

Farah Haddad

MANAGING DIRECTOR · INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION · MULTI-MARKET
DELIVERY · ARABIAN GULF

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PERSONAL DETAILS

Nationality	Lebanese
Residency status	UAE residence visa, employment sponsored, valid to March 2028
Work authorisation	Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation work permit held and transferable
Notice period	Three months
Languages	Arabic (native) · English (fluent) · French (professional working proficiency)

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Infrastructure and construction executive with 22 years of experience across civil engineering, transport and utilities delivery in the Arabian Gulf, currently holding full profit and loss accountability for the United Arab Emirates business of a regional contractor with group turnover of AED 4.2 billion. Proven track record of restoring margin in a low-margin sector, converting a tendering business into a disciplined commercial one, and delivering major public infrastructure packages to programme in four Gulf markets. Operates at group executive committee level and in direct engagement with government clients, project owners and joint venture partners.

Combines a chartered engineer's grasp of delivery risk with the commercial instincts of a contracts director, an uncommon pairing in a sector where the two functions typically negotiate against each other. Recognised within the group for taking the UAE business from marginal profitability to the strongest operating margin of its four national units, and for building a national talent programme that carried UAE citizen representation in skilled roles past the statutory target ahead of schedule. Board member of the UAE operating subsidiary and chair of the group tender and risk committee. Seeking a multi-market managing director or chief executive mandate in Gulf infrastructure, contracting or project development.

SELECTED CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Margin Recovery. Grew UAE revenue from **AED 1.4 billion to AED 2.6 billion** and lifted operating margin from **2.1% to 6.8%**, the highest of the group's four national businesses.

Order Book Construction. Rebuilt the forward order book from **AED 3.1 billion to AED 7.4 billion**, raising tender win rate from **18% to 31%** while declining work below the approved margin floor.

Multi-Market Loss Reversal. Turned a combined Qatar and Oman operation from an operating loss of **AED 90 million** to an operating profit of **AED 65 million** within **three years**.

National Capability Building. Raised UAE citizen representation in skilled roles from **4% to 11%**, ahead of the statutory schedule, with **34 UAE nationals** through a structured graduate engineering programme and **88%** two-year retention.

Commercial Settlement. Closed a legacy claims portfolio of **AED 610 million**, recovering **AED 235 million** and settling **14 of 17 disputes** without recourse to arbitration.

CAREER EXPERIENCE

MAR 2020 – PRESENT · REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRACTOR

Managing Director, United Arab Emirates

AED 4.2bn group turnover · 9,400 employees · projects across four Gulf markets

Scope: full profit and loss accountability for the group's United Arab Emirates business, comprising **AED 2.6 billion** in annual revenue, **5,200 employees** and a portfolio spanning highways, bridges, water and drainage, and utilities infrastructure for federal and emirate-level clients. Reporting to the Group Chief Executive Officer, with seven direct reports across operations, commercial, engineering, procurement, finance, human resources and health and safety. Member of the group executive committee and chair of the group tender and risk committee.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Business Turnaround:** Repositioned the national business from a volume-led contractor competing on price to a selective bidder built around transport and water infrastructure, where the group's plant base and prequalification history give it a defensible advantage.
- **Commercial Discipline:** Introduced an approved margin floor, a formal bid or no-bid gate and independent cost review on every submission above AED 100 million, ending a practice of buying work in the expectation of recovering it through variations.
- **Claims and Contract Management:** Directed the settlement of an inherited claims and variations portfolio, rebuilding contemporaneous records, notice discipline and delay analysis capability inside the commercial function rather than outsourcing it to counsel.
- **Cash Generation:** Reset the working capital cycle through certification discipline, milestone restructuring at contract award and a subcontractor payment framework aligned to client certification.
- **Emiratisation Delivery:** Built the graduate engineering and site management programme that carries the group's UAE national intake, together with the mentoring, secondment and progression structure behind it, taking the business past the statutory skilled-role schedule ahead of time.
- **Health and Safety Leadership:** Rebuilt the safety operating model around supervisor competence, subcontractor prequalification and near-miss reporting, moving the business from compliance monitoring to leading-indicator management.
- **Client and Government Engagement:** Hold the senior relationships with federal and emirate infrastructure clients, consultants and regulators, and lead the group's positioning on framework and long-term maintenance opportunities.
- **Executive Team Development:** Rebuilt the leadership team, appointing five of seven directs internally, and established the succession bench now supplying candidates to the group's other national businesses.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Grew revenue from **AED 1.4 billion to AED 2.6 billion** and operating margin from **2.1% to 6.8%**, taking the UAE unit to **62%** of group turnover.
- Grew the forward order book from **AED 3.1 billion to AED 7.4 billion** and raised tender win rate from **18% to 31%**.
- Delivered an **AED 1.6 billion** coastal highway and interchange package **five months ahead of programme** and within the approved budget.

- Reduced the working capital cycle from **118 days to 71 days**, releasing approximately **AED 340 million** in cash.
- Recovered **AED 235 million** from a legacy claims portfolio of **AED 610 million**, settling **14 of 17 disputes** without arbitration.
- Improved lost time injury frequency rate from **0.42 to 0.09** per million hours worked, with **38 million hours** completed on the flagship highway package without a lost-time injury.
- Raised UAE citizen representation in skilled roles from **4% to 11%**, meeting the annual skilled-role increment in **each of four reporting years**.

JAN 2016 – FEB 2020 · INTERNATIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTOR

General Manager, Qatar and Oman

AED 2.8bn turnover · operations in six markets

Scope: profit and loss accountability for the combined Qatar and Oman operations, **AED 1.1 billion** in annual revenue and **2,300 employees**, covering roads, drainage and marine works. Reporting to the Regional Chief Executive, with five direct reports and oversight of two joint venture vehicles.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Loss Recovery:** Led the recovery of a loss-making two-country operation, exiting three contracts carrying unrecoverable risk and renegotiating the terms of two others before rebuilding the pipeline.
- **Operating Model Redesign:** Consolidated duplicated Qatar and Oman functions into a single shared commercial, procurement and plant structure, cutting fixed overhead without reducing site supervision.
- **Joint Venture Governance:** Reset the governance of two joint ventures, establishing board cadence, cost allocation rules and dispute escalation that had not previously been documented.
- **Subcontractor Strategy:** Rebuilt the subcontractor base around a prequalified panel with standardised terms, reducing dependence on single suppliers in specialist trades.
- **Market Entry:** Established the Oman operation from prequalification through to first award, including registration, local partner selection and the initial management team.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Moved the combined operation from an operating loss of **AED 90 million** to an operating profit of **AED 65 million** within **three years**.
- Reduced fixed overhead from **AED 118 million to AED 74 million** annually.
- Secured the first **three Oman contracts** with a combined value of **AED 420 million**.

AUG 2011 – DEC 2015 · INTERNATIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTOR

Projects Director, United Arab Emirates

Scope: delivery accountability for a **AED 2.4 billion** portfolio of six concurrent infrastructure packages across Abu Dhabi and Dubai, leading **420 staff** and a site workforce of **3,100**. Reporting to the Country Manager.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Programme Delivery:** Directed the portfolio through a period of severe resource competition, sequencing plant, labour and specialist subcontract capacity across six packages rather than allowing projects to compete internally.

- **Design Management:** Established a single design management function across the portfolio, shortening the change and approval cycle with consultants and clients.
- **Interface and Risk:** Introduced a portfolio risk and interface register covering utility diversions, third-party approvals and access constraints, reviewed monthly with clients.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Delivered an **AED 780 million** water and drainage programme on budget and to the contracted completion date.
- Reduced the design change approval cycle from **42 days to 15 days**.
- Improved portfolio gross margin by **2.9 percentage points** across four years.

SEP 2003 – JUL 2011

Early Career

UAE building and infrastructure contractor · AED 900m turnover · Feb 2006 – Jul 2011

Senior Project Manager (2008 – 2011) · Project Manager (2006 – 2008)

Regional engineering consultancy, Beirut and Abu Dhabi · Sep 2003 – Jan 2006

Site Engineer (2005 – 2006) · Graduate Engineer (2003 – 2005)

Progressed from consultancy site supervision into contractor-side delivery, taking first full package accountability in 2008 on an **AED 310 million** mixed-use development and completing chartership during this period.

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Construction Management · 2010

Heriot-Watt University

Bachelor of Engineering, Civil Engineering · 2002

American University of Beirut

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

- Chartered Engineer (CEng), Engineering Council, United Kingdom
- Member, Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE)
- Fellow, Chartered Institute of Building (FCIOB)
- Project Management Professional (PMP), Project Management Institute

DIRECTORSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE

- **Board Member**, UAE operating subsidiary, 2020 – Present
- **Chair**, group tender and risk committee, 2022 – Present
- **Member**, group executive committee, 2020 – Present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Advanced Management Programme, INSEAD, 2022
- Leading Large-Scale Infrastructure Programmes, IMD Business School, 2019
- Delay and Quantum in Construction Disputes, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, 2017

CORE COMPETENCIES

Enterprise Leadership

Profit and loss ownership · Multi-country operations · Executive committee leadership · Board reporting · Organisational design · Succession planning

Infrastructure Delivery

Highways and bridges · Water and drainage · Marine and utilities works · Portfolio programme management · Design management · Plant and resource planning

Commercial and Contractual

Bid strategy and margin governance · FIDIC contract administration · Claims and variations · Delay and quantum · Joint venture structuring · Subcontractor frameworks

Regional Market Knowledge

UAE federal and emirate clients · Qatar and Oman market entry · Prequalification and registration · Government and regulator engagement · Local partner structures

People, Safety and Nationalisation

Emiratisation programme delivery · Graduate engineering development · Leading-indicator safety management · Workforce welfare compliance · Multicultural workforce leadership

MEMBERSHIPS

Institution of Civil Engineers · Chartered Institute of Building · Society of Engineers, United Arab Emirates

REFERENCES

Available on request.