**UAE THROUGH THE EYES OF THE YOUTH**

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‘’The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.’’ (Diogenes Laertius). His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai launched the UAE Centennial Plan 2071. It is a longstanding vision plan that extends for 5 decades, with the main objective of strengthening and enhancing the nation’s reputation. It focuses on four pillars which are: future-focused government, excellent education, a diversified knowledge economy and, a happy and cohesive society[[1]](#footnote-1). As a young and active member of the country, I firmly agree and am in favour of this initiative. Here are my reasons why:

Thinking ahead matters. One of the aims of the UAE Centennial 2071 is to establish a government with a long-term vision. One that anticipates and prepares for the future. There is no telling what the future brings, and it’s vital to be prepared for it. If one is not set when events don’t go as intended, then they will likely find themself in an unfavourable position. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic was sudden and unexpected to everyone. However, those who had a backup plan were far more fortunate than those who neglected to plan for disasters.

Education is a powerful weapon, just like what Nelson Mandela stated. He remarks,” Education is the most powerful weapon you can utilize to transform the world.’’ It improves one’s skills, knowledge, personality, and attitude. It aids in the advancement of innovation and technology. It is especially crucial for the youth like me because it is through education, we grow to become functioning members of society. When it comes to building the future, there is no greater asset than today’s youth.

Economic development is a crucial component for the success of the nation. It is the source of wealth from which the community benefits, and overall, it provides the citizens with a better quality of life. The youth also play a role in the development of the economy, when they design products, make consumer choices or save money. The knowledge and skills of today’s youth allow them to create economies of their own, and navigate the larger economies around them. By engaging the youth in economics, it can change the world in powerful ways.

People who are happy are more likely to make a positive contribution to the community. This is in connection with the fourth and final pillar, which aims to build a happy and cohesive society. Community development is an integral part of the improvement of a nation, for the citizens themselves are the ones who are serving and running the country. The youth may not be running the country now, but by providing them a tolerant, safe and principled society that embraces a positive lifestyle, eventually they will learn to treat others the same way their environment treated them. In other words, human beings are shaped by their environment.

After viewing the official portal of the government regarding the UAE Centennial Plan 2071, I observed that they never brought up the topic of sustainability. I am aware about the UAE’s efforts towards a green future, but it makes me feel sorrowful that it wasn’t included in this substantial project. I suggest the UAE to arrange interactive sustainable activities, so that the citizens of any age may engage while benefitting the environment as well. It is very similar to their Dubai Fitness Challenge, except they should give that same amount of attention, logistics and preparation to the wellbeing of the environment.

Aside from that, their comprehensive and well-established project known as the UAE Centennial Plan 2071 I cast no doubt on. They give attention to the future, education, the economy, and the people which I very much appreciate. Speaking from the heart, I am proud to be a resident of this futuristic metropolis we call the United Arab Emirates, and there is no other place I would rather stay.

1. *“UAE Centennial 2071”,* UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, accessed February 09, 2023 <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/innovation-and-future-shaping/uae-centennial-2071> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)