



## LETTER OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

**HARVARD HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVE (HHI); BOSTON, USA**

AND

**TEHRAN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (TUMS); TEHRAN, IRAN**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Islamic Republic of Iran is exposed to a wide variety of natural and man-made disasters. During last four decades, in average, 4,000 people were killed by natural disasters in the country annually. In addition, being a large and politically stable country has made Iran the largest host of refugees in the region. Over the last decade, the nation has undertaken dramatic efforts to increase its capacity for Disaster Health Management (DHM). Specifically in the area of health sector, progress has been made with the development of Disaster Management Center (DMC) in Ministry of Health & Medical Education (MOH&ME).

To strengthen Iran's health sector, Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS) has taken initiative to establish Disaster & Emergency Health Academy as an umbrella for joint collaboration of two inter-linked departments for research and education in the field of disaster health management. The research Department of Disasters & Emergencies Health (DDEH) has been established in National Institute of Health Research that is co-affiliated to TUMS and Ministry of Health & Medical Education (MOH&ME), and Department of Disaster Public Health (DDPH) has been established in School of Public Health at the TUMS. According to their mission statements, DDEH is responsible for research and certificate-based training courses and DDPH is responsible for degree-based post-graduate training programs, including master and PhD programs. The two aforementioned departments closely collaborate to ensure the support from Iran's health system on evidence-based decision making and capacity building of human resources in the field of DHM.

As the result, Iran is uniquely poised geographically, economically and scientifically to take great strides forward in their own disaster preparedness and response capacity as well as development of a regional leadership role in these fields.

The Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI) is a joint academic program involving multiple entities within the Harvard academic and medical community. The Initiative combines expertise in public health, medicine, governance, and scholarship to advance research, practice, and policy in the field of humanitarian assistance to populations affected by disasters. Large-scale natural disasters lay bare issues of environmental degradation and disregard for vulnerable populations, often leading to pandemic disease and social destabilization. HHI responds to large scale humanitarian emergencies



and disasters by assisting field practitioners to improve ground level responses, develop methods for educational programs for preparedness and response, and create academic linkages to evaluate and assess the impact of humanitarian interventions, and preparing the next generation of humanitarian actors. HHI's mission is to further the science, practice, professional development and role of human rights in humanitarian emergency response worldwide.

**PURPOSE:**

TUMS and HHI seek to develop an academic collaboration to promote the technical capacity for Disaster Health Management of Iran and to disseminate that capacity to other countries in the eastern Mediterranean region that are most in need.

**AREAS OF COOPERATION:**

To address the top priority identified needs of health sector regarding a wide variety of natural and man-made disaster preparedness, response and risk management the areas for inter-institutional cooperation include, but are not limited to:

- Development and/or strengthen the educational programs with Disaster Health Management orientation.
- Designing and implementation of research projects to provide the health sector policy makers with the most appropriate evidences
- Carrying out the common national and international conferences, workshops and meetings to share the expertise and information derived from the collaboration
- The faculty and student exchange to attend the courses and upgrading of teaching and research skills and co-supervising post-graduate students as well on the research and dissertations relevant to disaster preparedness and management
- The exchange of academic materials and publications

It is envisioned that this LoA will begin a long-term collaborative program in public health and disaster assistance programs between the TUMS and HHI to strengthen disaster and public health studies in Iran, the USA and in the region.

**FUNDING OF COOPERATIVE PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS:**

Before any particular cooperative project or program is initiated, all financial details should be negotiated and agreed upon by the both institutions.



**TERMS OF AGREEMENT, VALUATION AND TERMINATION:**

The present Letter of Agreement becomes effective upon its execution by both parties and shall remain in effect for five years from said date of execution, at which time the parties may negotiate to extend the agreement a further term. This LoA may be terminated by either party upon 90 days written notice, and may be amended by mutual consent of the parties, formalized in written communications that specify the date which such amendments are to take effect.

**COORDINATORS:**

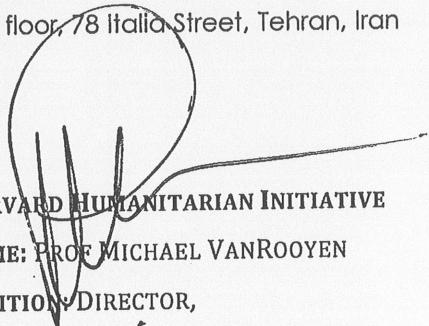
Both parties will appoint a coordinator to facilitate the communication between the parties.

**Harvard Humanitarian Initiative**

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