

**Ms. Clare Woodcraft  
Chief Executive Officer  
Emirates Foundation**

Clare Woodcraft heads up Emirates Foundation – an independent UAE foundation that aims to support youth development through the model of venture philanthropy. The Foundation has a dynamic portfolio of focused programs that aim to guide, inspire and empower young people in the UAE to meet their full potential. It focuses on three core areas: social inclusion, community involvement and leadership and empowerment.

Prior to this role, Clare was Deputy Director at Shell Foundation – an ‘enterprise based’ corporate foundation that builds social enterprises to address global development challenges related to the energy sector. Previously Clare worked as the Regional Director of Communications for Shell in the Middle East and North Africa managing Shell’s social investment (CSR) portfolio and a regional team in fourteen countries.

This involved developing local talent and working closely with civil society to identify core developmental needs that can deliver impact.

Earlier, Clare headed up Visa International’s emerging markets Public Affairs department (based in the UAE) working closely with governments and financial sectors in the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe to see how electronic payments could make a contribution to socioeconomic development.

Clare has spent a total of 18 years living in emerging economies (mainly in the Middle East) and has written extensively on issues related to sustainable development with a particular focus on Palestine and the Arab World.

She worked in various capacities including as a development practitioner, a journalist (Finance Editor for Middle East Economic Survey) and in the corporate sector in social investment, government relations and communications. She holds a BA degree in Arabic and French from Salford University and a MSc in Development from the London School of Economics.