference therefore urges those institutions responsible for both development and humanitarian affairs to look at their assessment processes to see how, from the very outset of response activities, development and recovery can begin;

**[6]** While trends forewarn of exponentially more complex global crises, the Conference acknowledged the importance of being sensitive to the regional differences that will require specific prevention, preparedness and response measures. The Conference suggested that relevant local,

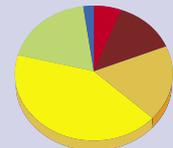


Types of Organisations at DIHAD 2008



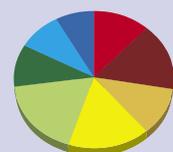
- 11% Government
- 50% Non-Government
- 17% U.N. Agency
- 2% Independent Charity
- 11% International Federation, Red Cross & Red Crescent
- 9% Others

Procurement Officials Budgets at DIHAD 2008



- 6% Under US\$100,000
- 13% Between US\$100,000 - US\$500,000
- 18% Between US\$500,000 - US\$ 1 million
- 42% Between US\$ 1 million - US\$10 million
- 19% Between US\$10 million - US\$100 million
- 2% More than US\$100 million

Type of Goods Procured at DIHAD 2008



- 12% Agriculture & Food
- 16% Health
- 11% Temporary housing & shelters
- 16% Water & Sanitation & Power
- 18% Vehicles & Logistics
- 10% Telecommunication and IT
- 9% Education
- 8% Others



*Dubai is an essential logistics hub for the entire humanitarian community, and especially for WFP as one of the leaders in this field."*

**John Powell - WFP's Deputy Executive Director**

national and international authorities work together towards plans to meet the identified prevention and preparedness needs accordingly;

**[7]** Potential “hotspots” – specific geographic areas of potentially severe future crises – are far better known and understood than they may have been in the past. The Conference therefore urged responsible organisations to use this knowledge to rapidly develop prevention and preparedness activities, always bearing in mind the critical roles of local authorities and community organisations;

**[8]** The Conference noted the growing awareness that local communities are fundamental to effective crisis prevention, preparedness and response, now and in the future. It therefore stressed the importance of developing ways to ensure consistent dialogue and interaction between local communities and national authorities, together with relevant international organisations as and when appropriate;

**[9]** The Conference recognised that humanitarian crises of the future will require wider partnerships and expanded forms of collaboration. Public sector-corporate sector engagement is a case in point. Follow-up action has to be taken to promote ways for greater practical

coordination and cooperation, and this should be one of dedicated follow-up objectives of this 5th DIHAD Conference;

**[10]** In various parts of our increasingly complex and interconnected world, humanitarian and charitable actors are confronted with new operational and policy constraints and challenges which, at times, place pressures on independent assistance and may lead to shrinking ‘humanitarian space’. Participants concluded that humanitarian agencies and workers from various backgrounds and denominations have opportunities to enhance dialogue and bridge-building in order to address these often common concerns and DIHAD was confirmed as a prime conducive platform in this regard.

**[11]** The Conference focused on criteria that would enable organisations with humanitarian responsibilities to assess their individual capacities to meet the challenges of the future. With this in mind, the Conference urged humanitarian organisations to consider their anticipatory, adaptive and collaborative capacities to deal with future crises and opportunities and to develop their organisational strategies accordingly.

**DIHAD is a great place for users of materials and services to make contacts and find sources for both current and future needs. These set appointments have been very useful.”**  
- World Health Organization



## Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development Conference & Exhibition

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