



Building a Better Response Arabic e-Learning Launched with Panel Discussion on Humanitarian Response at the Local Level in Dubai.

The Building a Better Response project, together with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the International Humanitarian City, launched the Building a Better Response (BBR) e-learning course in Arabic with a panel discussion in Dubai on the role of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in humanitarian response. The event came in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit, set to take place in Istanbul in May 2016, where much of the conversation is expected to focus on placing local actors at the center of humanitarian response.

“Our work cannot be as successful without local NGOs,” says Rabih Torbay, Senior Vice President of International Operations for International Medical Corps. “They are the ones who know the context inside and out. Without their knowledge and experience, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to access hard-to-reach areas in high-risk environments like Yemen, Syria, and Afghanistan. Our job is to support them and help develop and build their capacity, as they are the ones who will stay behind and serve their communities long after the international community leaves.”

The BBR project is being implemented by a consortium of International Medical Corps, Concern Worldwide, and Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the BBR e-learning course covers the international humanitarian architecture that is set up during crises, as well as international humanitarian law, humanitarian principles, and other core areas of emergency response. The BBR e-learning tool is free and designed for low-bandwidth settings, making the information available to potential first responders across the globe.

The launch event, which was held on January 18, 2016, at the International Humanitarian City in Dubai, brought together H.E. Shaima Al Zarooni, CEO of the International Humanitarian City, Khaled Khalifa, Chief of the Partnership Coordination Section of OCHA in Geneva, and Rabih Torbay, Senior Vice President of International Operations at International Medical Corps, for a panel discussion on putting local and national actors at the heart of humanitarian response. The panel was moderated by Moustafa Osman, the Founder and Director of Osman Consulting. Much of the discussion focused on the critical role international NGOs must play in building the capacity of local NGOs so they can take greater roles in responding to humanitarian crises in their own countries.

The BBR e-learning course is available in English, French, and Arabic. Some 16,000 people from 192 countries have already registered for the course, with people visiting the BBR site from locations such as the United States, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq.

The BBR e-learning course can be accessed here: <http://www.buildingabetterresponse.org/>.