



## Qatar's Fourth National Human Development Report

# Realising Qatar National Vision 2030 The Right to Development

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The cover shows Doha's modern towers through the traditional arches in the courtyard of the Museum of Islamic Art, blending old and new.

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# Foreword

Qatar's fourth National Human Development Report (NHDR) builds on the narratives of the previous three NHDRs. The first, *National Human Development Report (2006)* reviewed the country's progress with respect to comprehensive human development. The second, *Advancing Sustainable Development (2009)* focused on the sustainable development challenges of rapid economic development and critical environmental parameters that are essential for national planning. The third, *Expanding the Capacities of Qatari Youth, Mainstreaming Young People in Development (2012)* focused on the development opportunities and challenges facing Qatar's youth.

This fourth NHDR, *Realising Qatar National Vision 2030: The Right to Development*, reflects a commitment to deepening the national and international consensus that development entails much more than seeking economic growth. While emphasizing national identity, culture, heritage and Islamic values, national human development must promote, respect and protect the rights of all individuals.

The 1986 United Nations Declaration defines the right to development (RTD) as “...an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.”

The declaration, as well as Qatar's international human rights treaty commitments, provides a framework whereby international experience and lessons learned can assist the country in its efforts to achieve development that balances the social, economic and environmental dimensions.

Development in all its aspects is a right and not simply a meeting of needs. Individuals should be the subject of, and active participants in their own development and that of society as a whole. Equal and non-discriminatory enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and successful human development are mutually dependent and reinforcing.

Qatar's Permanent Constitution sets the tone for a society-based on the values of justice, benevolence, freedom, equality and high morals and equal opportunities for all citizens. The Constitution establishes social justice as the basis for the organisation of economic enterprises and for employer-employee relations and sets out the state's commitment to improving education, health and effective social protection as well as to empowering women.

Many of the fundamental rights-based principles are embedded in Qatar's legal, institutional and development planning including *Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV)*, *the National Development Strategy 2011-2016*, and *its Midterm Review*.

Qatar's fourth NHDR strengthens Qatar's commitment to these fundamental principles. The analysis points to many gains that Qatar has made in human development, particularly for its citizens. It also points to areas where a more focused effort is needed. The continued existence of socio-economic inequalities, domestic violence and relatively low labour force participation rates call for an even more effective interface between the country's people and planners..

Qatar has made significant strides in the area of women's rights and their empowerment, especially in education and health, where the country is a regional leader. But challenges remain in ensuring women's equal access to employment and in their political empowerment.

For children, youth and older persons, there has also been good progress at the aggregate level, yet scope for further action remains. Lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, obesity and smoking have long-term effects on human development, and the report calls for a broad social policy framework that can meet such challenges.

Qatar has put in place legislation, mechanisms and programmes to give effect to the rights of persons with disabilities. Yet opportunities for their full economic participation remain limited—partly because of lack of awareness and partly because many places of work are not conducive for such participation.

Reviewing Qatar’s human development indicators under the framework of The Right to Development remains a learning exercise to be further developed in implementation and by benefiting from ongoing discussions. Greater commitment in providing an environment where all rights are respected, and obligations are met, will contribute towards building a more cohesive society as envisaged by QNV 2030—a society where justice, benevolence and equality prevail.

No country is alone in today’s world and international cooperation in the progressive realisation of development is essential. A deeper appreciation of the linkages between respect for human rights and national and regional peace, stability and security are required. Qatar will continue to play a significant role in the global partnership for development.

Qatar’s fourth NHDR was prepared in partnership with relevant national ministries and government agencies, the private sector, civil society and the United Nations Development Programme’s United Arab Emirates office. I would like to sincerely thank members of the National Advisory Committee who guided the preparation of this report, authors of background papers and participants of a National Seminar on the Right to Development who have provided important inputs and insights. Thanks are also due to members of the fourth NHDR project team for their professionalism in putting this publication together.

**His Excellency Dr. Saleh bin Mohammad Al Nabit**

Minister of Development Planning and Statistics

June 2015

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BMI	Body Mass Index
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CMC	Central Municipal Council
COP18	Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EAA	Education Above All
EAC	Educate a Child
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EI	Enabling Environment Index
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
G77	Group of 77
GATT	General Agreement on Trade and Services
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGFR	Global Gas Flaring Reduction Partnership
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GNI	Gross National Income
GPEI	Global Polio Eradication Initiative
HDI	Human Development Index
HRBA	Human Rights-based Approach
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ictQatar	Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NDS 2011-2016	National Development Strategy 2011-2016
NDS 2017-2022	National Development Strategy 2017-2022
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NOC	No Objection Certificate
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PEIC	Protecting Education in Insecurity and Conflict
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
QBWA	Qatar Businesswomen Association
QF	Qatar Foundation
QFSPR	Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation
QNV 2030	Qatar National Vision 2030
QOC	Qatar Olympic Committee
QP	Qatar Petroleum
QRC	Qatar Red Crescent
QSTP	Qatar Science and Technology Park
RtD	Right to Development
SCFA	Supreme Council for Family Affairs
SCH	Supreme Council of Health
SEC	Supreme Education Council
SESRI	Social and Economic Survey Research Institute
SPI	Social Prosperity Index
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WHO	World Health Organization



# Overview

Qatar's National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS), launched in March 2011, embodies Qatar National Vision 2030's (QNV) commitment to carrying out development with responsibility and respect for all human rights. The strategy put in place a comprehensive development agenda that was agreed following extensive participatory stakeholder engagement involving the public sector as well as the private sector and civil society to ensure ownership and legitimacy.

In seeking to achieve the QNV 2030 goals, the NDS 2011-2016 aims to improve the lives of all citizens and people living in Qatar through legislative changes, policy reforms and ambitious programmes that will sustain economic prosperity and promote social development. These initiatives seek to promote, protect and secure the human rights of all citizens and non-Qataris.

With the country's exceptionally rapid development affecting the lives and well-being of individuals and communities, coupled with increasing pressures on institutional capacities for service delivery brought about by the country's phenomenal population growth, insufficient priority may sometimes be given to the social, economic, political and cultural rights of particular groups. By ensuring that policies and programmes are inclusive and that they take into account the rights of all subpopulation groups, including the marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged, as envisaged in QNV 2030, and that implementation and enforcement mechanisms are in place, Qatar can achieve the Right to Development (RtD) for all.

## A rights-based approach to development

Human development and human rights share a common vision and a common purpose—to secure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all people everywhere. Human development is a process of enhancing human capabilities—expanding choices and opportunities so that

individuals can lead a life of respect and value. Human rights express the idea that all people have claims to social arrangements that protect them from the worst abuses—and that secure the freedom for a life of dignity (UNDP 2000).

*Human development and human rights share a common vision and a common purpose—to secure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all people everywhere.*

The RtD Declaration is a significant landmark that distils best global practices and experience into values that should be adhered to for the success of development. These include a focus on people-centred development and the promotion of human development as a comprehensive process and fundamental concern of every human endeavour. They also include the maintenance of international peace and security and international solidarity for development in the context of the increasing interdependence of people and countries.

Qatar's Permanent Constitution, Qatar's legal framework and QNV 2030 are built on the foundations of fundamental rights and freedoms, and explicitly recognise the role of the state to embark on development that is pro-people and which benefits all. The NDS 2011-2016, the current basis for human development planning, translates the QNV 2030 into measurable targets through programmes, projects and initiatives.

Qatar's human rights institutional framework is evolving. In recent years it has been strengthened by establishing and enhancing independent institutions and organisations, as well as through government bodies that aim to promote, respect and protect the human rights of all people. Qatar's national human rights institutions are networked with regional and international organisations.

The country is thus increasingly able to contribute to the implementation of the human rights treaties and conventions that it is party to, and it is also in the process

of considering accession to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (1966). With this, Qatar would be well positioned to take its human rights obligations and human development aspirations to the next level of implementation. The lack of national expertise, technical and human resource capacity in human rights work is a challenge that sometimes affects the ability of individuals to realise their rights.

## Human development and human rights

Qatar's population has been growing at an exceptional pace averaging 10% a year in the decade to 2014. This high population growth is primarily on account of the massive inflows of socially and culturally diverse expatriate workers needed to support the country's infrastructure and construction investments, particularly in relation to hosting of the FIFA 2022 World Cup. By 2014 the non-Qataris share of Qatar's total population had risen to 88%. Rapid expatriate population growth is impacting on national development, increasing public sector expenditures, especially on frontline services of health and education, and potentially affecting the rights of individuals.

Qatar has made remarkable development progress. Its Human Development Index (HDI) value in 2013 places the country in United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) very high human development category. Significant improvements in the standard of living as well as gains in life expectancy have contributed most to increases in the HDI. A rights-based approach to development calls for efforts to be undertaken to address inequalities and exclusion. Inequalities and exclusion tend to mirror rights not observed. If inequality is taken into account Qatar's global ranking drops by seven positions from 31 to 38, mainly due to relatively higher inequality in gross national income and education.

*Inequalities and exclusion tend to mirror rights not observed.*

Most indicators of human development of the Qatari population have shown strong gains over the longer term. These gains to a large extent mirror progress on the RtD. Development progress has come about through people-centred plans, policies and programmes supported by increased and high public expenditures on the social

sectors. The RtD should necessarily throw a spotlight on excluded and/or disadvantaged populations, that is individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised.

Qatar, because of its recent persistent strong economic performance and high levels of income derived from its natural hydrocarbon resource base, does not suffer the pains of absolute poverty. However, so as to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable, Qatar's NDS 2011-2016 adopted a national relative poverty line to help determine a monetary social protection floor for Qataris. Nearly one-tenth of Qatari households experience relative poverty. Between 2006/7 and 2012/3 the relative poverty rate remained largely unchanged, at 9.3% and 9.8% respectively, although the incidence of children living in relative poverty increased. Low income Qatari households tend to be characterised by multiple dependents, low education of the household head, and are often headed by a divorced woman or a disabled person.

Disaggregated data from a study of spatial differentials in social prosperity among Qatari households shows that there is a significant divide in social prosperity between Qatar's most urbanised zones and the non-urbanised ones. There are gaps in a wide range of social, demographic and economic variables—including education, health and community facilities, employment and other public services—which have implications for policies and programmes.

Between 2004 and 2013, the total number of expatriate workers increased from 0.4 million to 1.4 million, representing a growth of 14.7% per annum. Males account for around 89% of total expatriates. Qatar has the highest share of expatriate workers relative to the size of its total population. Their presence indicates the significant contribution that they make to economic growth and to national development. Expatriates are employed in all sectors of the economy, but numerically dominate the private, mixed and government corporation sectors. More than 70% are engaged in semi-skilled or unskilled employment.

While Qatar has much of the legal, regulatory, institutional and policy framework in place for the promotion and protection of the rights of foreign workers, there are many challenges affecting the full realisation of these



rights, especially among the lesser skilled workers. The scale of expatriate inflows has stretched the institutional capacity of the relevant government ministries and agencies to implement and enforce existing regulations for the protection of foreign worker rights, especially of construction workers where exploitation often begins in their home countries at the time of recruitment.

Many complaints relate to delays in payment of wages and withholding of various allowances. Others relate to poor working conditions in the workplace due to lack of implementation of the Labour Law and substandard living accommodation in labour camps. In terms of occupational safety and health, there is insufficient compliance with existing national laws and regulations by many employers, especially subcontractors, as well as a lack of effective enforcement of them.

Government ministries and agencies have become ever-more conscious of the importance of ensuring the occupational health, safety and human rights of all expatriate workers. Numerous reforms are underway to promote and protect the rights of workers, including the replacement of the sponsorship system with employer-employee contracts.

Companies are now also recognising that ensuring workers' welfare and rights not only creates a contented workforce but also enhances labour productivity. Several organisations have proactively established initiatives and standards to safeguard the rights of labourers and to encourage ethical practices for their construction projects.

Foreign workers who experience denial of their rights often lack information and knowledge as well as the linguistic abilities to make formal complains. The NDS 2011-2016 proposed the establishment of a special labour tribunal to solve labour disputes and to expedite routine cases with the aim that they could be adjudicated on within a limited period of time. Ensuring effective access to the tribunal would necessitate providing information in multiple languages, that interpreters are available, and that no fees are charged to workers. Mechanisms for ensuring the tribunal's decisions are enforced must also be put in place.

*Foreign workers who experience denial of their rights often lack information and knowledge as well as the linguistic abilities to make formal complains.*

An increasing number of long-term expatriates, having worked in Qatar for 20 years or more, would like to remain permanently upon reaching retirement age. In some cases returning to their countries of birth may not be a viable option for a variety of reasons. While their service to the country may be considered worthy of social benefits, such as pension and health care, they currently have no entitlements. The NDS 2011-2016 proposal to establish a permanent residency category that could accommodate the needs of this group.

Cases of serious human rights abuses of domestic workers, including non-payment of wages, excessive hours, no leave days, physical, mental and sexual abuses, are not infrequent. Domestic workers have as much need for their work to be regulated by law as any other worker. Yet, because they are excluded from the 2004 Labour Law they do not have access to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' (MoLSA) Department of Labour Relations and the Labour Court to resolve grievances and access justice.

Creating a deeper human rights culture among expatriates is consistent with the spirit of QNV 2030. This needs to be done by communicating and raising awareness of rights consistently among the multilingual and multicultural groups, and also with the rights-holders, that is employers, the government and members of society.

## Women's right to development

Progress on gender equality is fundamental for realising human rights for all, creating and sustaining peaceful societies, and for socially inclusive and sustainable development. Qatar's accession to and monitoring of United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) emphasises the state's commitment to fulfil its obligations in realising women's rights to development. Qatar submitted its first Universal Periodic Review on its human rights obligations to the United Nation's Human Rights Council in February 2014. The council made several observations and recommendations on it which need to be followed-up.

Following the review of Qatar's report to CEDAW in early 2014, the United Nations body recommended that the country establish a centralised government agency with a strong mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on

women's empowerment, with a view to ensuring the systematic implementation of the provisions of the convention in the state party. This recommendation is of heightened importance given that women's issues previously carried out by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs were absorbed into the MoLSA in early 2014.

While Qatar ranks high internationally on human development, it scores low on gender equality and women's empowerment. Qatar was the highest ranked Gulf country (31<sup>st</sup> place) on UNDP's HDI yet it had a very low international ranking at 114 out of 152 countries in the Gender Inequality Index. Qatar fares unfavourably on this index, compared with other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

*While Qatar ranks high internationally on human development, it scores low on gender equality and women's empowerment.*

Several programmes in education, health, employment and leadership aim to ensure greater gender equality and women's empowerment, and better outcomes for women have been realised. In education, women's enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels has expanded significantly. At the tertiary level, there is a reverse gender gap in favour of women. Consistent with their higher performance in international tests at all grades, a much higher proportion of females than males make the transition from secondary to tertiary education. Better reproductive health has been reflected in reduced maternal mortality, improved birth spacing and lower fertility.

Impressive progress in achieving gender equality in education and health has not been matched by commensurate progress in employment and political empowerment. Women's strong gains in education and health outcomes should lead to higher labour force participation. While female labour force participation has increased and is high by GCC standards it is still low compared with countries at similar high levels of economic and human development. Barriers to women's participation in employment have to be addressed to reap the returns from investments in their education.

Qatar's private sector has a big profile in the country's employment. It employs a majority of the labour force but

only a small share of Qataris. However, a growing number and proportion of Qatari women in the labour force are joining the private sector. The share of employed Qatari women working in the private sector grew from just 2% in 2001 to almost 15% in 2013. There has also been a substantial growth of the share of Qatari women in the mixed sector. This increase in Qatari women working outside the public sector may well be partly explained by the state's Qatarisation policy aimed at increasing the number and share of nationals in all companies, particularly in higher level positions.

Few women are in top senior management positions although there has been an improvement over the last decade. The weak link between educational outcomes and labour market needs is a challenge preventing some educated women from gaining access to employment related to their specialisations at university. Underlying social and cultural norms also influence women's employment choices and make women reluctant to take up certain types of work. More efforts to motivate girls and women to study sciences and technology, as well as business, is another option for tapping women's potential as vital human capital for the country's economic and social advancement.

Qatar's rapid economic and social development, itself heavily influenced by globalisation processes, continues to affect traditional Qatari family life. Rising age at first marriage is common for both Qatari males and females. But whereas most males eventually marry, and if divorced remarry, there are rising proportions of females who never marry, or once divorced or widowed, do not remarry. Social and cultural implications of lifetime singleness and declining fertility need to be a central focus for family policy.

The number of Qatari women marrying foreign husbands grew significantly from 116 to 267 between 2000 and 2013, representing about one in eight. The number of divorces of Qatari women married to foreign husbands also doubled over this period. Many of these divorced couples had children. While CEDAW affirms that state parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children, this is inconsistent with the Qatari Nationality Law since citizenship is granted based on the nationality of the father. Although there are some measures to ensure that the children of Qatari women

with foreign husbands receive the same treatment as children of Qatari nationals in the areas of education and health this does not extend to all entitlements.

*Although there are some measures to ensure that the children of Qatari women with foreign husbands receive the same treatment as children of Qatari nationals this does not extend to all entitlements.*

Gender-based violence, which includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, not only affects victims but also has social and economic costs for society. Data on the various forms of violence against women tend to be incomplete and reflect only the most severe cases. The available evidence shows that the reported cases of domestic violence in Qatar are on the rise. CEDAW's Committee cited concern with low levels of coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGO) that are responsible for protecting families from domestic violence. Cultural sensitivities hinder collection and sharing of abuse-related data across organisations.

Enhanced collection and analysis sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are required so that policy and programme development are based on stronger evidence. For example, in the area of violence against women, there is a need for robust indicators that capture the prevalence of violence and women's access to justice, as well as studies that will lead to a better understanding of discriminatory social and cultural factors that cause violence. A more comprehensive sex-disaggregated database will also help mainstream the RtD of women in planning.

Qatari women have the right to participate and stand in local level municipal elections. However, in the four Central Municipal Council elections held to date, very few women have been put forward as candidates and despite the fact that upwards of 40% of the voters in each election are women, just one female candidate has been elected in any of the first four elections—none were elected in 1999. Women's participation in key decision-making processes needs to be strengthened. Their greater participation at the legislative level and expanded opportunities in senior governmental decision-making bodies would enable them to play a key role in development and in the advancement of women. Women should be better sensitised to their constitutional and legal rights.

The determination of the leadership to promote and protect women's political rights has enhanced the status of Qatari women. Globally it has also enhanced the state's reputation within the international system and has bolstered its legitimacy. However, the aim of promoting women's agency so that they can fully and more actively participate in the political sphere remains a significant challenge.

## Rights of persons with disabilities

People with disabilities are vulnerable because of the many barriers they face: attitudinal, physical, communication and financial. Supportive legislation, programmes and technology are helping persons with disabilities (PWD) in Qatar to better realise their potential.

A social and economic inclusive rights-based approach to development provides a platform to mainstream PWD. It recognises the rights of disabled persons and redresses the limitations and barriers which the social, economic and physical environment impose on them.

Qatar places great importance on the rights of disabled persons. A social rather than a medical model for disability is gradually evolving to meet the QNV 2030 aspirations for social justice and inclusion. The social model of disability places the issue of the way that PWD are viewed and treated by society rather than their underlying medical conditions as the primary factor leading to the need for empowerment.

*A social rather than a medical model for disability is gradually evolving to meet the QNV 2030 aspirations for social justice and inclusion.*

The 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has been ratified by Qatar and a national report was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014 on implementation progress. Existing national legislation, especially Law 2 of 2004 relating to persons with special needs is being aligned with the CRPD provisions. Qatar's National Human Rights Committee has called on the government to speed up procedures for implementing proposed amendments to Law 2 of 2004. In 2012 the Council of Ministers approved a draft resolution amending it, but it still remains to be finalised.

Progress has been made in providing PWD with the support and means to exercise their rights. Employment and education are two areas where relatively better progress has been made. Yet it remains the case that education and employment levels of PWD lag behind that of the general population. There is a need to do more through stronger job placement measures to enforce current law which mandates an employment rate for disabled people of at least 2%. An effective monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure that this target is being met.

Although Qatar has taken significant steps to promote and protect the rights of PWD, especially at legislative and institutional levels, challenges remain. Persons with special needs and their families are generally unaware of their rights and of the services and support available to them. Ensuring that PWD have access to all basic services and improving coordination between agencies in providing these services are continuing challenges.

Further, access to public buildings and amenities is often difficult for persons with a physical disability. Legislations requiring barrier-free building modification, such as installation of a ramp for wheelchairs alongside or in place of some steps, will improve access for the physically disabled.

The NDS 2011-2016 called for an integrated approach to sound social development that aims at individual and general well-being. The Midterm Review of the NDS showed that implementation of this social approach is challenged, *inter alia*, by lack of systems for project coordination and review of legislation on social protection; limited training and rehabilitation centres for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; and absence of a good database or methodology for measurement of social protection.

The inclusion of questions on disability in Qatar's 2010 population census was an important step in recognising the challenges of PWD. Counting them in order to better understand the number and their economic, social and housing characteristics can better inform policy and programme development. Basic registration data on PWD are also available. But the level, detail and quality of these data need to be significantly strengthened if better measurement and monitoring of the RtD outcomes are to

be realised. Periodic special in-depth surveys covering PWD are also required. Moreover, all data on PWD needs to be coordinated and analysed from a rights perspective.

The government alone cannot realise the RtD of PWD. Support and collaborative efforts of civil society, the private sector, communities and families are needed. PWD should have opportunities to access their rights within their own communities through affordable and relevant services. A comprehensive and holistic approach is required to mainstream PWD into the development agenda so that they can enjoy their rights.

## Children, youth and older persons

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Children (CRC) shifted the global paradigm on the way children are viewed and treated—as human beings with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity. Qatar national legislation is being progressively aligned with the articles of the CRC. Several agencies and specialised organisations have been established to compliment the role of line ministries in helping to realise the rights of the child to development.

Although there is no absolute poverty in Qatar, low-income households have a disproportionate share of young persons. About 15% of Qatari children (aged under 14) live in these relatively poor households compared with 13% in 2006/7. The effects of divorce on Qatari children continue to be an issue given the links to child poverty and other dimensions of child well-being. The risk of child poverty after divorce is high, despite legal obligations to pay maintenance to children under the 2006 Family Law. The risk to child well-being from divorce does not only stem from low income but also from the events of separation and divorce.

*The effects of divorce on Qatari children continue to be an issue given the links to child poverty and other dimensions of child well-being.*

Childhood obesity in Qatar is a major and growing health concern with both immediate and long-term effects on well-being. Legislation and policy need to encourage access and exposure to healthy foods as well as increased sport and physical activity. Prevention campaigns should be encouraged, including with stakeholder participation,

to educate the public on the links between diet, physical activity and health, including the need to reduce intakes of fat, sugar and refined grains.

Children's mental health is affected by multiple factors including their genetic endowment, physical health, quality of nutrition, income of their families and other social, familial and cultural factors. It is also affected by the stability and safety of the environment in which they live. Despite mental health difficulties in childhood and adolescence being common, Qatar has very limited data on the prevalence of them. There is a need to break the stigmas and taboos that surround child and adolescent mental health. There is also a need to expedite the establishment of a National Mental Health Law to protect the rights of people with mental health conditions, ensuring access to appropriate, high-quality care in suitable settings.

High-quality early childhood education and kindergarten provide great benefits to young children as well as to society and acts as an enabler for education reform. They tend to lead to higher educational performance, healthy and competent adults, responsible citizens and strong communities. While kindergarten is designed as part of Qatar's educational reform to improve subsequent school performance, at present there is limited acknowledgement of the need to link issues of child development in a strategic way. There is a need to expedite implementation of a policy for compulsory kindergarten and to establish this within a comprehensive framework for early childhood development.

Cases of violence and abuse of children in Qatar are growing: by parents, family members, caretakers, teachers or even other children. Many cases go unreported and the magnitude of the problem is hard to quantify. There should be regular health monitoring, school awareness programmes, establishment of counselling entities, better supervision in schools where abuse is more common, and in-depth studies to understand the root causes of such violent behaviour. Violence affects children's physical and mental health. Also required are campaigns to raise awareness about violence against children, to encourage victims of abuse to report and to provide support for them. And existing laws relating to violence against children need to be better enforced.

Drug abuse is a major public health problem impacting young people in all societies. Yet little is publicly known about it in Qatar, including what drugs are being used and the magnitude of the challenge. The Ministry of Interior-led Permanent Committee for Drug and Alcohol Affairs is raising awareness among school and university students of the dangers of drug abuse, including advertising on popular websites about the risk of drugs. Qatar has moved away from treating drug addiction merely as a criminal matter and is recognising it as a health and social challenge and a human rights issue. The right to health includes the right to obtain health services without fear of punishment. By incorporating a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, Qatar could improve access to treatment and reduce the prevalence of substance abusers.

*Qatar has moved away from treating drug addiction merely as a criminal matter and is recognising it as a health and social challenge.*

Qatar has experienced the spread of HIV/AIDS. The true HIV/AIDS level, especially among Qataris, is difficult to ascertain as the population is not screened and there is significant social stigma and fear attached to the disease. Young people, especially females, have little knowledge about prevention of HIV transmission. HIV/AIDS-related human rights issues, such as stigma and discrimination; punitive laws; policies and practices; and poor access to justice, have been identified by many countries as obstacles to achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support. A rights-based effective response to the HIV/AIDS involves investing in enabling legal and social environments and promoting and protecting human rights of those with HIV/AIDS.

The potential of youth in Qatar can be further harnessed through their greater participation in national development. Youth want to participate more in the life of the nation and want to communicate with decision-makers. Social media can provide the right vehicle. But they need an enabling environment in which they are encouraged and motivated to participate in national development.

Older persons have the same rights as everyone else, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



While there is no international convention exclusively on the rights of older persons, commitments to the rights of older persons exist: in the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing for example. These aim to ensure that persons everywhere are able to age with security and dignity and to continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights.

Older persons make a significant but often unrewarded contribution to development. Qatar supports the promotion of active ageing and empowerment of older persons through opportunities to participate in all spheres of life—social, economic, cultural and political. Giving older people a voice in the formulation of policies and the design of programmes, especially those affecting their rights, including age-appropriate health care and services, retirement pensions and an enabling physical environment, are becoming of increasing importance. The well-being of older persons needs to be enhanced by amending legislation negatively impacting on their well-being, including providing better social protection for older non-Qataris who have lived in and contributed towards the development of the country for many years.

*Giving older people a voice in policy formulation and programme design, including those related to health care, retirement pensions and an enabling physical environment, is increasingly important.*

## Participation in development

Participation in development is an important component of the RtD. A participatory approach to development in the context of the RtD framework needs to be accompanied by a culture that sees development not as the responsibility of the government alone but as a society-wide effort. The progressive development of such a culture will require concerted action towards strengthening training of the young in participatory values, human rights and awareness of their role in national development.

Laws, policies and programmes are most meaningful when people are engaged and have mechanisms to hold institutions accountable. Unless people can participate meaningfully in the events and processes that shape their lives, national human development paths will not be sustainable.

Both QNV 2030 and NDS 2011-2016 were highly participatory involving an extensive and inclusive dialogue with government ministries and agencies, the private sector, civil society, and local as well as international experts. However, an analysis of the membership of the Task Teams (and sub-Task Teams) and Executive Groups reveals that non-public sector participation was not as extensive as it could have been. There are opportunities for broadening participation during the preparation of Qatar's second National Development Strategy 2017-2022 (NDS) using multiple consultative mechanisms.

If well structured and free to act, civil society organisations (CSO) provide multiple benefits to society including providing constructive criticisms to government on policies, programmes and service delivery and advocacy for underrepresented citizens, such as disabled or older persons, on issues that matter to them. Most of Qatar's professional associations work in charitable and humanitarian causes. Compared with international best practices, the enabling environment for civil society is constrained. Given rapid growth in the country's population and the increasingly complex and diverse range of development challenges, there is a need to increase the number of CSOs and broaden their scope of engagement. A strategy for strengthening and expanding CSOs would further support national development.

*Compared with international best practices, the enabling environment for civil society is constrained.*

During its 2014 Universal Periodic Review before the Human Rights Council, Qatar reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of expression in the media and on social networks, except in the case of violations of moral principles and Sharia law. Qatar's Cybercrimes Law contains broad provisions that some contend do not meet best practice international standards. There is a need for caution in applying and implementing the new law.

Existing internet-based government websites can be used better by the government and the public. The former can use these platforms to inform and educate the public, while the latter can engage in public discussion and make positive contributions in terms of ideas or views. Space for Qataris and non-Qataris alike to express themselves through internet forums or through other mechanisms will deepen the participation process. E-government services

are not used to their potential although they can play a useful role in public policy discussion and in gathering inputs and feedback on policy and programmes. Study is needed on how to activate these processes and to achieve positive outcomes in terms of people's participation.

## International Cooperation

International cooperation can be an effective means whereby wealthier countries can support the efforts of poorer countries to help achieve the Rtd. Inspired by QNV 2030, Qatar is playing an increasingly prominent role in international development cooperation. The amount of its development assistance spend for international cooperation has increased significantly in recent years with the majority of its aid going to a relatively small number of Middle Eastern and African countries. Between 2008 and 2013 Qatar allocated an average of around 0.5% of its gross domestic product to official development assistance, albeit with sharp year to year fluctuations.

*Inspired by QNV 2030, Qatar is playing an increasingly prominent role in international development cooperation.*

Helping countries achieve internationally agreed development goals is a major objective of several projects under Qatar's international cooperation framework. Poverty reduction, including through employment creation in rebuilding and infrastructure projects, improved health and education as well as better management of the environment, are the main areas of focus of Qatar's international cooperation.

The needs for humanitarian assistance have markedly increased with the rising number and severity of conflicts, especially in the Middle East. This has resulted in growing numbers of children, women and older persons traumatised by conflict, many of whom are displaced from their homes. Qatar is responding to these humanitarian emergencies, through government as well as through its international NGOs and philanthropic foundations.

Private foundations have become a key source of Qatar's development cooperation, particularly in critical sectors such as health and education. Foundations, by operating outside official bureaucratic channels, can take higher risks and invest in more innovative projects. They can sometimes respond more quickly to

emergencies with lower transaction costs and reduce risks of misappropriation. But these advantages accrue only to those which adopt best practices, and have to be set against dangers of fragmentation, weak coordination, high procurement costs and poor accountability.

Qatar has been steadily promoting dialogue through the use of soft power diplomacy initiatives in regional and international affairs. Qatar's international relations have focused on the consolidation of peace and stability; maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries; the formation of strategic alliances with major powers, regional and international agencies and branding the country. It encourages settlement of international disputes by peaceful means and supporting the rights of people to self-determination. Qatar is committed to strengthening cooperation with countries of the south through the promotion of South-South cooperation.

Qatar's institutional arrangements for the coordination of international development assistance comes under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). A good practice in many traditional donor countries is the establishment of dedicated aid coordination agency to manage aid effectively as well as to monitor development impact.

As Qatar expands its presence in international cooperation, it needs to formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy. The strategy should build on the elements in the QNV 2030 framework and include priority countries for support; areas for cooperation, taking into account Qatar's comparative advantage, needs and what other donors are doing in those countries; expected results; timelines and budgets. It should also coordinate with other donor countries to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of its programmes. The strategy would develop a multiyear roadmap for establishing cooperation and principles for engagement such as national ownership. The strategy should ideally be integrated into Qatar's second NDS 2017-2022 so that it can be transparently monitored for effectiveness and results.

*As Qatar expands its presence in international cooperation, it needs to formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy.*

While the MOFA has developed an integrated information system to enable the government and NGOs to enter aid

information, the currently available data on Qatar's foreign aid flows are limited. There is a need to improve the quality and detail of statistical information on aid flows to be consistent with international best practice definitions and methodology as adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee. This would help to increase transparency and enable the MOFA to improve the quality and detail of its aid reporting. Making information publicly available on its website would also enable public scrutiny and strengthen accountability.

Moving forward Qatar's development cooperation will have to help support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. A new narrative of development cooperation is required that supports the scope, scale and impact of changes needed to achieve the sustainable development goals. It should embolden new ways of working together and partnerships driven by innovative practices, passion and international best practice.

## Recommendations: Realising Qatar National Vision 2030: The Right to Development

10 broad recommendations emerge from the detailed analysis of Qatar's challenges and opportunities for the fuller realisation of people's RtD:

- Review, amend and promulgate legislation to remove obstacles to exercising the RtD and human rights, and strengthen institutional capacity to implement and enforce them.
- Strengthen and expand civil society organisations' freedoms.
- Promote a culture of rights through improved communication and awareness raising on rights and obligations including through, *inter alia*, interactive internet forums.
- Address inequalities and exclusion among individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised.
- Establish a centralised government agency with a strong mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Monitor and raise public awareness about all forms of violence and abuse affecting children, women and domestic workers and provide appropriate support for them.
- Incorporate a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, and respect and protect the human rights of those living with HIV/AIDS.
- Amend relevant legislation that negatively affect the well-being of older persons, including providing better social protection for older non-Qataris who have lived in and have contributed towards the development of the country for many years.
- Formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy detailing priority countries, areas of support and principles of engagement.
- Strengthen the collection and analysis of data on population subgroups so as to better monitor progress towards the RtD.





# A Rights-based Approach to Development





# A Rights-based Approach to Development

*“Qatar National Vision 2030 is based on the guiding principles of the Permanent Constitution. It builds on a society that promotes justice, benevolence and equality and embodies the principles of the Permanent Constitution which protects public and personal freedoms; promotes moral and religious values and traditions; and guarantees security, stability and equal opportunities.”*

Qatar National Development Strategy 2011–2016

Human development and human rights share a common vision and a common purpose—to secure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all individuals. Economic and social rights on the one hand and civil and political rights on the other may be viewed as two sides of the same coin. Both sets of rights are inextricably linked. Addressing human development and human rights requires an understanding of the mutually reinforcing links between the two.

Human development is a process of enhancing human capabilities—expanding choices and opportunities so that individuals can lead a life of respect and value. Human rights express the idea that all people have claims to social arrangements that protect them from the worst abuses and that secure the freedom for a life of dignity (UNDP2000).

Globally countries are progressively trying to ensure that development allows the realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and that development measures contribute towards rectifying disparities and injustices in the international environment that work against the enjoyment of the right to development (RtD).

The RtD reaffirms the belief that people stand at the centre of development. People contribute to development just as development is meant to benefit people and improve their well-being. The choices people make; the capacities and capabilities they have and use; and the rights they

hold and exercise together contribute to the fulfilment of their own personal development as much as to their nation’s development, and by extension to regional and international development.

Human rights embody commitments to ensure all persons are secure in their enjoyment of the goods and freedoms necessary for living in dignity. Human rights are possessed by all persons, by virtue of their common humanity. Full exercise of those rights enable people to live a life of freedom and dignity.

In recognition of these principles, and of Qatar’s national and international responsibilities, Qatar’s fourth National Human Development Report (NHDR) is themed *Realising Qatar National Vision 2030: The Right to Development*.

## **Scope of report**

Qatar’s fourth NHDR may be viewed as a dynamic advocacy tool that is designed to provoke public policy debate. It was prepared through a process of broad participation and active stakeholder engagement. The process was guided by a National Advisory Committee that comprised some 20 key stakeholders from government, the private sector, academia and civil society, as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Coordinated by the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, in partnership with UNDP United Arab Emirates, data and independent analyses were provided through

11 background papers—prepared by 9 national and 2 international authors. Additional inputs were provided at a national dialogue seminar on The Right to Development.

This report addresses a critical challenge in the nation’s progress, that of realising people’s RtD. It is premised on the notion that human development and human rights are intertwined and that there can be no real development without the full enjoyment of all human rights. Specifically it:

- Takes stock of progress on human development in Qatar from the perspective of the 1986 Right to Development Declaration and from the allied perspective of a rights-based approach to development.
- Identifies national challenges and opportunities for the fuller realisation of the RtD.
- Proposes a limited number of key policy recommendations for Qatar’s second National Development Strategy 2017-2022, to progress the RtD.

Following this introductory chapter, chapter two focuses on progress towards the RtD of the Qatari and non-Qatari populations from the perspective of human development; chapter three deals with women’s empowerment and gender equality; chapter four covers the rights of children, youth and older persons; and chapter five looks at people living with disabilities. Two further important aspects of the RtD are considered—participation in chapter six and international cooperation in chapter seven. The final chapter contains some broad recommendations arising from the analysis.

## The Right to Development (RtD)

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 41/128 affirmed the RtD in 1986. The resolution was a declaration, not a treaty. It is thus not legally binding and does not require signature or ratification. It does however express a shared understanding by the international community of what constitutes sustainable human development, and states are called upon to implement its provisions and recommendations. Article one of the Declaration defines the RtD as:

*“...an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.”*

The RtD has been understood as the right to a particular process of development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be progressively realised. It also expresses the realisation of this right as a process and as an approach that can ensure the legitimacy and sustainability of development efforts by encompassing in its 10 articles a set of overarching principles including:

- Individuals are the central subject of and should be active participants in development.
- Equality and non-discrimination in rights and in access to services and benefits are fundamental for successful human development.
- Economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights are indivisible and interdependent. They are essential for the achievement of sustainable development, and at the same time, development should aim at guaranteeing the enjoyment of all human rights.
- Obstacles to development must be removed, especially human rights violations, racial and gender discrimination, and foreign domination.
- International cooperation is necessary for promoting development, international peace and security.
- Resources for development should be maximised. Disarmament efforts and a re-shifting of resources towards development are particularly highlighted.

These principles have been reiterated and further articulated in most United Nations global meetings and summits since the early 1990s, particularly after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and subsequent reviews and evaluations of efforts to achieve them (UN 2000). In the Outcome Document of the Millennium +10 Summit of 2010, states recognised the importance of (UN 2010):

- The interconnectedness of human rights, development, peace and security.
- Gender equality.
- Participatory, community-led strategies.
- Reform of international financial institutions and their role in development.
- Inclusive and equitable economic growth.

- Respect for and promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of effective work towards achieving the MDGs.

Beyond reaffirming the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations post-2015 development agenda, which will incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals, will reaffirm the importance of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the RtD and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and water, the rule of law, good governance, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development.

### **Human rights-based approach to development**

The Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) is a methodological tool. Mirroring the principles of the RtD, it further provides an operational framework for linking development and human rights. Used largely for mainstreaming human rights into development programmes, it proposes the implementation of several principles to strengthen human development processes including:

- Making clear linkage to human rights standards as articulated in international human rights treaties and declarations.
- Ensuring the participation of rights-holders in the design and implementation of projects and their empowerment.
- Applying principles of equality and non-discrimination; special efforts need to be made to ensure that particularly vulnerable or marginalised groups can participate in and benefit from development efforts.
- Rights are entitlements entailing corresponding obligations that bring in the requirement of accountability. While institutional accountability rests with states, all participants in development projects can be held accountable.
- Crucial are the rule of law and institutional protection.

Instead of merely focusing on development outcomes, a HRBA places importance on the application and promotion of human rights principles at all stages of the development process. Rights may be viewed as empowering all individuals, including the disadvantaged and most vulnerable. By following such an approach,

states are better able to fulfil and be accountable for their human rights obligations and development goals.

In the context of a HRBA, the state has to:

- Respect—refrain from violating human rights.
- Protect—prevent private or other parties from violating human rights.
- Fulfil—must take positive measures to ensure the realisation of human rights.

States are, therefore, obliged *inter alia* to dismantle discrimination; to prohibit torture, cruel and inhuman treatment as well as arbitrary detention; to ensure the availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, adaptability and quality of services; to guarantee the right to health, education and adequate standard of living; to protect the right of all migrants to decent work; and to ensure access to justice, the right to a fair trial, the right to an effective remedy, personal security as well as free expression, association and assembly.

### **Assessing Qatar's progress in the RtD**

An assessment of progress made by Qatar in the realisation of the RtD takes into consideration the respective roles and responsibilities assigned to the state and other parties. Article three clarifies that states have the primary responsibility for the creation of national and international conditions favourable to the realisation of the RtD where states are the primary duty-bearers. This responsibility has been interpreted to encompass three levels:

- First, states acting collectively in global and regional partnerships.
- Second, states acting individually as they adopt and implement policies that affect persons not strictly within their jurisdictions.
- Third, states acting individually as they formulate national development policies and programmes affecting persons within their jurisdiction.

Based on these three levels of responsibility, this report assesses the role of the State of Qatar in contributing towards promoting human development and ensuring the appropriate environment for the realisation of the RtD. Strengthening of the legal, institutional and accountability frameworks for the implementation of international human rights commitments and obligations must also be considered.

## National foundations

Many of the fundamental principles of human rights and the RtD are already required by Qatar's legal, institutional and development planning framework. Thus the choice of the RtD as the overall theme of the fourth NHDR is consistent with desired outcomes of the country's national development goals. The challenge is to determine how the RtD framework can help in the implementation and achievement of those goals, ensuring their success and strengthening their sustainability.

### Permanent Constitution

The goal of achieving social justice appears throughout Qatar's Permanent Constitution ratified in 2004, which provides the primary guiding principles for the legal, economic, social and human development goals of the country:

- Article 18 foresees a society based on the values of justice, benevolence, freedom, equality and high morals.
- Article 19, 34 and 35 affirm equal opportunities for all citizens regardless of sex and protect them from all forms of discrimination.
- Articles 21 and 22 cover effective social protection.
- Articles 22, 24 and 25 underline the state's commitment to improve education.
- Article 23 gives the state's pledge to improving health and wellness.
- Articles 28 and 30 state that social justice is the basis for the organisation of economic enterprises and for employer-employee relations.
- Article 33 commits to preserving the environment and its natural balance in order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development for all generations.

### Legal framework

The fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Permanent Constitution find expression in many laws that comprise Qatar's legislative framework, which includes, *inter alia*, laws relating to young persons; social security; regulation of medical treatment and health services; compulsory education; access to housing; labour code; code of criminal procedure; prohibition of the recruitment, employment, training and participation of children in camel racing; migrant workers; and access to housing for persons with disabilities.

Laws require effective implementation and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that they are in practice supporting

the realisation of human rights. The chapters below examine some of these legislative provisions in the context of the RtD, assessing the degree of their consistency with the Permanent Constitution and with the human rights standards that Qatar has committed to.

The rule of law is central to this aim. It is a principle of governance that enables people to ensure governments are delivering on their commitments to respect human rights. The rule of law exists where people and businesses can access efficient and predictable dispute resolution mechanisms, that is, have access to justice; where there is equal treatment before the law; where public authority is bound by, and accountable before, pre-existing, clear and known laws and where human rights are protected.

Qatar has been making the rule of law central to its effort to improve individual rights and to broaden the participatory process. In 2009 Doha hosted the Qatar Law Forum where legal representatives from 60 countries discussed issues and commitments to the rule of law. In partnership with the UN, the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre was opened in Doha in 2011. And in 2012, Qatar began working with United Nations Development Programme to establish and support a regional hub in Doha for training and research on the rule of law and anti-corruption issues.

In January 2014 the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers conducted an official visit to examine the achievements and challenges of Qatar in ensuring the independence of the judiciary and the free exercise of the legal profession. The Special Rapporteur recognised that Qatar has come a long way in a short time with respect to developing its justice system. Yet, in spite of Qatar's progress and achievements, the Special Rapporteur expressed concern that the challenges she identified are serious and negatively affect the independence of the justice system, as well as the realisation of people's human rights.

In particular, the Special Rapporteur raised the issue of the independence of non-Qatari judges appointed on a temporary basis and recommended that a transparent strategy, accompanied by a sufficiently resourced programme, should be adopted to progressively reduce the number of non-Qatari judges in full conformity with international human rights obligations.

## **Qatar's National Vision 2030 (QNV)**

QNV 2030 is built on four development pillars: human, social, economic and environmental development, with institutional development as cross-cutting. Each of the pillars is interrelated, together forming part of the seamless tapestry for the present and future development of the country. The first pillar, human development, highlights the centrality of the human dimension in development and the expansion of people's choices as well as their capabilities and capacities.

QNV 2030 seeks to promote the development of all the country's people and their full participation in development, as well as transparent and accountable implementation of development programmes by the state. Seen from this perspective, QNV 2030 is well harmonised with the articles of the Declaration on the RtD. Its emphasis on targeted education, health, social protection, skills development, and the inclusion of women in development, as well as the country's commitment to international cooperation, are consistent with the spirit of the Declaration on the RtD.

*“Qatar must continue to invest in its people so that all can participate fully in economic, social and political life. ... to create a dynamic and more diversified economy in which the private sector plays a prominent role. This requires continuous improvements in the efficiency, transparency and accountability of government agencies.”*

His Highness, the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani , QNV 2030

## **National planning**

State obligations towards addressing people's RtD can be met when a country's development framework incorporates a comprehensive and rights-based operational plan for meeting the needs and realising the rights of its citizens. Qatar's Permanent Constitution and QNV 2030 provide the legal basis and visioning for Qatar's development goals. Qatar's first National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) has translated these into programmes and projects to achieve time-bound targets across a broad range of social and economic sectors with initiatives to modernise the institutions and organisations that deliver public services.

The NDS 2011-2016, formulated through an extensive participatory process consistent with the principles of the RtD, together with its Midterm Review carried out in 2014, indicate the government's intention to strengthen

the capacity of rights-holders as well as the environment in which these rights can be exercised. The inherent application of a RBAD planning may be gleaned from the situational analysis as well as the push for major further investments in human development. The NDS 2011-2016 proposes a development agenda that includes more inclusiveness in education, health and social protection and reforms in the labour market, review of the sponsorship law; economic diversification; environmental management and regional cooperation.

## **National institutional machinery**

Qatar has several national institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, to promote and protect human rights by providing, inter alia, information, advice and material support, including:

- The National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) established in 2002 as an independent national institution for the promotion, respect and protection of human rights (see below).
- The former Supreme Council for Family Affairs

established in 1998 (whose key responsibilities were absorbed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in June 2014) formulates and follows-up on issues affecting the rights of children, women, persons with disabilities and older persons.

- The Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) established in 2005 as the main interface between the NHRC and the MOI on the one hand and between the public and the ministry on the other.
- The Human Rights Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) established in 2003 to respond to human rights issues regionally and internationally. Working with the ministry's Department of Legal Affairs, it helps in the preparation of human rights reports required under international treaties and submits them to international monitoring bodies.
- Doha Centre for Media Freedom, established in 2007 to protect the media in line with international standards,



conduct media research and build a database for different sectors of the media.

- Qatar Foundation for Social Work, founded in July 2013 as a supervisory and coordinating entity, aims to empower affiliate civil society organisations to sustain family and community cohesion and human development. These affiliate organisations include: Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation, Qatar Foundation for the Elderly Care (Ihsan), Qatar Orphan Foundation (Dhreima), Family Consulting Center, Al Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs, and the Social Development Center.
  - Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation aims to contribute to the provision of social protection services; raise awareness; and provide education and rehabilitation to reduce violence and social deviations.

### National Human Rights Committee (NHRC)

Qatar established the NHRC by the Emiri Decree Law 38 of 2002, as an independent national institution for the promotion, respect and protection of human rights. It is the primary institution that supports individuals who feel that their rights are being denied. The committee's role includes awareness raising and education on human rights, monitoring the human rights situation in the state, investigating breaches or infringements of human rights and taking steps to address them, proposing ways and means of promoting and monitoring the realisation of the aims of the international human rights treaties to which the state is a party and making recommendations on accession to other treaties.

Qatar's NHRC prepares half-yearly reports on the situation on human rights which are submitted to the Council of Ministers. It has established a complaint mechanism through a free telephone hotline and its website. In 2013 it received 1,929 complaints (tables 1.1 and 1.2). Qataris account for about 7% of total complaints received by the NHRC involving violations of their civil and economic rights (table 1.2).

As an initial step, the NHRC appeals to authorities and stakeholders to cooperate to settle complaints, including subsequent remedial actions and restitution of rights. Failing this, it advises on alternative pathways for individual complainants to seek access to justice and help secure their rights. A challenge facing the NHRC is that the

**Table 1.1** Types of complaints received by the NHRC, 2013

Types of complaints	Percentage
Grievances	50.3
Transfer of sponsorship	20.0
Financial dues	8.8
Transfer of sponsorship and financial dues	2.9
Leaving the country	2.7
Miscellaneous	2.2
Requesting exit permits	1.7
Finding jobs	1.6
Arbitrariness by sponsors	1.2
Cancelling decisions to deport	1.1
Others	7.5
Total	100.0
(Number)	1,929

Source: NHRC (2013).

**Table 1.2** Nationality of NHRC petitioners and complainers, 2013

Region	Country	Percentage
GCC	Qatar	7.1
	Other GCC countries	0.6
Arab (non-GCC) countries	Egypt	16.7
	Syria	5.4
	Morocco	4.4
	Other Arab countries	8.3
South and South-East Asia	Philippines	16.2
	Other South-East Asian countries	0.6
West Asia	India	10.6
	Other West Asians countries	12.1
Africa	Nigeria	7.0
	Cameroon	4.3
	Other African countries	3.1
America, Europe and others	United States of America, European countries and others	3.5
Total		100.0
(Number)		1,929

Source: NHRC (2013).

volume of complaints and issues that it is asked to help resolve has grown much more rapidly than its human resource capacity.

In October 2013 the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) of Qatar University conducted a survey for the NHRC on CSOs in Qatar. The findings highlighted that only 11 of the 26 surveyed organisations reported interacting with the NHRC on an ongoing basis through joint projects and conferences. The survey recommended that the NHRC:

- Make CSOs in Qatar more aware of the function and significance of the NHRC.
- Clarify the Committee's expectations regarding the frequency and nature of organisations' interaction with the NHRC.
- Establish more formalised mechanisms for the reporting of organisations' activities and for initiating and maintaining institutional collaboration.
- Tailor the NHRC's involvement with and expectations of CSOs according to the degree of their involvement in human rights work.

In October 2014 the cabinet approved a draft law amending provisions of Law 17 of 2001 that regulates the NHRC. The amendments brought the NHRC towards closer compliance with the Paris Principles governing the work of national human rights institutions by strengthening the independence of the NHRC and protecting committee members: the NHRC will enjoy full independence in exercising its activities related to human rights and no committee member shall be held criminally or disciplinarily accountable for opinions or statements shown before the committee and its subcommittees in respect to matter within its competence (Gulf Times 2014a).

National human rights institutions have critical linkages with and are aligned to regional and global human rights bodies.

## Regional and international human rights institutional machinery

Qatar upholds its commitment to protecting human rights through cooperation with and active participation in regional and international human rights organisations, frameworks and institutions (figure 1.1).

Qatar is a member of the League of Arab States which primarily serves to promote political, economic, cultural and scientific cooperation among Arab states. Founded in March 1945, the League of Arab States is the oldest existing international organisation in the world, predating the creation of the UN. The league, which includes 22 Arab nations, was created to strengthen relations and ties which bind them, direct efforts toward their welfare, and ensure realisation of their aspirations.

As a response to the international recommendations on the Arab League to have a more participative contribution towards human rights and to advise its council, the Permanent Arab Commission on Human Rights was established in 1968. The commission is composed of governmental representatives from all member states, and Qatar is an active participant.

### The Arab Charter on Human Rights

The Arab Charter on Human Rights affirms the principles contained in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. The charter entered into force in March 2008, and Qatar ratified it in 2009. The goal is to establish an integrated Arab system of human rights to protect fundamental rights and freedoms. An independent Arab Human Rights Committee reviews reports (submitted every three years) from ratifying states. Qatar has recently submitted its report and is awaiting the concluding remarks and recommendations by the committee.

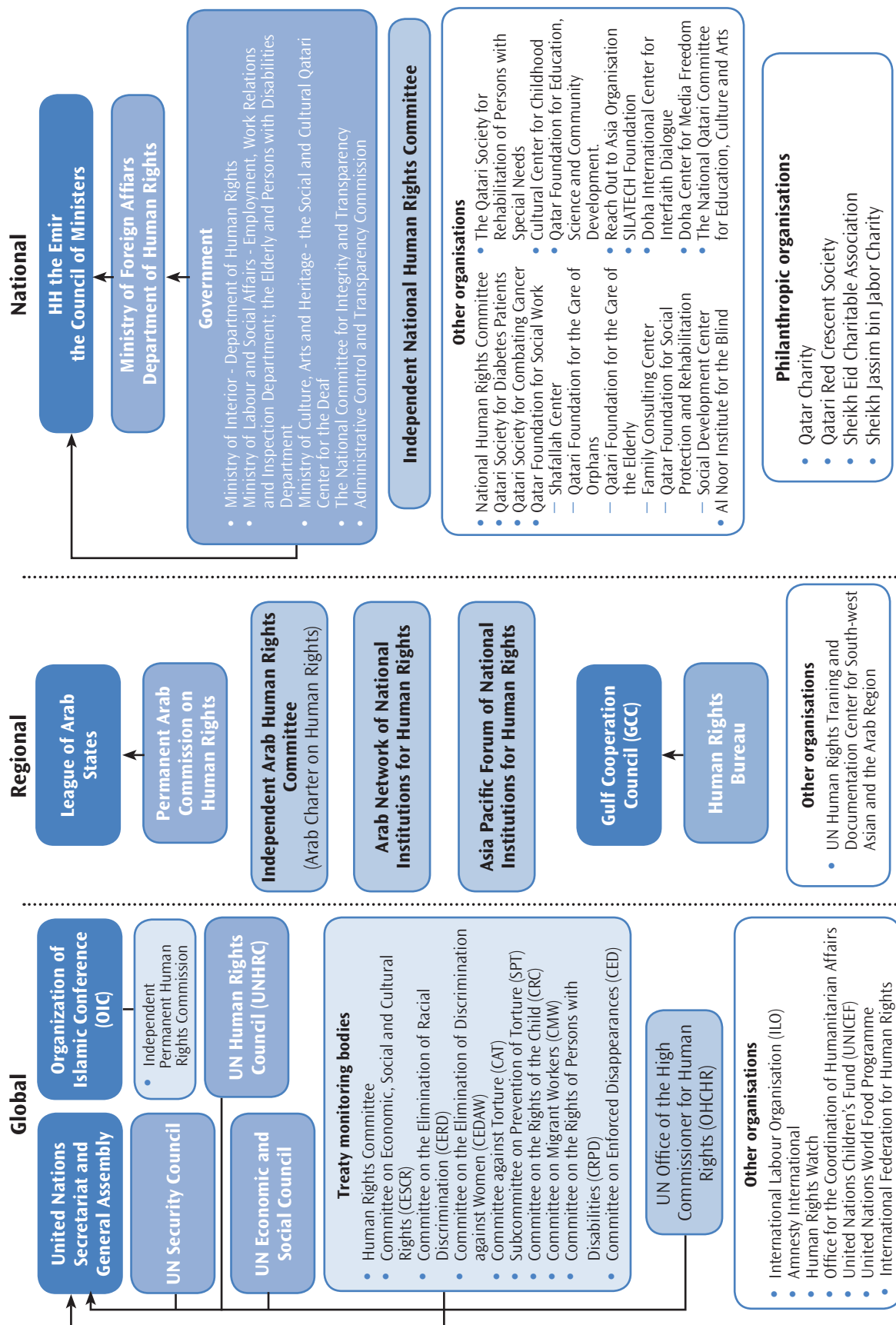
The charter has been criticized by Arab civil society as falling short of international human rights standards including not addressing freedom of association or partnership with CSOs; that there is no specific protection for human rights defenders; and that civil society is mostly excluded from participation in decision-making within the framework of the League of Arab States.

### Gulf Cooperation Council

Qatar is also an active member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which in 2012 established a Human Rights Bureau designed to increase coordination amongst GCC member states in the field of human rights, and to undertake dissemination and awareness raising in the subregion. The office also presents human rights achievements and issues at regional and international



Figure 1.1 Global, regional and national human rights machinery



forums. Qatar reports to and attends meetings of the GCC Human Rights Office, and provides support by hosting forums such as the International Conference on the Challenges to Security and Human Rights in the Arab Region that was held in November 2014.

At the 25<sup>th</sup> GCC Summit held in Doha in December 2014, the GCC Supreme Council issued the GCC Human Rights Declaration. The declaration comprising 47 articles covering civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights calls for, *inter alia*, respect for all religions, the freedom of opinion and expression and the right to live in a healthy environment. The declaration stems from member states respect for human dignity and a commitment to protecting human rights guaranteed by Islamic Sharia Law, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Arab Charter of Human Rights and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.

This declaration is not binding on GCC member states, and like the Arab Charter, has been criticized as falling short of the standards of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. No specific requirements or obligations ensue from either the bureau or the declaration other than good-faith, coordination and cooperation in promoting and strengthening a culture of human rights.

### **United Nations Human Rights Training Documentation Centre for South West Asia and the Arab Region**

In May 2009 the United Nations Human Rights Training Documentation Centre for South West Asia and the Arab Region was established in Doha under the supervision of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The centre's mandate is to undertake training and documentation activities according to international human rights standards and to support countries within the region, including their national human rights institutions and CSOs.

The centre has forged strong partnerships within the State of Qatar, with the departments of human rights at the MOFA, the MOI and the NHRC. Activities include business and human rights training, inculcating HRBA within the media and combating human trafficking.

### **International level**

In October 2014 Qatar was elected to the United Nations

Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for three years 2015-2017. The UNHRC replaced the Human Rights Commission in 2006, and is a subsidiary intergovernmental body of the United Nations General Assembly. The UNHRC is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world, including through addressing human rights violations and offering recommendations to resolve them.

The UNHRC works closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and appoints the experts under its Special Procedures. OHCHR is part of the United Nations Secretariat, services the UNHRC, spearheads the institution's human rights efforts and the commissioner serves as the principal human rights official of the UN.

Under the auspices of the UNHRC, Qatar reports national efforts to improve human rights through the Universal Periodic Review process and receives comments and recommendations from the member states of the UNHRC. Qatar is responsible for implementing the provisions outlined in the international human rights treaties it has signed (see below). Treaty monitoring bodies receive, review and issue feedback on national reports detailing Qatar's implementation. The OHCHR supports both the treaty monitoring and Universal Periodic Review processes and engages Qatar on human rights issues.

In recent years, Qatar has increased its engagement level with the UNHRC. Qatar was one of the first states in the Gulf region to invite the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council and to create a NHRC. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants visited Qatar in November 2013 (see chapter 2) and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers visited in January 2014.

## **Qatar's international human rights treaty commitments**

Fulfilling human rights commitments as well as strengthening the institutional and accountability framework for meeting human rights obligations are steps towards the progressive realisation of the RtD. The human rights treaties and conventions that Qatar is a party to, and the status of Qatar's commitments to these instruments are shown in Box 1.1.

## Box 1.1

## Qatar's international human rights treaty commitments

1. **International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination** (1966, acceded 1976).
2. **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989, ratified 1995).
  - Qatar entered a general reservation concerning any of its provisions that are inconsistent with the Islamic Sharia law, but “partially withdrew” it in 2009. This general reservation continues to apply to articles two and 14 of the Convention Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts (2000, ratified 2002).
    - **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict** (2000, ratified 2002).
    - **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography** (2000, ratified 2001).
  - In 2008 Qatar withdrew its general reservation on not respecting provisions that may be in conflict with Islamic Sharia Law.
3. **Convention against Torture and Cruel, Degrading and Inhuman Treatment or Punishment** (1984, Ratified in 2001).
  - Qatar initially entered a general reservation but “partially withdrew” it, keeping in effect a limited general reservation within the framework of articles one and 16. Qatar further withdrew its reservation to the mandate of the Committee against Torture as stipulated in articles 21 and 22 of the convention.
4. **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (2006, ratified 2008).
  - **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;** on individual complaints mechanisms. (2006, signed 2007 but not yet formally ratified).
5. **United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime** (2000, acceded 2009)
  - Qatar entered a reservation regarding paragraph two of article 35 concerning the submission of disputes to international arbitration or to the International Court of Justice.
    - **Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children** (Palermo Protocol) ( 2008, ratified 2009).
  - Qatar entered reservations to paragraph three(d) of article six regarding employment, educational and training opportunities and paragraph one of article seven urging states to permit victims of trafficking “to remain in its territory, temporarily or permanently, in appropriate cases.” Qatar also rejected commitment to the settlement of disputes regarding interpretation per article 15.
6. **Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women** (1979, Ratified 2009)
  - Reservations: article two (a) in connection with the rules of the hereditary transmission of authority; article nine, paragraph two on citizenship; article 15, paragraph one on matters of inheritance and testimony; article 15, paragraph four for inconsistency with family law and established practice; article 16, paragraph one (a) and (c) and article 16, paragraph one (f) for inconsistency with Islamic law; and paragraph one of article 29 which Qatar does not consider itself bound.
  - Further declarations:
    - The government of the State of Qatar accepts the text of article one of the convention provided that, in accordance with the provisions of Islamic law and Qatari legislation, the phrase “irrespective of their marital status” is not intended to encourage family relationships outside legitimate marriage. It reserves the right to implement the convention in accordance with this understanding.
    - The State of Qatar declares that the question of the modification of “patterns” referred to in article five (a) must not be understood as encouraging women to abandon their role as mothers and their role in child-rearing, thereby undermining the structure of the family.

Source: UNOHCHR (2015).

When a country has ratified or signed a human rights treaty or convention, it is required to report periodically to the treaty body committees on the measures taken to give effect to these conventions. Qatar has consistently undertaken its periodic reviews and provided the reports to independent committees who have then provided their comments and advice on the steps taken by the country to implement its human rights obligations as well as recommendations for action.

Preparing the required periodic reports and responding to feedback from the international committees has involved national consultation within government as well as dialogue between the government and all sections of society, including the NHRC and civil society. In the near and medium term, Qatar's involvement in the processes

of the international human rights system and the learning that comes from that experience is contributing towards the progressive realisation of the RtD.

Qatar is not yet a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). This position is currently being reviewed by the government with a view towards Qatar joining these two covenants, as noted by His Excellency the Assistant Foreign Minister for International Cooperation, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, at the September 2014 meeting of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where Qatar's second National Report on Human Rights was discussed and adopted (box 1.2) (Gulf Times 2014b).

### Box 1.2

#### The Universal Periodic Review of Qatar, September 2014

Qatar submitted a national report to the United Nations Human Rights Council in early 2014 for the UPR. The outcomes of the Universal Periodic Review were adopted by the council in September 2014 and included 84 recommendations.

Qatar made progress in institutional and legislative reforms since the previous Universal Periodic Review submitted in 2010 including those related to protection against torture and human trafficking. The state made efforts to promote the status of women and protect them from violence, and to improve the status of migrant workers. Qatar also made provisions for development assistance for the global advancement of economic, social and cultural rights.

However, non-governmental organisations expressed concerns about the non-implementation of accepted recommendations, particularly those related to freedom of expression, the rights of migrant workers including domestic workers, gender-based violence, torture and other ill-treatment, corporal punishment and discrimination against women.

In his statement to the Human Rights Council, His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, the Assistant Foreign Minister for International Cooperation Affairs of Qatar said that:

*“Qatar considers human rights as a priority, as reflected in the development of human rights mechanisms and national strategies and in Qatar’s international policies. Qatar could not accept some recommendations that were incompatible with Islamic law or national identity.”*

Qatar rejected the recommendation to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at this time. However, the state accepted all the recommendations concerning accession to the two covenants and confirmed its political will to accede to them. However, accession to a large number of conventions in a short period of time has placed pressure on the state's legislative authorities and, therefore, the state cannot immediately consider accession to these instruments.

Sources: UNOHCHR (2014) and AI (2014).

## Measuring human rights

Measuring human rights compliance has many challenges, both conceptual and methodological and include the lack of rights-relevant data as well as political sensitivities (McInerney-Lankford and Sano 2010). After several years' work by the OHCHR, a common understanding has emerged for a framework of human rights indicators that is comprised of three components—structural, process and outcome (UNOHCHR 2012). Indicators on structure measure acceptance and adoption of the norms, reflected by ratification, national laws, policy acceptance and statements. Indicators on process measure efforts by duty-bearers to effect policy or programme changes. Indicators on development outcome measure results, and reflect the extent to which rights-holders have benefitted from these efforts in process and structure (figure 1.2).

Traditional development programmes are focused on improvements in outcomes and tend to be quantitative. A rights approach emphasises the importance of

respecting and promoting human rights at all stages of the development process and includes quantitative as well as qualitative measures of issues such as changes in attitudes, behaviours and relationships, good governance, citizenship, and laws and their implementation.

Human rights indicators devote particular attention to process and conduct. Where it is particularly difficult to measure variables, such as participation, non-discrimination, equality and accountability proxy measures can be used. For example, in measuring gender equality, an ideal indicator of the influence of women's organisations on legislation is the extent to which their proposals are actually incorporated into law.

A basic indicator framework taking into account available data for Qatar to review the progress of human development is broadly linked to the RtD is given in annex two of this report.

**Figure 1.2** An indicator framework for measuring human rights

Type	To measure what	Common examples
<b>Structural</b>	Help in capturing the acceptance, intent, and commitments of the state to undertake measures in keeping with its human rights obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant international human rights treaties ratified by state.</li> <li>• Time frame and coverage of national policy on education and health.</li> <li>• Date of entry and coverage.</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	Help in assessing state efforts through the implementation of policy measures and programmes of action to transform its human rights commitment into desired results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on budget allocations.</li> <li>• Coverage of targeted populations under public programmes.</li> <li>• Human rights complaints received and the proportion redressed.</li> <li>• Incentive and awareness measures extended by the duty-bearer to address specific human rights issues.</li> <li>• Indicators reflecting functioning of specific institutions such as the legal system.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome</b>	Help in assessing the results of state efforts in furthering the enjoyment of human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of labour force participation in social security scheme.</li> <li>• Reported cases of miscarriage of justice and proportion of victim who received compensation within a reasonable time.</li> <li>• Educational attainments by age and targeted population groups.</li> </ul>

Source: UNOHCHR (2012).

## Conclusions

Human development and human rights share a common vision and a common purpose—to secure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all people everywhere.

Human development is a process of enhancing human capabilities—expanding choices and opportunities so that individuals can lead a life of respect and value. Human rights express the idea that all people have claims to social arrangements that protect them from the worst abuses—and that secure the freedom for a life of dignity (UNDP 2000).

The RtD Declaration is a significant landmark that distils best global practices and experience into values that should be adhered to for the success of development. These include a focus on people-centred development and the promotion of human development as a comprehensive process and fundamental concern of every human endeavour. They also include the maintenance of international peace and security and international solidarity for development in the context of the increasing interdependence of people and countries.

Qatar's Permanent Constitution, Qatar's legal framework and QNV 2030 are built on the foundations of fundamental rights and freedoms, and explicitly recognise the role of the state to embark on development that is

pro-people and which benefits all. The NDS 2011-2016, the current basis for human development planning, translates QNV 2030 into measurable targets through programmes, projects and initiatives.

Qatar's human rights institutional framework is evolving. In recent years it has been strengthened by establishing and enhancing independent institutions and organisations, as well as through government bodies that aim to promote, respect and protect the human rights of all people. Qatar's national human rights institutions are networked with regional and international organisations.

The country is thus increasingly able to contribute to the implementation of the human rights treaties and conventions that it is party to, and it is also in the process of considering accession to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (1966). With this, Qatar would be well positioned to take its human rights obligations and human development aspirations to the next level of implementation. The lack of national expertise, technical and human resource capacity in human rights work is a challenge that sometimes affects the ability of individuals to realise their rights.



# 2

## Human Development and Human Rights





## Human Development and Human Rights

This chapter assesses progress towards the right to development separately for Qataris and non-Qataris taking into account differences in availability of data from differing perspectives. The section on Qataris is based primarily on a review of trends and patterns in aggregate key human development indicators of health, education, labour and income, and is supplemented with an analysis of spatial differentials in their social prosperity. While that for the non-Qataris focuses on their employment, labour rights, occupational health and safety, and right to social protection.

As background to this assessment a brief analysis is made of Qatar's rapidly changing population dynamics and overall trends in human development as measured through the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI).

### Qatar's very rapid population growth

Between 2004 and 2014 Qatar's population grew at an exceptional and globally unprecedented pace, averaging 10% a year between 2004 and 2014 (figure 2.1). During this period the country's population size almost tripled, growing from just 0.8 million in 2004 to 2.2 million in 2014. Qatar's very rapid population growth is primarily a result of the continuing inflows of expatriates, mainly young and lesser skilled male workers. The country's labour requirements needed to support its investments in a broad range of infrastructure and construction projects,

including a new airport, seaport, metro, highways, hospitals and schools, as well as stadiums being built in preparation for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, greatly exceed its indigenous supply.

Qatar's diverse expatriate population is drawn from numerous countries but with the majority coming from India and Nepal in South Asia, from the Philippines in Southeast Asia and from Egypt in the Middle East. The population is highly heterogeneous—multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual and multiskilled. Whereas the relatively small number of higher-paid and higher-skilled expatriates are typically accompanied by their families, the lower-paid and lesser-skilled workers come unaccompanied.

By 2014 the non-Qatari share of Qatar's total population had risen to 88% compared with 76% in 2004. The changing composition of Qatar's population according to nationality influences national development policies and programmes across all sectors.

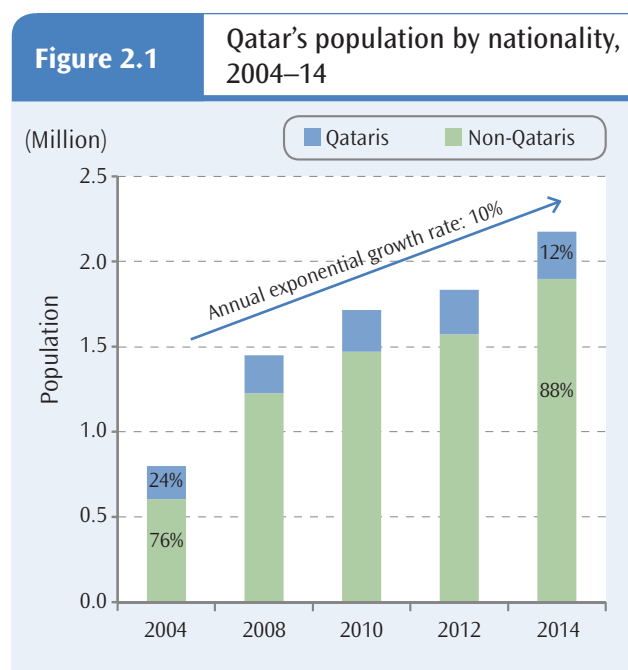
Qatar's population remains relatively young. In 2014 the median age of the population was 30 years overall, and just 21 years for the Qatari population. Because the overwhelming majority of labour migrants are male, the country's population's sex ratio is highly imbalanced, especially at the working ages 20 to 59. At these ages men outnumber women by 4.1 to 1 for Qatar's total population, and by almost five to one for the non-Qatari population.

*"We commit to systematically consider population trends and projections in our national, rural and urban development strategies. Through forward looking planning, we can seize the opportunities and address the challenges associated with demographic change."*

The Future We Want, Rio +20, 2012



Not all of the non-Qatari population are transient or temporary workers. While data on duration of residence of the expatriate population are not routinely available, an analysis using 2010 population census data showed that 11% of expatriates had lived in Qatar for more than 10 years: many of these were living with their families in regular households. A small proportion, mainly Arabs and Asians, were born and bred in Qatar.



The large net population inflows seen in recent years are expected to continue in the short run to meet the employment needs of the pipeline of construction projects. In the medium term there are likely to be net population outflows once the projects have been completed.

The massive expatriate inflows that have augmented Qatar's population size were not foreseen in Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV) or in the National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS). The QNV 2030 had called for choosing a development path compatible with the targeted size and quality of expatriate labour. It highlighted that managing growth and avoiding uncontrolled expansion was one of the major challenges facing the country. In practice, there has been little progress towards the intended restructuring of the non-Qatari labour force towards higher wage and skill levels.

While supporting high economic growth in the short run, rapid expatriate population growth is impacting development planning on both supply and demand sides, increasing public sector expenditures, especially on frontline health and education services, and potentially affecting the rights of individuals (figure 2.2).

Through the United Nation system, the global community is calling for nations to address population dynamics in

**Figure 2.2** Qatar's very rapid population growth is creating many challenges for national and sectoral planning

Sectors	Challenges
Social	Huge demand pressures on existing social infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and lower-cost housing, as well as on land values
Cultural	Increased potential for traditional Qatari Arab and Islamic cultural values and identity to be diluted
Economic	If for any reason large numbers of expatriates suddenly leave Qatar, not only will their productivity capabilities be lost and projects be delayed, but a secondary decrease to the economy will occur when their spending is lost
Environmental	Significant environmental degradation occurring (for example increased road traffic including heavy vehicles, CO2 emissions) and will continue until infrastructure can be increased to match needs of population and behavioural patterns change
Safety	Reputational risks associated with occupational health and safety; building safety may be compromised, road traffic accidents and injuries could increase, and capacity of criminal justice system and other institutions could be strained

ways that respect and protect human rights. Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, since people are the most valuable resource of any nation. Higher and sustained rates of economic growth are not enough. Promoting sustainable development depends on inclusive economic growth and rights-based population policies and programmes. Without these, efforts to cater to growing populations and raise economic output will lead to dangerous degradation and unsustainable development.

## Progress in human development

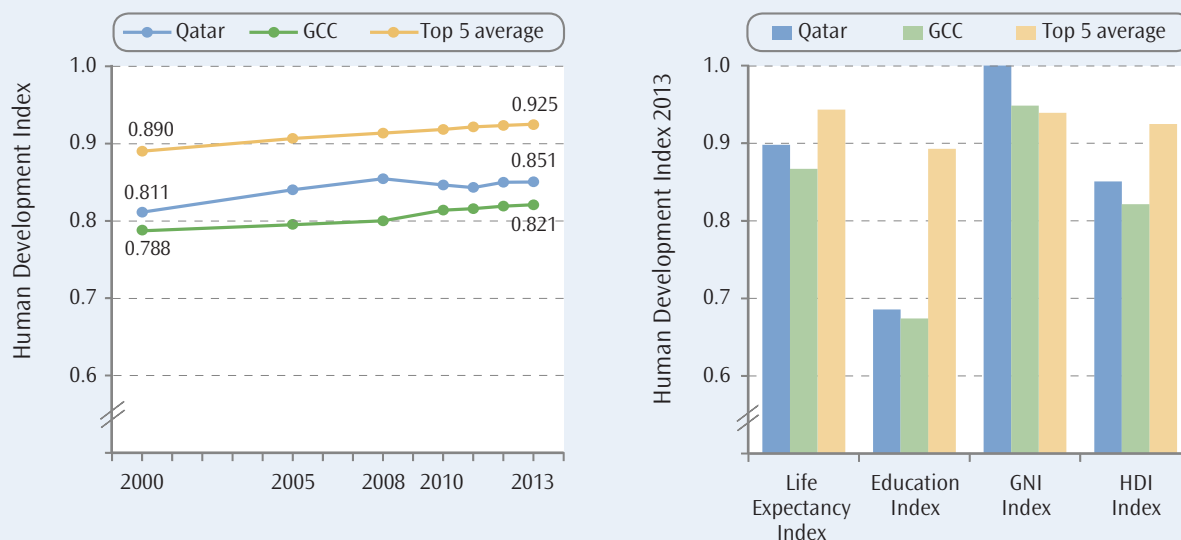
QNV 2030's human development pillar calls for sharing of development among all of Qatar's people to enable them to sustain a prosperous society and meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations. The NDS 2011-2016 established operational programmes designed to broaden individual choices and opportunities, that is to advance human development and to help realise individuals' rights. UNDP's HDI, a composite summary measure focusing on three critical dimensions of human development—living a long and healthy life, having access to knowledge, and having a decent standard of living—may be employed for assessing Qatar's human development progress.

Qatar's HDI value for 2013 was 0.851 which places the country in UNDP's very high human development category. Qatar's HDI rose from 0.811 in 2000 to 0.851 in 2013, an increase of 5% during this period. Progress has resulted primarily from government efforts and investments to improve the quality of life and standard of living of the population. Significant improvements in the standard of living as well as gains in life expectancy contributed most to the increase in the HDI.

At this level of HDI, in 2013 Qatar ranked 31<sup>st</sup> out of 187 countries. Qatar's relative progress in the HDI as compared to the top five and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries is shown in Figure 2.3. Of the three component dimensions of the HDI, Qatar ranks highest globally on the Gross National Income Per Capita Index, while its standing with respect to life expectancy, an indication of wellness outcomes, is slightly below that of top five countries. However, Qatar still lags markedly behind the world's top five countries, and is much the same as other GCC countries, with respect to educational outcomes. Education is an area where major reforms are taking place in a context of ever-increasing demands being made on the education system by the country's rapidly growing school-going population.

Figure 2.3

Qatar's progress in human development benchmarked against the averages of world's top five countries and GCC countries



Source: UNDP (2014).

As an indicator of the average level of human development achievements in a country, the HDI does not identify any inequality in the distribution of human development across the population at the national level. An Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI), introduced by UNDP in 2010, takes into account inequality in all three dimensions of the HDI by discounting each dimension's average value according to its level of inequality. The difference between the HDI and the IHDI represents the loss in human development due to inequality, with a higher level of inequality represented by a larger loss in human development. Taking this inequality into account slightly lowers Qatar's HDI ranking (box 2.1).

Development is a comprehensive process that aims at progressive and regular improvement of individual well-being. It also aims to achieve a fair and equitable distribution of its benefits so as to improve the well-being of all people, especially the vulnerable. The IHDI acts

as a policy tool to assess whether all population groups are benefitting from human development. For Qatar the analysis points to a need for more attention to narrowing income and education differentials.

In attempting to interpret statistical information on human development from a rights perspective, the analysis that follows in this chapter of selected indicators considers: (i) movements in national averages over a period of time; (ii) whether there has been progression in the status of particular groups and (iii) whether disparities between groups have widened or narrowed. In this section unless otherwise stated the focus is on all individuals in particular subpopulation groups. Subsequent sections look separately at disaggregated indicators for Qataris and non-Qataris with the analysis extended to women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities in later chapters.

### Box 2.1 Inequality adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI)

UNDP's global Human Development Reports for the series up to present did not report Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index for Qatar due to lack of survey data. However, recent availability of data from Qatar's Household Expenditure and Income Survey 2012/3 enabled its construction.

The inequality adjustment to Qatar's HDI resulted in a loss of 17.5% of its value from 0.851 to 0.702 and consequently its global ranking dropped by seven ranks from 31 to 38 (box table 1). This drop is mainly due to relatively higher inequality in GNI and education development as their individual losses are, respectively 24.7% and 20.7%. The loss for the health index is less, 6% (box table 2).

**Box table 1 : Differences between Human Development Index (HDI) and inequality adjusted HDI and ranking, 2013**

Indicator	Human Development Index	Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index	Change after adjustment
Value	0.851	0.702	-0.149
Rank	31	38	-7

Sources: MDPS (2014a) and UNDP (2014).

**Box table 2 : Human Development Index losses due to inequality by components, 2013**

Component	Loss (%)
Live-expectancy	6.0
Education	20.7
GNI	24.7
Total	17.5

Sources: MDPS (2014a) and UNDP (2014).

With respect to the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health:

- *Per capita* national health expenditures increased four-fold between 1995 and 2012, with its USD PPP value ranking highest among GCC countries. However, national health expenditures as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at between 1.9% and 2.6% is currently at the lower end among GCC countries.
- Life expectancy at birth has risen significantly for Qatari men from 70.2 years in 1997 to 76.5 in 2013, compared with corresponding values for women of 74.1 to 80.9. The gender gap in life expectancy in favour of females at around four years has remained much the same.
- The proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants has been at 100% since the 1990s.
- The unmet need for family planning at 6% in 2012 is lower than that of GCC countries, Egypt and the United States. However, contraceptive prevalence among married Qatari women which stood at 38% in 2012 is low compared with countries in the region, such as Bahrain and Kuwait (figure 2.4), and is indicative of a continued desire for a relatively large family size among Qatari couples. This is consistent with Qatar’s national population policy which targets a high growth rate for the Qatari population.
- The declining number of hospital beds per 10,000 population, that is from 20.3 in 2003 to 12.6 in 2011,

a trend due to the steep rise in the expatriate population in the country, is of concern from a right to health perspective. Several new hospitals are being built to better meet the needs of the growing population.

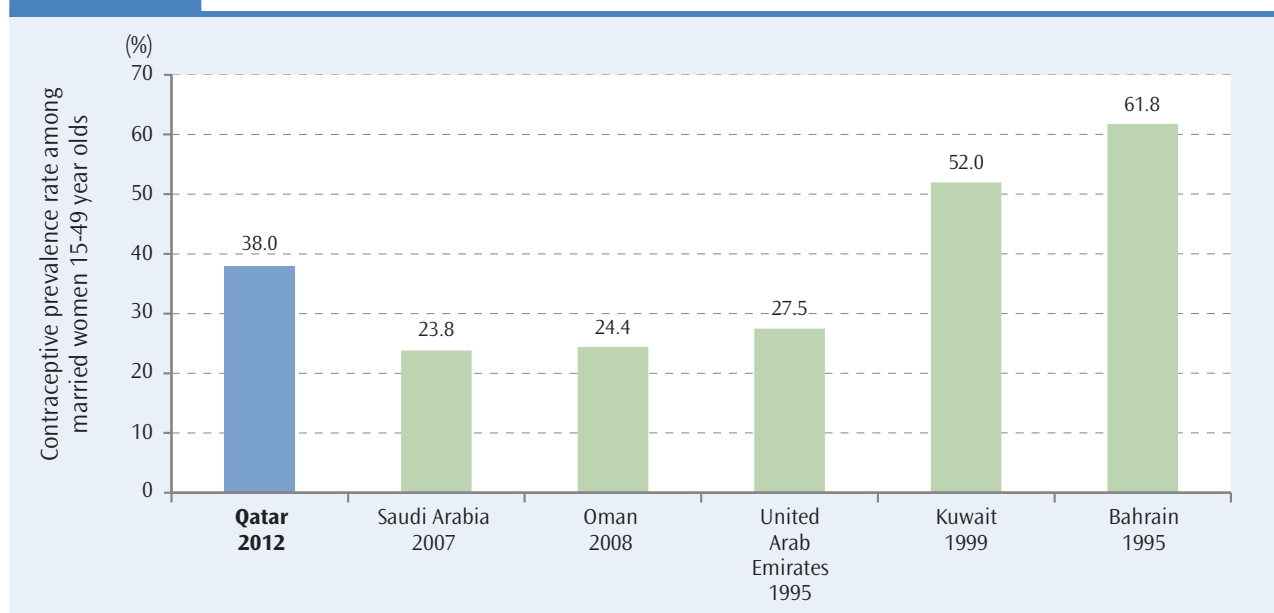
- Since 1990 access to safe water and sanitation has been universal.

In terms of education:

- With the significant rise in the share of government spending on education from 8% in 2000/1 to 10% in 2013/4, Qatar’s educational expenditure as a percentage of GDP at 3% in 2013/4 compares favourably to other GCC countries: per student expenditure is also among the highest.
- Boys’ net enrolment rate in primary education, which was much lower than that of girls before 2000, is now of a similar level, and around 94% in 2012 compared with 90% in 2008.
- The overall literacy level of the Qatari population at ages 15 and over was 95% in 2010 compared with 89% in 2001; at ages 15-24 it was more than 99% for both males and females in 2010.
- Gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education rose for Qatari males from 22% in 2001/2 to 37% in 2012/3, with the corresponding figures for females being 44% and 72%.
- A higher percentage of Qatari women have obtained tertiary qualifications compared with their male

**Figure 2.4**

**Contraceptive prevalence rate, Qatar compared to GCC**



Sources: MDPS (2014b) and UN (2013b).

counterparts. However, highly educated Qatari women often face a glass ceiling when it comes to finding jobs that match their capabilities whether it be in the government or private sector (chapter 3).

In terms of labour and income:

- Qatar's labour market is segmented with most Qataris in the public sector and most non-Qataris in the relatively low wage private sector. Overall Qataris comprised just 6% of the labour force in 2013 compared with 14% in 2001.
- Labour force participation rates, a key indicator in the human rights framework, show increases for both men and women and for Qataris and non-Qataris alike during the period 2001 to 2013. However, participation rates are much higher among both non-Qatari men and women, due to the fact that the non-Qatari population represents a migrant worker population who are in Qatar principally on employment contracts.
- The mean and median equivalised income for Qatari households grew by 21% over the period 2006 to 2013. Income per adult equivalent is a better measure of individual welfare than total household income. The growth rates for mean and median equivalised expenditure were 11.2% and 16% for the same period.
- Income inequality among Qataris as measured by the Gini coefficient has narrowed to 0.27 in 2012/3 compared with 0.29 in 2006/7—the closer the Gini

value is to zero the more equal is a population's income distribution. Based on this measure, income inequality is higher in Qatar than in countries like Denmark (0.25), Sweden (0.26), Finland (0.26), and Belgium (0.26), but it is lower than that of UK (0.34) and the US (0.38) where income inequalities are sharper.

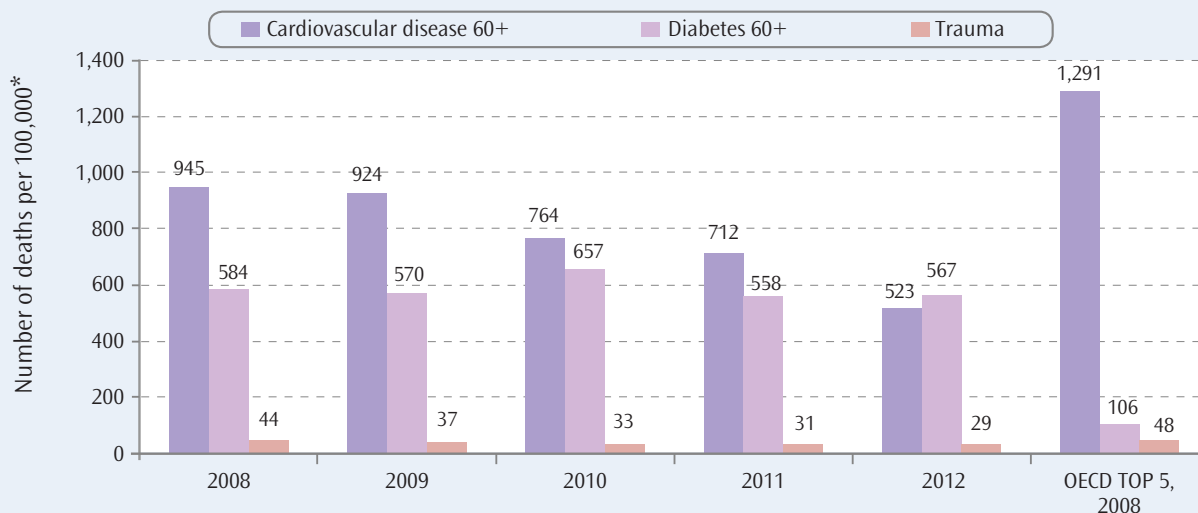
## Qataris: progress and challenges

Most indicators of human development of the Qatari population, such as infant and child mortality, maternal mortality; literacy; school enrolment and attainment levels; universal access to water and sanitation; and labour force participation of males and females have all shown strong gains over the longer term. These gains to a large extent mirror progress on the RtD. Development progress has come about through people-centred plans, policies and programmes supported by increased and high public expenditures on the social sectors. This section reviews some of the key issues around human development (health, education, labour and income) and the progressive realisation of the RtD for Qataris.

### Health

A healthy population is the foundation of a society and thus imperative for progress towards sustainable human development. Modern lifestyle choices are negatively affecting the well-being of the population. For example,

**Figure 2.5** Number of deaths per 100,000, Qatar compared to OECD Top 5



Note: \* Data refer to three-years moving averages.

Sources: SCH (2013a) and WHO (2011).

the share of Qataris who smoke (tobacco or shisha) rose from 13.1% to 16.4% over the period 2006-12.

The high prevalence of diabetes, though slightly falling from 2008 to 2012, remains a serious health challenge (figure 2.5), as does the prevalence of obesity, another lifestyle disease. Among the Qatari population the prevalence of obesity increased from 40% in 2006 to 41.1% in 2012. The International Diabetes Federation notes that Qatar has one of the highest rates of diabetes in the region.

Qatari deaths per 100,000 due to cardiovascular disease have markedly decreased over the period 2008-12 and remain much lower than the top five Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (figure 2.5).

Cognizant of the changing pattern of diseases, Qatar's health policy is increasingly emphasising the importance of preventive health care. Multiple prevention campaigns

aim at improving public awareness and well-being, especially in relation to chronic and lifestyle diseases.

### Education

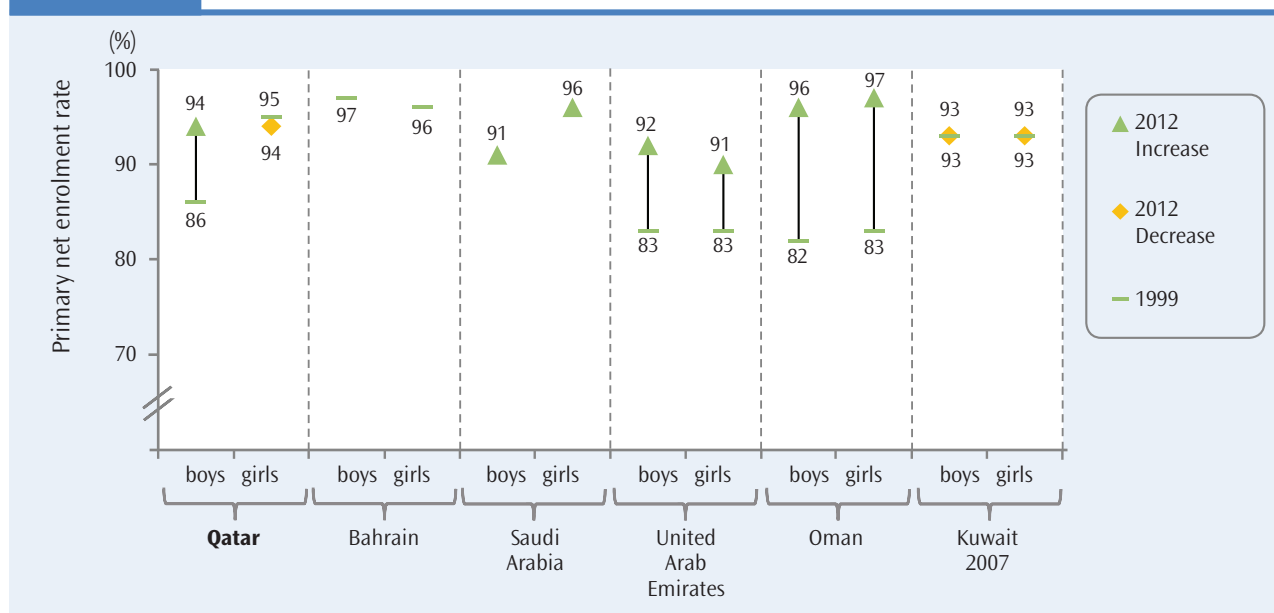
Qatar is strongly committed to ensuring access to quality education at all levels for boys and girls. Among GCC countries, it is the only country where girls' net primary school enrolment rates are higher than those of boys (figure 2.6). Qatari females also outnumbered males by five to two in tertiary enrolment.

### Labour and wages

Labour force participation rates show increases for both Qatari men and women. Labour force participation of females has increased substantially from 27.4% in 2001 to 34.7 in 2013, reflecting rising educational levels and much greater employment opportunities in all sectors (figure 2.7). Nevertheless, their participation still remains at half the rate of male Qataris and well below that of women in most OECD countries.

**Figure 2.6**

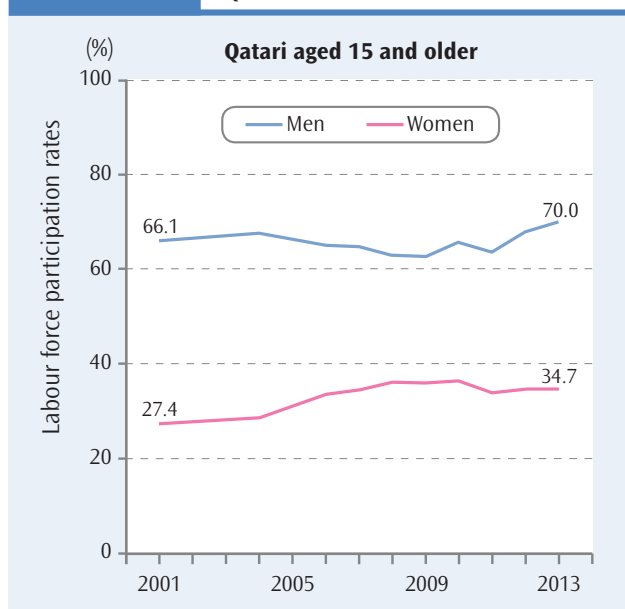
**Primary net enrolment rates by gender, Qatar and GCC countries**



Sources: MDPS (2015b) and UNESCO (2015).

Figure 2.7

## Labour force participation rates, Qataris



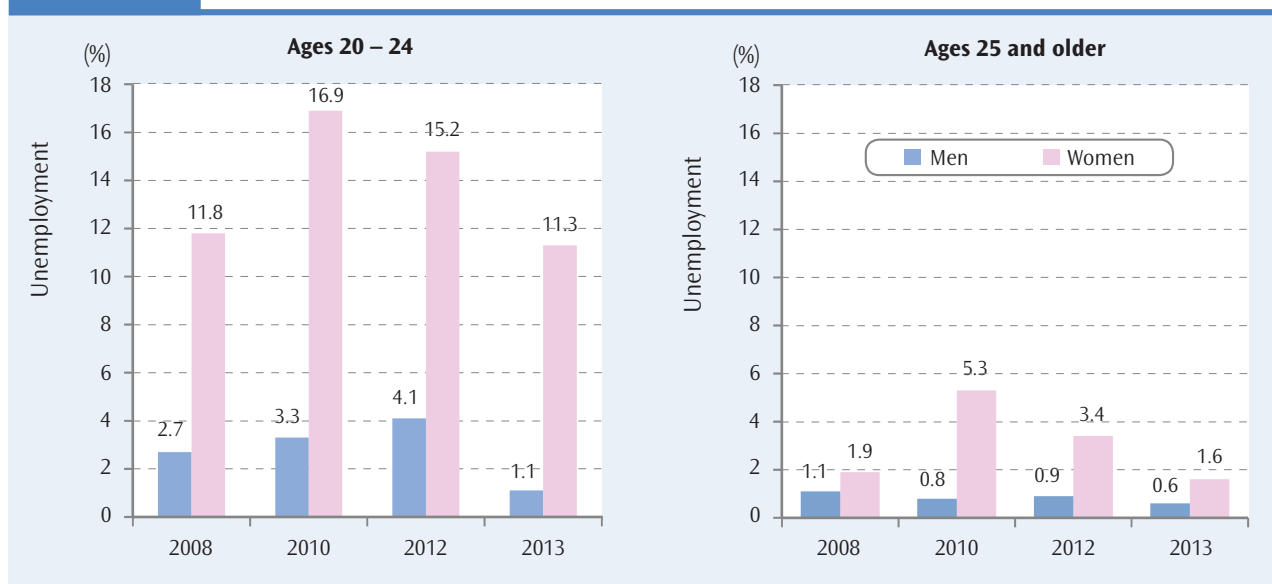
Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2005, 2011 and 2013a).

Unemployment, although very low compared with international levels is relatively high among young females, especially those seeking a first job after completing secondary or tertiary education (figure 2.8). Social and cultural factors play a big role in influencing decisions of young women as to whether to take up available job opportunities, especially in the private sector.

The wage-gap between Qatari men and women has narrowed overtime, although it is still significant among all occupational groups. The ratio of Qatari women's to Qatari men's wages increased from 0.66 in 2006 to 0.75 in 2013. This increase towards greater wage equalisation, which speaks to improved rights for women, can be seen especially among occupational groups such as professionals, technicians and associate professionals, and among legislators, senior officials and managers (figure 2.9).

Figure 2.8

## Unemployment rates low overall but relatively higher for young Qatari women

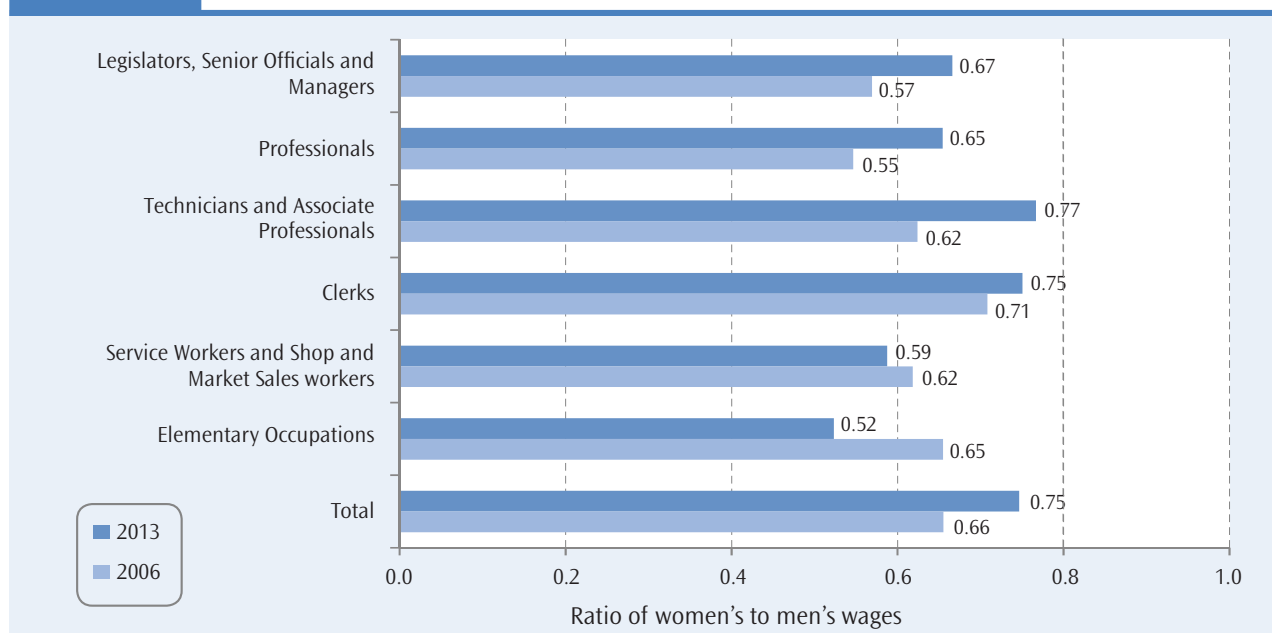


Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2011 and 2013a).



**Figure 2.9**

**Ratio of Qatari women's to men's wages by occupation**



Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2007).

### Income profiles

Real incomes of Qatari households have experienced a doubling between 2006/7 and 2012/3. In both periods two-thirds of household income came from salaries. For the bottom decile of households, transfers from government were the most significant source of income, after employment income.

The RtD should necessarily throw a spotlight on excluded and/or disadvantaged populations, that is individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised. Qatar, because of its recent persistent strong economic performance and high levels of income derived from its natural hydrocarbon resource base, does not suffer the pains of *absolute poverty*.

However, so as to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable, Qatar's NDS 2011-2016 adopted a national *relative poverty* line to help determine a monetary social protection floor for Qataris. It also helps identify the primary characteristics of low-income households. Relative poverty measures the incidence and intensity of low income (or expenditure) by using a threshold of 50% of the median household's equivalised income. It is important to equalise household incomes to allow for variations in household size and composition—using income or income per capita does not adequately capture household welfare.

Nearly one-tenth of Qatari households experienced relative poverty. Between 2006/7 and 2012/3 the headline relative poverty rate of Qatari households remained largely unchanged at 9.3% and 9.8% respectively. However, the incidence of children living in relative poverty increased from 13.4% in 2006/7 to 15.2% in 2012/3. Low income Qatari households tend to have multiple dependents, low education of the household head, and are often headed by a divorced woman or a disabled person. Relative poverty rates are highest in households where there is only one income earner.

Most (55%) relatively poor households are close to the QR 153,095 annual income threshold, but those most relatively poor spent on average more than they earned (table 2.1). This can lead to the exhaustion of past savings or increased debt which can create future problems for such households.

### Spatial differentials

Looking at human development data through a rights prism necessitates going beyond national aggregate indicators to subnational levels. A spatial study using multivariate analysis was undertaken by the Department of Social Development Planning on differentials in social prosperity among Qataris at local levels (zones) using detailed data from the 2010 population census.

**Table 2.1** Lowest income households spent more than they earned, 2012/3

Equivalised income (QR) of lowest decile	Household means			Saving rate (%)	Frequency (%)
	Income (QR)	Expenditure (QR)	Saving (QR)		
Less than 80,000	328,473	400,142	-71,669	-21.8	9.1
80,000–100,000	416,679	520,104	-103,424	-24.8	13.6
100,000–120,000	409,505	435,933	-26,427	-6.5	21.8
120,000–140,000	534,528	521,961	12,567	2.4	31.6
140,000–153,095	527,697	497,859	29,838	5.7	24.0
All poor households	470,912	486,124	-15,212	-3.2	100.0 (4,045)

Source: MDPS (2014f).

This study was a first attempt to examine subnational socio-economic differentials among the Qatari population and to measure changes over time. It focuses on 35 of the country's 91 geographic planning zones (the smallest administrative planning areas) which contain 95% of the Qatari population.

A Social Prosperity Index (SPI) was constructed using selected census variables in the 2010 census through the use of principal component analysis (PCA). The SPI's variables are taken to reflect three key dimensions of social prosperity:

- *Empowerment*—an ability of individuals to access information and to communicate globally as measured by the percentage of Qataris using the internet.
- *Social status*—the socio-economic status of individuals as measured by the percentage of Qataris aged 15 and over in professional and higher level occupations.
- *Knowledge*—the education and skills of individuals as measured by two variables, (a) percentage of Qataris aged 25 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment and (b) percentage of Qataris 10 and over who are literate. The former captures the attainment of the youngest generation who have completed their education, while the latter reflects the ability of individuals to participate effectively in a modern society and economy.

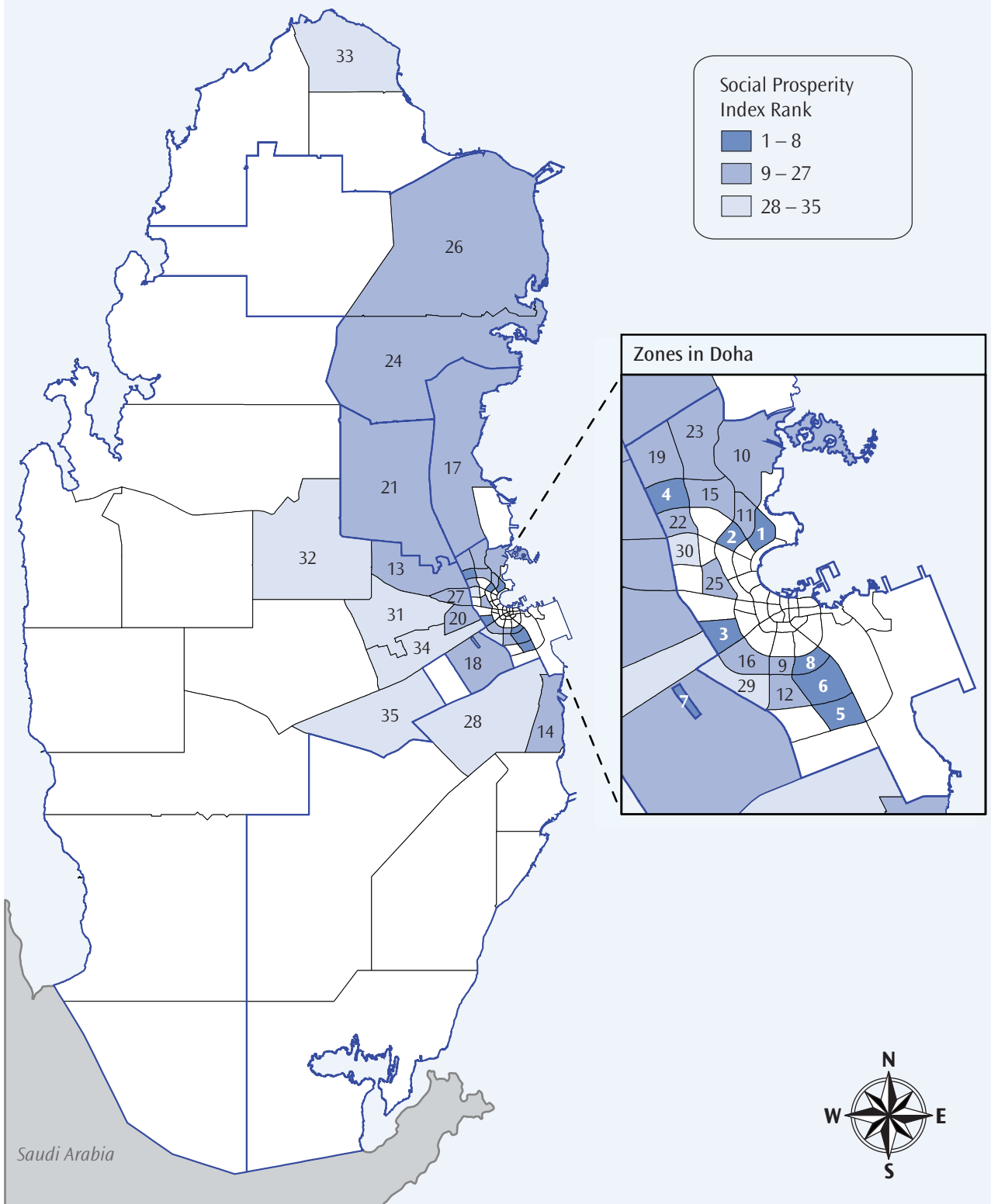
The SPI was then used to rank the 35 zones and to classify them into three groups, representing high, medium and low prosperity (map 2.1). The SPI is shown to be a robust measure when verified against 2004 census data, as well as from data on income from the annual Labour Force Survey.

The eight zones with highest SPI are all concentrated in Doha, whereas the eight zones with lowest SPI are spread among four municipalities (map 2.1). Two low SPI zones are on the margins of what might be termed old Doha, one in Al Shamal and the other five in a contiguous belt cutting across the municipalities of Al Rayyan and Al Wakra. The remaining 15 medium SPI zones are spread across all of Qatar's seven municipalities.

A striking feature is the big discrepancy between the lowest and highest groups of zones for the variables higher occupations, tertiary education and internet usage. Mabaireek stands out as being not just the most disadvantaged zone, but for being significantly behind the other zones in the lowest quartile.

The lowest eight zones, which contained nearly 88,000 (36%) of all Qataris in 2010, also exhibit big discrepancies in mean monthly employment income where it is more than QR4,000 (24%) lower than it is for the highest SPI zones. Similarly unemployment levels are much higher.

The findings from the study thus show that there is a significant divide in social prosperity between Qataris living in Qatar's most urbanised zones and the non-urbanised ones. There are gaps in a wide range of social, demographic and economic variables which have implications for policies and programmes—in the establishment of education facilities (including preschools), health and community facilities and employment, as well as public services.



## Non-Qataris: progress and challenges

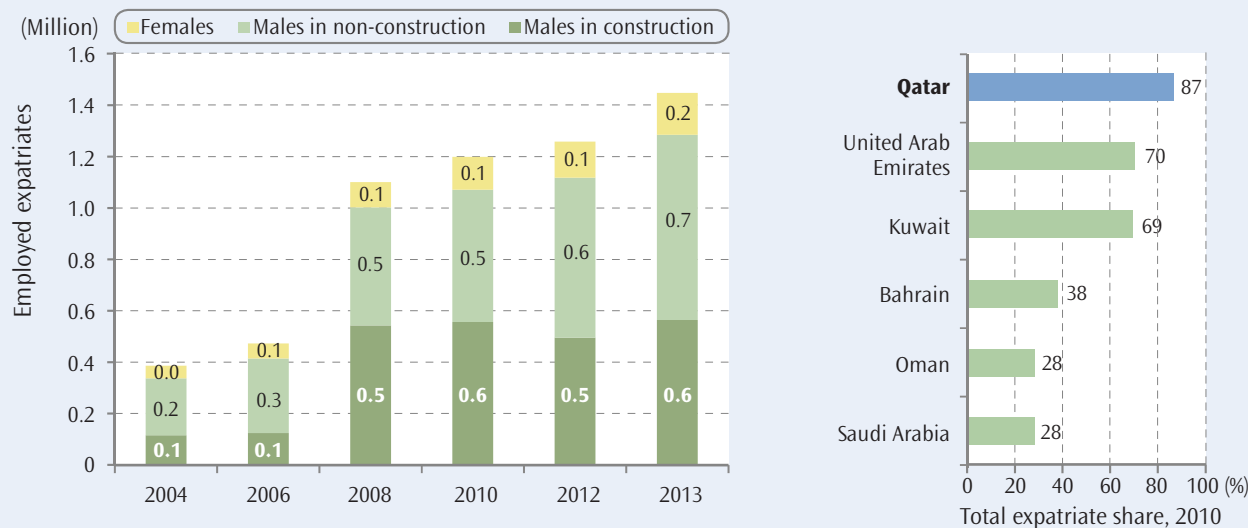
A common feature of the GCC states is the presence of large numbers of migrants who comprise sizeable shares of their total populations. According to United Nations' estimates, Qatar tops the list of countries with the highest share of foreign population relative to the total population (figure 2.10), where the non-Qatari population accounts for around 87% of the total population. Most of the foreign population are expatriate workers whose very presence indicates the significant contribution that they make to economic growth and to national development.

Between 2004 and 2013, the total number of expatriate workers increased from 0.4 million to 1.4 million, representing a growth of 14.7% per annum. Males accounted for around 89% of total expatriates. They are

employed in all sectors of the economy, but numerically dominate the private, mixed and government cooperation sectors. Even in the public sector expatriates account for about half of all workers.

In 2013 more than 70% of Qatar's 1.4 million expatriate workers were engaged in semi-skilled or unskilled employment (table 2.2). Among males the bulk of these lesser-skilled workers are employed in construction (figure 2.10) and to a lesser extent in retail and hospitality jobs, whereas among females the majority of the lesser-skilled are employed as domestic household workers. The sections below focus primarily on rights issues affecting foreign workers, particularly on these categories of workers.

**Figure 2.10** Qatar has the highest proportion of international migrants



Sources: MDPS (2014c); QSA (2005, 2011 and 2013a); UNESCWA (2012).

**Table 2.2** Non-Qatari employment by skill level, 2013

Skill level	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)
Highly skilled	14.8	24.7	15.9
Skilled	11.5	18.4	12.3
Semiskilled	54.4	0.2	48.3
Unskilled	19.2	56.7	23.5
Total	100	100	100
Number	1,284,992	163,169	1,448,161

Source: MDPS (2014a).

### International provisions for migrant workers

Human rights law requires that migrant workers be seen and treated as independent contractors with legal personality who are free to make choices and enter into mutually beneficial work relationships with their employers where the rights and responsibilities of both are clearly delineated and legally protected. International instruments guarantee the same basic human rights for non-citizens as they do for citizens. Citizens, however, enjoy added rights and privileges by virtue of their citizenship, while migrant workers must also enjoy special protections and guarantees of certain rights that may be abused because of unequal power relations and their non-citizenship status.

For example, rights relevant to migrant workers include: to be free from slavery or servitude including forced labour; equality before the law and equal protection of the law; protection against discrimination; legal personality and the right to seek recourse and effective remedy by national tribunals; freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention; freedom of movement and residence; peaceful assembly and association and social security.

Migrants' rights have been promoted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in its efforts to provide "protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own." This has also been asserted in ILO conventions such as the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. More recently, the 92<sup>nd</sup> ILO Convention (2004) stated that "a fair deal for all migrant workers requires a rights-based

approach, in accordance with existing international labour standards and ILO principles." The ILO conventions provide a normative and legal framework to safeguard the rights of migrant workers.

Qatar fares less well than most GCC countries and other countries in ratifying ILO labour conventions (table 2.3). The NDS 2011–16 targeted an increase from six to 20 in the number of ILO conventions that the country should sign by 2016. It foresaw that improving labour rights would not only benefit employees but would also enhance the country's global image as a leading and progressive nation. In particular it envisaged the signing and ratification of the three remaining fundamental conventions that are related to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

States have the sovereign right to determine their economic systems and processes, and to draft their own migration laws. They must do so, however, in accordance with international standards and best practices, and especially with the standards contained in treaties and conventions which they have signed and ratified.

### National constitution and legal framework

There are several provisions in the 2004 Permanent Constitution designed to protect the rights of non-citizens, distinguishing between rights given to "citizens" and "persons." The Permanent Constitution articulates in article six that the state shall respect international charters and conventions and strive to implement all international agreements, charters and conventions to which it is a party.

**Table 2.3** ILO conventions ratified by country, 2013

Country	Fundamental (8)	Governance (4)	Technical (177)	Total
Kuwait	7	2	10	19
Saudi Arabia	5	1	9	15
Bahrain	5	1	4	10
United Arab Emirates	6	1	2	9
<b>Qatar</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
Oman	4	0	0	4
Finland	8	4	88	100
South Africa	8	2	16	26

Source: ILO (2013).

In article 30 the Permanent Constitution states that employee-employer relations shall be “based on the ideals of social justice” and shall be regulated by law. article 35 provides that all persons are equal before the law and that there shall be no discrimination whatsoever on the grounds of sex, race, language or religion. article 36 further states that “personal freedom shall be guaranteed and no person may be arrested, detained or searched, neither may his freedom of residence and mobility be restricted save under the provisions of the law;” no person may be subjected to torture or any degrading treatment.

Qatar’s labour Law 14 of 2004 does not allow migrant workers to form associations and participate in collective bargaining. This situation goes against international labour conventions, as well as the spirit of the Declaration of the RtD that calls for participation of all stakeholders in development.

Matters regarding foreign workers fall within the purview of the *Kafala* system or 2009 Sponsorship Law which regulates expatriates’ entry, departure, residence and sponsorship. Under this law, each expatriate who is granted an entry visa to Qatar needs a sponsor, and may only leave the country temporarily or permanently on submission of an exit permit granted by the sponsor<sup>i</sup>. The 2004 Labour regulates the employment of all workers, except six categories that are excluded among whom are domestic and casual workers.

### ***Kafala* sponsorship system**

Entry of expatriate workers into Qatar is governed by the *Kafala*, or sponsorship system. This system regulates the relationship between employers and foreign workers. They are legally linked to the sponsors/employers through work permits and employment contracts. The Sponsorship Law prevents foreign workers from changing employers or from leaving Qatar without the sponsor’s approval, thus providing space for employers to exploit employees and deny them their rights.

Migrants are required to stay with their employer unless they get a no objection certificate (NOC) and employers are required to report migrants who abscond to the Ministry of Interior (MOI). Migrants who leave their employers without an NOC are charged with absconding and labelled runaways (Crépeau 2014). They lose their residence permit

and risk fines, imprisonment and deportation. This system can amount to forced labour as defined in the ILO international conventions.

Although it is illegal under the 2009 Sponsorship Law for sponsors to confiscate passports—there are regulations that allow for a change of sponsor in certain cases—this law is not effectively enforced (Crépeau 2014). Since employers pay for the recruitment of the foreign worker, he or she is generally seen by the employer as an investment to be held on to for an extended time.

Under the sponsorship system arrangements expatriates may only leave the country with an exit permit issued by their sponsor. This violates the freedom of movement guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Racial Discrimination. The question has been raised as to whether expatriate workers under the current interpretation of the *Kafala* system are treated as independent contractors working under a set of clear rules of mutual rights and obligations, or whether they are subjected to such serious limitations on their freedoms, such as on passports or exit permits, that they run the risk of becoming forced labour.

Following the NDS 2011-2016 proposal to review and revise Qatar’s sponsorship system, the government carried out a comprehensive study of the system in 2012/3 taking into account the views of national and international stakeholders. Based on this, in 2014 it was officially announced that the existing sponsorship system will be superseded during 2015 with a simplified and much improved contractual system.

### **National institutional framework**

Two government ministries, the MOI and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), are primarily responsible for matters related to expatriate workers. The MOI is responsible for the entry and exit visas of migrants and for managing the sponsorship system. Through its Search and Follow-up Department, the MOI manages the deportation of migrants and the deportation centre. Its Human Rights Department receives and investigates complaints from migrants and undertakes visits to the deportation centre.

<sup>i</sup> This does not apply for women sponsored by the head of the family, minors and visitors staying for 30 days or less.

The MoLSA is responsible for all aspects of recruitment of migrant workers, labour inspections on occupational health and safety, accommodation and work site inspections. It also receives complaints from workers, deals with dispute resolution and cases of abuse against migrants by negotiating between the migrant and the employer, and can check with the MOI regarding transfer of sponsorship. The Labour Court, under the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), is responsible for resolving labour disputes that cannot be settled amicably by the MoLSA's Department of Labour Relations.

A few independent organisations help support migrant workers on human rights issues. The National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) serves as a watchdog and assists migrants to bring grievances to the relevant departments within the MoLSA, as well as to the MOJ's Labour Court. The Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (formerly the Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking) addresses human trafficking issues. The Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, a semi-private non-profit organisation, and the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, promote best practices for workers' welfare.

At the policy planning level, the NDS 2011–16 serves as a roadmap to realise the goals of QNV 2030 which foresaw protecting the rights of expatriate labour and securing their occupational health and safety. The NDS 2011–16 called, *inter alia*, for a review of Qatar's sponsorship system; a review of Law 4 of 2009 Law on Human Resources Administration as well as measures to protect the rights and safety standards of all foreign workers within a comprehensive social protection framework with international norms and standards.

While Qatar has much of the legal, regulatory, institutional and policy framework in place for the promotion and protection of the rights of foreign workers, there are many challenges affecting the full realisation of these rights, especially among the lesser-skilled workers.

### **Recruitment**

Qatar's private sector generally chooses a labour-intensive production option based on a perceived unlimited supply of relatively inexpensive labour from regional countries and beyond. Conversely, many lesser-skilled foreign workers living in low-income labour surplus countries with high unemployment are desperate to find employment to support their families.

There are multiple pathways for the recruitment of foreign workers, but most come to the country sourced through overseas recruitment agencies and go either directly to local companies who they will work for, or to local manpower agencies.

Exploitation of these workers often begins in their home countries at the time of recruitment. Although Qatar's labour laws do not allow for charging of recruitment fees, many overseas recruitment agencies impose a high fee for which migrants have to secure loans to pay. Some of these agencies do not provide accurate terms of reference about the jobs, salaries and allowances before the workers leave their countries. Pre-departure orientation programmes are often not well organised, overcrowded and provide only rudimentary information. Workers are not briefed about their rights as workers.

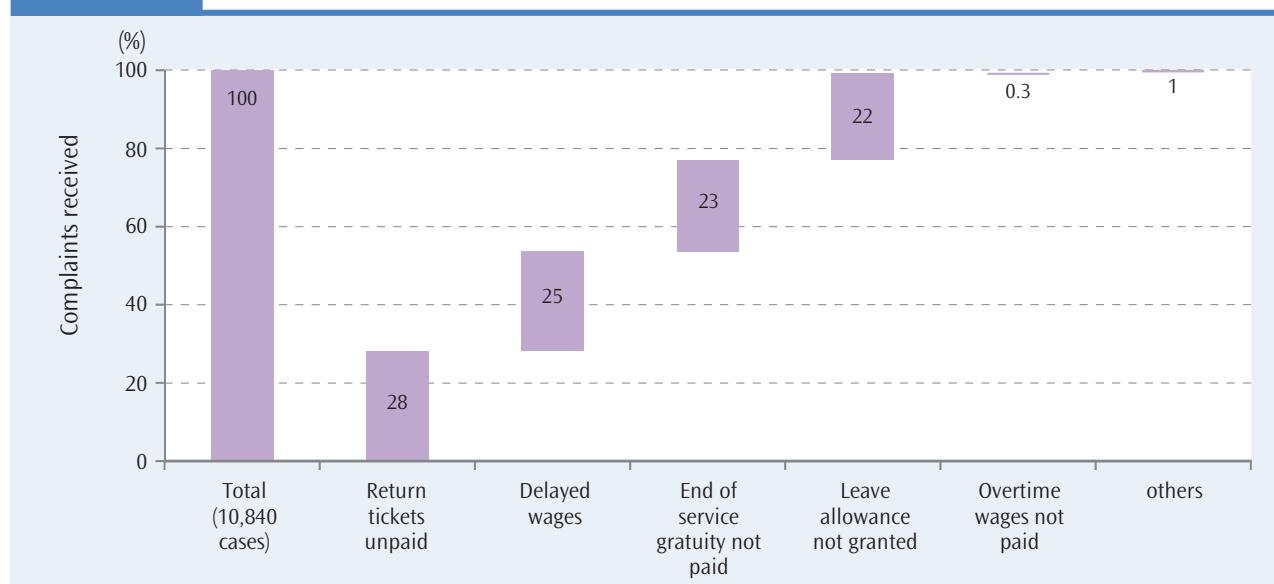
Upon arrival in Qatar, not infrequently the contract which the worker has signed is replaced by a new contract with a lower salary and allowances, a different job description and changed working conditions. The worker, already in debt due to illegal recruitment fees and unable to change jobs without his sponsor's agreement, is thus in a weak position to negotiate contractual arrangements and entitlements.

The human rights violations which take place during the recruitment process are exacerbated by weak regulatory frameworks in labour-sending countries, highly competitive private sector involvement in recruitment and corruption. Adoption of government-to-government agreements which ensure standardised ethical recruitment practices, standard work contracts as well as pre-departure orientation and a minimum wage have been recommended to address overseas recruitment challenges faced by foreign workers (Jureidini 2014).

### **Rights' abuses**

Complaints by workers about rights abuses by employers, especially those in the construction sector, have attracted wide interest, including of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights. Many of the complaints relate to delays in payment of wages and withholding of various allowances (figure 2.11). Others relate to poor working conditions in the workplace due to lack of implementation of the 2004 Labour Law and substandard living accommodation in labour camps. Still others relate to non-issue of (or extension of) identity cards which means employees cannot access government subsidised health care and cannot make transactions, including sending money back home.



**Figure 2.11** Complaints<sup>a</sup> received by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2013

<sup>a</sup> % figures scaled to take account that some cases reflect multiple complaints.

Source: MoLSA (2014).

Foreign workers need to be informed of their rights in their own language before their arrival in Qatar, upon arrival and throughout their stay. Communication strategies need to target foreign workers and their employers on their rights and responsibilities.

The scale of expatriate inflows has stretched the institutional capacity of the relevant government ministries and agencies to implement and enforce existing regulations for the protection of foreign worker rights. For example, despite increases in the number of labour and occupational and health inspectors in the MoLSA's Labour Inspection Department, there are insufficient inspectors with multilingual skills to adequately carry out thorough site inspections of working and living conditions (table 2.4).

**Table 2.4** Number of labour inspectors increased markedly

Type of inspector	2010	2012	2013
Labour	95	113	114
Occupational health and safety	32	33	45
Total	127	146	159

Source: MoLSA (2014).

Numerous reforms are underway to promote and protect the rights of workers including a newly established wage protection system. It is now mandatory for employers to make electronic payments to workers by crediting their wages to state banks within seven days of the due date. A special unit has been created within the MoLSA to ensure compliance.

### Occupational health and safety

Occupational health and safety are fundamental for all workers, being crucial for the reputation of companies, organisations and even countries worldwide as well as being rights in themselves. Many government, semi-government, multinational and private organisations across all sectors do adhere to Qatar's labour laws and regulations and provide excellent welfare benefits to their workers. Thus for example Qatar's energy and industry sector accords high priority to health and safety with outstanding outcomes. Qatar Petroleum's *Sustainability in the Qatar Energy and Industry Sector Report 2013*, which includes data from 35 companies in the sector, highlighted a 13% reduction in employee occupational illness rate between 2012 to 2013 and zero employee fatalities in 2013.

This contrasts with the construction sector where there are many reported cases of workplace accidents and

fatalities. Occupational safety and health of construction workers is an area where there is insufficient compliance with existing national laws and regulations by many employers, especially subcontractors, as well as a lack of effective enforcement of them. Construction workers, often employed in companies where they do not have health and safety committees or a voice on them if they do exist, are a particularly vulnerable group being exposed to, *inter alia*, the risks of extreme temperatures, hazardous chemicals and dust, equipment malfunctions and working at heights.

For example, in 2013 the reported number of injuries due to falling from heights at work sites in Qatar was more than 1,000 and there were also related fatalities. Accurate statistics on the range of workplace injuries and fatalities from a single data source are not currently readily available. However, the MoLSA, as part of its portfolio of NDS 2011-2016 labour projects, undertook to build on ongoing efforts to improve workplace safety

by strengthening standards and creating a centralised database of workplace accidents, injuries and diseases, and requiring mandatory reporting of these by employers.

Many expatriate workers also face fundamental challenges in readily accessing health care services, including effective geographical access to hospitals and medical centres; lack of health cards to access government subsidized health services, and lack of awareness about emerging health issues that may be affecting them, especially among lower-skilled single workers (Mohammed 2014). Although the government has embarked on several new initiatives as part of the National Health Strategy to provide comprehensive and integrated health care service, the strategy currently falls short of realising the right to health for lower-skilled expatriate workers.

Steps need to be taken to strengthen enforcement of existing laws and regulations relating to occupational health and safety, including through more frequent and

## Box 2.2

### Qatar Shell's approach to workers' welfare

A core aspect of Qatar Shell's corporate responsibility in Qatar is the development and care for all who work for the company. During the construction of the mega Pearl Gas-to-Liquid plant during 2007 to 2011 which required some 50,000 workers, Shell made a conscious decision to create a community environment called the Pearl Village – residential accommodation envisioned to be a 'home away from home' for all its workers. The objective was to foster a culture of care and concern for the well-being of all workers in order to get the best out of people.

Innovations implemented by Shell on the Pearl Gas-to-Liquid project included the provision of facilities for sport and recreation, including the Al Muntazah park in the heart of the Pearl Village, theatrical performances, continuous professional learning and facilities for communication with home. Close attention was also paid to the health of workers through nutritional standards—reflecting multiple national diets, world-class medical services and psycho-social support including a network of volunteer *uncles* and *aunties*.

Following the construction phase, these best practices were transitioned into the operational phase and formalised within the Worker Welfare Terms and Conditions, with measurable performance standards embedded in all contractor agreements.

The outcomes of the new model for workers accommodation included:

- Workers' development through a training centre which conducted 137,000 inductions; 282,000 health, safety and environment training and 5,000 supervisors' training.
- Only one construction fatality, significantly lower than even industry best practice would have expected.
- 50% higher workforce productivity at peak construction.
- Low investment for high benefit.

Source: Qatar Shell (2014).

more thorough inspections by the MoLSA. Although Qatar's labour law lays the foundation for safety in the workplace, it fails to impose specific industry standards and does not include important sectors as well as casual and domestic workers (MDPS 2015c). Best practice standards (see below and box 2.2) need to be replicated, including by subcontractors and at the household level, to allow all workers to enjoy the right to occupational health and safety.

### **Best practices in workers' welfare in construction**

While there are many examples of rights abuses in Qatar's construction sector, there are several best practice initiatives that serve as exemplars. These organisations and companies recognise that taking care of workers' welfare through good management practices not only leads to a contented workforce but also helps boost labour productivity.

Qatar Foundation (QF) began a Migrant Workers' Welfare initiative around 2010 to create a framework of prescriptive standards to protect workers and encourage ethical practices for its construction projects. After two years of comprehensive research, QF produced a workers' charter *Mandatory Standards of Migrant Workers' Welfare for Contractors and Subcontractors*, which is in line with the national labour law and ILO conventions, except in two areas—the right to form associations and unions and collective bargaining—both of which are not permitted by law. Beyond fundamental principles, such as dignity of workers, fair employment practices, decent living and working environments, the charter contains components covering recruitment and employment standards, such as fair treatment in terms of wages, working hours, food, medical insurance, counselling and training services and so on. The charter aims to ensure the effective application of these principles for the benefit of all migrant workers in its construction and other service industries.

QF will only select bidders for new construction projects when they approve the Workers' Charter. QF authorities undertake random monitoring visits to their sites to investigate working and living conditions. If the contractor or subcontractor fails to comply with the agreed standards, QF will advise or suspend the contractor based on the severity of the situation.

In early 2014 Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, which oversees Qatar's plans for the 2022

FIFA World Cup, launched its *Workers' Welfare Standards*, which covers wage payments, workers' accommodation and occupational health and safety, including regular monitoring for compliance. All contractors and subcontractors engaged in the delivery of its projects must comply with its standards and with all relevant national laws. The standards will be included in all contracts and will be robustly monitored and enforced for the benefit of all workers.

Qatari Diar Real Estate Company established in 2005 by the Qatar Investment Authority has been proactive in taking steps in safeguarding the rights of its labourers. It sets standards for all the workers with comprehensive guidelines on food quality, hygiene, health, and salary payments. In all its contracts it emphasises the importance of labour protection and calls for strict adherence to standards, terminating contractors and subcontractors if they do not comply. The company has a team of experts monitoring the health and safety of its workers onsite and in their living places, including surprise inspections.

### **Access to justice**

Foreign workers who experience denial of their rights often lack information and knowledge as well as the linguistic abilities to make formal complaints. While the MoLSA has produced an *Expatriate Workers Guide* on the complaints process, the guide is not widely disseminated.

Advice on grievances is provided through various governmental channels as well as the NHRC, local embassies and some other organisations. Where complaints of abuses or grievances are made and cannot be resolved by the MoLSA's Department of Labour Relations, workers' often experience impediments, especially a lack of financial means and language barriers, in trying to access justice through the Labour Court.

The NDS 2011-2016 proposed the establishment of a special labour tribunal to solve labour disputes and to expedite routine cases with the aim that they could be adjudicated on within a limited period of time. Ensuring effective access to the tribunal would necessitate providing information in multiple languages, that interpreters are available, and that no fees are charged. Mechanisms for ensuring the tribunal decisions are enforced must also be put in place.

## Right to social protection

The right to social security for the permanent or semi-permanent expatriate community is a sensitive and complex topic about which there has been limited research or public discussion on costs and benefits. Many expatriates have been living in Qatar for more than 15 years and in some cases for more than a generation, working in public or private organisations or running their own businesses with a long-term national partner.

An increasing number of long-term expatriates especially from Asian, African and Middle Eastern countries, seek to stay in Qatar, together with their family members, beyond their retirement age. In some cases returning to their countries of birth may not be a viable option for a variety of reasons. While their service to the country may be considered worthy of social benefits, such as a retirement pension and health care, they currently have no entitlements.

For example, during a focus group interview undertaken as part of a background paper commissioned for this report, a Pakistani taxi driver living and working in Qatar since the early 1980s expressed a concern that once his resident permit expires he will have to leave the country: “After serving so many years in Qatar I feel I belong here, but I have no rights. I am frail now, have no savings and how can I survive with no health insurance” (Mohammed 2014).

The NDS 2011-2016 proposed that the government establish a category of permanent residency for individuals who fulfilled certain criteria. Consistent with international best practice, the government could also review how it can provide benefits for its long-term residents who have contributed significantly to the nation’s development.

## Domestic workers

With the growing affluence of households in Qatar, domestic workers—which includes maids, nannies, cooks, drivers and gardeners—have become a major category

of foreign workers, especially of female workers. Census data show that the number of domestic workers per Qatari household increased from an average of 1.5 in 2004 to 3 in 2010. Domestic workers are extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. They are excluded from the 2004 Labour Law which regulates the employment of workers: their employment is regulated through contracts signed with their employers.

However, as was noted by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, domestic workers have at least as much a need for their work to be regulated by law as any other worker. There are many reported cases of serious human rights abuses of domestic workers, including non-payment of wages, excessive hours, no leave days, physical, mental and sexual abuses (box 2.3). Yet, because they are excluded from the 2004 Labour Law they do not have access to the MoLSA’s Department of Labour Relations and the Labour Court to resolve grievances and access justice. By and large they have to rely on their embassies in Doha, the Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (QFSPR) and other informal networks to resolve their labour issues. Even using these pathways can be challenging given the relative isolation of their working environments.

Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs from GCC countries met in Kuwait in late 2014 to agree on a draft GCC-wide contract to protect the rights of domestic workers. Provisions include a six-hour working day with overtime pay for additional two hours, decent dwelling, a ban on employers from holding the passports of employees, freedom of workers to live outside the home of the employer or travel at any time, and for employers to provide an air ticket at termination of the contract. The challenge now is to make this type of contract legally binding for all domestic workers in Qatar and to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of its provisions as soon as possible, irrespective of the pace of progress in other GCC countries.

## Box 2.3

## Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (QFSPR) assisting foreign domestic workers

ILO links forced labour and human trafficking, defining forced labour as “situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means such as accumulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities. Forced labour, contemporary forms of slavery, debt bondage and human trafficking are closely related terms though not identical in a legal sense.”

The government passed Law 15 of 2011 on Human Trafficking which defines the crime of human trafficking to include “exploitation of vulnerability or need, and forced labor or servitudes...”. The law is designed to play a significant role in protecting domestic workers from labour exploitation.

The QFSPR (formerly the Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking), helps implement the laws on human trafficking and provides support for victims of human trafficking, including those referred by the police and national embassies. It also oversees the Qatar Home for Shelter and Humanitarian Care to provide female victims of trafficking with support and protection, legal advice, psychological, social rehabilitation and reintegration assistance.

Domestic workers who approach the QFSPR for assistance and meet the criteria for human trafficking are eligible to receive legal and financial assistance. Those who do not meet the criteria receive consultation and referral to the appropriate agency.

In 2012, the QFSPR reported receiving 200-300 complaints a month from domestic workers regarding non-payment of wages, excessive working hours, and non-compliance with other contractual obligations. Data from Amnesty International point to an average of 12-15 domestic workers visiting Hamad Hospital's psychiatric unit daily for treatment of anxiety disorders, of whom 30 are admitted each year for depression. QFSPR also reported 52 cases of serious abuse of women. 19 were categorised as being victims of forced labour, visa trading and the trafficking of children. Official investigations were opened into 20 cases. However, as of March 2013 Amnesty International reported that none of the cases had led to a conviction of a perpetrator.

To address the scale of need for protection of domestic workers who are victims of abuse, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights (2013) and Amnesty International (2014) recommended QFSPR to:

- Increase capacity, resources and specialist expertise to improve procedures to ensure effective response is provided to each call for assistance.
- Revise indicators and criteria to assess admittance to its shelter and use internationally recognised definitions for forced labour.
- Expand the capacity of the Qatar Home for Shelter and Humanitarian Care.

*Source:* AI (2014).

## Conclusions

Qatar's population has been growing at an exceptional pace averaging 10% a year in the decade to 2014. This high population growth is primarily on account of the massive inflows of socially and culturally diverse expatriate workers needed to support the country's infrastructure and construction investments, particularly in relation to hosting of the FIFA 2022 World Cup. By 2014 the non-Qataris share of Qatar's total population had risen to 88%. Rapid expatriate population growth is impacting on national development, increasing public sector expenditures, especially on frontline services of health and education, and potentially affecting the rights of individuals.

Qatar has made remarkable development progress. Its HDI value in 2013 places the country in UNDP's very high human development category. Significant improvements in the standard of living as well as gains in life expectancy have contributed most to increases in the HDI. A rights-based approach to development calls for efforts to be undertaken to address inequalities and exclusion. Inequalities and exclusion tend to mirror rights not observed. If inequality is taken into account Qatar's global ranking drops by seven positions from 31 to 38, mainly due to relatively higher inequality in gross national income and education.

Most indicators of human development of the Qatari population have shown strong gains over the longer-term. These gains to a large extent mirror progress on the RtD. Development progress has come about through people-centred plans, policies and programmes supported by increased and high public expenditures on the social sectors. The RtD should necessarily throw a spotlight on excluded and/or disadvantaged populations, that is individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised.

Qatar, because of its recent persistent strong economic performance and high levels of income derived from its natural hydrocarbon resource base, does not suffer the pains of absolute poverty. However, so as to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and vulnerable, Qatar's NDS 2011-2016 adopted a national *relative poverty* line to help determine a monetary social protection floor for Qataris. Nearly one-tenth of Qatari households experience relative poverty. Between 2006/7 and 2012/3 the relative poverty

rate remained largely unchanged, at 9.3% and 9.8% respectively, although the incidence of children living in relative poverty increased. Low income Qatari households tend to be characterized by multiple dependents, low education of the household head, and are often headed by a divorced woman or a disabled person.

Disaggregated data from a study of spatial differentials in social prosperity among Qatari households shows that there is a significant divide in social prosperity between Qatar's most urbanised zones and the non-urbanised ones. There are gaps in a wide range of social, demographic and economic variables—in education, health and community facilities, employment, as well as public services, which have implications for policies and programmes.

Between 2004 and 2013, the total number of expatriate workers increased from 0.4 million to 1.4 million, representing a growth of 14.7% per annum. Males account for around 89% of total expatriates. Qatar has the highest share of expatriate workers relative to the size of its total population. Their presence indicates the significant contribution that they make to economic growth and to national development. They are employed in all sectors of the economy, but numerically dominate the private, mixed and government cooperation sectors. More than 70% are engaged in semi-skilled or unskilled employment.

While Qatar has much of the legal, regulatory, institutional and policy framework in place for the promotion and protection of the rights of foreign workers, there are many challenges affecting the full realisation of these rights, especially among the lesser-skilled workers. The scale of expatriate inflows has stretched the institutional capacity of the relevant government ministries and agencies to implement and enforce existing regulations for the protection of foreign worker rights, especially of construction workers where exploitation often begins in their home countries at the time of recruitment.

Many complaints relate to delays in payment of wages and withholding of various allowances. Others relate to poor working conditions in the workplace due to lack of implementation of the Labour Law and substandard living accommodation in labour camps. In terms of occupational safety and health, there is insufficient compliance with existing national laws and regulations by many employers,

especially subcontractors, as well as a lack of effective enforcement of them.

Government ministries and agencies have become ever-more conscious of the importance of ensuring the occupational health, safety and human rights of all expatriate workers. Numerous reforms are underway to promote and protect the rights of workers, including the replacement of the sponsorship system with employer-employee contracts.

Companies are now also recognizing that ensuring workers' welfare and rights not only creates a contented workforce but also enhances labour productivity. Several organisations have proactively established initiatives and standards to safeguard the rights of labourers and to encourage ethical practices for their construction projects.

Foreign workers who experience denial of their rights often lack information and knowledge as well as the linguistic abilities to make formal complains. The NDS 2011-2016 proposed the establishment of a special labour tribunal to solve labour disputes and to expedite routine cases with the aim that they could be adjudicated on within a limited period of time. Ensuring effective access to the tribunal would necessitate providing information in multiple languages, that interpreters are available, and that no fees are charged to workers. Mechanisms for ensuring the tribunal's decisions are enforced must also be put in place.

An increasing number of long-term expatriates, having worked in Qatar for 20 years or more, would like to remain permanently upon reaching retirement age. In some cases returning to their countries of birth may not be a viable option for a variety of reasons. While their service to the country may be considered worthy of social benefits, such as pension and health care, they currently have no entitlements. The NDS 2011-2016 proposal to establish a permanent residency category that could accommodate the needs of this group.

Cases of serious human rights abuses of domestic workers, including non-payment of wages, excessive hours, no leave days, physical, mental and sexual abuses, are not infrequent. Domestic workers have as much need for their work to be regulated by law as any other worker. Yet, because they are excluded from the 2004 Labour Law they do not have access to the MoLSA's Department of Labour Relations and the Labour Court to resolve grievances and access justice.

Creating a deeper human rights culture among expatriates is consistent with the spirit of QNV 2030. This needs to be done by communicating and raising awareness of rights consistently among the multilingual and multicultural groups, and also with the rights-holders, that is employers, the government and members of society.





# 3

## Women's Right to Development



# 3

## Women's Right to Development

*"...inequality matters because it is a fundamental issue for human development. Extreme inequalities in opportunity and life chances have a direct bearing on what people can be and what they can do—that is, on human capabilities."*

The United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report, 2005

Gender inequality is a globally pervasive phenomenon and a pressing human rights concern. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment remains at the forefront of the international development agenda. Some of the priority issues include access to education and decent work, violence against women and girls, equality in agency, voice and participation in the full range of decision-making agendas, reproductive health and rights, and gender mainstreaming as a strategy for ensuring that gender perspectives permeate the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes.

Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV) sets a goal of maintaining strong cohesive families that care for their members, and maintain moral and religious values and humanitarian ideals. Balancing modernisation and the preservation of traditions, in a setting of rapidly changing family dynamics and outcomes, it envisions a society in which women are empowered to assume a significant role in all spheres of life, especially through participating in economic and political decision-making.

The National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) supports an expanded role for Qatari women in national development. It encourages gender mainstreaming in sector development programmes, while recognising the need to take into account Qatar's cultural and social setting and the imperative of preserving a strong Arab and Islamic identity. It contains, *inter alia*, initiatives to help women balance work-life responsibilities, to build

their capacities to undertake leadership positions, and to change public perceptions about the role of women.

Women are central to the evolving Qatari family. Even as they maintain an adherence to valuable traditions, women are adapting to the impacts of modernisation. Through their nurturing of language, codes of ethics, behavioural patterns, value systems and religious beliefs, women continue to play an indispensable role in upholding traditional familial and cultural values.

The right to development (RtD) is a human right of all people and individuals, men and women alike. Countries are called upon to implement effective measures that ensure women have an active role in and benefit from development. The rights-based approach to development provides an additional and central element by its inclusion of the concept of equality.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), arising from the year 2000 Millennium Summit, made the connection between national development goals and the importance of gender equality. The MDGs placed a special focus on women with gender equality being both a separate goal, promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, and a cross-cutting dimension for the achievement of all of the other development goals. And the elusive goal of gender equality and women's empowerment is again a central focus of the post-2015 development agenda.

This chapter looks at the extent to which women in Qatar have realised the RtD. Following a summary of the applicable constitutional, national and international legislation, it then reviews evidence from international and regional studies on women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. The remaining sections provide a more detailed review of national progress in the achievement of women's economic, social and political rights.

Of Qatar's 2.2 million people in 2014, just 550,000 (25%) are females. The much lower share of females is of course due to the significant presence of expatriate workers the bulk of whom are male. Of the female population 75% are non-Qataris of whom some 45% are working.

## Women's rights: constitutional, national and international frameworks

### Permanent Constitution

Qatar's Permanent Constitution supports fundamental rights and freedoms. The Constitution recognises that human rights are interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. The fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution include the right to equality before the law; outlawing discrimination based on sex; personal freedom; the right to work; and the right to education (box 3.1). The Constitution further stipulates that these rights must not be regulated or modified in such a way as to limit or diminish them.

### National frameworks

At the national level, Qatar's Penal Code of 2004 reflects the state's commitment to protect women from violence and crimes against honour; such as molestation, defamation, insult, dishonour, discredit, encouraging prostitution or abortion.

The 2009 Law of Human Resources Administration defined the rules for appointments to public sector jobs, salaries, allowances, promotions and leave, without distinction between males and females. It grants working women additional benefits and leave entitlements, including maternity leave and time for breastfeeding their newborn babies.

In December 1998 the Supreme Council for Family Affairs (SCFA) was established as an institution concerned in particular with women's issues and has had an impact on strengthening the role played by Qatari women. A national plan aimed at the advancement of women and enhancing their status, inspired by the 1995 Beijing Declaration and its accompanying Platform for Action, arising from the fourth World Conference on Women, has been instrumental in achieving substantial gains in the fields of education, health and employment. In 2014 the work of the SCFA was transitioned and mainstreamed into the work of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). It is unclear at this juncture whether this will enhance or diminish programmes related to women's rights.

#### Box 3.1

#### Principles of equality in Qatar's Permanent Constitution

Principles of equality are contained in the following constitutional articles:

18: Qatari society is founded on justice, benevolence, freedom, *equality* . . .

19: The state shall preserve the foundations of society and shall ensure to citizens . . . *equality of opportunity*.

34: Citizens have *equal public rights and duties*.

35: All persons are *equal before the law*. There shall be no discrimination between them on grounds of sex . . .

42: The state shall afford citizens the right to vote and to stand for election in accordance with the law.

49: All citizens have the *right to education*. The state shall endeavour to provide free compulsory general education in accordance with the laws and regulations in effect in the state.

Source: MOFA (2015).

The promotion and protection of human rights are underpinned in the QNV 2030. One of its goals is to enhance women's capacities and empower them to participate fully in the social, political and economic spheres, especially in decision-making roles. To achieve this goal, the NDS 2011-2016 contained a plan of action designed, *inter alia*, to promote women's empowerment through education and skill capacities; assisting Qataris to work in the private sector and to participate in the business environment; removing obstacles to women's participation in the labour force and promoting women as leaders.

### International framework

In keeping with the constitutional and national provisions that establish that all citizens, regardless of sex, have equal rights and duties, in 2009 Qatar acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), albeit with reservations on four articles:

- Two (a) relating to the rules of hereditary transmission of authority which is inconsistent with the provisions of article eight of the Permanent Constitution that the "the system of government is one of hereditary rule."
- Nine, paragraph two which provides that "state parties

#### Box 3.2

### Qatar's commitment to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Qatar acceded to the CEDAW in March 2009. Its accession to CEDAW attests to the country's commitment to build the capacities of women and enable them to participate actively in economic, political and public life, as well as to ensure that they have access to decision-making positions. The state has pledged that it will work diligently to achieve its vision of improving the social status of women and ensuring that they, working side by side with men, can contribute more to the development of society.

The state is monitoring implementation of the provisions of CEDAW, raising awareness of its contents and training law enforcement personnel, lawyers, and journalists about its provisions. By those means it aims to create more opportunities for the realisation of gender equality and the further advancement of Qatari women.

The state has introduced measures to address violence against women. Besides a hotline to facilitate communication with vulnerable groups, the Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation have been established to support victims of violence and abuse. A national strategy is in place to address human trafficking, including provision of a shelter to provide victims with protection and assistance that meets international and local standards.

Qatar's submitted its first Universal Periodic Review on its human rights obligations to the United Nation's Human Rights Council in February 2014. The council made several observations and recommendations on it, among these being to (UNHRC 2014):

- Review its laws and regulations and to modify or repeal discriminatory legislation.
- Strengthen awareness-raising measures and studies to effectively promote gender equality and overcome patriarchal attitudes and deeply rooted discriminatory stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society.
- Establish a comprehensive domestic violence protection system and adopt specific legislation to criminalise all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and marital rape.
- Take immediate measures to ensure that at least 30% of the members appointed in the Advisory (Shura) Council are women.
- Amend nationality law to enable Qatari women to pass their nationality to their children and their foreign spouse on the same basis as Qatari men.

Source: UNCEDAW (2014).

shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children” which is inconsistent with Qatar’s Nationality Law since nationality is granted on the basis of blood ties of the father.

- 15, paragraph one on matters of inheritance and testimony, whereby if a man and a woman provide conflicting testimony in a case, their testimony is accorded equal value, which is inconsistent with Islamic law.
- 16, paragraphs one (a) and (c) the equal right of men and women to enter into marriage are inconsistent with the provisions of Islamic law.

Adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, CEDAW is often described as an international bill of rights for women. It is the most comprehensive international agreement seeking the advancement of women. It establishes rights for women in areas not previously subject to international standards.

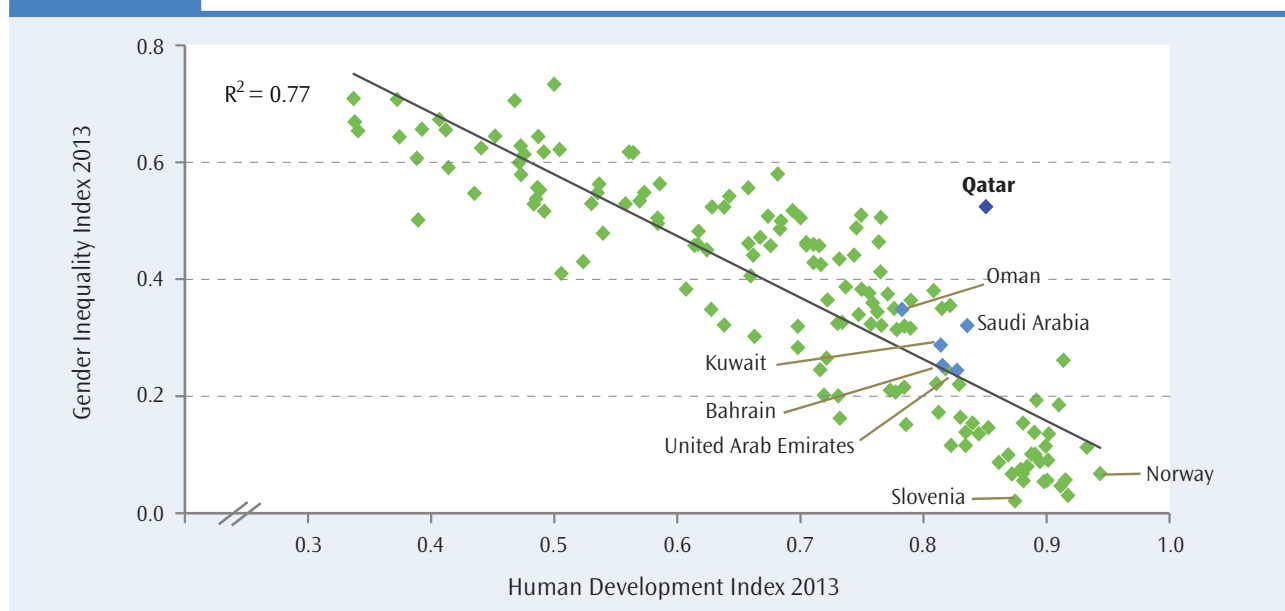
By acceding to CEDAW, states commit to abolishing discriminatory norms, to modifying laws that are not in line with the convention and to establishing new laws, as well as to taking concrete actions to promote equality. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures that they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations (box 3.2).

## International and regional perspectives on women’s rights

United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Global 2014 Human Development Report included two composite indexes that focus on gender equality and women’s empowerment and that rank all countries in international league tables. The first is the Gender Inequality Index (GII) which reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions—reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. The health dimension is measured by the maternal mortality ratio and the adolescent fertility rate; the empowerment dimension is measured by the share of parliamentary seats held by each sex and by secondary and higher education attainment levels; and the labour dimension by women’s participation in the work force.

While Qatar ranks high internationally on human development, it scores low on gender equality (figure 3.1). Thus Qatar was the highest ranked Gulf country (31) on UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDI), yet it had a very low international ranking at 114 out of 152 countries in the GII. In comparison with other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Qatar fares unfavourably on this index. The GII can be interpreted as the loss in human development due to inequality between female and male achievements

**Figure 3.1** Qatar ranks high internationally on human development but low on gender equality



Source: UNDP (2014).

in the three GII dimensions. One key factor in Qatar’s low GII ranking is the absence of females in the national Shura Council, that is a lack of political empowerment.

The second composite index is the Gender Development Index (GDI), a new measure based on the Human Development Index (HDI) simply disaggregated by sex, defined as the ratio of the female to the male HDI values. The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in the three standard basic dimensions of human development: health, measured by female and male life expectancy at birth; education, measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years of schooling of adults aged 25 years and older; and command over economic resources, measured by female and male estimated Gross National Income (GNI) per capita.

The GDI was calculated for 148 countries and gave a female HDI value for Qatar of 0.838, in contrast with 0.856 for males, resulting in a GDI value of 0.979. In comparison, GDI values for Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates were 0.961 and 0.958 respectively (table 3.1). Qatar’s high GDI ranking comes about through higher female scores on the social dimensions of health and education, balanced against lower scores on the economic dimension relative to males. Because of its limited dimensions and the way the GNI is divided between males and females, the GDI appears to have methodological challenges in adequately capturing gender inequality in human development for Qatar.

An insightful regional survey of professional opinions on Women’s Rights in the Arab World was conducted in 2013<sup>i</sup> which assessed the extent to which states adhere to key provisions of CEDAW—most Arab League states have signed, ratified or acceded to CEDAW<sup>ii</sup>. States were assessed on how they had performed on women’s rights issues, such as women in society, political representation, economic inclusion, reproductive rights and gender violence.

Based on the survey results Qatar was placed fifth out of 22 Arab states in an overall composite measure on women’s rights. Qatar ranked high (2) in the category women in society which included indicators of education, marriage and participation in public and private life. It also ranked relatively high (6) in the area of reproductive rights that included access to pre- and post-natal health care services. However, it had a relatively low rank (10) on women in economy as measured by gender-based discrimination in the workplace and property rights (Thomson Reuters Foundation 2013).

In its 2013/4 *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the Arab Region*, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia notes the general progress in the number of parliamentary seats occupied by women in the Arab World, but a decrease in the political participation of women in the GCC. In Qatar the absence of women in the Shura Council points to the need for more commitment for the inclusion of women in political and decision-making processes.

**Table 3.1** Qatar’s 2013 GDI value and its components high relative to selected countries and the Arab states

	Life expectancy at birth		Expected years of schooling		Mean years of schooling		GNI per capita		HDI values		F-M Ratio GDI value
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
<b>Qatar</b>	79.5	77.8	14.0	13.9	10.1	8.7	45,863	141,468	0.838	0.856	0.979
Bahrain	77.5	75.9	15.1	13.7	9.1	9.6	24,531	36,660	0.798	0.831	0.961
United Arab Emirates	78.2	76.1	13.9	12.9	10.2	8.7	23,903	72,659	0.800	0.835	0.958
Arab states	72.2	68.4	12.1	12.8	4.9	6.7	6,991	23,169	0.626	0.722	0.866

Source: UNDP (2014).

i The poll was conducted by Thomson Reuters Foundation, which surveyed 336 gender experts in August and September 2013 in 21 Arab League states and Syria, which was a founding member of the Arab League but was suspended in 2011.

ii Eighteen Arab League members and Syria have signed and/or ratified CEDAW. Somalia and Sudan have not signed or ratified the convention. The Palestinian territories has endorsed it symbolically.



## Progress in women's right to economic participation

Qatar's legal foundation supports Qatari women's working rights and advances their opportunities for employment outside the home. The right to work is a fundamental constitutional right afforded to all Qataris without discrimination on the grounds of sex. The 2004 Labour Law provides equality in working rights to men and women, and states that women "have the right to equal pay for equal work, equal access to training and promotion opportunities." There are also laws that regulate maternity leave<sup>iii</sup> and retirement benefits, as well as measures that protect all working women in all sectors from work-related hazards and harm to their health or moral welfare. Initiatives such as the "Women Working from Home" support women who work from home and enable them to reconcile family commitments with their participation in the workforce<sup>iv</sup> (UNCEDAW 2012).

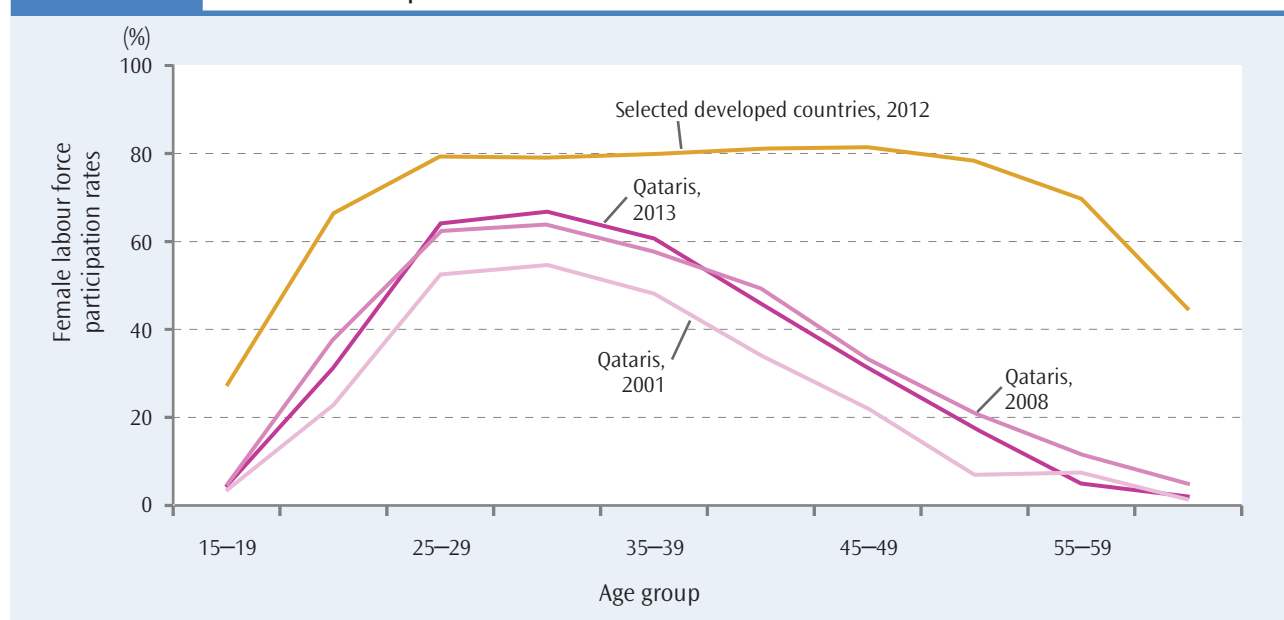
Participation of women in the labour market is one of the most important features of their participation in

development. Qatari women's labour force participation rates grew substantially between 2001 and 2008 but have subsequently remained stable at relatively low levels, despite their achieving higher educational levels and there being no shortages of employment opportunities (figure 3.2). The provision of more graduate opportunities for Qataris, especially women, could help to increase their labour force participation.

As educational attainment increases among young Qatari women, their low labour force participation rates reflect an untapped reservoir of knowledge and skills. The challenge is how to transform their educational gains into better economic empowerment. Some Qatari women who want to work face social and cultural challenges, such as not being able to find suitable public sector employment. Unemployment rates are therefore significantly higher among young women than among young men, especially for those seeking their first job after completing their studies.

**Figure 3.2**

After rising, Qatari female labour force participation rates have stabilised compared to selected developed countries



Sources: MDPS (2014c) and ILO (2014).

iii Qatari women's labour participation rate does not decline during their reproductive years. That may be partly explained by the positive effect of the state policies that support women during periods of pregnancy and childbirth.

iv The project was launched jointly by the Supreme Council for Communications and Information Technology and Qatar Telecom to benefit both women and employers.

One initiative of the NDS 2011-2016 focused on supporting work-life balance, including by establishing crèches at the work place as well as the establishment of early childhood centres and government nurseries from the age of six months to four years, the adoption of more convenient work measures for the family, such as flexible working hours, part time jobs and special leave. It also foresaw a review of the 2009 Human Resources Law and maternity leave policy (GSDP 2011).

Compared to that of Qatari males, Qatari female labour force participation rates are markedly lower. Their lower participation may be explained by a complex set of social and cultural factors that have traditionally made them reluctant to seek employment outside their homes. Women’s labour force participation rates in Qatar follow the pattern of Gulf countries (table 3.2).

Traditionally Qatari women tended to concentrate in a relatively small number of occupations, mainly in teaching, health care and clerical jobs. However, increasingly they are employed in a broader range of occupations such as doctors, lawyers, lecturers, and police officers—jobs that were previously exclusive to men. In response to labour market needs, Qatar University has opened several professional programmes, such as architecture and chemical engineering, to women (Felder and Vuollo 2008). Similarly, the international university campuses at Education City offer undergraduate and

**Table 3.2** Qatar’s labour force participation of women aged 15+ higher than other Gulf countries

Country	Men (%)	Women (%)
<b>Qatar<sup>1</sup></b>	96.2	53.1
Qatari <sup>1</sup>	70.0	34.7
Non-Qatari <sup>1</sup>	97.9	59.0
Bahrain	87.2	39.4
Kuwait	82.8	43.4
Oman	81.8	28.6
Saudi Arabia	75.5	18.2
United Arab Emirates	91.0	46.6

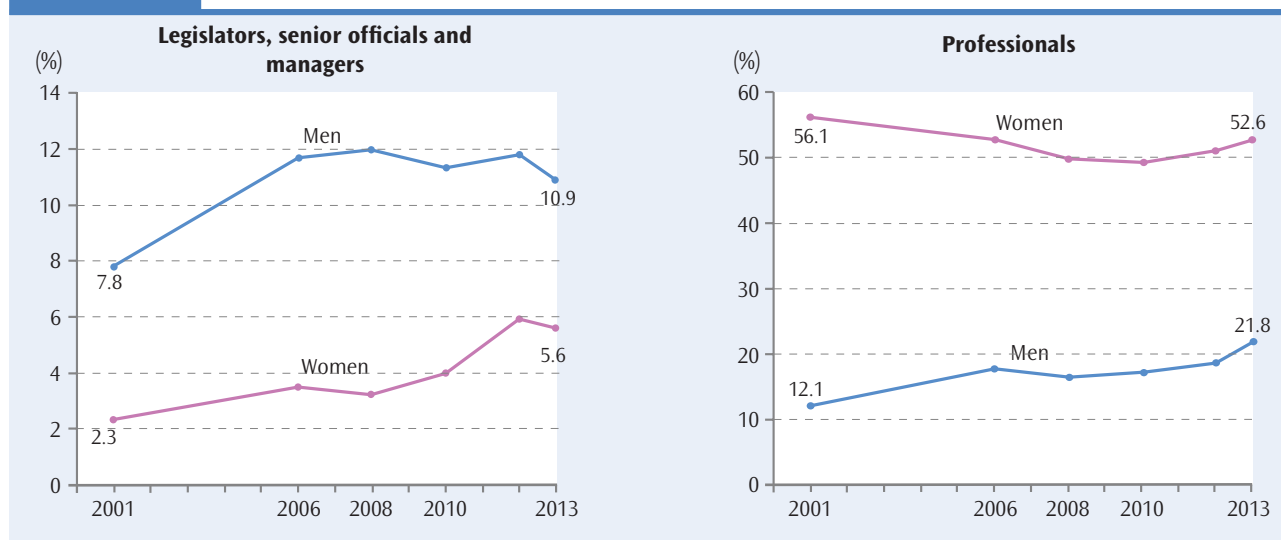
<sup>1</sup>Data relate to 2013.  
Source: UNDP (2014).

graduate courses to male and female students alike in knowledge-economy subjects that are suitable for finding jobs in all sectors and fields of employment.

The share of Qatari females who are in occupations classified as legislators, senior officials and managers has risen steadily over the period 2001 to 2013 and at a quicker pace than the corresponding share for males (figure 3.3). Conversely, a much higher share of Qatari females are in occupations classified as professionals, predominantly teachers and health professionals, as compared with males.

**Figure 3.3**

Share of employed Qatari females who are legislators, senior officials or managers lower than that of men



Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2011 and 2013a).

Qatar's private sector has a big profile in the country's employment. It employs a majority of the labour force but only a small share of Qataris. However, a growing number and proportion of Qatari women in the labour force are joining the private sector (table 3.3). The share of employed Qatari women working in the private sector grew from just 2% in 2001 to almost 15% in 2013. There has also been a substantial growth of the share of Qatari women in the mixed sector. This increase in Qatari women working outside the public sector may well be partly explained by the state's Qatarisation policy aimed at increasing the number and share of nationals in all companies, particularly in higher level positions.

While women's participation in paid employment has increased, they still face huge challenges in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial development of women is being encouraged to increase their involvement in the private sector and economic empowerment.

Sectors	2001 (%)	2008 (%)	2013 (%)
Government	89.1	73.7	68.2
Government corporation	7.2	18.2	12.4
Mixed	1.6	3.2	4.7
Private	2.1	4.9	14.7
Total	100	100	100
(Number)	10,851	24,829	30,256

Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2013b).

Programmes have been put in place to overcome barriers to entrepreneurship, including embedding courses in the education system, strengthening incentives, increasing business training and building capacity.

Enterprise Qatar is facilitating access to capital for male and female entrepreneurs, creating an environment that supports small and medium-size enterprises, and setting up projects that will help young entrepreneurs. The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology has an incubation centre that helps young male and female entrepreneurs start their businesses, with mentoring and tutoring for up to two years. The Roudha Center is addressing many of the concerns of young

women interested in entrepreneurship and is supporting their innovative business ideas.

So as to help enhance their status and strengthen their contribution to national development, Qatari businesswomen have formed an association. Qatar Businesswomen Association (QBWA) was founded in 2000 and has since launched several activities, including Qatar Businesswomen Awards, Company Ambassadors Programme, and Qatar International Businesswomen's Forum. It has also concluded an important strategic partnership with the Qatari Businessmen Association. By joining QBWA, female investors working independently can enhance their capacities, as well as network and expand their activities. QBWA aims to:

- Develop commercial and economic relations among Qatari businesswomen and prepare a suitable environment for them to play their role in the economic development process.
- Encourage women to contribute actively to small industries and enterprises.
- Link Qatari businesswomen to the Chamber of Commerce to understand the laws regulating commercial and economic activities through meetings, symposiums and capacity building.
- Promote educational issues that aim to increase women's qualifications to contribute actively to the comprehensive economic development process.
- Develop educational programmes to raise women's economic and commercial awareness.
- Create a bilingual e-network linking businesswomen together locally and globally.

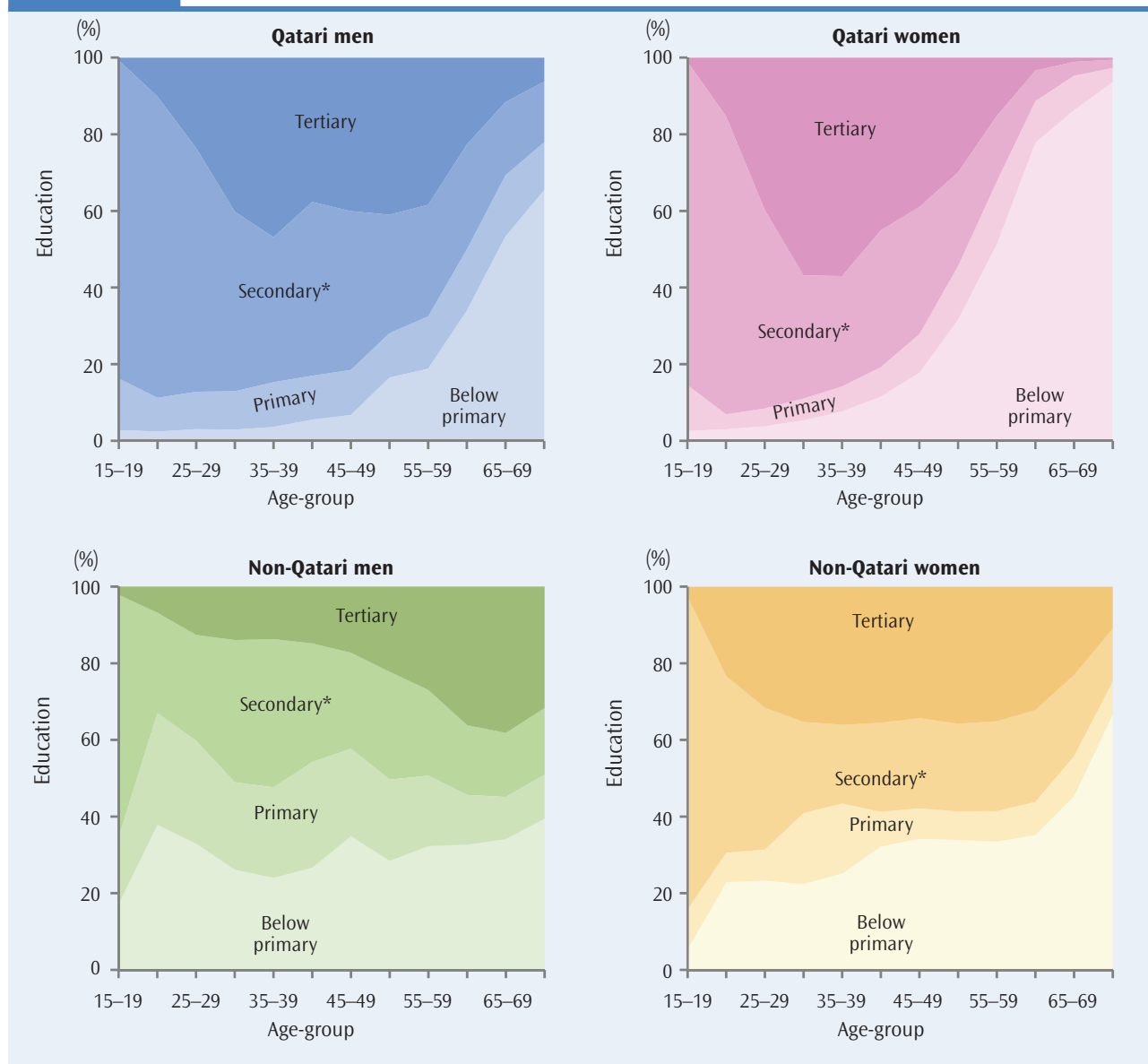
While multiple career opportunities are legally available to women, social and cultural norms still continue to influence women's employment choices. In a survey of secondary school graduates, Qatari women said that religious beliefs and parental advice were two significant factors that they would take into account when making career choices. What the family deemed professionally acceptable for their daughter is highly respected and is not to be disregarded, although some respondents felt that their future careers should reflect their personal interests. When asked about job characteristics they most valued, the respondents mentioned interesting work, prestige and the feeling of being respected and appreciated. Others also considered a mixed-gender work environment as an important characteristic of their future job (Felder and Vuollo 2008).

Government and media could play a more supportive role in reducing occupational stereotypes of Qatari women and in promoting their economic empowerment. This could be achieved by showing women’s positive contributions to the economy in all spheres and by helping to eliminate negative attitudinal barriers to their employment.

## Progress in the right to education of females

Education is a fundamental human right and is essential for the exercise of all other human rights. It supports individual freedom and empowerment and has major social and economic benefits (UNESCO 2015b). Education is enshrined in Qatar’s Permanent Constitution as one of the keystones of social progress that will be provided and promoted. All citizens have the right to education for which the state shall establish free and compulsory education for all children, boys and girls, from primary up to secondary level (UNCEDAW 2012).

**Figure 3.4** Qatari and non-Qatari’s education attainment levels, 2010



Note: \* includes preparatory.

Source: QSA (2011).

QNV 2030 sees an important aim of the education system as being “to equip citizens to achieve their aspirations and to meet the needs of Qatar’s society.” One specific objective is related to the role of the education system in meeting the current and future needs of the labour market. For children of expatriates the aim is to address their cultural rights and public service needs. It commits to delivering world-class and quality education and training opportunities. The NDS 2011-2016 put in place a comprehensive programme of initiatives to meet these objectives with the aims of increasing choice, equity and portability of qualifications.

There are two distinct large and growing groups of students that Qatar’s education system caters for, that is Qatari students and non-Qatari students. With the rapidly rising number of expatriates in the country, children of expatriates now constitute the majority of students at all educational levels. Qatari children have the choice of free education in either public or private schools, while public sector education is also free for non-Qatari children of expatriates working in government.

**Education attainment**

Measures of educational attainment reflect Qatar’s stock of human capital, that is the knowledge and skills of its people. Qatar’s modern and diversifying economy requires ever higher skill levels. The attainment of secondary level education is considered the minimum for successful entry to the labour market. The stock of the nation’s skills reflects the impact of past educational strategies and performance.

The expansion of educational opportunities at all levels can be seen in the progressively higher attainment levels of younger cohorts (figure 3.4). Attainment levels of Qatari women are shown to be higher than those of Qatari men. It is only at the older ages that there are significant proportions who had achieved just primary education or below. This is on account of the limited educational opportunities when they were passing through the school-going ages.

By contrast with the educational attainment levels of the Qataris, the non-Qataris are much more concentrated at lower education levels (figure 3.4). This reflects their heavy concentration in lesser-skilled work.

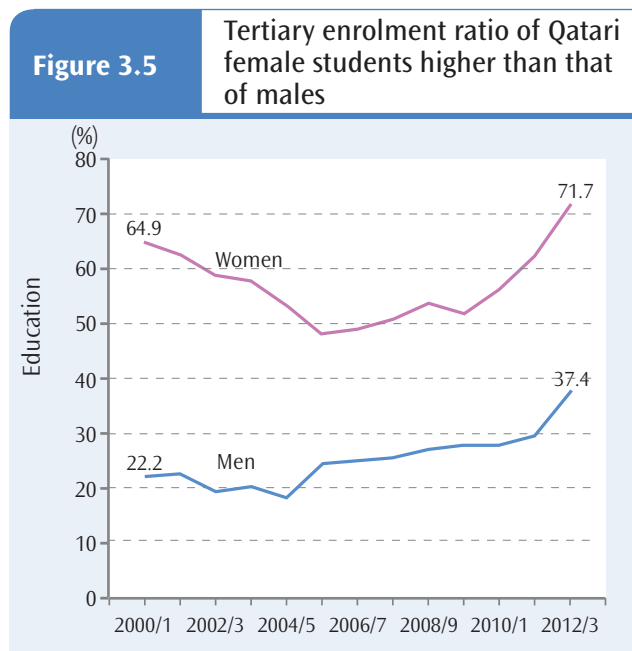
**Enrolment levels**

Early childhood education and kindergarten educational opportunities are expanding for young boys and girls with measures underway to make kindergarten schooling compulsory. Enrolment rates at these levels are increasing steadily.

Enrolment rates in primary education for both boys and girls have increased over the last two decades such that universal education has been achieved. The net primary enrolment rate for boys (Qataris and non-Qataris) increased from 87% in 1991/2 to 94% in 2012/3, for girls it increased from 92% to 94% during the corresponding period.

Net enrolment rates at secondary level have also risen sharply and reflect higher levels for females than for males. For males they increased from 72% in 1991/2 to 85% in 2012/3, and for females from 88% to 91% over the corresponding period. Consistent with their higher performance in international tests at all grades, a much higher proportion of females than males make the transition from secondary to tertiary education.

Qatari female enrolment at university level has consistently exceeded that of males over the years (figure 3.5). Female tertiary enrolment ratios are almost double those of males, indicating a reverse gender gap. Female graduates from Qatar University, for example, accounted



Note: Data include SEC scholars.  
Sources: MDPS (2014h and 2015a) and QSA (2013c).

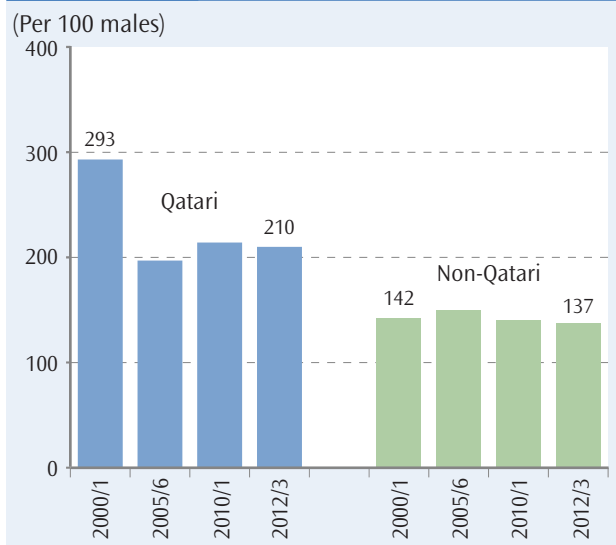
for 82% of all graduates in 2011/2 (QU 2011). The high and increasing proportion of females in higher education as compared to males may be attributed mainly to the cultural tendency of Qatari males to join the labour market at an earlier age, in particular for relatively higher paid jobs in the police and military.

While the ratio of Qatari females to males in tertiary education has consistently been about 2 to 1 over the decade up to 2013, the corresponding ratio of non-Qatari females to males is much closer to parity (figure 3.6). It would appear that Qatari males are not well informed about the high economic returns for post-secondary educational qualifications.

There are social expectations concerning appropriate work for females that has a bearing on their educational performance. Qatari women are not generally attracted to low paying lesser-skilled jobs nor is it culturally acceptable for them to participate in this type of work. Thus they need a higher level of educational attainment to enter and participate in the work force (Felder and Vuollo 2008).

A profile of the stock of all Qatari graduates from the 2010 population census showed that while overall the ratio of females to males with tertiary qualifications was much higher, in certain specialisations it was lower, such as in engineering, business and law (figure 3.7).

**Figure 3.6** Ratio of females to males in tertiary education much higher for Qataris than non-Qataris

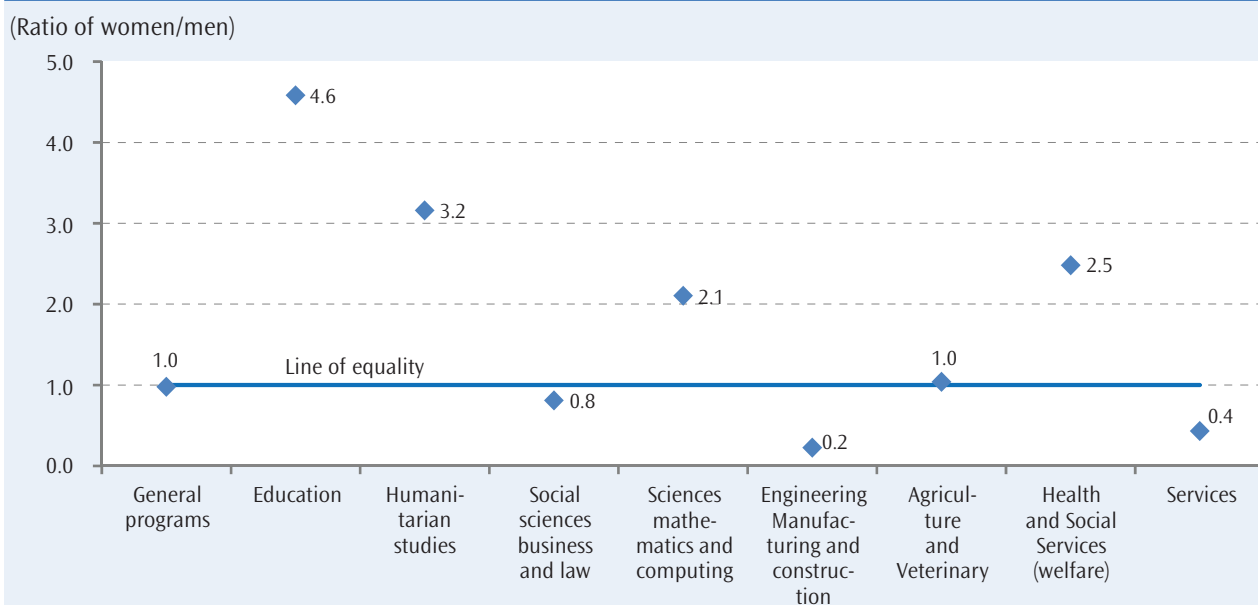


Sources: MDPS (2014h) and QSA (2013c).

Enhanced efforts to motivate girls and women to go into the sciences and technology, as well as business studies and engineering, is another option for tapping women's potential as vital human capital for the country's economic and social advancement. Providing equal opportunities for males and females in technical education and vocational training programmes should also be encouraged.

**Figure 3.7**

Ratio of Qatari women to men who have attained university and above qualification by field of specialisation, 2010



Source: QSA (2011).

## Women’s reproductive health care

The highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every human being. States must put in place conditions in which everyone, males and females, can be as healthy as possible. This includes access to timely, acceptable and affordable health care of appropriate quality (WHO 2007). CEDAW has also emphasised the significance of health care: “state parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning. Health care for women, especially reproductive health care, is one of the most important means of ensuring women’s empowerment, and of creating opportunities for choices throughout their lives.

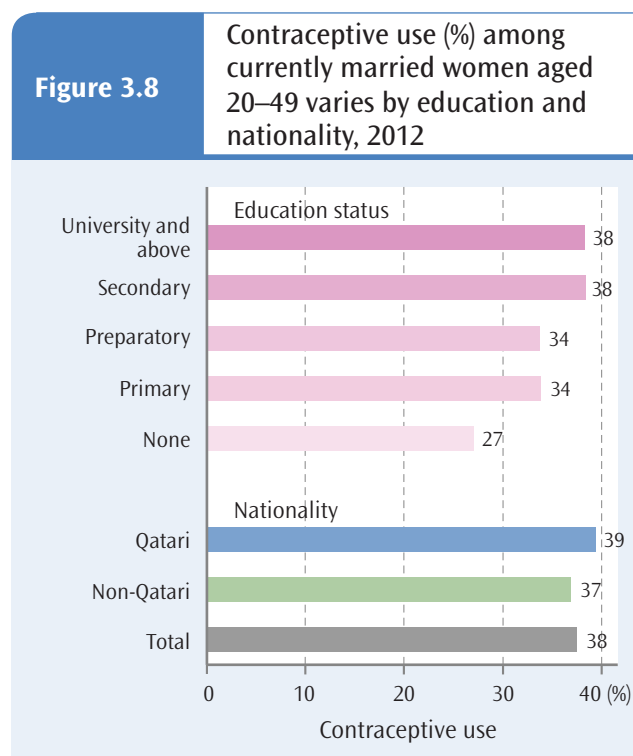
Qatar’s Permanent Constitution stipulates that the state shall foster public health, provide means of prevention from diseases and epidemics and their cures in accordance with the law (MOFA 2015). Advancing the health and well-being of all is central to the country’s vision for sustainable growth and development. QNV 2030 underlined the intention to develop an integrated system for health care, managed according to world-class standards, with services accessible to all. Through implementation of the first comprehensive National Health Strategy 2011-2016, the well-being of all people is being enhanced, including through preventive health care and a programme that specifically targets women’s health care needs.

All Qataris have free access to government and private health care that cover a wide range of health services. Qatari women have significant freedom to make independent decisions about their health. The health challenges they face, however, differ from those of men due to social and economic distinctions, as well as dissimilarities in the prevalence of diseases and risk factors. A comprehensive women’s health programme that specifically addresses women’s health challenges, including screening of women’s diseases and postpartum depression, is being implemented.

Intensive antenatal care for women is important to ensure the safety of mothers and babies. All pregnant women in Qatar visit health centres at least once. Prenatal medical services are offered systematically to pregnant women,

particularly in the last few months before delivery. The Integrated Programme of Care for Pregnant Women is implemented through regular monitoring of the health of the mother and baby in the period up to and following delivery (UNCEDAW 2012). Qatar’s maternal mortality ratio is very low. All births are attended by skilled birth attendants.

Among currently married women, contraceptive use was reported to be 38% in 2012, with similar rates among Qatari and non-Qatari women (figure 3.8). Most respondents to a 2012 survey reported that their demand for contraception was satisfied with only a small proportion having an unmet need.



Source: MDPS (2014b).

Breast cancer cases have increased. Between 2008 to 2013, the number of Qatari breast cancer cases increased from 38 to 48, while non-Qatari cases increased from 92 to 143 (Al Kubaisi 2014). A study by Qatar Foundation found that most women in Qatar are diagnosed with breast cancer at a late stage. Among the women surveyed, there were very low participation rates in breast self-examination and clinical examination. Many breast problems are first



discovered by women themselves, often by accident. As it is difficult to pinpoint what exactly predisposes someone to breast cancer; prevention needs to focus on early detection.

Routine mammograms help women identify breast cancer long before any symptoms become noticeable. In the early stages breast cancer may be asymptomatic and women may notice only a breast lump. As the breast cancer progresses, the cancer cells invade surrounding organs and may lead to the development of symptoms. There is a need to increase awareness and encourage women to participate in breast cancer screening: early diagnosis and early treatment of breast cancer would improve women's health and survival rates.

## Social trends affecting women's rights

### Marriage and fertility

Qatar's rapid economic and social development, itself heavily influenced by globalisation processes, continues to affect traditional Qatari family life (box 3.3). Qatari men and women are getting married for the first time at older ages than in the past. The mean age at first marriage for men rose from 25.8 in 1990 to 26.1 in 2013; the corresponding ages for women were 22.1 and 23.5 years. The trend for women is consistent with their higher educational attainment. Getting married while in employment is increasingly a pattern of life among younger Qatari women. Rising proportions of women are not marrying at all and fertility levels are falling.

#### Box 3.3

#### With social and economic advancements attitudes towards family life are changing

In its 2012 Survey of life in Qatar, the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) included several questions to capture attitudinal changes with respect to gender-related issues. Questions were asked of Qatari nationals both men and women regarding preferences for family size, ideal age at marriage, and attitudes towards gender roles, with responses suggesting:

**Qataris still prefer moderately large families:** when asked about the number of children a couple should have, about half indicated an ideal family size of four children or more. A quarter did not have a numerical preference and said it was up to God, which is generally indicative of a preference for large families.

**Qataris prefer male children over female children:** on their preference for an ideal number of female and male children, respondents indicated: (i) ideally they would prefer to have at least one child of each sex; (ii) a male child was preferred over a female child; and (iii) the ideal sex composition of children was dependent on whether the respondent reported a preference for an even or odd number. No respondent wanted all female or all male children.

**Qataris are getting married at a later age than in the past, but their preference is to marry at earlier ages:** respondents indicated that the ideal age for first marriage should be around 21 for women and 25 for men, although currently the mean age at first marriage is around 24 for women 27 and around for men.

**Most Qatari women participate in household decision-making:** on matters related to children's education and marriage as well as on the number of children to have, around three-quarters responded that these were joint decisions.

**Education of women is more valued for the job market:** almost all respondents (97%) agreed that higher education helps women to secure a better job.

**Gender equality is positively accepted:** respondents were asked questions regarding the extent to which they agreed or disagreed. First, men and women should share equal status in the society, to which more than half of males and 70% of females agreed. Second, for marriage, consent of a woman should be as important as the consent of a man, to which 90% of men and 98% of women agreed.

Source: SESRI (2012).

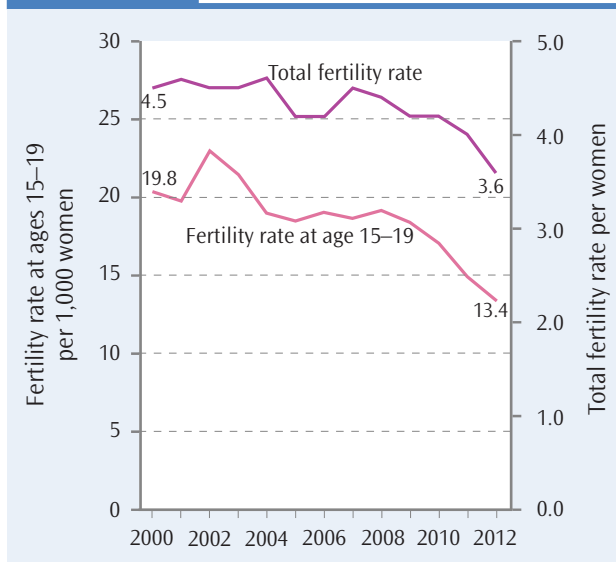
Family Consulting Center helps to build and strengthen the bonds of marriage and family, providing counseling services and strengthening relations between parents and children in Qatari society.

Qatari women are starting childbearing at later ages. The adolescent fertility rate has declined sharply over time from 20 births per 1000 women aged 15-19 in 2000 to just 13 in 2012 (figure 3.9). They are also having fewer children during their reproductive ages. The total fertility rate, which represents the average number of children each woman is expected to have, fell from 4.5 in 2000 to just 3.6 in 2012. One factor in the fall in the total fertility rate is the rising proportion of women remaining permanently unmarried.

An increasing number of Qatari couples are seeking divorce, especially younger couples, even though the divorce rate has increased only moderately from 17.4 per 1,000 married couples in 1995 to 17.5 in 2012. Divorced and widowed women are much less likely to remarry than men are (figure 3.10).

Rising age at first marriage is common for both Qatari males and females. But whereas most males eventually marry, and if divorced remarry, there are rising proportions of females who never marry, or once divorced or widowed, do not remarry (figure 3.10).

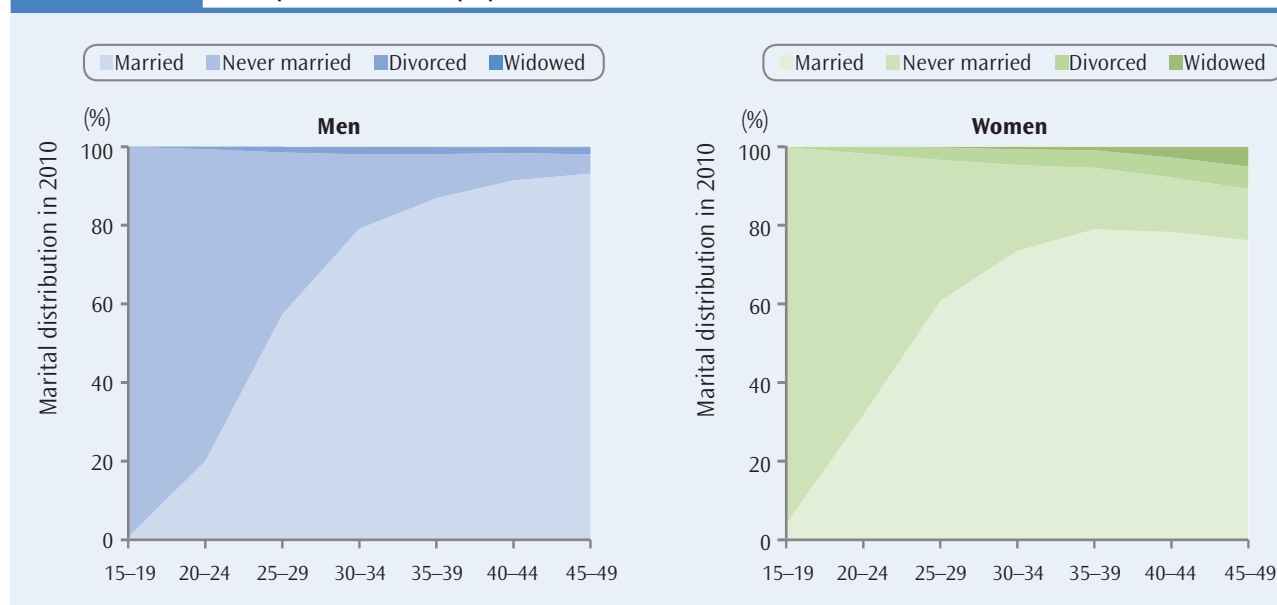
**Figure 3.9** Qatari adolescent and total fertility rates are declining



Sources: MDPS (2014i) and QSA (2013d).

In most societies lesser-educated men tend to be reluctant to marry higher educated women and vice-versa. Thus a rising gap in education attainments between Qatari males and females is a big factor in the rising proportions of females remaining permanently unmarried. Another factor is that Qatari males are much more likely to marry non-Qatari women than Qatari women to marry non-Qatari men.

**Figure 3.10** With much higher proportions of Qatari women than men unmarried, the marital composition of the population is imbalanced



Source: QSA (2011).

### Qatari women’s right to transmit their nationality to their children

The numbers of Qatari women marrying foreign husbands grew significantly between 2000 and 2013, from 116 to 267, representing about one in eight (figure 3.11). While CEDAW affirms that “state parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children,” this is inconsistent with the Qatari Nationality Law since nationality is granted based on the nationality of the father. Although there are some measures to ensure that the children of Qatari women with foreign husbands receive the same treatment as children of Qatari nationals in the areas of education and health, this does not extend to all entitlements. The Qatar Foundation for Social Work represented by the committee—headed by of the Ministry of Interior—is mandated to study the situation of children of Qatari women married to non-Qataris.

The number of divorces of Qatari women married to foreign husbands also doubled between 2000 and 2013. Many of these divorced couples had children.

### Violence against women

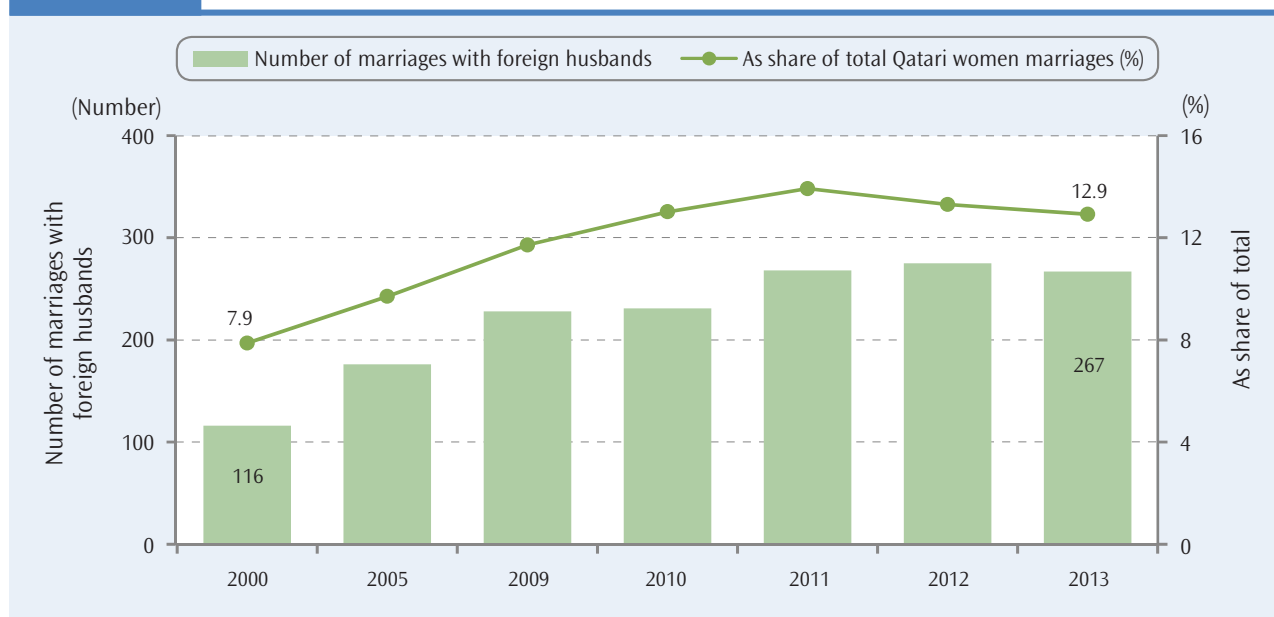
Gender-based violence, which includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, not only leaves scars on victims but also has social and economic costs for society. Violence

against women prevents them from enjoying their basic human rights. The Qatar Foundation for Child and Woman Protection (QFCWP), which established a call centre for accepting reports of abuse and also has satellite branches, including at Hamad hospital, received 2,145 calls about domestic violence between 2011 and 2012.

In general data on the incidence of various forms of violence against women, especially those derived from administrative systems and support services, tend to be incomplete, reflecting only the most severe incidents. Cases of domestic violence against women reported by QFCWP, just part of the overall picture, increased from 159 in 2008 to 461 in 2012. These figures also include counseling provided to visitors (transients) who were not necessarily battered or subjected to violence. It is unclear to what extent this increase indicates a real increase in acts of violence as opposed to better monitoring and reporting. Most reported cases of physical assault are recorded at the QFCWP’s office at Hamad hospital where 84% of victims reported physical violence (figure 3.12).

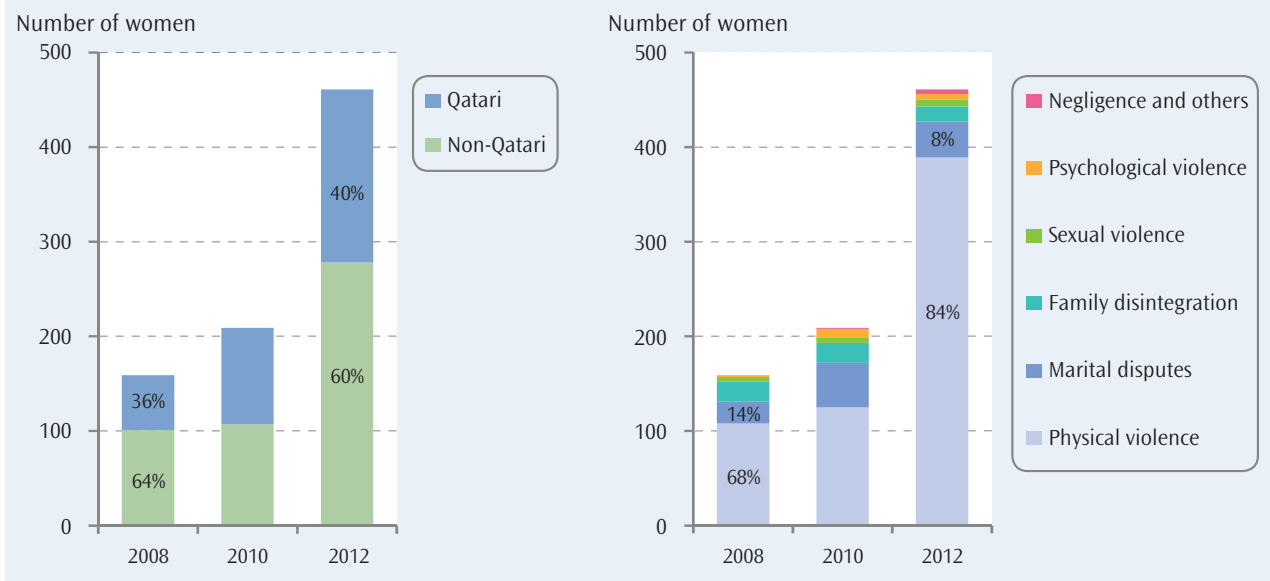
One-third of the cases dealt with by the QFPCW concerned Qatari families and in 2012 74% of the total cited a husband as the perpetrator, with a further 15% alleged to be a relative of the victim’s husband (figure 3.13).

**Figure 3.11** Increasing number and proportion of Qatari women married to foreign husbands



Sources: MDPS (2014j) and QSA (2013e).

**Figure 3.12** Growing incidence of violence against women



Source: QFCWP (various years).

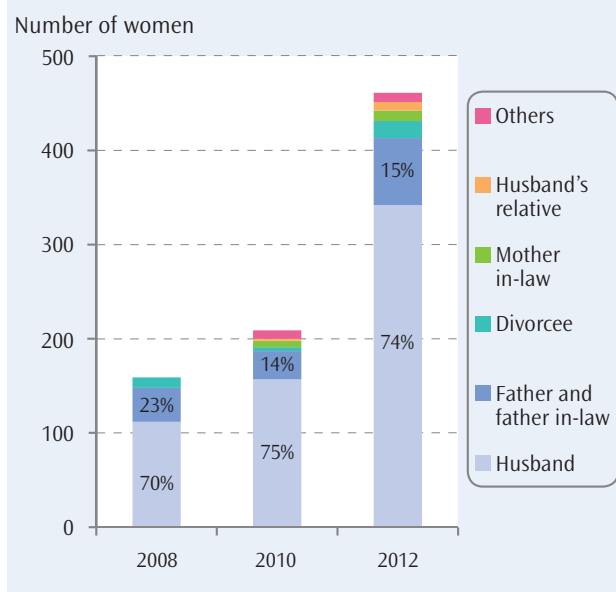
Cultural norms pose a challenge to reducing the incidence of domestic violence and providing protection. Over 20% of Qatari males and even 6% of Qatari females believe it is justified for a husband to beat his wife under certain circumstances (MDPS 2014b). This attitude of condoning violence in the home may undermine efforts to reduce domestic abuse.

Reporting instances of family violence is not socially encouraged or considered culturally acceptable. Many victims of domestic violence are unaware of their legal rights and support services that are available. There is also fear of social, legal and political repercussions for victims and their families. Training for detecting abuse is not mandatory and the lack of training among medical, public safety and educational staff leads to low levels of detection at primary health care centres, schools and nurseries. The true level of abuse may be concealed.

Civil society organisations that deal with women’s issues have contributed towards raising awareness of women’s rights and reducing violence against women and girls. Such organizations include the Family Consulting Center and Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (formerly the Qatar Foundation for Child and Women Protection).

There are mechanisms for reducing violence against women such as expanding the number of protection

**Figure 3.13** Husbands are main perpetrators of violence against women



Source: QFCWP (various years).

centres and shelters as well as establishing branch offices. Branch offices for the Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation have been established in the Capital Security Department of the Ministry of Interior and the Hamad Medical Corporation. An office for social rehabilitation was established in the Ministry of Interior and a family consulting office was established in the courts.

Training budgets in this area are underfunded as reported by the QFCWP. In an effort to minimise non-reporting of abuse due to fear of shame, the Ministry of Interior dispatches community police officers to attend to domestic cases in an effort to settle problems inside homes and without overt exposure to the community.

In November 2013, the Council of Ministers approved a standing committee for anti-domestic violence tasked to promote awareness of domestic violence and its affects. A *Stop the Silence* campaign has also been launched to raise awareness about domestic abuse and to provide training to health workers to detect cases of abuse and violence.

However, the CEDAW Committee cited concern with low levels of coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations that are responsible for protecting families from domestic violence. Cultural sensitivities hinder collection and sharing of abuse-related data across organisations. Efforts to reduce and eliminate violence against women must be supported by reliable statistics on the levels of the different forms of violence.

## Women’s political participation

Qatar’s Permanent Constitution recognises that women and men have an equal right to participate in political life. Women have the right to stand for and vote in all elections and to take part in policy-making, to have access to public office and to participate in public and political affairs (MOFA 2015) Women’s participation in political and public life is a key indicator of their empowerment.

While there is growing momentum among governments internationally to foster greater political participation and

leadership of women in governance structures, women’s right to participate in political life continues to be a challenge in Gulf countries. Qatar’s decision to initiate national elections for the Central Municipal Council (CMC) in 1998 and give women the right to vote and run for office was a major change.

The CMC elections, held every four years, opened space for the first time for Qatari women to participate in political life and in public decision-making. However, in the four CMC elections held to date very few women have been put forward as candidates. Despite the fact that upwards of 40% of the voters in each election are women, just one female candidate was elected in any of the first four elections—none were elected in 1999 (table 3.4). In 2015 two women were elected.

In contrast with the CMC, there is an absence of representation of women in the Shura Council, which serves as the national parliament. Qatar is the only GCC state that does not have women represented in parliament (Al Kubaisi 2014). Women’s share in parliament is highest in Saudi Arabia at 20% and UAE at 18% (UNESCWA 2014).

Notwithstanding the trailblazing leadership role played by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser in national and international development (see chapter 7), Qatari women hold relatively few high-level political leadership positions. While three women were assigned top-level government positions in 2013, as the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and the Ambassador to Croatia, in general women do not have the same opportunities as men even though they have higher educational attainment.

**Table 3.4**

**Political participation of women in the four elections of the Central Municipal Council, 1999–2011**

	Females (number)				Females share of total (%)			
	Registered voters	Actual voters	Candidates	Elected	Registered voters	Actual voters	Candidates	Elected
1999	9665	7484	6	0	44	43	3	0
2003	11055	2985	1	1	48	39	1	3
2007	13608	7054	3	1	48	51	3	3
2011	16221	6120	4	1	50	45	4	3

Source: SCFA (2013).

Changing public attitudes and views towards women remains a challenge despite some limited progress in Qatari women's participation in political life. Results of a survey on women's participation in political life revealed that 62% wanted to see men as CMC members and 50% of females stated their preference for male candidates. Only 9% of all respondents said they would vote for a woman in the CMC elections. Some 45% of those surveyed for the

study opposed women's participation in political life due to traditional beliefs and stereotyping the role of women (SCFA 2007).

While society recognises the capacities of women as workers, it does not recognise their capacities as leaders, with only 32% viewing women capable of performing a leadership role (SCFA 2007). This may reflect why there is

### Box 3.4

### Promoting women's agency in development

Agency is a process through which women and men use their endowments and opportunities to make effective choices and to act in order to achieve desired outcomes. Outcomes include control over resources, ability to move freely, decision-making over family formation, freedom from the risk of violence and the ability to have a voice in society and influence policy—measured by participation and representation in formal politics and engagement in collective action and associations.

Even where gender gaps in human capital and physical assets are narrowed, differences in gender outcomes could emerge because girls and boys, and later women and men, have unequal capacity to exercise agency.

According to the World Bank, while women do vote, they do not enter or progress in formal political institutions as much as men. Despite increases in representation at national and, more markedly, subnational levels and in designated positions, progress generally has been slow and remains below the level typically considered sufficient to ensure voice, which is often thought to be around 30%. For those women who enter the political sphere, they tend to remain in the lower ranks and to cluster into sectors perceived as “female.” Women are also more likely to lead ministries of health, education, or social welfare, rather than hold portfolios in economy or finance.

Women's collective agency is transformative, promoting changes in society and policy. This ability to influence society goes beyond formal political channels and includes participation in informal associations and through collective action, but their success depends in part on their individual ability to make effective choices.

While individual women might have limited voice, groups of women and girls can exert much more pressure to promote structural changes that will reform the environment for other women including changes in laws, policies, services, institutions, and social norms that eventually will increase women's individual agency. In higher-income countries greater female representation has increased the prominence of issues more relevant to women's lives, including health, maternity leave, childcare, and violence against women.

Bearing in mind the specificities of Qatari society still largely organised along tribal lines, it would take time before the democratic reforms introduced by the state leaderships can be fully realised. From a regional perspective, given the context of the Arab Gulf states where women's right to run for political office is still questioned, it is notable that Qatari women were the first to gain the right to vote and run for public office in municipal elections.

The determination of the leadership to promote and protect women's political rights has enhanced the status of Qatari women and globally it has enhanced the state's reputation within the international system and has bolstered and secured its legitimacy. However, the aim of promoting women's agency so that they can fully and more actively participate in the political sphere remains a significant challenge.

*Sources:* WB (2012) and Desiderio (2013).

a lack of women in the CMC and a complete absence of representation in the Shura Council. In order to promote Qatari women's participation in elections and encourage them to acquire relevant skills for participation in democratic elections, training programmes and campaign to help empower them politically and acquaint them with their rights, including skills training, have been launched, such as:

- Leadership skills in the electoral process.
- Running election campaigns for Gulf women leaders.
- How to run election campaigns.
- Importance of voter participation in municipal council elections.
- Women and political participation.

The *Get Out the Vote: New Women Activists Seek Women Voters campaign*, launched ahead of the 2007 CMC election, provided a voter education programme encouraging women to exercise their right to political participation. Female university students distributed a *Get-Out-The-Vote* leaflet and conducted a survey on women's political participation. Despite such initiatives and the intent of the state to promote and protect women's political rights, there remains the challenge of promoting women's agency in more active participation in the country's political life (box 3.4).

Beyond training programmes, there is an obvious need for public education on the advantages of women's leadership and gender equalities.

## Conclusions

Progress towards gender equality before the law is fundamental for realising human rights for all, creating and sustaining peaceful societies, and for socially inclusive and sustainable development. Qatar's accession to and monitoring of CEDAW emphasises the state's commitment to fulfil its obligations in realising women's right to development. Qatar's submitted its first Universal Periodic Review on its human rights obligations to the United Nations Human Rights Council in February 2014. The council made several observations and recommendations on it which need to be followed-up.

Following the review of Qatar's report to CEDAW, the United Nations body recommended that the country establishes a centralised government agency with a strong

mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on women's empowerment, with a view to ensuring the systematic implementation of the provisions of the convention in the state party. This recommendation is of heightened importance given that women's issues previously carried out by the SCFA were absorbed into the MoLSA in early 2014.

While Qatar ranks high internationally on human development, it scores low on gender equality and women's empowerment. Qatar was the highest ranked Gulf country (31) on UNDP's HDI, yet it had a very low international ranking at 114 out of 152 countries in the GII. Qatar fairs unfavourably on this index, compared with other GCC countries.

Several programmes in education, health, employment and leadership aim to ensure greater gender equality and women's empowerment, and better outcomes for women have been realised. In education—women's enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels has expanded significantly. At the tertiary level, there is a reverse gender gap in favour of women. Consistent with their higher performance in international tests at all grades, a much higher proportion of females than males make the transition from secondary to tertiary education. Better reproductive health has been reflected in reduced maternal mortality, improved birth spacing and lower fertility.

Impressive progress in achieving gender equality in education and health has not been matched by commensurate progress in employment and political empowerment. Women's strong gains in education and health outcomes should lead to higher labour force participation. While female labour force participation has increased and is high by GCC standards it is still low compared with countries at similar high levels of economic and human development. Barriers to women's participation in employment have to be addressed to reap the returns from investments in their education.

Qatar's private sector has a big profile in the country's employment. It employs a majority of the labour force but only a small share of Qataris. However, a growing number and proportion of Qatari women in the labour force are joining the private sector. The share of employed Qatari women working in the private sector grew from just 2%



in 2001 to almost 15% in 2013. There has also been a substantial growth of the share of Qatari women in the mixed sector. This increase in Qatari women working outside the public sector may well be partly explained by the Qatarisation policy aimed at increasing the number and share of nationals in all companies, particularly in higher level positions.

Few women are in top senior management positions although there has been an improvement over the last decade. The weak link between educational outcomes and labour market needs is a challenge preventing some educated women from gaining access to employment related to their specialisations at university. Underlying social and cultural norms also influence women's employment choices and make women reluctant to take up certain types of work. More efforts to motivate girls and women to study sciences, technology and business, is another option for tapping women's potential as vital human capital for the country's economic and social advancement.

Qatar's rapid economic and social development, itself heavily influenced by globalisation processes, continues to affect traditional Qatari family life. Rising age at first marriage is common for both Qatari males and females. But whereas most males eventually marry, and if divorced remarry, there are rising proportions of females who never marry, or once divorced or widowed, do not remarry. Social and cultural implications of lifetime singleness and declining fertility need to be a central focus for family policy.

Qatari women marrying foreign husbands grew significantly from 116 to 267 between 2000 and 2013, representing about one in eight. The number of divorces of Qatari women married to foreign husbands also doubled over this same period. Many of these divorced couples had children. While CEDAW affirms that state parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children, this is inconsistent with the Qatari Nationality Law since citizenship is granted based on the nationality of the father. Although there are some measures to ensure that the children of Qatari women with foreign husbands receive the same treatment as children of Qatari nationals in the areas of education and health this does not extend to all entitlements.

Gender-based violence, which includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, not only leaves scars on victims but also has social and economic costs for society. Reported cases of domestic violence are on the rise. CEDAW's Committee cited concern with low levels of coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations that are responsible for protecting families from domestic violence. Cultural sensitivities hinder collection and sharing of abuse-related data across organisations.

Enhanced collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are required so that policy and programme development are based on stronger evidence. For example, in the area of violence against women, there is a need for robust indicators that capture the prevalence of various forms of violence and women's access to justice. There is also a need for studies that will lead to a better understanding of discriminatory social and cultural factors that cause violence as well as the longer-term consequences. A more comprehensive sex-disaggregated database will also help mainstream the RtD of women in planning.

Qatari women have the right to participate and stand in local level municipal elections. However, in the four CMC elections held to date, very few women have been put forward as candidates and despite the fact that upwards of 40% of the voters in each election are women, just one female candidate has been elected in the first four elections—none were elected in 1999. Two females were elected in 2015. Women's participation in key decision-making processes needs to be strengthened. Their greater participation at the legislative level and expanded opportunities in senior governmental decision-making bodies would enable them to play a key role in development and in the advancement of women. Women should be better sensitised to their constitutional and legal rights.

The determination of the leadership to promote and protect women's political rights has enhanced the status of Qatari women. Globally it has also enhanced the state's reputation within the international system and has bolstered its legitimacy. However, the aim of promoting women's agency so that they can fully and more actively participate in the political sphere remains a significant challenge.



# 4

## Rights of Persons with Disabilities



# 4

## Rights of Persons with Disabilities

*“We must do more to empower individuals through decent work, support people through social protection, and ensure the voices of the poor and marginalised are heard. Let us make social justice central to achieving equitable and sustainable growth for all.”*

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General  
Message for the 2014 World Day of Social Justice

Social justice for all is at the core of Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV). It foresees all citizens and people living in the country benefitting from development and living in dignity. Social justice is an underlying principle in recognition of the need to remove barriers that people face on account of sex, age, ethnicity, religion and disability and which prevent them from enjoying their rights.

Disabled persons face multiple barriers—physical, attitudinal, communication and financial. These barriers can be found in all sectors and at all levels of society. A human rights-based approach to disability is relevant across sectors since persons with disabilities (PWD) are rights-holders in their own right.

Disability is a development and a human rights issue. A rights-based approach to development provides the government with a platform to mainstream disability in development. Through this approach it is possible to recognise the rights of disabled persons and redress the limitations which the social, economic and physical environment impose on their rights.

The correspondence between disability and poverty is two directional. Disability can result in poverty when PWD are deprived from participation in economic and social life. Likewise, poverty can cause disability through malnutrition, poor health and difficult living conditions.

Families that have to take care of disabled family members are also often exposed to bouts of poverty. Qatar’s data on low-income profiles show that one of several reasons for relative poverty is the burden of support in providing for a disabled household member of working age.

Qatar’s Law 2 of 2004 on Persons with Special Needs provides a comprehensive legal framework for PWD and includes 14 articles that provide for their special care and legal protection so that they can exercise their rights on an equal basis with all other persons. It covers, *inter alia*, employment, stipulating that at least 2% of positions in public and private sector organisations shall be allocated for persons with special needs; providing for persons with special needs to be given access to education; providing for preventative and curative health for those with special needs; enabling welfare provisions, such as help with suitable housing. PWD are issued certificates and special cards to facilitate access to their rights as contained in this and other relevant legislation.

Qatar ratified the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008 and is a participating member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that monitors the implementation of the convention. The convention outlines what is required to ensure that PWD fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The purpose of the

convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all PWD, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

This chapter summarises the national and international enabling legislation relating to PWD; profiles the number and socio-economic characteristics of PWD and reviews the programmes, services and support available for them to determine the extent to which their rights are being met.

## National and international enabling legislation

### National

Qatar continues to make major efforts to promote and protect the rights of PWD, including establishing laws, agencies and programmes to serve people with special needs and provide them with the necessary facilities and services to support their needs. Judicial assistance and administrative allowances and benefits are provided to disabled persons to help them manage their affairs.

Qatar's Permanent Constitution guarantees people equality before the law and that there is no discrimination among them on the basis of sex, origin, language or religion.

Qatar's Constitution protects all citizens against violence and abuse with no discrimination against PWD.

PWD enjoy all political rights stipulated for other citizens. Thus Law 17 of 1998, that establishes the structure of the Central Municipal Council elections, guarantees the right of PWD to vote and run in municipal elections.

Many other rights of PWD are promoted and protected through Law 2 of 2004. This comprehensive legislation provides, *inter alia*, for:

- Mainstreaming disabled students in educational institutions; establishing special schools for disabled students who cannot be integrated in ordinary schools; building a suitable school environment and facilities for disabled students and offering them additional tutoring support.
- The enjoyment of good health through medical, psychological, cultural and social care.
- Employment and work compatible with their capacities and qualifications in the public and private sectors.

It decrees that 2% of the total number of positions in public and private companies with at least 25 employees be allocated for persons with special needs.

- Access to tools, equipment and transportation that help PWD to receive education and rehabilitation as well as facilitate their movement.
- An enabling physical environment for integrating PWD in public life.

The 2009 Law of Human Resources Administration grants persons with special needs a work allowance of 25% of basic salary in addition to the original allowance specified for all workers according to their job grades. It also grants a Qatari female employee two leaves during her service with a maximum of three years per leave to take care of her children who are under age six. Priority is given to the care of disabled children. The leave is fully paid during the first three years then partially paid (50% of salary) for any extra period.

Following the 2004 legislation, three operational mechanisms were established to implement it. First, an executive department, the Elderly and Disability Department was set up in the then Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), to play a coordination role to ensure the rights of PWD were realised. Second, certificates and special cards were issued to facilitate persons with special needs to access their rights as provided for in the law. And third, a number of public posts were identified for persons with special needs.

Subsequently, following ministerial reorganisation in 2009, a Department of Persons with Special Needs was established within the former Ministry of Social Affairs. In 2014 it was renamed as the Department of the Affairs of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities and relocated within the reestablished MoLSA. The department, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), provides support to PWD to employ one domestic worker whose wages are paid from social security. It also meets the costs of special equipment required by PWD.

The Department of Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Affairs is responsible for proposing and implementing national strategies, plans and policies pertaining to older persons and PWD; developing and implementing programmes and services needed in caring and

rehabilitating older persons and PWD in cooperation with relevant government agencies and non-government organisations; educating the public and raising their awareness about the rights of older persons and PWD, and implementing training programmes for persons who deal with these two groups in cooperation with government agencies and NGOs; organising training courses, conferences and workshops that discuss issues related to older persons and PWD and establishing and developing an integrated database of information about them.

### **International**

Several international conventions address the needs of PWD. The 1986 Declaration on the RtD speaks to the rights of all people, including PWD, to participate in development and enjoy the benefits of development.

The CRPD defines PWD to include “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” While previously the focus was on the impairments of persons, the understanding has been broadened to include the social barriers faced by PWD.

The CRPD has given impetus to governments, international development partners, and civil society organisations to address the rights of this population group. The CRPD marks a shift from viewing PWD primarily as recipients

towards recognising them as rights-holders. They are therefore entitled on an equal basis to all civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights as active members of society.

Qatar ratified the CRPD in 2008, and signed the Optional Protocol allowing for individual complaints but has not yet ratified it (box 1.2 in chapter 1). The CRPD clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to PWD and how they can effectively exercise their rights. Qatar, as all state parties, is obligated to undertake proactive and appropriate measures to ensure that PWD participate in all facets of society, on an equal basis with others. Alignment of the provisions of Law 2 of 2004 is another obligation that Qatar undertook in ratifying the CRPD. Qatar submitted a national report to CRPD in July 2014 (box 4.1).

Qatar’s National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) has called on the government to speed up procedures for implementing proposed amendments to Law 2 of 2004 to make it fully compatible with the provisions of the CRPD. The NHRC had proposed seven new provisions related to economic, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities and their right to education, health, employment and housing, in addition to the right of access to public and private facilities, and cultural and sports services. In 2012 the Council of Ministers approved a draft resolution to amending Law 2 of 2004, but it still remains to be finalised.

#### **Box 4.1**

#### **Issues raised in Qatar’s submission to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

In June 2012 Qatar submitted the CRPD monitoring report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities prepared by a national committee established in 2010, chaired by the Human Rights Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with members including the Ministry of Finance, the MOI, the MoLSA, the Supreme Education Council (SEC), the Supreme Committee for Family Affairs, the Supreme Council of Health (SCH) and the Shafallah Center. Among the issues raised were:

- A committee concerned with monitoring the implementation of the CRPD conventions was not established as required by article 33 of the convention.
- The 2% employment law for persons with special needs is not monitored and not fully implemented.
- Challenges to implementing the rights of PWD included the shortage of well-trained technical staff.
- Weak coordination among organisations that take care of PWDs.
- Full physical access to public facilities has not been achieved.

*Source:* UNCRPD (2014).

## Profile of PWD

### Statistical information

The CRPD obligates state parties to collect statistics that will facilitate development of policies and programmes to implement its provisions. Each state party shall develop a mechanism and a framework to implement its provisions at the national level.

The main source of data on PWD is from administrative records of registrations of persons with special needs. Information from this source can be supplemented with survey and population census data.

Qatar's 2010 census included questions on disability as part of the initiatives to improve the statistics on PWD. Counting the disabled population in order to understand the number and socio-economic characteristics of this population group is in itself an action that is consistent with the Declaration of the RtD and the rights-based approach to development.

Despite the positive efforts taken so far to collect information on PWD, the data available are not sufficiently detailed to inform on trends in human development of PWD, or to what extent the rights provided to them by law are being realised. This section on the profile of PWD thus

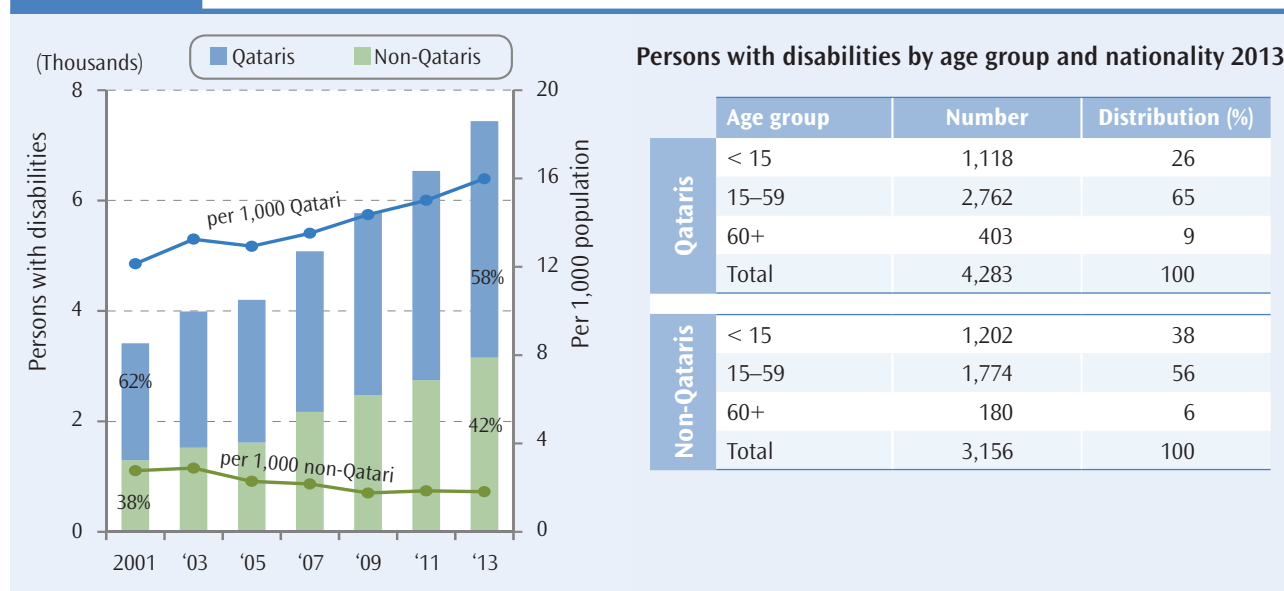
provides only an indication of broad levels, patterns and characteristics of PWD.

### Number and characteristics of PWD

Between 2001 and 2013 there was a doubling in the number of PWD. In 2013, a total of 7,400 PWD were registered with 12 centres, of whom 4,300, or 58%, were Qataris (figure 4.1). There was also a rise in the number of PWD per 1,000 Qataris. In terms of age composition of PWD, among Qataris 26% are under age 15, 65% are of working ages and 9% are older persons (figure 4.1). Among non-Qataris the proportion of PWD of working ages is lower than among Qataris which may be explained by the selective nature of this population group, that is that the non-Qataris are overwhelmingly young and healthy males.

The 2012/3 Household Expenditure and Income Survey showed that about 3.6% of Qatari households include a disabled member aged 15 or over who is economically inactive compared with 4% in 2006/7. Varying degrees of disability extend throughout the Qatari population with prevalence rates remaining fairly constant from age 10 to 50, and with males considerably more likely to suffer from disability than females.

**Figure 4.1** Registered persons with disabilities, rate per 1,000 population and age composition



Sources: QSA (2013b) and MDPS (2014d).



PWD often face discrimination and social exclusion. They tend to be lesser educated, have unmet health care needs, be unemployed and relatively poor. A series of low-income profiles employing logit regression using data from Qatar’s Household Expenditure and Income Surveys of 2012/3 and 2006/7 confirms that relative poverty among Qatari households tends to be highest for households with a disabled member. Households with persons receiving no labour income as a result of disability may receive welfare transfers from government. However, there is a need to provide assistance to particularly vulnerable households with one or more disabled members.

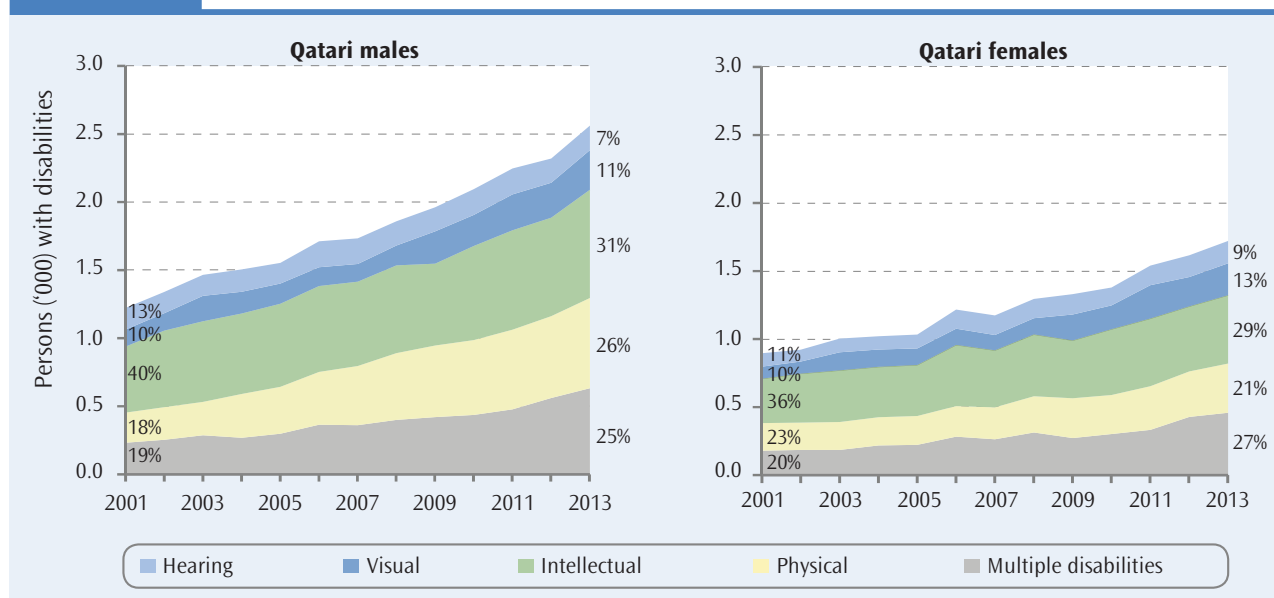
The two largest cause groups of disability in 2013 for Qatari males are intellectual (31%) and physical disabilities (26%) (figure 4.2). Intellectual disabilities, which include down syndrome and autism, have remained as the largest proportion of disabilities over the past decade or so. Physical disabilities (largely arising from motor vehicle accidents) grew in proportion from 18% in 2001 to 26% currently. The largest cause group of disabilities for females is much the same as for males. However, the second and third ranking is reversed for females, that is physical disability is ranked third instead of second as for males, most likely on account of their lower risk of accidents.

In terms of educational characteristics, the majority of PWD have only primary education or below – 73% of Qatari males and 83% of Qatari females (figure 4.3). The corresponding shares having university education were just 6% and 5% respectively.

Opportunities for decent work enable PWD to benefit from development. Just 10% of Qatari males and 4% of females aged 15 and above with disabilities were economically active. The economically active shares were much higher for non-Qataris—most non-Qataris must have employment to reside in the country (figure 4.3). When asked in the 2010 census why they were economically inactive, 54% of this group reported that they were unable to work.

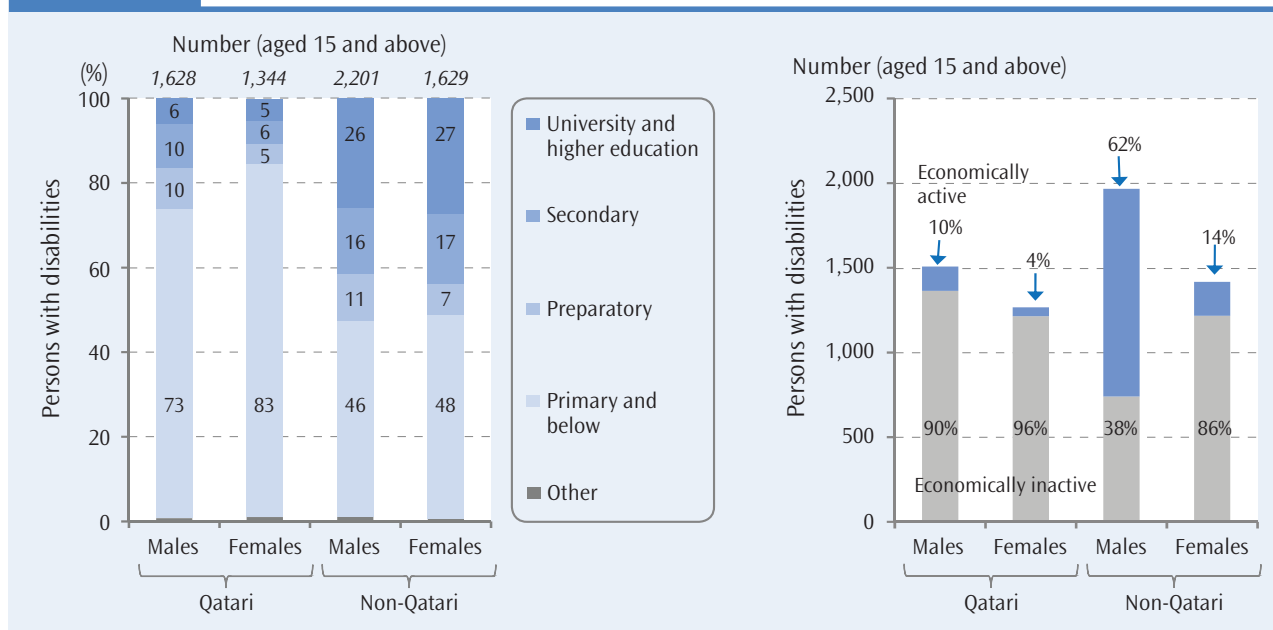
Since 1982 Rumailah Hospital has been the rehabilitation centre for disabled patients, providing adult rehabilitation, children’s rehabilitation and psychiatry services. The Children’s Rehabilitation Unit cares for handicapped and developmentally disabled children. Data about children with disabilities registered at Rumailah Hospital show that physical disability is the paramount type of disability among both Qatari and non-Qatari boys and girls, accounting for about 40% to 60% (figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.2** Persons with disabilities by type of disabilities



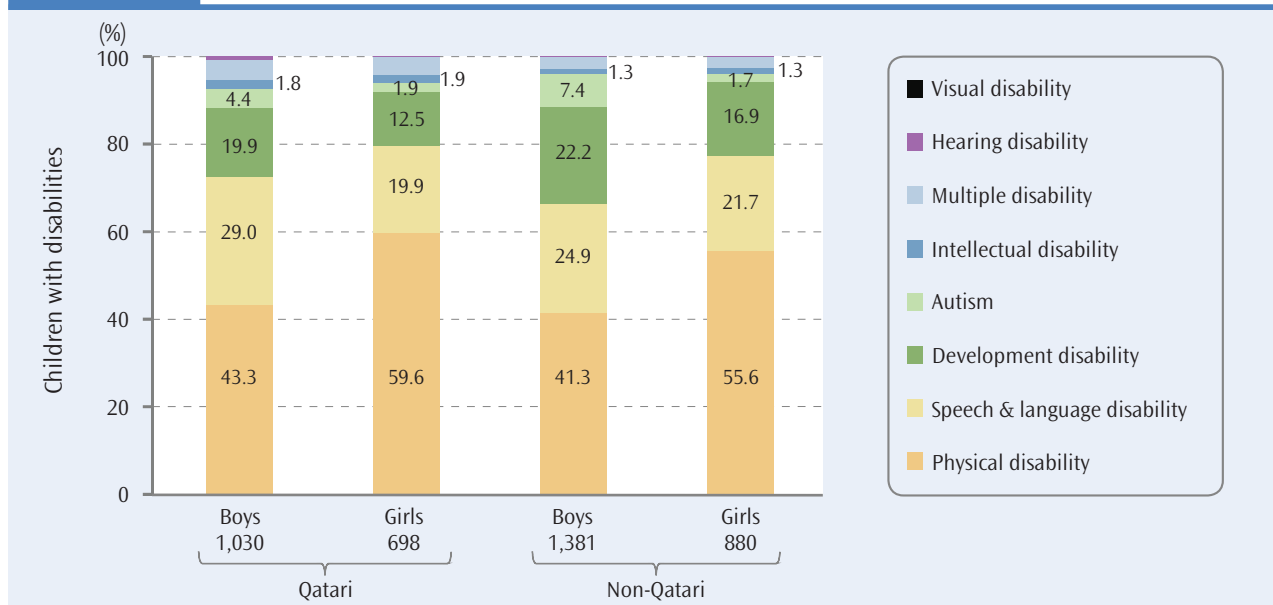
Sources: QSA (2013b) and MDPS (2014d).

**Figure 4.3** Education and employment status of persons with disabilities, 2010



Source: QSA (2012).

**Figure 4.4** Children aged 0–14 with disabilities registered at Rumailah Hospital by type of disability and nationality, 2012



Source: MDPS (2014e).

## Programmes and services for PWD

QNV 2030 aspires for an effective social protection system for all Qataris that ensures their civil rights, values their contribution in developing their society and ensures an adequate income to maintain a healthy and dignified life. Law 2 of 2004 provides for protecting people with mental or physical disabilities.

The National Development Strategy 2011-2016 addresses PWD as individuals with rights. It lays the foundation for the implementation of a social policy which includes establishing strong cohesive families that care for all their members. Among the specific projects that target PWD is a plan to ensure social inclusion involving increasing the number of vocational training and occupational therapy centres, as well as a jobs database for the disadvantaged to facilitate jobs matching.

The SCH ensures equal treatment and care of disabled persons at all its health centres. It organises public awareness events that focus on the rights of disabled persons and the importance of their integration in society and social life. Hamad Medical Corporation develops and provides multidisciplinary rehabilitation for disabled persons.

Financial support programmes have been initiated to provide a level of socio-economic independence to PWD or with special needs, and to help relieve the burden on their families. For instance, a monthly subsidy is granted to each unemployed Qatari with a disability irrespective of age, while each Qatari with a disability receives an allocation of shares. Non-Qatari students with special needs are exempted from paying the cost of school books and transportation, as well as fees related to their participation in special centres that have been established for their care and rehabilitation.

A project is being implemented by the SEC designed to ensure high-quality education for students with disabilities. A preliminary study has been conducted on the educational needs of students with special needs and current provision. A database has been developed and some progress has been made in formulating policies and a support system for students with special needs.

### Service centres

A number of public and private institutions provide services for people with special needs from birth onwards (table 4.1). The two largest service providers are the Qatari Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs and the Shafallah Center.

The Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs was established in 1992 and comes under the purview of the MoLSA. The society provides rehabilitation services for people with special needs in terms of health, social and mental care for all persons living in Qatar. It provides shelter and prepares PWD professionally, educationally, culturally, mentally and behaviourally for integration into society. And it also provides medical and remedial equipment for the development of PWD; psychiatric counselling; and organises awareness activities, seminars and research on issues affecting PWD.

### Shafallah Center

Several institutions have been established to promote and protect the rights of PWD. The Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs, established in 1999 and serving over 700 students in 2013/4, is a centre of excellence in the provision of educational, training and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities from birth to adulthood. The centre also offers state-of-the-art technologies, including the onsite Genetic Research Center, cutting-edge therapies and first-class faculty and counsellors.

The centre's various educational units encourage the maximum growth of children with disability through the application of modern special education strategies which are both academic and vocational and emphasise social and daily life skills. Beyond education, the centre aims at matching a suitable job to all its graduates and social as well as psychological support to those who do not qualify for a job due to limited abilities.

Psychological, behavioural and medical treatments as well as counselling services are provided for students. Diagnosis and early intervention for children with autism and students referred from external institutions are provided.

**Table 4.1** Services provided by major disability centres in Qatar, 2011

Centers	Share of persons with disabilities (%)	Major services provided
Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs	67	Multiple disabilities, including physical, intellectual, hearing and visual disabilities (all age groups)
Shafallah Center	10	Intellectual disabilities (children and youth)
Al Noor Institute	7	Visual disabilities (all age groups)
Qatar Sports Federation for Special Needs	6	Multiple disabilities, including physical, intellectual, hearing and visual disabilities (children and youth)
Qatar Culture and Social Center for Deaf	3	Hearing disabilities (adults 15+)
Qatar Social and Cultural Center for Blinds	2	Visual disabilities (all age groups)
Doha International Center for Special Needs	2	Multiple disabilities, including physical, intellectual, hearing and visual disabilities (school-aged population)
Others	3	
Acoustics Education School	1	Hearing, speech and language disabilities (school-aged population)
Qatar Autism Center	1	Developmental and Intellectual disabilities (children)
Altamakon for Comprehensive Education	1	Intellectual, physco-social disabilities (school-aged population)
Al Farah for Special Needs	0.4	Developmental and intellectual disabilities (children)
Step by Step Centre	0.2	Developmental disabilities (expatriate children aged 9 and below)
Total	100	

Source: QSA (2012).

Support and counselling services are provided to the families of children and adults with special needs through courses, workshops and home visits in order to give parents the skills needed to raise special needs children. Shafallah also interacts with the community through

raising awareness, fostering acceptance and understanding of the nature of disabilities. It hosts international forums on topics related to children with special needs. It also networks with other agencies that provide support for PWD, including with assistive technology (box 4.2).

**Box 4.2****MADA enabling people with special needs**

Established in 2010, the Qatar Assistive Technology Center (MADA) is a non-profit organisation that strives to empower PWD through information and communication technology. MADA's strategy is to create an inclusive society using technology to enable PWD to communicate, learn life skills and to engage in education and employment.

MADA has assessed over 1,200 PWD to identify and adapt the most appropriate assistive technologies to help fulfill their individual needs. It also provides support by publishing a database of resources and has launched and adapted products and programmes in Arabic for people with special needs.

In 2012/3 MADA worked extensively with the Shafallah Center and the Al Noor Center to provide Assistive Technology services to children and young adults with cognitive and multiple disabilities the Shafallah Center has over 500 children attending their special education services and the Al Noor Center has 80–90 children. MADA also builds capacity of teachers, therapists and staff working with children at these centres with a range of tailored training programmes.

*Source: MADA (2014).*

**Mental health**

Mental health in Qatar, as in many countries, has been surrounded by negative attitudes and stigma which often prevent individuals and families from seeking help (see chapter five). Public education is therefore central to reducing the impact of mental health issues.

Best Buddies Qatar is one of the most prominent and competent institutions in the field of improving the conditions of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It endeavors to end their social isolation and integrate them into society in all walks of public life. The number of people with disabilities in Best Buddies Qatar initiative totaled 242 in 2011. Best Buddies Qatar held a seminar in January 2013 addressing the issue of social and economic exclusion among people with intellectual disabilities. Frustrated by low levels of inclusion and the lack of follow-up in implementing existing legislation, it called for more and better-enforced legislation, as well as stronger cooperation between civil society organisations and government agencies to ensure that high-quality services and scientific research benefit persons with intellectual disabilities.

A new model of care has been endorsed for mental health to give people access to a range of high-quality, culturally appropriate services tailored to Qatar's needs. Whether it is in a primary care, community-based or a hospital

setting, people with mental health issues will have access to care at the right time and in the right place (SCH 2011).

Qatar's National Mental Health Strategy 2013-2018 highlighted that research conducted in Qatar suggests that one in five people will be affected by mental illness at any given point in time. In 2010 three of the top five causes of disability in Qatar were mental disorders. Mental health is one of the three priority areas for health services. The social and economic costs of mental illnesses are significant and include the direct costs of caring for people with mental health issues and also the costs of lost productivity in the wider economy. For Qatar, the total economic cost of mental disorders is estimated at QR 1.7 billion per annum (SCH 2013c).

**Satisfaction with services**

In 2012 the Supreme Council of Family Affairs (SCFA) reported low levels of compliance with legislation concerning the rights of PWD, especially in the area of employment, physical access and provision of services. To address lax enforcement and the social and economic exclusion still faced by PWD, the SCFA and Qatar's National Committee for Human Rights hosted a symposium in 2013 on the rights of PWD. It recommended integrating disability-related issues into national planning, with the active participation of PWD and their families in the planning process. Amendments were drafted to Law 2 of

2004, taking into account the CRPD, calling in particular for more inclusive policies supporting PWD in employment and increasing accessibility in urban spaces.

A very small survey was held in 2014 to gauge the extent to which PWD are satisfied with legislation and services provided to them. It sought to understand the views of disabled persons with respect to the realisation of their rights across seven dimensions: health, education, social aspects, service centres, legislations, work and income level, and sports and recreational facilities (box 4.3). The

results show that a large percentage of respondents were on average satisfied with their disability rights and with their provision and enforcement.

The results also reveal areas where people with special needs believe they need more. These include the physical layout of educational institutions and the enforcement of the building code to facilitate movement of people with special needs. Non-Qatari PWD were particularly dissatisfied with the legal barriers to getting married.

### Box 4.3 Persons with disabilities (PWD) broadly satisfied with services

A small survey of 46 Qataris and non-Qataris PWD aged 16 and over was conducted in 2014 to gauge, *inter alia*, their awareness of their rights, enforcement of laws, and provision of services. Seven dimensions were covered, work and income level; marriage and social life; education; health; disability laws; cultural and sports facilities for special needs; and disability facilities and services.

On average, more than 61% of respondents were satisfied, with the level of satisfaction ranging from 70% with respect to the dimensions of work and income level as well as marriage and social life, to 53% satisfaction on disability laws: some 19% were dissatisfied with the country's disability laws.

**Box table 1 : PWD by satisfaction on 7 dimensions (%)**

Dimension	Satisfied (%)	Almost satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)
Work and income level	69.7	19.5	10.7
Marriage and social life	69.2	18.8	11.5
Education	64.9	22.9	12.1
Health	56.2	28.2	15.4
Disability laws	53.0	27.9	19.0
Cultural and sports clubs for special needs	54.9	34.1	11.0
Disabled facilities and services	62.0	26.1	11.8
Average	61.4	25.4	13.1

Among Qatari respondents, they were most satisfied with their rights with respect to marriage and social life (83%), and work and income (74%). They were most dissatisfied with disability laws (14%) and health services (12%). Non-Qatari respondents were most satisfied with work and income (66%) and education (61%), and least satisfied with disability laws (24%) and marriage and social life (21%).

Areas identified by respondents as priorities for further attention included: premises and educational environment; enforcement of the building code to ensure easier movement of PWD; design of the disability sports centres and coaching for sport for PWD.

*Source:* Hajji (2014).

## Inclusion of PWD in sport

Participation in sport can foster greater inclusion and well-being for PWD by reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with a disability and by empowering them to recognise their potential. Sport allows PWD greater social inclusion, an opportunity to improve their health and to improve their life skills. Sports social integration aims to improve the quality of life of people with intellectual disabilities, and to provide opportunities to enhance their social interaction and create effective social communication.

The principle of social inclusion is among the key objectives of the Qatar Olympic Committee's (QOC) strategic plan. QOC works with the Qatar Paralympics' Committee and national sports federations to integrate PWD into society through sport and also encourages them to participate in national and international championships and tournaments. Thus QOC's annual Sport Festival for People with Special Needs aims at increasing community sport programmes, raising community awareness and integrating PWD into society. Further, in partnership with the SEC, the physical education curriculum in schools is being reviewed to ensure it includes provisions for activities for students with physical or learning disabilities.

An initiative began in 2012 to include sport-specific development pathways for the national federations for sport with disabilities. A focus on developing opportunities in sports programmes for persons with special needs enables and facilitates participation. The initiative, backed by an adequate resource framework, includes providing appropriate infrastructure and support such as trained and qualified coaches, rehabilitative services and sports medicine, accessible transportation and adaptive equipment, and communications as well as promotional activities.

Qatar has competed in three Paralympic Games, 2004, 2008 and 2012. Some 12 paralympic athletes from Qatar also participated in the 2014 Asian Para Games in Incheon, South Korea where Qatar won five medals (three gold and two bronze). As a measure of its strong commitment for sports for PWD, Qatar will host the October 2015 International Paralympic Committee Athletics World Championship.

## Conclusions

PWD are vulnerable because of the many barriers they face: attitudinal, physical, communication and financial. Supportive legislation, programmes and technology are helping PWD in Qatar to better realise their potential.

A social and economic inclusive rights-based approach to development provides a platform to mainstream PWD. It recognises the rights of disabled persons and redresses the limitations and barriers which the social, economic and physical environment impose on them.

Qatar places great importance on the rights of disabled persons. A social rather than a medical model for disability is gradually evolving to meet the QNV 2030 aspirations for social justice and inclusion. The social model of disability places the issue of the way that PWD are viewed and treated by society rather than their underlying medical conditions as the primary factor leading to the need for empowerment.

The 2006 CRPD has been ratified by Qatar and a national report was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014 on implementation progress. Existing national legislation, especially Law 2 of 2004 relating to persons with special needs is being aligned with the CRPD provisions. Qatar's National Human Rights Committee has called on the government to speed up procedures for implementing proposed amendments to Law 2 of 2004. In 2012 the Council of Ministers approved a draft resolution amending it, but it still remains to be finalised.

Progress has been made in providing PWD with the support and means to exercise their rights. Employment and education are two areas where relatively better progress has been made. Yet it remains the case that education and employment levels of PWD lag behind those of the general population. There is a need to do more through stronger job placement measures to enforce current law which mandates an employment rate for disabled people of at least 2%. An effective monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure that this target is being met.



Although Qatar has taken significant steps to promote and protect the rights of PWD, especially at legislative and institutional levels, challenges remain. Persons with special needs and their families are generally unaware of their rights and of the services and support available to them. Ensuring that PWD have access to all basic services and are exempt from related fees (such as visa fees for their caretakers and drivers) and improving coordination between agencies in providing these services are continuing challenges.

Further, access to public buildings and amenities is often difficult for persons with a physical disability. Legislations requiring barrier-free building modification, such as installation of a ramp for wheelchairs alongside or in place of some steps, will improve access for the physically disabled.

The National Development Strategy 2011-2016 called for an integrated approach to sound social development that aims at individual and general well-being. The Midterm Review of the NDS showed that implementation of this social approach is challenged, *inter alia*, by lack of systems for project coordination and review of legislation on social protection; limited training and rehabilitation centres for

disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; and absence of a good database or methodology for measurement of social protection.

The inclusion of questions on disability in Qatar's 2010 population census was an important step in recognising the challenges of PWD. Counting PWD in order to know the number and their economic, social and housing characteristics can better inform policy and programme development. Basic administrative registration data on PWD are also available. But the level, detail and quality of these data need to be significantly strengthened if better measurement and monitoring of the RtD outcomes are to be realised. Periodic special in-depth surveys covering PWD are also required. Moreover, all data on PWD needs to be coordinated and analysed from a rights perspective.

The government alone cannot realise the RtD of PWD. Support and collaborative efforts of civil society, the private sector, communities and families are needed. PWD should have opportunities to access their rights within their own communities through affordable and relevant services. A comprehensive and holistic approach is required to mainstream PWD into the development agenda so that they can enjoy their rights.





# Rights of Children, Youth and Older Persons





# Rights of Children, Youth and Older Persons

Children, youth and older persons are three distinct age-determined population groups who experience different sets of human rights challenges and vulnerabilities during the course of the life cycle. The challenges are often significantly greater for children and older persons due to their higher reliance on the provision of public services as well as on their families and the community.

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Children (CRC) shifted the global paradigm on the way children are viewed and treated—as human beings with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity. The articles of the CRC have been progressively integrated into national legislation and Qatar monitors and reports factors affecting the well-being of children. Child well-being is multidimensional, dynamic and relational. In assessing child well-being it is necessary to look at other dimensions that are important for family cohesion and positive child development apart from income.

Inspired by QNV 2030 and its plans for the future, youth are seen as an important human resource and catalyst for positive social change. Young Qataris are expected to play a critical role in realising the national vision. The establishment of a new Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2013 demonstrates the importance placed on youth development by Qatar's leadership. Critical areas of concern for youth are the impact of health risks especially those related to lifestyle, such as obesity, and risk-taking behaviours including the use of drugs and HIV/AIDS.

Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS are major public health and social problems affecting young people everywhere.

Combating discrimination based on age and promoting the dignity of older persons is fundamental to ensuring the respect that older persons deserve. The promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development (RtD), is essential for the creation of an inclusive society in which older persons participate fully and without discrimination and on the basis of equality.

This chapter assesses selective themes related to the realisation of the RtD of these three population groups.

## Realising the rights of children

Nurturing and caring for children are the cornerstones of human progress. Proper care at the youngest ages forms the strongest foundation for a person's future. Children have the right to special care and protection and Qatar is investing in multiple programmes to promote child well-being consistent with the CRC.

The CRC, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, shifted the global paradigm on the way children are viewed and treated—as human beings with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity. The CRC sets basic standards for children's well-being at different stages of their development. It

*The National Development Strategy 2011-2016 advocates for the adoption of a holistic approach to child well-being. This approach will enable Qatar to interweave important policies to create a coherent spectrum of programmes for children of different ages to increase child well-being, leading to better human capital outcomes.*

Qatar National Development Strategy 2011-2016

defined a child as a person below the age of 18 or the age the laws of a particular country have set as the legal age for adulthood. Where the legal age is below 18, the monitoring body for the convention, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, encourages states to increase protection for all those below 18 years.

Qatar signed and ratified the CRC in 1995, with general reservations on all articles which were inconsistent with Islamic law. The CRC establishes numerous rights concerning the child, including the right of the child to development and registration after birth; to acquire a nationality and to preserve his or her identity; to health care, education and social security as well as the rights of disabled children; to legal protection and protection from all forms of violence, injury, abuse and sexual exploitation; to express his or her views; to freedom of thought, religion and association; to participate in cultural and artistic life and to be protected from economic exploitation.

In December 2008 Qatar submitted its second periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and withdrew the general reservation entered under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. However, the state maintained its reservation to:

- Article two on non-discrimination and ensuring the rights of each child without discrimination irrespective of birth status and freedom to manifest one's religious beliefs. With respect to nationality of the child, Qatar's 2005 Nationality Law states that nationality is transmitted by descent through the father. Children of Qatari mothers married to foreign fathers are not granted Qatari citizenship. In the event of the father's death or his leaving his wife and the country for good, the children have the right to reside permanently with the mother, to be issued with Qatari travel documents and to have access to education and medical treatment. Under the 1989 Marriage to Aliens Act, subject to approval, such children are given an option to apply for naturalisation when they reach the age of majority. In its 2012 Annual Report the National Human Rights Commission recommended government to grant Qatari women married to non-Qatari men the right to transmit their nationality to their children.
- Article 14 on freedom of thought, conscience and religion—Qatar, as an Islamic state, does not allow Muslim children to convert to another religion.

In October 2009, the committee's concluding observations on Qatar's second periodic report requested it to implement recommendations adopted in October 2001 including those related to a national plan of action, best interests of the child and the definition of the child and juvenile justice. The committee made recommendations to the State of Qatar to:

- Expedite the adoption of the Children's Bill and implement the draft National Strategy for Children 2008-2013.
- Ensure that the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) establish a children's rights unit to monitor children's rights and investigate complaints on the violations of children's rights.
- Critically review its Nationality Law in order to ensure that nationality can be transmitted to children through both the maternal and paternal line without distinction.
- Prioritise the elimination of all forms of violence against children.
- Strengthen mechanisms to address groups of children in need of special protection including children with disabilities, sexually exploited and abused children and children of migrant workers.
- Strengthen its measures to protect children from injuries, including road traffic and domestic accidents.

The committee invited Qatar to submit its combined third and fourth periodic report by May 2013. In April 2014, a third Optional Protocol was adopted, allowing children to bring complaints directly to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The committee will then investigate the claims and can direct government to take action.

Articles of the CRC have been progressively integrated into national legislation. The State of Qatar's Permanent Constitution recognises equal rights of all persons without discrimination, and provides for the right to health and education. Provision is made for free and compulsory education for all children, from the beginning of the primary stage until the end of the intermediate stage or until a child reaches the age of 18 years, whichever comes first. The 2006 Family Act provides for maintaining, raising, guiding and caring for a child in his or her best interests (*hadanah*) and the right of the child to express views (*hibah*) (box 5.1).

*Hadanah* is defined as “maintaining, raising, guiding and caring for a child in his or her best interests.” These are duties which parents must assume for as long as they are married to one another and which otherwise devolve upon the mother. The Family Act emphasises that *hadanah* is a continuous right which the parent and minor share between them, with the minor's right taking precedence. Hence, the act makes the child the central focus of the person entrusted with *hadanah*. When a court issues a judgment assigning *hadanah* to any person, it will always take into account the best interests of the child, choosing the person best placed to show the child affection, provide a suitable environment, shield the child from delinquency, offer the best kind of care, education and preparation for the future, teach the child important moral values and meet other criteria set out in the act.

To ensure the best interests of children in terms of the care that they receive, the act allows mothers to retain custody (*hadanah*) of a boy up until the age of 13 and of a girl up until the age of 15. It also grants the courts the power to extend *hadanah* of a boy up to the age of 15 and of a girl until she marries. The courts may also ask children to select the person that they want to care for them. The act supports the right of *hadanah* by requiring the father to pay maintenance to the woman entrusted with care and custody of the child, in addition to providing a home, money for rental of a home or a portion of the rent on a home which the caregiver shares with her parents.

As for visiting rights, the act regulates the *hadanah* process in keeping with the best interests of the child. In order to preserve family ties and cohesion and allow fathers a role in guiding their children, the act grants fathers the right to visit their children throughout the period of *hadanah*. Visits are arranged by agreement between the parents or pursuant to a court order. Disputes over visiting rights are deemed as urgent cases before the courts. The act allows children to accept a deed of gift (*hibah*) for themselves, provided that they have a legal guardian but does allow them to make such gifts to others before reaching the age of 18. The purpose of these provisions is to guarantee the best interests of the child.

Under the act, a competent court may annul a deed of gift (*hibah*) by which a father shows favour to one child over another for no good reason. The aim of this provision is to preserve family unity and protect the rights and interests of the other children. As for tutorship arrangements, with a view to ensuring the best interests of the child, the act provides that the tutor must agree to the arrangement and may only revoke it with the permission of the courts.

Sources: MDPS (2014f) and QSA (2008).

Qatar's National Vision 2030 foresees social justice and equality for all men, women and children and places great importance on social and human development. The National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) addresses child well-being in a comprehensive and outcome-based manner. Cross-sectoral programmes were designed and are being implemented to improve various factors affecting the well-being of children. A new child law covering child protection is being prepared to serve as an omnibus legal and results tracking framework for child development (GSDP 2011). This new legislation will ensure that Qatar meets its obligations under CRC. In 2012 the

NHRC recommended expediting the issuance of this new legislation (NHRC 2012).

Several agencies and specialised organisations have been established over the past two decades to complement the role of line ministries in helping to realise the rights of the child to development and to ensure the well-being of all children. In 2013 the Qatar Foundation for Social Work was established to unify and enhance these organisations that provide a range of social services for special population and disadvantaged groups.

Qatar Foundation for Social Work, founded in July 2013 as a supervisory and coordinating entity, aims to empower affiliate civil society organisations to sustain family and community cohesion as well as human development. These affiliate organisations include: Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (chapters two and three as well as below), Qatar Foundation for the Elderly Care (IHSAN, see below), Qatar Orphan Foundation (Dhreima), Family Consulting Center (see below), Al Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs (see chapter four), and Social Development Center). In addition, Qatar's NHRC monitors children's rights, responds to complaints and human rights violations, and liaises with and refers complaints to relevant component organisations of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work.

## Child well-being

While there is no absolute poverty in Qatar, in 2012/3 almost 10% of Qatari households were classified as relatively poor, that is having an income of less than half the median household income (table 5.1). About 15% of Qatari children (aged under 14) live in these relatively poor households compared with 13% in 2006/7. Put in another way, larger households, those with most children in them, tend to experience higher relative poverty. Relatively poor households tend to have fewer income earners in them compared to non-poor households.

Category	2006/7	2012/3
Household	9.3	9.7
Individual	11.7	12.5
Children (under 14)	13.4	15.2
Older persons (60 and over)	10.9	8.3

Sources: MDPS (2014f) and QSA (2008).

Child well-being is multidimensional, dynamic and relational. In assessing the well-being of children in Qatar apart from income it is necessary to look at other dimensions that are important for family cohesion and positive child development. In addition to income, the focus in the sections below is on other selective dimensions of well-being: divorce and child well-being; child health, including obesity and mental health; early

education; child protection—chapter four discusses children with special needs and their treatment within society.

### Divorce and child well-being

With high levels of divorce, the effect of divorce on children continues to be an issue given the links to child poverty and other dimensions of child well-being. The risk of child poverty after divorce is high, despite legal obligations to pay maintenance to children under the 2006 Family Law. One factor in this is the low probability of divorced Qatari women remarrying. Obtaining orders for child maintenance and enforcement of child maintenance is in theory available on a comprehensive and universal basis for all divorced families with children and Qatar's report to the United Nation's Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasises these provisions as providing equitable treatment (UNCRC 2008).

The risk to child well-being from divorce stems not only from low income but also from the events of divorce and separation. Evidence from international studies on divorced families have tended to show that poor outcomes for child well-being are associated with parental conflict and the absence of post-divorce contact with one parent (usually the father). Continued close involvement with children by both parents following divorce, together with consensual arrangements for their custody and development, tend to mitigate the short-term impact of the trauma of separation for children.

Established in 2003, the Family Consulting Center helps to build and strengthen the bonds of marriage and family, providing counseling services and strengthening relations between parents and children in Qatari society.

### Child health

A sensitive measure of health is provided by focusing on the record of survival among the most vulnerable members of society—infants and young children. In addition to measuring a dimension of children's well-being, child health and mortality indicators are key to assessments of a country's overall progress in the RtD.

The government is responsible for ensuring public health and providing resources to prevent and treat diseases and epidemics. Qatar's state health institutions, including primary health care centres and Hamad



Medical Corporation, offer their services free of charge to children and mothers throughout the country without discrimination. These services range from prenatal programmes to paediatric care for newborn children, the prevention of infectious diseases and immunisation.

A health card is issued for all newborn children to make it easier to monitor them and keep records on their general health. Health institutions also offer services and issue health cards to children of expatriates. They do not charge fees for preventive health services for mothers and children, school health services, treatment of infectious diseases and treatment in emergency and accident cases where the patient needs to be hospitalized (Abdelmoneium 2014).

### Infant nutrition

Nutrition, particularly breastfeeding, is known to be crucial for subsequent cognitive and overall child development. Breastfeeding for the first few years of life protects children from infection, provides an ideal source of nutrients, and is economical and safe. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that babies be exclusively breastfed for the first few months and that breastfeeding continue for two years or more. However, many mothers stop breastfeeding too soon and there are often pressures to switch to infant formula, which can contribute to growth faltering and micronutrient malnutrition.

In Qatar, some 10% of infants born in 2012 were underweight at birth: slightly lower among Qataris than non-Qataris (table 5.2). Patterns of breastfeeding differ by nationality. Although the proportion of infant ever breastfed does not differ between Qataris and non-Qataris, the intensity of breastfeeding differs greatly. The percentage of Qatari infants between zero to five months old who were exclusively breastfed, 19%, is markedly less than those of non-Qatari, 35%. Exclusively breastfeeding of Qatari infants is just 0.6 months on average compared with 0.8 for non-Qatari infants, figures which are well below the WHO recommendations.

### Infant and child health

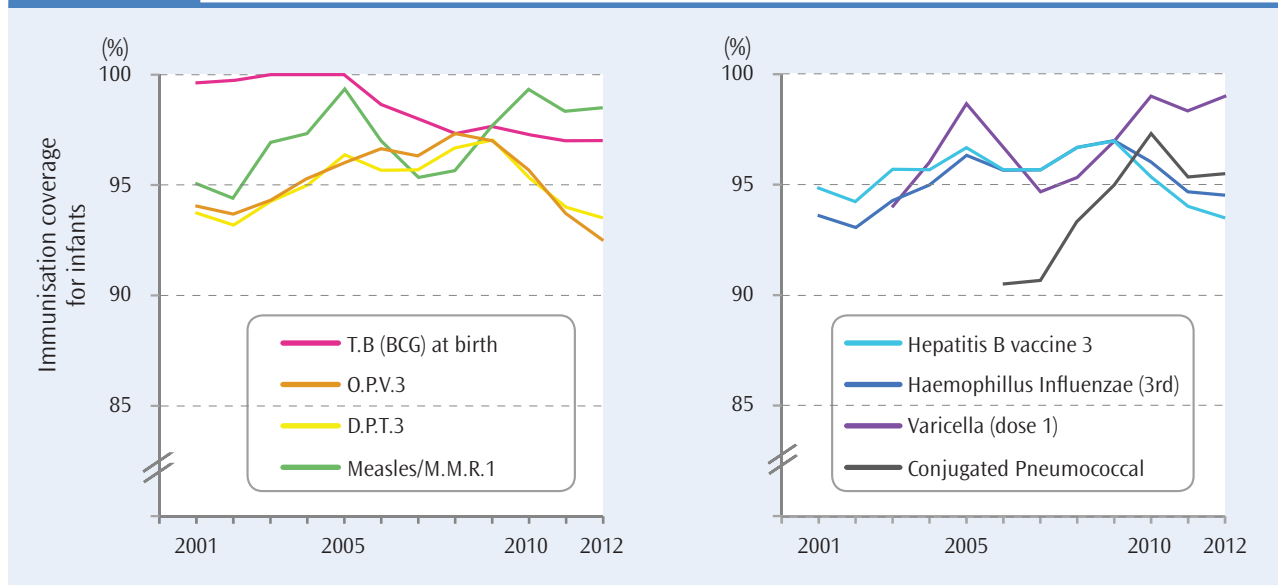
Vaccination constitutes a crucial health measure for protecting children against common diseases, particularly those occurring during early childhood. In Qatar, vaccination coverage for infants under age one appears to have fluctuated at very high levels between 2001 and 2012, with almost universal coverage for all vaccinations (figure 5.1). More than 95% of infants below the age of one received all types of basic immunisations. The trendlines shown in figure 5.1 tend to fluctuate from year to year; this is because these indicators are calculated using reported vaccination numbers in the numerator and population estimates as the denominator. More stable trends could be expected from indicators derived from nationally representative surveys.

**Table 5.2** Short intervals of breastfeeding, 2012

Variable	Qatari	Non-Qatari
	Percentage	
Low birth weight infants	10.2	11.0
Ever breastfed in last 2 years	94.5	94.7
Exclusively breastfed between 0–5 months	18.6	35.0
Predominantly breastfed between 0–5 months	26.2	44.4
	Median duration of breastfeeding for children between 0–35 months (months)	
Any breastfeeding	13.7	18.3
Exclusive breastfeeding	0.6	0.8
Predominant breastfeeding	0.6	1.4

Source: MDPS (2014b).

**Figure 5.1** High coverage of basic immunisation for infants under 1 year old



Note: the data is three-year moving averages.  
Source: SCH (2013a and 2013b).

Both the infant mortality rate and the early childhood mortality rate (deaths at ages one to four) are useful indicators of child development outcomes. The infant mortality rate records the number of infants dying before reaching their first birthday per 1,000 live births. Infant mortality not only reflects the efficacy of antenatal and post-natal care and conditions, but is also a robust measure of the social, economic and environmental conditions in which children live. One reason for this is that the post-neonatal contribution to infant mortality is almost entirely due to exogenous socio-economic and environmental factors rather than any complications of birth. The early childhood mortality rate provides insights into a broad range of environmental factors. This indicator, when combined with infant mortality, has the added value that it captures the bulk of mortality of children under the age of 15 years (figure 5.2).

Qatar's infant mortality has recorded a big improvement over time with a decline from 10 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to around seven in 2013 (figure 5.2). However, there is considerable scope for much further reductions in infant death rates as the country's level is about three times higher than the mean for the 10 lowest mortality Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Mortality rates at ages one

to four have also significantly improved, falling from 2.3 deaths per 1,000 live birth in 2000 to 1.3 in 2013 (figure 5.2). Mortality of children at ages one to four in Qatar is very low and not much higher than in the 10 healthiest OECD countries.

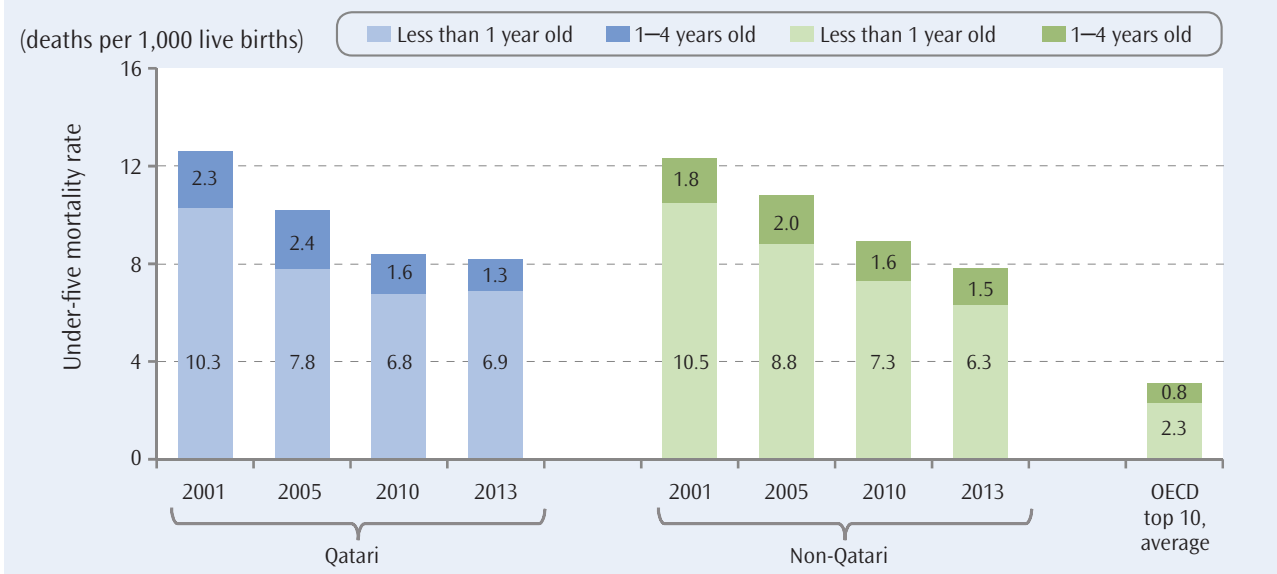
### Childhood obesity

Childhood obesity in Qatar is a major and growing health concern. It has both immediate and long-term effects on health and well-being. Among other immediate health effects, obese children are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. Obese adolescents are also more likely to have pre-diabetes, a condition in which blood glucose levels indicate a high risk for development of diabetes. Obesity also affects mental health, with a greater risk for social and psychological problems such as stigmatisation and poor self-esteem.

A 2006 World Health Survey found that about 44% of Qatari children aged under five were in the normal body mass index (BMI) range with 28% below and 28% above the normal range of  $-1$  to  $+1$ : some 17% of Qatari children were in the  $+2$  category, indicating a very high BMI. The survey also suggested that as few as 50% of boys and men, and less than 40% of girls and women reported regular

**Figure 5.2**

Infant mortality has stabilised at a much higher level than in OECD countries



Note: Three-year moving averages.  
Sources: MDPS (2014e) and SCH (2013a and 2013b).

participation in sports or other physical activities. Further, in 2009 the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) conducted a study on the weight and height of a sample of Qatari students aged 12 to 17 which showed that compared to the adult population of Qataris and to the national level, the student population had a significantly higher level of obesity (table 5.3). This suggests that poor diet and exercise habits are being established at an early age.

Childhood provides an opportunity to address the social factors that drive the growth in obesity. There is evidence that good eating and exercise habits among young people are inculcated at a very young age. Action needs to be taken before children acquire the habits and lifestyles that can greatly increase their risk of serious illness later in life. QOC's annual Schools Olympic Program promotes an attractive environment for girls and boys to participate in sport. The programme is helping to establish a sports culture and is increasing the interest of students in sport and physical activities.

Legislation and policy need to encourage access and exposure to healthy foods as well as increased sport and

**Table 5.3**

Obesity among Qatari students starts at a young age, 2009

Age	Overweight and obese (%)	Obese (%)
12	74	42
13	58	42
14	77	50
15	70	47
16	75	50
17	69	47
12-17	70	45
Qatari adults 18+	75	40
Qatari and non-Qatari adults 18+	71	32

Sources: NHA (2008) and QOC (2009).

physical activity. Prevention campaigns could be held, including with stakeholder participation, to educate the public on the links between diet, physical activity and health, including encouraging healthy eating in school by reducing intakes of fat, sugar and refined grains.

## Child mental health

Children's mental health is affected by multiple factors including their genetic endowment, physical health, quality of nutrition, income of their families and other social, familial and cultural factors. It is also affected by the stability and safety of the environment in which they live.

One in 10 young people under 18 has a diagnosable mental illness such as depression, anxiety and conduct disorder—amounting to 220 million worldwide. Of these, more than half will go on to develop mental illness in adult life and have a three times higher risk of being involved in crime, drug abuse or suicide. Less than a quarter of mentally ill children are getting specialist help and this lack of intervention costs societies.

The Qatar Mental Health Strategy 2013-2018 highlights that mental health difficulties in childhood and adolescence are common. The national model of mental health care being implemented is adopting a life-course approach addressing particular circumstances and needs that people have at various stages of their life. There are a broad range of difficulties and mental disorders encountered during childhood and teenage years, and lack of attention to this age group is likely to lead to lifelong consequences. The needs of children and adolescents is being met through specialised service provision, which will provide high-quality services ensuring effective assessment, treatment and support for them and their families (SCH 2013c).

There is very little data on the prevalence of mental health issues amongst children and adolescents in Qatar, especially data on children who experience challenges such as depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, anxiety and conduct disorder as well as suicidal feelings, self-harm, anorexia and bulimia. While there are some data about children using mental health inpatient and outpatient services they are not routinely published and readily available. Further, many children with mental challenges do not access health services or receive professional help. In 2012 there were 472 cases with mental, behavioural and neurodevelopmental disorders discharged from Hamad Medical Corporation hospitals out of which 9% were children. It is crucial that Qatar breaks the stigmas and taboos that surround child and adolescent mental health so as to get a fuller picture of mental health needs.

Qatar is in the process of establishing a National Mental Health Law to protect the rights of people with mental health conditions, ensuring access to appropriate, high-quality care in suitable settings. This is usually best achieved by enhancing community-based services, ensuring that inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services are closely integrated, and educating the general population to remove the stigma often attached to such illnesses.

A 2015 report, *Healthy Young Minds: Transforming the Mental Health of Children*, launched at the World Innovation Summit for Health that was held in Doha, called for global action to improve the mental well-being of children (Layard and Hagell 2015). It contended that the well-being of children must become a major priority for every nation. It focuses on 10 specific evidence-based action points that start within communities, health care systems and schools to address the burden of poor mental health in childhood.

## Consanguine marriages impacting child health

Consanguineous marriage is a high risk factor affecting the health of Qataris. Its prevalence across the Arab world has a long cultural tradition, where notions of family solidarity and cohesion, in which a man marries the daughter of his paternal uncle (*bint 'amm* in Arabic), are prevalent. This reinforces the close proximity and intensity of familial ties, in which in-laws form part of what has been termed a 'functionally extended family.' Cultural reasons of maintaining family honour alongside the economic retention of resources within the family have been put forward as underlying reasons for this practice. No matter the reasons, the results are that the family unit is protected from external influences and essentially maintains the same family relationships that existed before marriage.

The current prevalence is estimated at around 54% of marriages. But with only 46% of husbands' parents and 42% of wives' parents being from consanguineous marriages, the rising incidence is crucial to its potential growing impact. The largest proportion of consanguineous marriages are between first cousins. The effects on children's health and development are well known—a statistically significant increase in the risk of mental retardation and epilepsy among offspring of children in first cousin unions, in accordance with the findings of a number of studies that have reported a link between

parental consanguinity and low IQ levels in the offspring. However, direct intellectual impairment is not the only threat to child well-being; incidences of asthma, leukaemia and diabetes mellitus were all found to be significant.

Healthcare is a major priority for the government. The goal of achieving a healthy society begins with the family. In order to achieve its goal all citizens are required to undergo premarital screening. The Family Law 22 of 2006 provides for a compulsory premarital medical examination after which a medical certificate is issued that allows the couple to marry.

## Child development and education

Education is a basic right of children giving them the opportunity for self-development, to improve their living conditions, to help support upward mobility and the means to help make informed choices as they enter adulthood.

Since 2004 a child rights' culture has been progressively promoted in national schools through the use of teaching manuals, developed in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, that translate the rights and principles in the CRC into easily understandable language. Child rights are also linked to the rights of the child in Islam using passages from the Koran and the hadith (tradition) of the Prophet. The teaching manuals include the use of real stories and coloured illustrations to explain to children concepts of rights and violations.

Several awareness-raising programmes incorporating the concepts of human and children's rights into educational programmes have been initiated, including in the curricula of the Military College and training academies of the armed forces; and several awareness and training programmes on the rights of the child provided to different groups in the country by the NHRC and the Supreme Education Council (SEC).

Qatar's education strategy is guided by the aspiration to develop a world-class education system that incorporates quality, equity, access, efficiency, effectiveness, variety and choice. The strategy seeks to overcome many challenges facing the national education system on the supply and demand sides through policy reforms and other initiatives.

In earlier chapters, primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment and attainment levels, as well as differentials, have been discussed. The sections below focus on early childhood education and the challenge to the education system posed by the rapidly growing population of school-going ages.

### Early childhood education and kindergarten

Children are the foundation of sustainable development. Early childhood is the most significant development period of life. The early years are crucial not only for individual health and physical development, but also for cognitive, emotional and social development. Events in the first few years of life are formative and play a vital role in building human capital, opening up opportunities and enabling choices throughout life.

High-quality early childhood education (ECE) provides great benefits to young children aged six to 36 months as well as to society and acts an enabler for education reform. ECE tends to lead to higher educational performance, healthy and competent adults, responsible citizens, economic productivity, and strong communities. Improved cognitive development associated with ECE enhances children's potential to learn throughout their lives. This in turn leads to better school readiness, higher enrolment rates and improved academic achievements. By better preparing young people for school, the efficiency of the education system is also improved providing greater returns to society.

Early childhood factors are core predictors of later well-being and educational and social performance. Family-based practices in the home and the way in which young infants learn about the world define a set of key characteristics that are lifelong in their persistence. Parenting and the style of parenting during infancy—the observed mother-child patterns of reinforcement and promotion of child-centred behaviour—are critical in outcomes some 15 years later.

The Qatar Academy, sponsored by Qatar Foundation, has opened three early childhood centres serving children aged six months to three years. They also provide opportunities for these young children to transition to pre-kindergarten at age three and then kindergarten at age four. There are plans to expand this best practice model. The SEC opened Bedayat as the first early childhood centre to serve children aged six months to four years.

Kindergarten in Qatar, for children aged four to six, has grown very markedly over the past decade or so for both Qatari and non-Qatari children, the bulk of whom attend private schools. In 2012 40% of children aged between three and four (the survey data excludes five year olds) were attending early childhood education (table 5.4). The proportion of Qatari children attending ECE was 32% compared with 45% for non-Qatari children. Children of higher educated mothers are much more likely to attend early schooling than the children of their lesser educated counterparts. School enrolment data show that among children aged four and five in 2013/4, some 92% were attending kindergarten: 87% for Qataris and 96% for non-Qataris.

An added advantage of the expansion of high-quality nurseries and kindergartens providing childcare is that it enables parents, particularly mothers, to join the labour force. A draft law addressing nursery and kindergarten quality was submitted to the Council of Ministers in 2011 and approved in January 2014 as Law 1 of 2014.

While kindergarten is designed as part of Qatar's educational reform to improve subsequent school performance, at present there is limited acknowledgement of the need to link issues of child development in a strategic way.

Allowing young children to access high-quality preschool facilities has an additional potential to allow earlier diagnosis of developmental problems. Currently, many referrals occur on entry into primary school and the emergence of learning and behavioural difficulties in a school environment. Having earlier entry will potentially place greater demands on specific services for special needs earlier in childhood and could lead to less of a need for later interventions.

Because kindergarten is not yet mandatory, some children enter school less prepared than others. International evidence suggests that children benefit most from preschool when all classmates are at a similar level of knowledge. Qatar's NDS 2011-2016 proposed making kindergarten mandatory. A policy for compulsory kindergarten education, enacting required legislation and establishing a framework for early childhood development, is in preparation.

It is well recognised that a period of rapid brain development occurs in the first three to four years of life and the quality of homecare is a major determinant of the child's development during this period. In this context, engagement of adults in activities with children, the presence of books in the home for the child and the conditions of care are important indicators of quality of homecare.

**Table 5.4** Early childhood education (ECE) and human support for learning, 2012

	Children aged 36-59 months attending ECE (%)	Learning support for children aged 36-59 months	
		With whom adult household members engaged in 4 or more activities (%)	With whom father engaged in 1 or more activity (%)
<b>Nationality</b>			
Qatari	32.3	85.5	80.9
Non-Qatari	45.0	89.9	86.9
<b>Mother's education</b>			
Below secondary	27.4	80.5	74.1
Secondary	31.1	88.5	86.9
University and above	47.3	89.7	87.4
Total	40.8	88.4	84.9

Source: MDPS (2014b).

Table 5.5

Limited reading material support for learning, 2012

Variable	Household has 3 or more children's books (%)	Household has toys from shop or manufactured toys (%)	Household has computers and computer games (%)
<b>Nationality</b>			
Qatari	37.7	85.4	36.8
Non-Qatari	40.3	86.1	35.6
<b>Age group of children</b>			
0–23 months	13.4	71.5	11.7
24–59 months	57.4	95.8	52.7
<b>Mother's education</b>			
Primary	28.3	86.8	27.9
Preparatory	35.0	86.0	28.4
Secondary	40.2	85.4	34.7
University and above	41.0	86.0	38.0
Total	39.5	85.9	36.0

Source: MDPS (2014b).

Material support in terms of number books available at home is still low in households in Qatar, and this is especially so in having three or more children's books among Qatari households, and where the mothers have lower education status (table 5.5). However, the percentage of households with young children owning toys is around 85%.

### Increasing school-going population

The rapid growth of the school-going population is beginning to stretch the capacity of schools to cope with rising numbers of students at all levels of schooling. Educational outcomes in terms of quality of education, teacher-student ratios, class-student ratios are being affected, despite increasing investments. The capacity of private schools is also being stretched as student numbers increase.

Given the large inflows of expatriates, the number of expatriate families with school-age children has substantially increased. Expatriate children now outnumber Qatari children at all levels of education, and the disparity will likely increase, taxing Qatar's education system.

The system has to provide the highest possible quality of education and choice to the growing school-going Qatari population—the number of Qatari children at all ages grew considerably in the decade to 2013 and will continue to grow for the foreseeable future. It also has to meet the

education needs of children of the much faster growing number of expatriate families.

In the public independent schools, the growth in numbers of Qatari students has been much more moderate than for non-Qatari students. While Qataris still make up the majority of students at independent schools, the share of non-Qataris is growing.

In private schools, the growth of both Qatari and non-Qatari students at all levels has been much more marked, but the reasons differ. For Qataris, the rising preference for private school reflects in part the extension of the voucher programme, initiated in 2008 and expanded to all Qataris in 2013, and in part a trend towards private schools that predated the voucher programme. By contrast, the massive growth of non-Qataris in private schools reflects the greater number of children of expatriate workers in the country.

Overall, the increasing proportion of students in private schools mainly reflects trends in enrolment for non-Qataris, though there has been a steady increase in the proportion of Qatari students attending private schools—a trend likely to continue. Going forward, further expansion of high-quality private and public schools is required to meet the needs of the growing number of local and expatriate children.



## Child protection

All children have the right to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse (physical and emotional). There is significant evidence that violence, exploitation and abuse can affect a child's physical and mental health in the short and longer-term, impairing their ability to learn and socialise, and impacting on the transition to adulthood with adverse consequences later in life. Violence and abuse can also take the form of neglect—the failure to respond to a young child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs. In many instances this can result from a lack of support from young children's caregivers.

Conceptual thinking has moved from merely identifying abuse and the punishment of perpetrators to more proactive measures on child protection. Focus is on the influences on children and their exposure to risk, including in the home, such as internet safety. New forms of emotional abuse are impacting child well-being, such as bullying by text messages through social media.

Children in all family settings, of any economic status, are at risk of violent discipline. Evidence shows that children whose mothers are educated, who have books and learning materials at home, or whose parents are involved in their day-to-day learning, are less likely to experience violent disciplinary practices. Interventions aimed at preventing violence at home in early childhood have to be comprehensive, addressing the linked needs of child and caregiver.

Qatar has been working to strengthen the rights of the children and prohibit all forms of violence against them through the promotion of partnerships; support of joint action mechanisms through the Arab League; exchange of experiences and capacity development; and the advancement of children's rights.

### Child discipline and child abuse

Child discipline is integral to child rearing that teaches children socially acceptable behaviour. But there is debate on the most appropriate methods of child discipline and the use of physical and psychological disciplinary practices. Just 14% of households who responded to a 2012 national survey believed in physical disciplines of children (table 5.6). Only 7% of children experienced such discipline in a severe manner. Educational level of mother is a factor in belief in physical punishment, with lesser educated

mothers more likely to resort to physical discipline. Other disciplinary methods, such as psychological aggression are much more common than physical punishment.

**Table 5.6**

**Belief in physical child discipline highest among least educated, 2012**

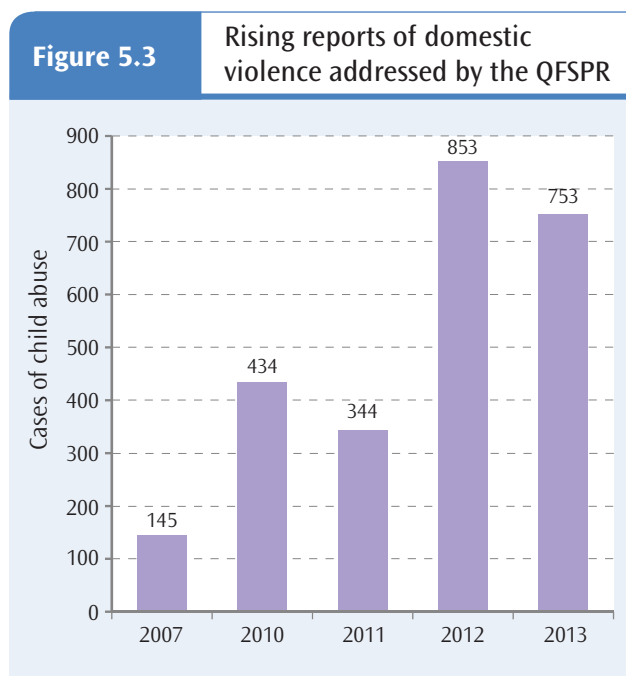
Variable	Respondent believes child needs to be physically punished (%)	Experienced any violent discipline (%)
<b>Nationality</b>		
Qatari	15	54
Non-Qatari	14	48
<b>Mother's education</b>		
Primary	19	65
Preparatory	18	60
Secondary	17	54
University and above	12	45
Total	14	50

Source: MDPS (2014b).

Cases of violence and abuse of children have been growing—by a parent, family member, caretaker, teacher or other children. Many cases go unreported and the magnitude of the problem is hard to quantify. A study of 500 expatriate and Qatari families conducted by the SCFA in 2011 found that one in five children in Qatar were subjected to some form of abuse—psychological, physical or sexual—in their own home, at school or in the community often out of sight of others (Scott 2011.). The study recommended that there be regular health monitoring, school awareness programmes, establishment of counselling entities, anti-abuse campaigns, better supervision in schools where abuse is more common and in-depth studies to understand the root causes of such violent behaviour.

Another study in 2013 of 1077 Qatari and non-Qatari students confirmed evidence of physical abuse and violence, including corporal punishment, in school settings (Al Meiriki and Al Meiriki 2013). And the Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (formerly the Qatar Foundation for Child and Women Protection) handled a rising number of cases of child abuse during 2007 to 2013 (figure 5.3).

The NDS 2011-2016 has a target to install and operate an early detection mechanism for child abuse and neglect by 2016. It also includes plans to establish a data registry centre for child abuse and neglect, child advocacy programmes and improving the lines of communication between hospitals and relevant authorities. Violence affects children’s physical and mental health. Campaigns to raise awareness about violence against children, to change attitudes, to encourage victims of abuse to report and to provide support for them merit high priority. Existing laws relating to violence against children need to be better enforced.



Sources: MDPS (2014g) and QSA (2013f).

## Realising the rights of youth

*“The state is fully convinced that no nation can develop and prosper without youth in leadership roles...the state expects to harvest and gain the rewards of its investment in youth at a time when the entire Arab region is suffering from different political, educational and economic tensions and upheavals.”*

His Highness the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, 2014

Qatar’s third National Human Development Report (2012) *Expanding the Capacities of Qatari Youth: Mainstreaming Youth in Development* focused in depth on youth and the expansion of their capacities to meet the challenges and opportunities of development. Here the focus is on a few priority themes affecting the rights of youth that were not covered in that report.

Critical areas of concern for youth are the impact of health risks especially those related to lifestyle, such as obesity (discussed above), and risk-taking behaviours including the use of drugs and HIV/AIDS. Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS are major public health and social problems affecting young people everywhere.

Inspired by QNV 2030 and its plans for the future, youth are seen as an important human resource and catalyst for positive social change. Young Qataris are expected to play a critical role in realising the national vision. The establishment of a new Ministry of Youth and Sports

in 2013 demonstrates the importance placed on youth development by Qatar’s leadership.

### Size of youth population

The United Nations defines youth as those in the age group 15-24 years, and adolescents as the population within the age group 10-19 years. Youth is the period of life generally considered as the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood. Qatar’s youth population grew at an exceptionally rapid rate during the period 2000 to 2015, with the size of the youth population rising from 86,000 in 2000 to an estimated 353,000 in 2013 (table 5.7). The bulk of the increase is due to the presence of large numbers of foreign workers in this age range. Qataris account for just 16% of the country’s youth.

### Youth well-being

Individuals tend to assess their level of well-being by comparing their situation to that of their peers. For

**Table 5.7** Qatar's youth population is growing very rapidly

	Population aged 15–24 (000s)			
	2000	2005	2010	2015 <sup>1</sup>
Qatari	31.0	37.6	47.7	54.7
Non-Qatari	55.1	117.2	204.8	298.4
Total	86.1	154.8	252.5	353.1
Share of youth in population (%)	14.0	17.1	14.9	14.7

<sup>1</sup>Based on projection

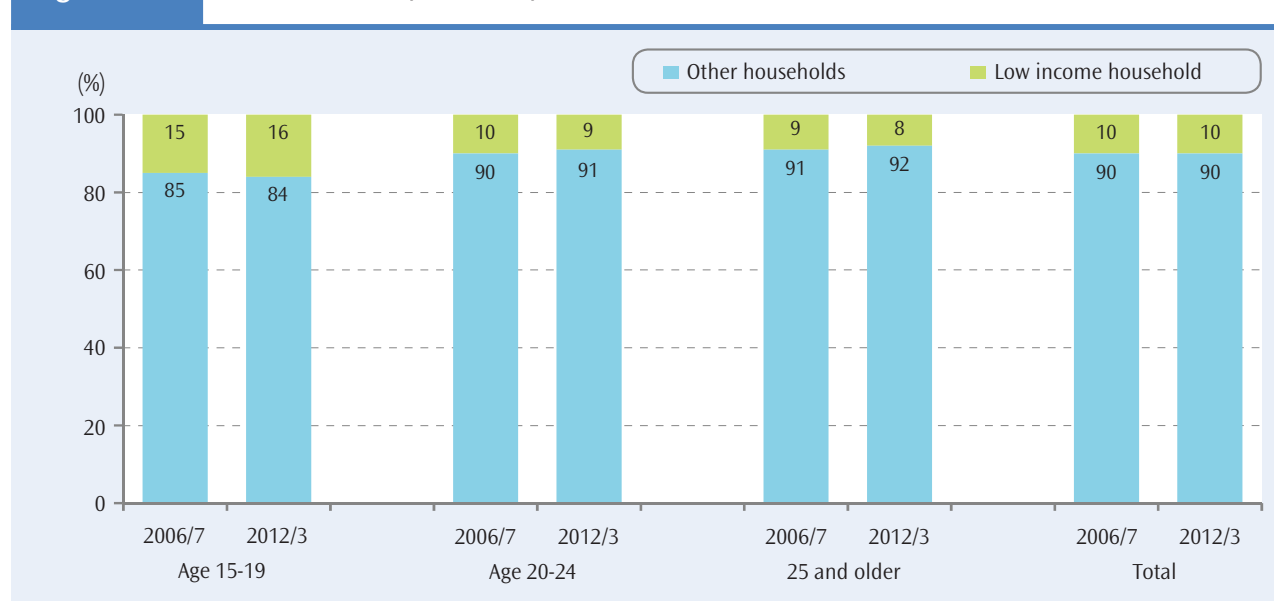
Sources: QSA (2010 and 2011) and MDPS (2013a).

this reason, the use of a relative poverty line helps to demonstrate the incidence and intensity of low income and spending among Qatari households<sup>i</sup>. Some 9.7% of Qatari households were classified in 2012/3 as being in relative poverty with around 12% of youth living in these households, compared with 8% for adults (figure 5.4). Poor households tend to be larger-sized households. Since many young people do not contribute to household income, households with more youth members tend to have lower

per capita incomes. Young people in these household also face other challenges such as lower educational attainment and higher unemployment.

Unemployed Qatari youth have relatively low educational attainment levels (figure 5.5). In 2013 unemployed young females were mainly secondary school graduates, although there are also a significant number of university graduates. Social and cultural factors are also important in decisions of young women as to whether to take up available job opportunities. Most prefer public sector employment, although a rising share are joining the private sector.

Qatari youth experience high death rates and high rates of serious injuries from road traffic accidents as a result of risky-behaviour (MDPS 2015). Deaths from road traffic accidents are the main cause of death among young males. While there are traffic laws and regulations in place that aim to curb reckless driving these are often not adhered to and enforcement is frequently lax. New initiatives for improving road safety need to focus on behavioural changes among youth.

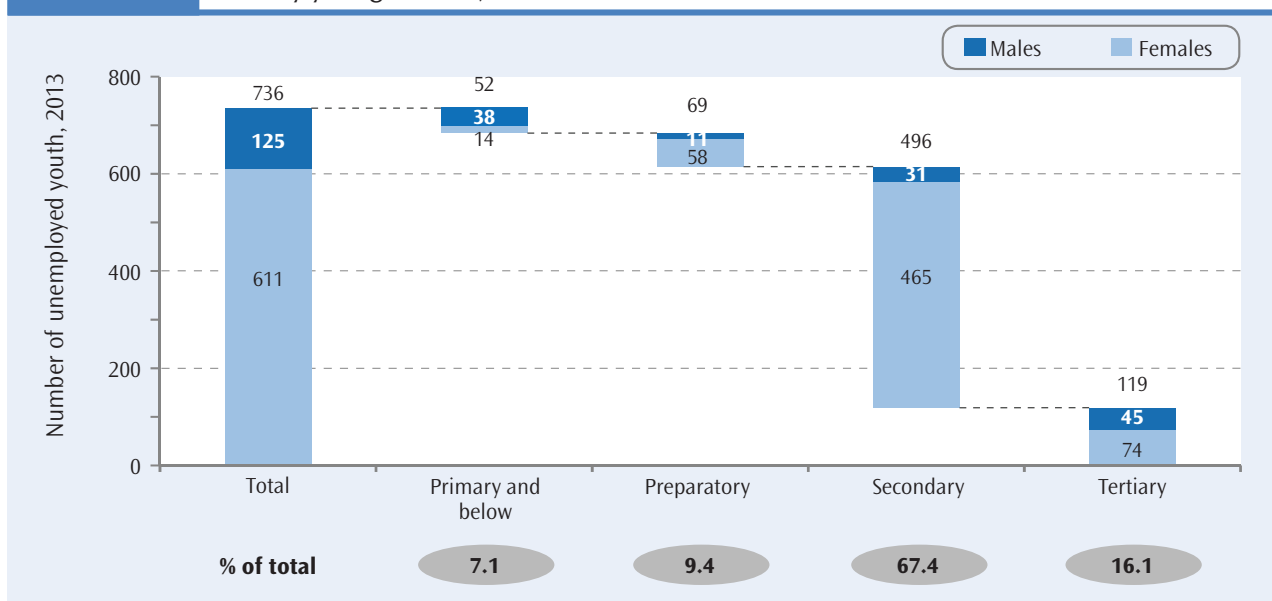
**Figure 5.4** About 1 in every 8 Qatari youth lives in low-income households

Sources: MDPS (2014f) and QSA (2008).

i Defined as half the median household equivalitised income.

**Figure 5.5**

Two-thirds of unemployed Qataris aged under 25 were secondary school graduates, mainly young women, 2013



Source: MDPS (2014c).

## Youth and drugs

Drug abuse is a major public health and social problem impacting young people in all societies. Yet little is publicly known about it in Qatar, including what drugs are being used and the magnitude of the challenge. Information from other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries suggests that problems such as heroin and cocaine may not be as significant as cannabis and amphetamines. Drug use disorders is ranked as the fifth highest cause of disability in Qatar in disability-adjusted life years lost (IHME 2013).

A number of civil society organisations conduct rehabilitation programmes, including the Qatar Foundation for Social Protection and Rehabilitation (formerly the Social Rehabilitation Center) established by Law 21 of 2006. The foundation, which works closely with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and began to receive cases in 2009, is mandated to provide protection and care to persons with behavioural disorders, including drug addicts of all nationalities and ages.

The Supreme Council of Health's Treatment and Rehabilitation Center, which also works closely with the Ministry of Interior, offers inpatient (current capacity of

28 beds with a plan to expand to 125 beds and cover females and non-Qataris) and outpatient services to adolescents and adult Qatari males who are suffering from use or addiction of any addictive substance. It adopts an integrative approach covering medical care for patient as well as psycho-social rehabilitation as well as spiritual and religious support.

Cultural appropriateness is important to the centre's work, and there are some recognised problems with drug use and treatment that are particularly relevant in the local environment. One is the high level of stigma attached to addiction, which makes individuals and families reluctant to seek the help of local services for fear of personal, family and community shame. As a result many Qataris with substance abuse problems either do not seek help or find treatment outside Qatar. Treatment abroad, however, has disadvantages since it isolates the treatment programme from the rest of the patient's life. There is an unrealistic expectation that you leave Qatar sick and return cured. Further, rehabilitation institutions that rely on self-reported instead of court ordered admissions have lower intake rates which conceal the true levels of substance abuse.

The new Naufar-Qatar Wellness Centre (with some 130 residential rooms) for the treatment and rehabilitation of persons suffering from substance abuse and behavioural disorders is expected to open in 2015. And Hamad Medical Corporation is also able to provide hospital-based care and treatment for any resident if and when this becomes necessary.

Qatar's National Drug Control Strategy 2010-2015 aims to strengthen the role of government and civil society agencies to collectively address drug use. The MOI-led Permanent Committee for Drug and Alcohol Affairs proposes policies for combating, treating and rehabilitating drug abusers. For example, it is raising awareness among school and university students of the dangers of drug abuse, including advertising on popular websites about the risk of drugs.

Launched in December 2013, Qatar's National Mental Health Strategy *Changing Mind's, Changing Lives, 2013–2018*, also recognises the concerns that surround drug abuse. It sets out Qatar's vision to provide the best possible mental health services and this includes substance misuse. The strategy emphasises the importance of prevention and promotion as well as the need to provide the right care, in the right place and at the right time.

Drug users are often stigmatised and can be vulnerable to repressive treatment by the criminal justice system. Qatar has moved away from treating drug addiction merely as a criminal matter and is recognising it as a health and social issue. The right to health includes the right to obtain health services without fear of punishment. By incorporating a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, Qatar could improve access to treatment and reduce the prevalence of substance abusers.

## Youth and HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS (human immune-deficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome), which has the potential to spread very rapidly, can have a devastating impact on individuals, families, communities and society. Adolescents and youth represent an opportunity to end the AIDS epidemic through leadership as well as behavioural and social changes which would have an impact on new

HIV infections, AIDS related deaths and the way countries respond to HIV and AIDS.

### Human rights and HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS-related human rights issues—such as stigma and discrimination; punitive laws, policies and practices; and poor access to justice—have been identified by many countries as obstacles to achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support. A rights-based, effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic involves investing in enabling legal and social environments and promoting and protecting human rights of those with HIV/AIDS. This ensures that resources reach the people who need them most, individuals are empowered to be proactive in taking care of their HIV/AIDS-related health and human rights' needs, demand for services increases and the quality of services improves.

In 2011 United Nations member states committed to national HIV/AIDS strategies that promote and protect human rights, including programmes aimed at eliminating stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS as well as their families through sensitising police and judges; training health care workers in non-discrimination, confidentiality and informed consent; supporting national human rights learning campaigns; legal literacy and legal services; and monitoring the impact of the legal environment on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support.

### HIV/AIDS trends

Currently the incidence of communicable diseases in Qatar is generally low. All foreign workers are screened for communicable diseases, with those found to pose a health risk barred entry—which may be seen as a form of discrimination. As a result of such measures, communicable diseases have remained low despite the massive influx of expatriates over the past decade.

The true HIV/AIDS level among Qataris is difficult to ascertain as they are not screened and there is significant social stigma, shame and fear attached to the disease. Still Qatar has experienced the spread of HIV/AIDS. New cases of HIV are being reported each year (table 5.8). According to official statistics in 2013, 10 new infections were reported for Qataris and eight for non-Qataris.

**Table 5.8****Qatar's continued reporting of new HIV cases**

Year	Males	Females	Total	Qatari	Non-Qatari
2001	4	0	4	2	2
2002	14	4	18	8	10
2003	7	1	8	3	5
2004	9	2	11	4	7
2005	11	3	14	2	12
2006	5	4	9	7	2
2007	3	6	9	6	3
2008	5	1	6	1	5
2009	2	3	5	3	2
2010	5	2	7	4	3
2011	4	3	7	1	6
2012	13	2	15	5	10
2013	..	..	18	10	8

.. Not available

Source: SCH (2013a and 2013b).

### Education on HIV/AIDS

Providing young people with basic HIV/AIDS education enables them to protect themselves from infection. Young people are often particularly vulnerable to the disease through sexually transmission and drug use. Acquiring knowledge and skills encourages young people to avoid or reduce risky behaviours. Even for those not yet engaging in risky behaviours, HIV/AIDS education helps prepare them for situations they may experience later in life.

HIV/AIDS education also helps to reduce stigma and discrimination, by dispelling false information that can lead to fear and blame. This is crucial for prevention, as stigma often makes people reluctant to be tested and individuals who are unaware of their HIV/AIDS infection are more likely to pass the virus on to others.

Educating young people about HIV and AIDS necessitates discussions about sensitive subjects such as sex and drug use. Many people believe it is inappropriate to talk to young people about these subjects and fear that doing so will encourage young people to indulge in risky behaviours. Such attitudes are often based on moral or religious views rather than evidence. Substantial international evidence shows that educating young people about safer sex and the importance of using condoms does not lead to increases in sexual activity.

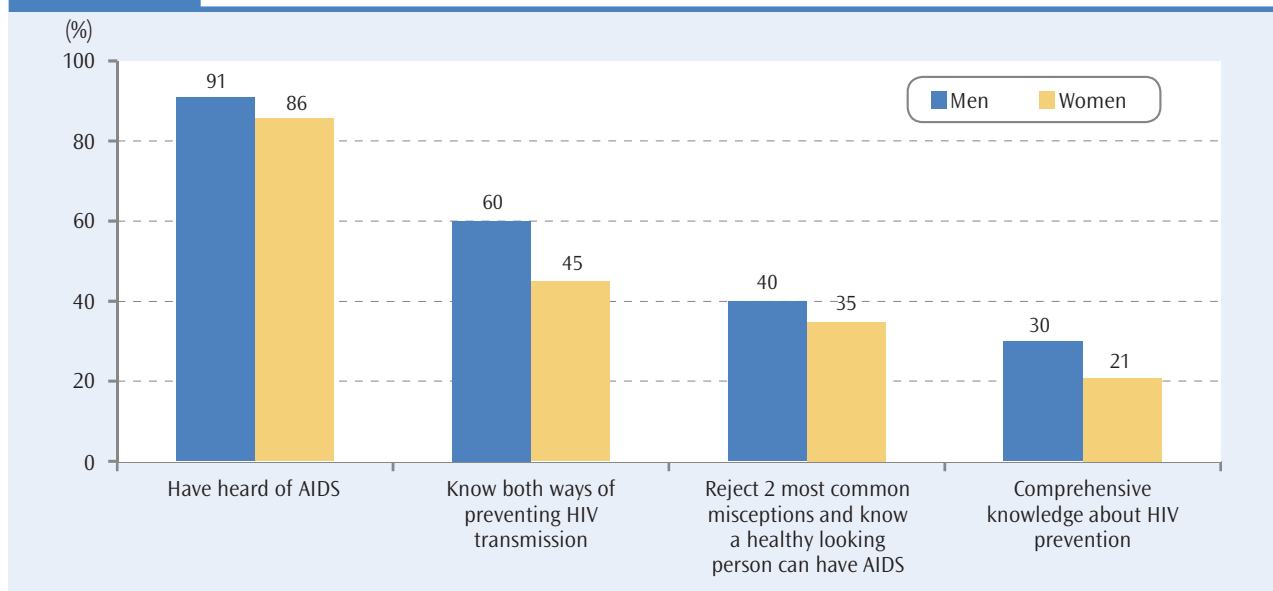
Schools play a pivotal role in providing HIV/AIDS education for young people. Not only do schools have the capacity to reach a large number of young people, but students are particularly receptive to learning new information. Families also need to be empowered to provide the first line of protection against stigma, raise awareness and decrease the incidence of new infections. Further, the wider community, mass media and popular culture all influence young people. It is important that they convey accurate educational information about HIV/AIDS.

### Knowledge on AIDS and HIV/AIDS prevention

One of the most important prerequisites for reducing the rate of HIV infection is accurate knowledge of how HIV is transmitted and strategies for preventing transmission. Correct information is the first step towards raising awareness and giving young people the tools to protect themselves from infection. Misconceptions about HIV are common and can confuse young people and hinder prevention efforts.

HIV/AIDS is mainly spread by three means: sexual contact, exposure to infected bodily fluids or tissues, and from mother to child during pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding. The 2012 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey shows that although very high percentages of males and females in Qatar—91% and 86% respectively—have heard

**Figure 5.6** While most people in Qatar have heard of AIDS only a small proportion know how to prevent HIV, 2012



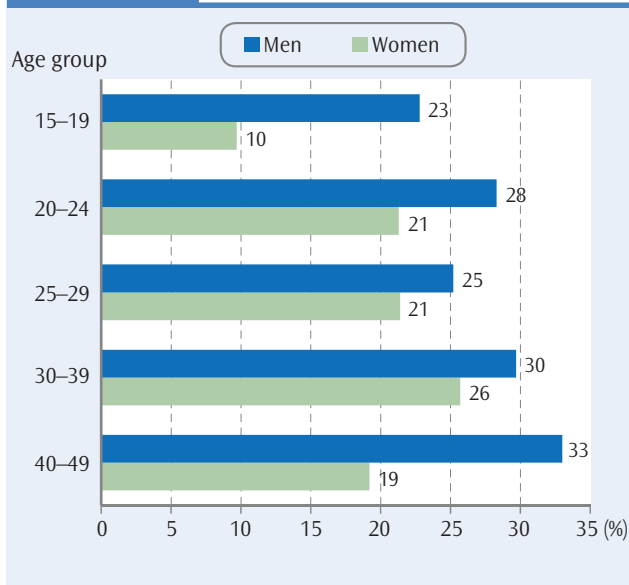
Source: MDPS (2014b).

of AIDS, knowledge about HIV prevention is still low at 30% and 21% respectively (figure 5.6).

Young people living in Qatar, especially females, have little knowledge about prevention of HIV transmission. Just 10% of females aged 15-19 have comprehensive knowledge of HIV prevention—less than half of those in the other age groups (figure 5.7). Among male youth, the information gap between those aged 15-19 and the older age groups is not as wide as it is for females (figure 5.7).

Accepting attitudes toward people living with HIV/AIDS Stigma and discrimination are among the foremost barriers to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. International research has shown that stigma and discrimination undermine HIV prevention efforts by making people afraid to seek HIV information and services to reduce their risk of infection and to adopt safer behaviours because these actions may raise suspicion about their HIV status. Research has also shown that fear of stigma and discrimination, which can also be linked to fear of violence, discourages people living with HIV from disclosing their status even to family members and sexual partners and undermines their ability and willingness to access and adhere to treatment. Thus, stigma and discrimination weaken the ability of individuals, families

**Figure 5.7** Comprehensive knowledge of prevention of HIV transmission is low, especially among young women, 2012



Source: MDPS (2014b).

and communities to protect themselves from HIV and to stay healthy if they are living with HIV.



About 90% of both Qatari and non-Qatari women agreed with at least one of the four accepting attitudes towards people living with HIV:

- Are willing to care for family member with AIDS in own home
- Would buy fresh vegetables from shopkeeper or vender who has the AIDS virus
- Believe that a female teacher with AIDS and is not sick should be allowed to continue teaching
- Would not want to keep secret that a family member got infected with the AIDS virus

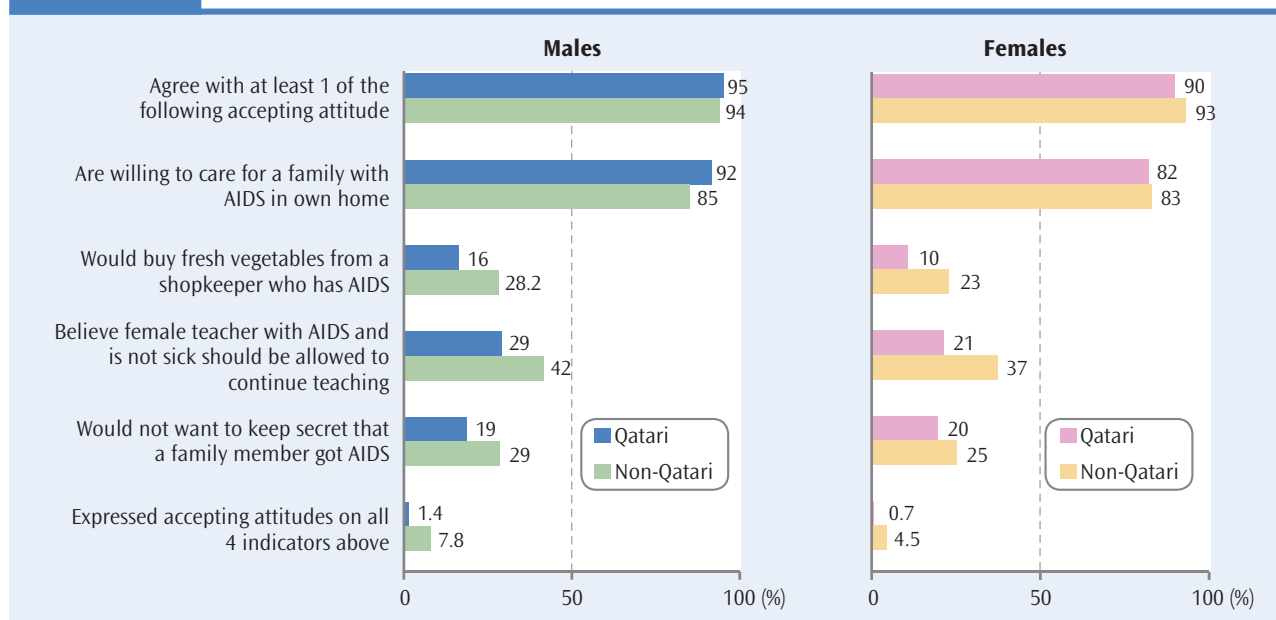
The majority of Qatari and non-Qatari women expressed their willingness to care for a family member with AIDS. However, significantly smaller proportions of women had accepting attitudes towards those with AIDS outside their family and most would keep the AIDS status of a family member secret (figure 5.8). While the strong role of family in Qatari society may provide some protection to those living with HIV/AIDS, discrimination and stigma associated with the virus is evident.

## Youth participation and social media

Inclusion of young people’s voice in policy is based on the rationale that participation is a right to which young people are entitled and a way to demonstrate respect for their views. Participation in development processes provides an opportunity for social learning, which contributes to young people’s development of skills and competences which are valuable to other aspects of their lives.

The potential of Qatar’s youth can be further harnessed through greater participation in national development through social media (box 5.2). Qatar’s youth are internet savvy. Internet use rate as well as social media use are highest among GCC countries (figure 5.9). Youth want to participate more in the life of the nation and want to communicate with decision-makers. They need an enabling environment in which they are encouraged and motivated to participate in their country’s development.

**Figure 5.8** Qatari and non-Qatari accepting attitudes towards people living with HIV/AIDS, 2012



Source: MDPS (2014b).

**Box 5.2** Social media and youth participation in national development

A 2013 survey on *The Role of Social Media in Development* reviewed the social media interactions between the public and agencies in Qatar. The survey covered 444 respondents, mainly young persons, of whom 69% were Qataris and 31% non-Qataris.

Most topics shared or browsed by respondents were of a social nature, religious, political and entertainment topics (13%), followed by health and sports (8%) and education and the economy (7%). About half of respondents raised topics related to national development. Around 80% agreed that social networking sites have a greater ability to influence society than traditional media because social media allowed easier access to information and freedom of expression, including discussion of topics often seen as inappropriate.

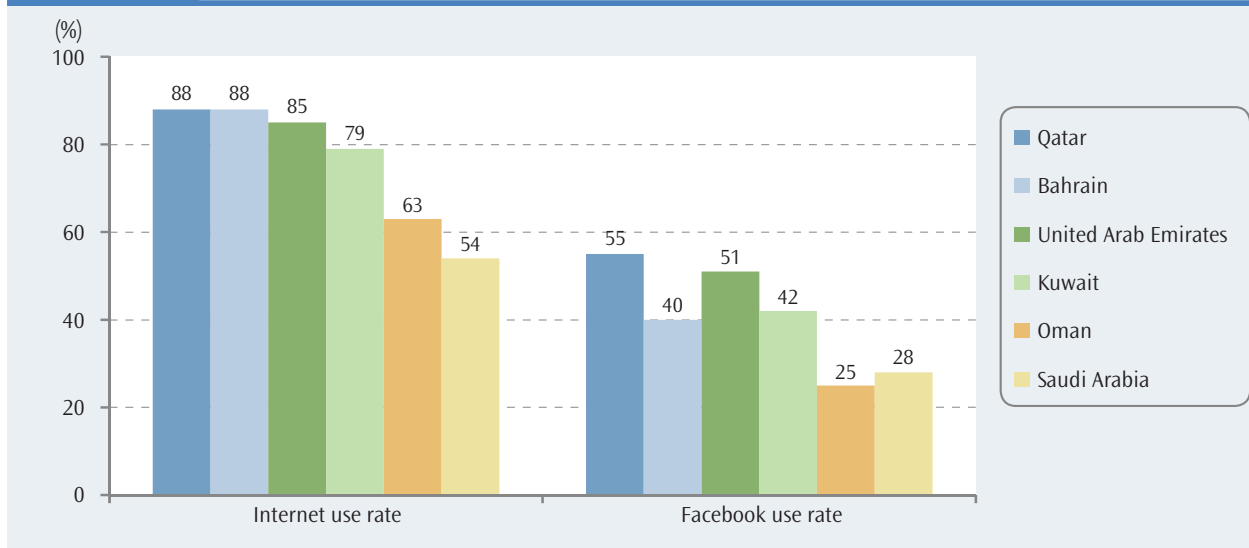
More than half of respondents felt satisfied with the government and agency use of social media. Of 58 agencies using social media, the MOI was seen as the most active in interacting with respondents, followed by the SEC, the Qatar Charitable Society and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Less active agencies include the Supreme Judiciary Council, Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Audit Bureau.

Increased internet bandwidth has enable expanded participation in social media from texts to multimedia, video and audio. These forms of communication appeal to the younger generation. They provide an opportunity for the government to increase the effectiveness of social media to motivate greater participation in national development.

A key challenges identified by respondents in the use of social media is the lack of response by some institutions. Institutions need to train staff and develop a strategy for social networking management, with supporting teams to help manage information responses that the public demand. Social media also requires communication and coordination between government agencies to ensure quality and consistency of messages and to address cross-sector issues.

Source: Khalid (2014).

**Figure 5.9** Qatar has highest use of internet and social media among GCC countries, 2014



Source: ASDA (2014).

## The RtD of older persons

*“Older persons make wide-ranging contributions to economic and social development. However, discrimination and social exclusion persist. We must overcome this bias in order to ensure a socially and economically active, secure and healthy ageing populations.”*

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General  
Message for the 2014 International Day of Older Persons

The promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the RtD, is essential for the creation of an inclusive society in which older persons participate fully and without discrimination and on the basis of equality. Combating discrimination based on age and promoting the dignity of older persons is fundamental to ensuring the respect that older persons deserve.

Older persons have the same rights as everyone else, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is, however, no international convention exclusively on the rights of older persons, except for the International Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families which mandates against age discrimination.

However, international commitments to the rights of older persons exist as contained in the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing for example. But these are not legally binding and therefore only impose a moral obligation on governments to implement them. Yet it could be argued that some rights have more relevance in older age than at other times in life, for example the right to social security in the form of pensions.

The aim of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is to ensure that persons everywhere are able to age with security and dignity and to continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights. It advances the full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all older persons, including:

- Achieving secure ageing, which involves reaffirming the goal of eradicating poverty in old age and building on the United Nations Principles for Older Persons.
- Empowering older persons to fully and effectively participate in the economic, political and social lives of their societies, including through income-generating and voluntary work.

- Providing opportunities for individual development, self-fulfilment and well-being throughout life as well as in late life, through for example, access to lifelong learning and participation in the community while recognising that older persons are not one homogenous group.
- Ensuring the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, and civil and political rights of persons and the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against older persons.
- Committing to gender equality among older persons through, inter alia, elimination of gender-based discrimination.
- Providing health care, support and social protection for older persons, including preventive and rehabilitative health care.

Older persons are mentioned in article 21 of Qatar’s Permanent Constitution which states that the family is the basis of society. A Qatari family is founded on religion, ethics and patriotism. The law shall regulate as necessary to protect the family, support its structure, strengthen its ties and protect mothers, children and older persons.

Qatar does not have a comprehensive law to protect the rights of older persons. Although the Permanent Constitution provides for equal treatment of older persons, their rights are not fully acknowledged. These rights include the right to social security in the form of a pension, their right to social services and their right to continue in employment.

Qatar Foundation for Elderly People (IHSAN) was established to provide social care and services to older persons while advocating their right to remain active and respected in society. IHSAN promotes Islamic values in the treatment and care of older persons and helps them overcome difficulties in all social, health, economic and rehabilitative aspects of life. Nursing and physical therapy

services include diet counselling, drug treatment and physiotherapy. In addition, IHSAN also provides support and guidance to the families of older persons.

Population ageing presents challenges, including ensuring the sustainability of pensions and the ability of an already overburdened health care system to serve growing numbers of older people who have ever-increasing needs for health care. Conversely it brings with it more experienced workers, a growing cohort of custodians of culture and traditional values and caregivers of grandchildren.

### Profile of and issues faced by older persons

A profile of Qatar's older persons and their socio-economic characteristics can be obtained from population census information the most recent of which was held in 2010. The census enumerated a total of 29,000 persons aged 60

and above of whom 37% were Qataris and 63% non-Qataris (table 5.9). This number is certain to have increased since, and with increasing life expectancy will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Overall in 2010 older persons comprised just 2% of the total population and 4.4% of the Qatari population. Among older Qataris the sex ratio is fairly evenly balanced, whereas for non-Qataris older males outnumber older females by 3.4 to 1.

There are some further interesting differences in the profile of older Qataris compared with non-Qataris. The Qatari group is significantly older. In 2010 43% of older Qataris were aged over 70 compared with just 15% of older non-Qataris. Not surprisingly therefore the proportion of Qatari older persons with a disability is much higher than among non-Qataris (table 5.9). In terms of marital composition, most older Qatari males are married whereas most older Qatari females are widowed.

**Table 5.9** Profile of Qatar's older persons aged 60 and over, 2010

Variable	Qatari			Non-Qatari		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
<b>Age group</b>						
60–64	1,569	1,840	3,409	9,251	2,309	11,560
65–69	1,249	1,436	2,685	2,826	943	3,769
70–74	963	1,069	2,032	1,145	460	1,605
75+	1,294	1,336	2,630	672	424	1,096
Total 60+	5,075	5,681	10,756	13,894	4,136	18,030
Population share (%)	4.2	4.6	4.4	1.2	1.4	1.2
<b>Disability</b>						
With disability	780	659	1,439	444	393	837
Without disability	4,295	5,022	9,317	13,450	3,743	17,193
Share with disability (%)	15.4	11.6	13.4	3.2	9.5	4.6
<b>Labour force status</b>						
In labour force	866	51	917	12,900	694	13,594
Outside labour force	4,209	5,630	9,839	994	3,442	4,436
Participation rate (%)	17.1	0.9	8.5	92.8	16.8	75.4
<b>Marital status</b>						
Never married	1.4	2.1	1.8	6.3	2.4	5.4
Married	92.8	46.2	68.1	90.7	74	86.9
Divorced	1.4	4	2.8	0.8	2.2	1.1
Widowed	4.4	47.7	27.3	2.2	21.4	6.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: QSA (2011).

Of older Qataris in 2010 just 14% of males and 1% of females were still in the labour force (table 5.9). Most older Qataris receive pensions or other government transfers and benefits. By contrast labour force participation rates among older non-Qataris were 93% for males and 17% for females. The high rate of labour force participation of older non-Qataris raises an important issue on the link between continuing work in order to stay in the country. On retirement a non-Qatari either leaves Qatar or transfers his/her residence permit to his/her children if they want to stay in the country. They have no entitlement for a pension or other social security benefits.

Illiteracy among older persons is highest for Qatari females at 41% in 2013. Overall illiteracy has fallen sharply among older persons (table 5.10). This is due to the effect of greater exposure to education by these cohorts with the passage of time.

	Qatari		Non-Qatari	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
2004	47.8	82.7	28.3	46.2
2010	23.0	55.0	11.7	22.6
2013	15.0	40.7	7.6	29.9

Sources: MDPS (2014c) and QSA (2005 and 2011).

In many countries older persons are disproportionately affected by poverty. Mandatory retirement age, inheritance laws that deny women the right to own or inherit property when their husband dies, low educational attainment, illness, disability and the absence of social security are all challenges. Each contributes to age-related forms of economic disadvantage. However, analysis of relative poverty in Qatar in 2012/3 indicates that the prevalence of relative poverty in low-income households with persons aged 60 and above was less than the overall level.

### **Social protection—pensions**

Cultural values and traditions play important roles in the

lives of older peoples. Culture conditions the attitudes and behaviour of older people and the perception and practices of family members around them. Traditional family support mechanisms for older persons are being eroded with the rapid changes that Qatar has experienced over the past decade or so. A comprehensive pension enhancement plan outlined in the NDS 2011-2016 aims to provide protection against relative poverty in old age and to ensure a smooth transition from work to retirement.

Qatar’s formal pension system, which covers public sector and government-owned company employees, lacks a cost-of-living adjustment, so pension incomes do not keep pace with inflation. And the system does not cover self-employed people and people in the private sector. Nor does it cover non-Qataris who may have worked for government for a sizeable proportion of their working life.

The General Retirement and Social Insurance Authority is in the early stages of planning an expansion of the pension system to include Qataris working in the private sector. Possible options for reform include improved governance of the existing system and the introduction and testing of voluntary systems or non-contributory pensions.

The feminisation of ageing constitutes an unprecedented shift in the social fabric of all societies with far-reaching consequences. Older women face inequalities as a result of their gender-based roles in society. The impact of gender inequalities in education and employment becomes most pronounced in old age. Older women are more likely than older men to be poor. Older women often take on greater responsibilities for family care.

The well-being of older persons needs to be maintained and enhanced by regularly adjusting social security pensions in line with inflation, and expediting the amendments to Law 24 of 2002 on Retirement and Pensions and Law 8 of 2009 on Human Resources Administration. Qatar’s NHRC further recommended in its 2013 Annual Report the need for implementing awareness and education programmes on the role of the family in the care of older persons, as well as establishing integrated health centres for older persons.

## Conclusions

The CRC shifted the global paradigm on the way children are viewed and treated—as human beings with a distinct set of rights instead of as passive objects of care and charity. Qatar national legislation is being progressively aligned with the articles of the CRC. Several agencies and specialised organisations have been established to complement the role of line ministries in helping to realise the rights of the child to development.

Although there is no absolute poverty in Qatar, low-income households have a disproportionate share of young persons. About 15% of Qatari children (aged under 14) lived in relatively poor households in 2012/3 compared with 13% in 2006/7. The effect of divorce on Qatari children continues to be an issue given the links to child poverty and other dimensions of child well-being. The risk of child poverty after divorce are high, despite legal obligations to pay maintenance to children under the 2006 Family Law. The risk to child well-being from divorce does not stem from low income alone but also from the events of separation and divorce.

Childhood obesity in Qatar is a major and growing health concern with both immediate and long-term effects on well-being. Legislation and policy need to encourage access and exposure to healthy foods as well as increased sport and physical activity. Prevention campaigns should be encouraged, including with stakeholder participation, to educate the public on the links between diet, physical activity and health, including the need to reduce intakes of fat, sugar and refined grains.

Children's mental health is affected by multiple factors including their genetic endowment, physical health, quality of nutrition, income of their families and other social, familial and cultural factors. It is also affected by the stability and safety of the environment in which they live. Despite mental health difficulties in childhood and adolescence being common, Qatar has very limited data on their prevalence. There is a need to break the stigmas and taboos that surround child and adolescent mental health. There is also a need to expedite the establishment of a National Mental Health Law to protect the rights of people with mental health conditions, ensuring access to appropriate, high-quality care in suitable settings.

High-quality ECE and kindergarten provide great benefits to young children as well as to society and acts an enabler for education reform. They tend to lead to higher educational performance, healthy and competent adults, responsible citizens, and strong communities. While kindergarten is designed as part of Qatar's educational reform to improve subsequent school performance, at present there is limited acknowledgement of the need to link issues of child development in a strategic way. There is a need to expedite implementation of a policy for compulsory kindergarten and to establish this within a comprehensive framework for early childhood development.

Cases of violence and abuse of children in Qatar are growing: by parents, family members, caretakers, teachers or even other children. Many cases go unreported and the magnitude of the problem is hard to quantify. There should be regular health monitoring, school awareness programmes, establishment of counselling entities, better supervision in schools where abuse is more common, and in-depth studies to understand the root causes of such violent behaviour. Violence affects children's physical and mental health. Also required are campaigns to raise awareness about violence against children, to encourage victims of abuse to report and to provide support for them. And existing laws relating to violence against children need to be better enforced.

Drug abuse is a major public health problem impacting young people in all societies. Yet little is publicly known about it in Qatar, including what drugs are being used and the magnitude of the challenge. The MOI-led Permanent Committee for Drug and Alcohol Affairs is raising awareness among school and university students of the dangers of drug abuse, including advertising on popular websites about the risk of drugs. Qatar has moved away from treating drug addiction merely as a criminal matter and is recognising it as a health and social challenge. The right to health includes the right to obtain health services without fear of punishment. By incorporating a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, Qatar could improve access to treatment and reduce the prevalence of substance abusers.

Qatar has experienced the spread of HIV/AIDS. The true HIV/AIDS level, especially among Qataris, is difficult to ascertain as the population is not screened and there is significant social stigma and fear attached to the disease. Young people, especially females, have little knowledge about prevention of HIV transmission. HIV/AIDS-related human rights issues, such as stigma and discrimination; punitive laws; policies and practices; and poor access to justice; have been identified by many countries as obstacles to achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support. A rights-based effective response to the HIV/AIDS involves investing in enabling legal and social environments and promoting and protecting human rights of persons living with HIV/AIDS.

The potential of Qatar's youth can be further harnessed through their greater participation in national development. Youth want to participate more in the life of the nation and want to communicate with decision-makers. Social media can provide the right vehicle. But youth need an enabling environment in which they are encouraged and motivated to participate in national development.

Older persons have the same rights as everyone else, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While there is no international convention exclusively on the rights of older persons, commitments to the rights of older persons exist: in the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing for example. These aim to ensure that persons everywhere are able to age with security and dignity and to continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights.

Older persons make a significant but often unrewarded contribution to development. Qatar supports the promotion of active ageing and empowerment of older persons through opportunities to participate in all spheres of life—social, economic, cultural and political. Giving older people a voice in the formulation of policies and the design of programmes, especially those affecting their rights, including age-appropriate health care and services, retirement pensions and an enabling physical environment, are becoming of increasing importance. The well-being of older persons needs to be enhanced by amending legislation negatively impacting on their well-being, including providing better social protection for older non-Qataris who have lived in and contributed towards the development of the country for many years.



# 6

## Participation in Development





# Participation in Development

*“Qatar must continue to invest in its people so that all can participate fully in economic, social and political life... This requires continuous improvements in the efficiency, transparency and accountability of government agencies.”*

Qatar National Vision 2030  
His Highness the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

Participation is integral to the right to development (RtD) “by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.” This definition underscores that:

- Development is comprehensive and not merely economic.
- Equal emphasis is placed on development processes as on results.
- Entitlement of all individuals to participate in, contribute towards, and enjoy the benefits of development.

A human rights-based approach to development emphasises the participation of rights-holders in the design and implementation of policies and programmes affecting them, ensuring also that vulnerable, discriminated and marginalised groups can participate in and benefit from development on the basis of equality and non-discrimination. Participation is thus a process by which people’s concerns, needs, and values are incorporated into decision-making (Nabatchi 2012).

Participation enables people to express in practical ways the opportunities they seek for themselves and how they and their communities can benefit from the changes sought in development strategies and programmes. Through their inputs and contributions in determining the future that they seek and what they want from

development, participation helps to ensure buy-in. People participating in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes have a stake in both outcomes and accountability.

Political participation alone is insufficient for the exercise of the RtD. Participation in decision-making means much more than political participation. Global evidence confirms the need for mechanisms for maintaining a dialogue between government and its citizens. All institutions, local and national, that impact on the lives of individuals must be concerned with development.

Following a summary description of Qatar’s legal and planning framework, this chapter looks at critical elements of good governance, including political participation; freedom of association and expression; as well as a range of consultancy mechanisms that are being used to strengthen participation of the people in national and local development.

## Legal and planning framework

### Permanent Constitution

Qatar’s Permanent Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, association, assembly and the press, to be exercised in accordance with “the provisions of the law” or “the conditions and circumstances set forth in the law.” Article 46 of the Permanent Constitution provides that “individuals have the right to address public authorities,”

with no restrictions or caveats. The Constitution therefore provides an important legal basis for participation by individuals and further states:

- Article one, Qatar is a state with a democratic system.
- Articles 18 and 19, citizens are equal and Qatari society shall be based on the principle of freedom and equal opportunities for citizens.
- Article 42, the state shall ensure the right of all citizens to vote and to be elected in accordance with the law.
- Article 45 secures the freedom to establish societies.
- Article 47 secures the freedom of expression and scientific research.
- Article 48 secures the freedom of press, printing and publishing.

All freedoms and rights to participate in public life are thus secured in accordance with the Permanent Constitution (MOFA 2015). Some of these rights and freedoms are regulated by laws such as the Public Election Law and the Law on the Formation of Associations.

### Rule of law

The Arab Human Development Report 2004, *Towards Freedom in the Arab World* argued that freedom is about human dignity. For it to be sustained and guaranteed it requires a system of good governance that rests upon effective popular representation and is accountable to the people, and that upholds the rule of law and ensures that an independent judiciary applies the law impartially (UNDP 2004).

Qatar is fostering legal reforms that can be associated with more open politics, including:

- The College of Law at Qatar University—legal studies were earlier undertaken at the College of Sharia and Islamic Studies—was established in 2006 to meet the needs of and demands for expanding legal education and curricula reform. Currently, the college has some 800 students and 50 academics, with an enriched curriculum that also covers domestic violence, human rights and environmental law.
- A new dedicated tribunal for international commercial and civil disputes.
- The formation of, and establishment of standards for, the Qatar Bar Association.
- In 2012 Qatar National Research Fund funded a three-year interdisciplinary research on legal development and practices in Qatar titled *The Rule of Law in Qatar:*

*Comparative Insights and Policy Strategies*, conducted by the University of Massachusetts Amherst in collaboration with FIKRA, a policy-oriented research organisation based in Doha.

Qatar has further demonstrated commitment to the rule of law through participation in international conventions on the rule of law and human rights. Qatar asserts successes at the national level by making the rule of law an organising principle for public life and by promoting transparency in political administration. In 2013 the country ranked 36th out of 212 countries in the World Bank's Rule of Law index which reflects perception of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence. The country has the highest ranking in this index amongst Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

### Participation in national planning

People's participation has been recognised at the international level as an integral part of development and is being incorporated into the process of formulating national development policies and strategies in many countries. There are several models for engaging people's participation in public policy discussions, development planning processes, or even at lower levels of the community. Countries like Malaysia routinely engage the views of the public through representation from political parties, trade unions, professional associations, think tanks, academia, and so on before formulating the annual budget and before determining the development priorities of the National Five Year Development Plans.

Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV) sets out the main economic, social, human and environmental goals that are designed to help in choosing a development plan that is compatible with the aspirations of the country's leadership and of its people. QNV 2030 benefited from the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, as well as an extensive and inclusive dialogue with government ministries and agencies, the private sector, civil society, local and international experts.

Similarly, the processes involved in preparing Qatar's first National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) were also participatory and involved all sectors of society. The

NDS 2011-2016 was *highly participatory and inclusive across society. Qataris and non-Qataris from all sectors were energised, enthusiastic and engaged...[engagement of] countless public, private and civil society sector participants ...[and including] interviews, discussions, debates and research...* (GSDP 2011). The process was a complex one involving 14 cross-sectoral Task Teams (frequently also supported by sub-Task Teams) working within six Executive Groups working under the direction of the National Steering Committee. A variant on this model was followed on the Midterm Review of the NDS 2011-2016. The rationale was to get ownership of the initiatives by all sectors of society.

An analysis of the membership of the Task Teams and Executive Groups reveals that non-public sector participation was not as extensive as it could have been. Membership of Task Teams ranged from seven to 18 with most averaging around 13-15 members each, including one or two representatives of the private sector and one or two from civil society organisations (CSO), drawn in most cases from Qatar Foundation and various universities in Qatar. The Task Team on Security and Public Safety was the smallest at seven members, and did not include any non-governmental members, while the Task Team on Health Care (13 members) had the highest participation of five representatives of hospitals and health care providers – most of whom under the Supreme Council of Health (SCH) or were government-funded (GSDP 2011). The representation in sub-Task Teams tended to mirror that in Task Teams.

## Political participation

With the spread of education and increased access to information and communication technologies (ICT), globally people are demanding more participation in political processes, challenging decision-makers to be more accountable and expand the opportunities for public discourse. Expanded opportunities for political participation, along with greater government accountability in ensuring that basic human needs are met, can foster human freedoms and sustain human development.

Equitable and sustainable human development requires systems of public discourse that encourage citizens to participate in the political process by expressing their

views and voicing their concerns. People should be able to influence policy and to look forward to greater economic and social opportunities, as well as political accountability. Exclusion from this process limits people's ability to communicate their concerns and needs and can perpetuate injustices.

### Central Municipal Council elections

Political participation at the municipal level (currently the country has seven municipalities) started in 1999 when Qatar held its first elections for the Central Municipal Council (see chapter 3). Previously members of the council were appointed. With the 1998 Municipal Council Elections Law, men and women were now eligible to stand for elections for a four-year term. Municipal elections, which have taken place four times since 1999, are restricted to Qatari citizens. The role of the council is advisory, and its remit is municipal services, including roads, lights, parks and recreation and sewerage, that are important at the community level. The Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning is however responsible for resource allocation decisions.

Around 50% of eligible voters have voted in each of the four municipal elections. Measures could be initiated to increase awareness among eligible voters of the importance of participation in the electoral process as an expression of political participation. An expanded role for the council in decision-making at the municipal level would help stimulate interest among the voting public and strengthen their participation in decision-making through their representatives.

### Advisory Shura Council elections

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, laid the groundwork for public participation through the 2004 *Permanent Constitution* which states that an elected legislature would enhance the state's legislative, executive and judicial authorities, enabling them to excel in performing their respective duties. Previously, since 1972, article 46 of the amended *Provisional Constitution* had stipulated that a legislature would be launched through direct elections after the end of the term of the first Shura Council. However, at the end of that term it was decided the appointed council would remain in office for an additional year. Extensions have continued without explanation (Al Sayed 2010).

*“For this very purpose, we have decided to appoint a committee of specialised and efficient individuals to write a Permanent Constitution for Qatar, the basic principles of which will stipulate the launching of an elected parliament through direct, public vote, which will aid us in laying down public participation as integral to the foundation of our rule.”*

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, 1998

The 2004 Permanent Constitution provides for a consultative assembly, the Shura Council, composed of 30 elected members and 15 members appointed by the Emir. The assembly has only advisory powers with a limited role in drafting and approving legislation, with the Emir having the final say on all matters. In 2010 the existing council’s term was extended until 2013, based on the constitutional provision that “extending the council’s term is permitted if it is found to be in the public’s best interest.” On 25 June 2013, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani abdicated his rule to his son, Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. On the eve of the abdication, Sheikh Hamad issued a decree further extending the term of the Shura Council for another three years, postponing the long awaited elections that had been provisionally scheduled for the second half of 2013.

### Civil society

For people to participate and express their views, they should be able to organise themselves to articulate and promote their common interests. Qatar’s law allows for the establishment of private institutions and professional associations, but with some restrictions on CSOs.

Qatar’s Law 12 of 2004<sup>i</sup> gives the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA)—and by extension, the Council of Ministers—all authority to approve, reject, renew or dissolve organisations, to call for a meeting of their general assembly, to attend their meetings, and to directly dismiss directors and managers by ministerial decision in case of alleged infraction. Private associations and foundations are prohibited from engaging in unclearly defined “political affairs,” from fundraising, and from membership in international associations without permission. Only Qatari citizens are allowed to form foundations and professional associations, although an amendment to Law 8 of 2006 allows non-Qataris to participate in these associations as long as they do not exceed 20% of the total membership.

Law 12 of 2004 on the formation of associations and its amendment in 2006 also specified the areas where a private association or institution may involve itself in—humanitarian, social, cultural, scientific, professional or charitable. Most of Qatar’s civil society organisations work in charitable and humanitarian causes. The growth of these associations has been slow and the number of national participants is limited. Compared with international best practices, the enabling environment for civil society is constrained (box 6.1). Given rapid growth in the country’s population and the increasingly complex and diverse range of development challenges, there is a need to increase the number of CSOs and broaden their scope of engagement.

### Freedom of association

The right to organise and form employers’ and workers’ organisations is a prerequisite for sound collective bargaining and social dialogue. Combined with strong freedom of association, sound collective bargaining practices ensure that employers and workers have an equal voice in negotiations allowing both sides to negotiate a fair employment relationship and preventing costly labour disputes.

Qatar’s membership in the International Labour Organization (ILO) necessitates that the country uphold fundamental principles and rights, including the freedom of association and collective bargaining. Yet Qatar has not ratified ILO’s Freedom of Association, Collective Bargaining and Equal Remuneration conventions.

Article 116 of the Labour Law of 2004 only allows Qatari workers the right to form workers’ associations, provided that they are working in enterprises with more than 100 workers. Everyone should have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association and the right to form

<sup>i</sup> As amended by Law eight of 2006 and Law 10 of 2010.

Civil society refers to voluntary formations of individuals that work for a common purpose. If well structured, CSOs provide multiple benefits to society including providing constructive criticisms to government on policies, programmes and service delivery and advocacy for underrepresented citizens, such as disabled or older persons, on issues that matter to them, as well as for particular causes. Of course, CSOs may have weaknesses, for example some are isolated from their audience, lack transparency, and experience other financial and human resource constraints.

In 2013 the World Alliance for Citizen Participation prepared an Enabling Environment Index (EEI) to examine the status of civil societies globally. The enabling environment is defined through a set of conditions that impact on the capacity of citizens to participate and engage in the civil society arena in a sustained and voluntary manner. These conditions include a CSO's legitimacy; transparency and accountability; building connections, coalitions and solidarity; legal and regulatory environment; political environment; public attitudes and perceptions; corruption; communications and technologies; and resources.

The EEI has three dimensions—socio-economic, socio-cultural and governance—with each dimension having a number of subdimensions. The EEI ranks countries according to their EEI values between zero and one—one representing a country that has a perfect enabling environment for civil society.

In 2013 the mean EEI score of 223 countries was 0.52 with New Zealand and Canada ranking highest with scores of 0.87 and 0.85 respectively. The overall EEI score for 57 countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) was 0.39 compared with the average for developed countries of 0.73. Qatar had a score of 0.52 placing it 112<sup>th</sup> out of the 223 countries, albeit above most OIC countries. Qatar was 40<sup>th</sup> in the socio-economic dimension; 96<sup>th</sup> in the socio-cultural dimension and 143<sup>rd</sup> in the governance dimension—scoring low on civil society infrastructure, that is strength of organisational capacity, financial resources and support mechanisms for CSOs.

Source: SESRIC (2014).

and to join trade unions for the protection of his/her interests. But there is an absence of national legislation that provides for freedom of association and collective bargaining for non-Qatari citizens (DLA Piper 2014).

Qatari workers' associations may organise under a *General Committee* across companies engaged in a similar trade, and across trades in a *General Union of the Workers of Qatar*. These forums have juridical personality and are empowered to represent their members in all matters related to the affairs of the work. However, workers' committees are not permitted, *inter alia*, from exercising any political or religious activities, "distributing any materials insulting the state or the government or the status quo thereof," and from "accepting gifts or endowments" except with the approval of the MoLSA, formerly the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing.

Workers' committees are provided the nominal right to strike in the event of failure of arbitration or amicable solutions. The law however requires a 75% vote of the membership to take such action, a two-week notice period to the employer, and approval by the MoLSA. Strikes are prohibited in some industries deemed to be "vital public utilities."

Qatar Foundation's Migrant Welfare Initiative appears to have taken a step towards a participatory model in developing its recent *Minimum Standards for Migrant Workers' Welfare* (QF 2013). While only passing reference is made to a collaborative process of developing the standards and of the contributions and input of the private sector, in practice it entailed a quite intensive two-year process that included direct observation; onsite visits and consultation sessions; and interviews with workers.



More than 500 focus groups with five to eight workers each were organised in several work sites that have around 30 workers each.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants recommended that Qatar recognise the rights of association and self-organisation for all workers, including migrants (Crépeau 2014). A report commissioned by the government also recommends that the MoLSA engage and consult with relevant stakeholders and publish proposals allowing migrant workers the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining (DLA Piper 2014).

## Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone right—one that enables other rights to be protected and exercised. It allows people to demand the right to health, education and a clean environment. Access to information strengthens mechanisms to hold governments accountable for their promises, obligations and actions. It can also increase the knowledge base and participation within a society and secure external checks on state accountability, thus preventing corruption that thrives on secrecy and closed environments. Freedom of expression allows individuals and communities the possibility of becoming active in development processes.

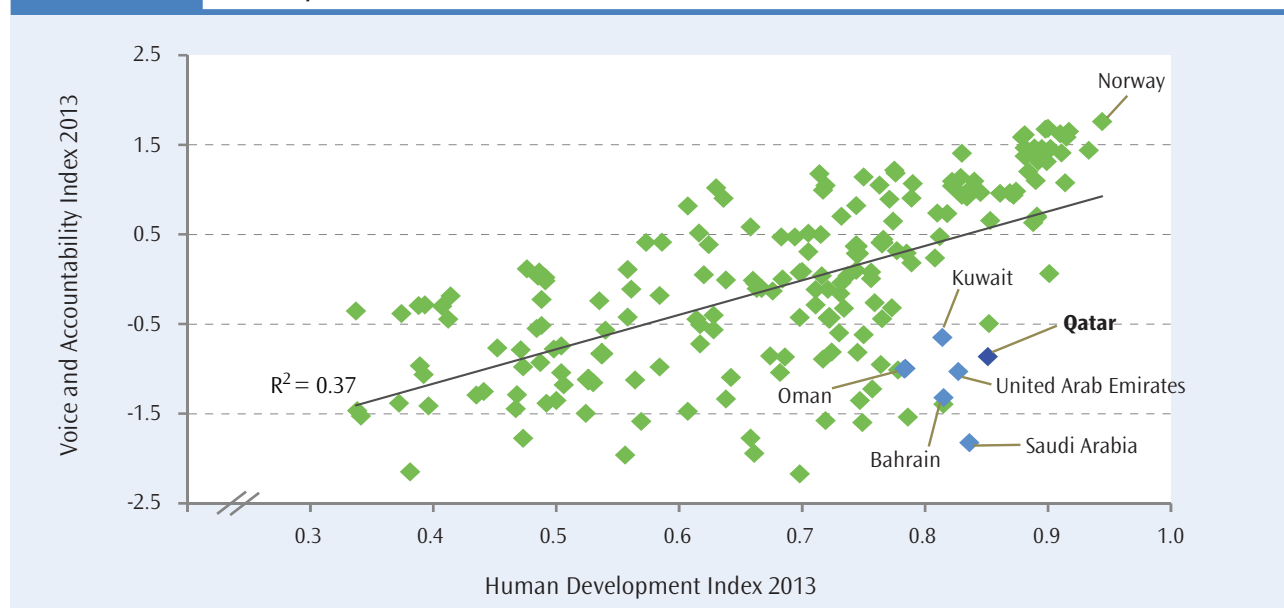
The achievement of successful development relies on an enabling legal and policy environment in which freedom of expression, access to information and an independent media are respected and can thrive. These require, *inter alia*, developing and adopting freedom of information laws, decriminalising defamation, building constitutional guarantees to freedom of expression and vetoing or withdrawing laws that repress the media.

The World Bank's Voice and Accountability Index captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association and a free media. It is based on 31 underlying data sources reporting the perceptions of governance of a large number of survey respondents and expert assessments. Qatar's Voice and Accountability Index lags behind that which could be expected based on its level of human development (figure 6.1).

In its 2014 Universal Periodic Review to the United Nations Human Rights Council, Qatar reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of expression in the media and on social networks, except in the case of violations of moral principles and Sharia law. The state accepted the recommendation to guarantee freedom of expression by protecting journalists, bloggers and media professionals from arbitrary arrest and detention and from censorship,

**Figure 6.1**

**Qatar's Voice and Accountability Index below that expected based on its level of human development**



Source: WB (2014).



including by amending those provisions in the Criminal Code and the draft Media Law that are inconsistent with international standards of freedom of expression.

### **Press freedom**

Press freedom is a fundamental human right. Established in December 2007, the Doha Centre for Media Freedom works towards strengthening press freedom and freedom of expression over the internet and other media across the Middle East and North Africa region. It works towards improving the safety of media professionals, promotes open dialogue and the sharing of information and knowledge.

Press freedom and other civil liberties have declined globally over the last five years. Professional journalism has become one of the riskiest professions. In some countries laws restrict media freedom. New threats are emanating from private entities that monopolise the media and decrease the pluralism of news and opinion.

Governments and societies should spread a culture of freedom, transparency and accountability. And they should provide and reinforce legal guarantees of freedom of expression. There is a paradox between the possibilities offered by the digital age—internet, social media, satellite TV and mobile phones—and the challenges they pose to the safety of those who publicly disseminate information (DCMF 2014).

### **Cybercrimes and media laws**

In September 2014 Qatar enacted a new Cybercrimes Law to protect against crimes like cyberterrorism and to protect intellectual property. However, this legislation is seen by some as a major setback for freedom of expression (AI 2013 and HRW 2014). Many countries are struggling to enact new laws that keep pace with and prevent crimes using fast changing technology and social media.

Qatar's Cybercrimes Law contains broad provisions that some contend do not meet best practice international standards. There is a need for caution in applying and implementing the new law. Under the new law the authorities may ban websites considered threatening to the *safety* of the country and punish anyone who posts or shares online content deemed harmful to Qatar's *social values or general order*. It also requires telecommunications providers to block access to websites or supply evidence or records at the request of the authorities.

The Committee to Protect Journalists criticised the new law which would restrict press freedom and impose prison sentences on journalists inside the country if found guilty of violating social values by publishing “news, pictures, audio or video recordings related to the personal or family life of individuals, even if true,” including libel online. The media has a specific task of informing the public; it can enhance the free flow of information and ideas which in turn can help people make informed choices for their lives.

Despite being the headquarters of Al Jazeera, Qatar's domestic press environment remains notably restricted (DCMF 2013). His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, launched the Al Jazeera network shortly after he came to power in 1995 declaring an end to media censorship. But the government's commitment to a free press has yet to lead to a change in the Media Law. The current Media Law has helped create a “national press in the strong grip of self-censorship.” In 2014 Reporters Without Borders ranked Qatar at 113 out of 180 countries globally in press freedom, although among GCC countries only Kuwait (91) ranked higher.

In June 2012, the government released a new version of the draft Media Law covering print, broadcast and electronic media—the earlier 1979 law only covered newspapers. Unfortunately, the draft law contains multiple prohibitions that will still leave the media outlets restricted. It allows defamation to remain a criminal offense, although a court must now issue approval before a police officer may arrest a journalist. While imprisonment has been removed as a penalty for journalists, fines have been raised to exorbitant amounts. The penalty for not paying a debt is jail, so the prospect of prison would still loom for a practicing journalist. Also, the draft law forbids journalists from reporting critically on “friendly nations,” and prohibits criticism of the “royal family.” It also decrees that journalists may not damage “higher interests” of the country. Such a provision is unreasonably broad and would tend to self-censorship. In countries with strong press freedoms, no type of reporting is legislatively decreed as off-limits.

## **Consultancy mechanisms**

### **ICT and participation**

Qatar has made significant strides in building an advanced ICT sector that benefits all sectors of society. When ICTs are available, affordable and accessible, they

*“In order to move to the next level of ICT maturity, ictQATAR is expanding the use of advanced online services such as e-commerce, e-banking and especially e-government to meet the rapidly growing needs among consumers in Qatar. Qatar’s e-government initiatives through a ministry-wide master plan designed to improve and add new e-government services and make government more efficient and customer-centric will be accelerated.”*

Dr. Hessa Sultan Al Jaber,  
Minister of Information and Communications Technology, 2014

significantly improve access to many aspects of society and development, enabling and accelerating inclusive participation at all levels.

The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (ictQATAR) conducts an annual study that enables it to measure progress toward its overall ICT goals, as well as to frame relevant new policies and programmes. The results of the survey published in *Qatar’s ICT Landscape 2014: Households and Individuals* examine the ICT access and usage behaviours and patterns of residents in Qatar.

In terms of e-government, the findings show that 55% of the population are aware of online services, although only 16% used them in the past year. The results suggest the perception that interaction with the government could be handled more effectively face-to-face rather than online. The most commonly accessed e-government services are Metrash2, other Ministry of Interior (MOI) services and traffic fine payments.

One of the major impediments to achieving a true information-based society is the lack of advanced ICT skills and knowledge among the population. ictQATAR is implementing a digital literacy and ICT skills programmes to mitigate this problem. Online security continues to be a major obstacle to widespread usage and most people lack awareness about e-government services. Better customer experience and more value-added services, which are being planned as part of the E-government 2020 Strategy, are likely to help increase awareness and usage.

### **E-government/Hukoomi**

Established in 2008, the Qatar government e-portal Hukoomi provides an integrated gateway to information, connection to government services, programmes, events and initiatives and a channel for feedback on services. The portal is managed by the MOI and provides more than 400 services of which 150 can be completed electronically from

start to finish. In 2014, a new mobile application or mobile portal Metrash2 that works on all java-enabled smart phones in Arabic and English was introduced.

The World Economic Forum’s 2014 *Global Information Technology Report* states that Qatar ranked fourth in the world in government usage of ICT. In 2013, Hukoomi hosted a record 3.2 million transactions by companies, citizens, residents and visitors—up 19% from 2.7 million in 2012. Transactions included residence renewal, applications for exit permits, visit visas, sponsorship transfer and applications for new residence permits and smart identity cards.

ictQatar’s 2014 annual survey highlights that some 45% of the surveyed population were unaware of e-government services and 60% unaware of Hukoomi. Of those aware of Hukoomi, only 15% reported that they used any of Hukoomi’s available services in the past 12 months. There was a high satisfaction among users of online e-government services (75%) and Hukoomi (68%). However, some respondents complained that there is no margin for negotiation in carrying out certain government-related processes online.

The 2014 survey indicated that making e-government services available on a mobile platform—in response to the general demand for convenient on-the-go services—would help further increase awareness and usage. 40% of respondents reported that they are more likely to use e-government services (including Hukoomi) through an application on their mobile phones, while another 39% were neutral about the idea and could possibly be converted into users by the availability of relevant services and improved awareness levels.

An online forum established through the government’s e-government website, *HukoomiForums*, provides access to information for citizens and residents of Qatar on governmental services and events, with a link specifically titled e-participation. This link allows people to post

comments and ask questions. However, there has been minimal usage of this platform despite its immense potential for initiating and continuing discussions on all aspects of development, including on issues of service provision.

Likewise the government's Twitter account, @HukoomiQatar is not used to its potential but can also play a useful role as a public policy discussion and in gathering inputs and feedback on policy and programmes. Study is needed on how to activate these processes and to achieve positive outcomes in terms of people's participation.

Qatar is in the midst of major transformations in several fields including in education, health, labour relations and political rights. As part of this process, there are also increasing efforts to promote community participation in development in order to meet the country's needs for development.

### **Health and other services**

Patient-centred health care engages patients, adopts the preferences and aspirations of individuals and communities, and results in satisfied users. The SCH has adopted a patient advocacy framework for a service encouraging patients to exercise their rights, and has completed a Patient Bills of Rights for display across all providers.

The SCH facilitates public participation through differing fora. It conducts town hall meetings to inform on progress of the National Health Strategy 2011-2016 and to get feedback from a wide group of stakeholders. It also maintains a website dedicated to reporting progress of projects contained in the strategy.

The SCH's e-complaint system allows patients and members of the public to make online complaints and observations on their satisfaction with services, including on quality issues and waiting times. It also conducts various periodic surveys on client satisfaction with health care services. It reports, in summary terms, on patient satisfaction in its annual reports. It also established a government-wide call centre and patient consultative councils.

Similar, albeit less developed, e-engagement mechanisms are being put in place for other frontline and public sector services, including reporting on satisfaction with service delivery.

## **Conclusions**

Participation in development is an important component of the RtD. A participatory approach to development in the context of the RtD framework needs to be accompanied by a culture that sees development not as the responsibility of the government alone but as a society-wide effort. The progressive development of such a culture will require concerted action towards strengthening training of the young in participatory values, human rights and awareness of their role in national development.

Laws, policies and programmes are most meaningful when people are engaged and have mechanisms to hold institutions accountable. Unless people can participate meaningfully in the events and processes that shape their lives, national human development paths will not be sustainable.

Both QNV 2030 and NDS 2011-2016 were highly participatory involving an extensive and inclusive dialogue with government ministries and agencies, the private sector, civil society, local and international experts. However, an analysis of the membership of the Task Teams (and sub-Task Teams) and Executive Groups reveals that non-public sector participation was not as extensive as it could have been. There are opportunities for broadening participation during the preparation of Qatar's second National Development Strategy 2017-2022 using multiple consultative mechanisms.

If well structured, CSOs provide multiple benefits to society including providing constructive criticisms to government on policies, programmes and service delivery and advocacy for underrepresented citizens, such as disabled or older persons, on issues that matter to them. Most of Qatar's civil society organisations work in charitable and humanitarian causes. Compared with international best practices, the enabling environment for civil society is constrained. Given rapid growth in the country's population and the increasingly complex and diverse range of development challenges, there is a need to increase the number of CSOs and broaden their scope of engagement. A strategy for strengthening and expanding CSOs would further support national development.

In its 2014 Universal Periodic Review to the Human Rights Council, Qatar reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of expression in the media and on social networks, except in the case of violations of moral principles and Sharia law. Qatar's Cybercrimes Law contains broad provisions that some contend do not meet best practice international standards. There is a need for caution in applying and implementing the new law.

Existing internet-based government websites can be used better by the government and the public. The former can

use these platforms to inform and educate the public, while the latter can engage in public discussion and make positive contributions in terms of ideas or views. Space for Qataris and non-Qataris alike to express themselves through internet forums or through other mechanisms will deepen the participation process. E-government services are not used to their potential although they can play a useful role in public policy discussion and in gathering inputs and feedback on policy and programmes. Study is needed on how to activate these processes and to achieve positive outcomes in terms of people's participation.



# 7

## International Cooperation



# 7

## International Cooperation

*“As a responsible member of the international community, Qatar will contribute towards international peace and security through political initiatives and development and humanitarian assistance.”*

Qatar National Vision 2030

Countries have a duty to cooperate to overcome development challenges and take steps, individually and collectively, to formulate international development strategies. International cooperation promotes, supports and strengthens the right to development (RtD).

Effective international cooperation provides a means to complement national development efforts. Development aid, when effectively coordinated, targeted and sustained, has assisted lower income developing countries accelerate economic growth, reduce poverty and improve human development. Overseas development assistance is a stable form of development financing for many poor countries.

Inspired by Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV), Qatar has continued to consolidate and build its international cooperation profile through bilateral, regional and multilateral arrangements and programmes, as well as through conflict resolution and other diplomatic initiatives. In a short space of time Qatar has become a major non-traditional donor country helping to improve the lives of poorer people and to saving the lives of those trapped in complex humanitarian crisis situations, especially within the Arab world.

Qatar’s spending on development assistance as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) averaged 0.5% between 2008 and 2013, and was predominantly in Arab and North African countries. Beyond development and humanitarian aid Qatar has been steadily promoting dialogue through

the use of soft power diplomacy initiatives in regional and international affairs.

Following a brief outline of the framework and institutional mechanisms for delivering Qatar’s overseas development assistance, this chapter looks at trends and patterns in the level of development assistance; outlines some of the development and humanitarian initiatives that the government and non-governmental organisation (NGO) sectors are involved in, including through South-South arrangements and how it is encouraging multicultural dialogue in support of peace and security.

### Framework and institutional mechanism for international cooperation

QNV 2030 affirms a desire for the country to play a meaningful role in international cooperation and its willingness to contribute constructively towards international peace and security, as well as fulfilling its international obligations. QNV 2030 envisages:

- Contribution towards international peace and security through political initiatives as well as development and humanitarian assistance.
- Increased regional role economically, politically and culturally, particularly within the framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab League, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).



- Proactive and significant regional role in assessing the impact of climate change and mitigating its negative impacts, especially in Gulf countries, and support for international initiatives.
- Sponsorship and support of dialogue among civilisations, promoting coexistence between different religions and cultures.
- Intensification of cultural exchange with the Arab peoples in particular and with other nations in general.

A good practice in many traditional donor countries is the establishment of an aid coordination agency to coordinate and manage aid effectively as well as to monitor development impact. Qatar's institutional arrangements for the coordination of international development assistance come under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (box 7.1).

A significant aspect of Qatar's overseas development assistance is the role played by civil society organisations and foundations in mobilising resources and serving as implementing agencies. A substantial proportion of the funding of these NGOs and foundations comes from Zakat (Islamic tax) and Waqf (endowment) contributed mainly by Qataris. The leading organisations are:

**Qatar Charity**—a Qatar headquartered international NGO with 18 offices predominantly located in Arab, African and Asian countries.

**Education Above All**—a Qatar Foundation programme expanding educational opportunities globally under the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

**Sheikh Eid Charitable Association**—a humanitarian NGO working in some 60 countries with a focus on children and families.

**Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah for Humanitarian Services (Raf) Foundation**—a predominantly humanitarian NGO working mainly in Asian and African countries.

**Daawa Charity**—an international humanitarian NGO with headquarters in Sudan and supported by Qatar with active branch offices across the country.

**Reach out to Asia**—a Qatar Foundation NGO focusing on expanding educational opportunities across Asia.

**Qatar Red Crescent**—a national branch of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

**Jassim and Hamad bin Jassim Charitable Foundation**—a humanitarian NGO working primarily in countries that experience natural disasters with a focus on health and emergency relief.

**Silatech Foundation**—an initiative to create employment opportunities for Arab Youth under the auspice of Her

### Box 7.1

#### Strengthened institutional arrangements with an increasing role in international cooperation

In 2010 responsibility for Qatar's international cooperation became centred on the MOFA. Through the Office of the Undersecretary for International Cooperation, the MOFA plays a leading role in international cooperation policy and in the management of its activities within the MOFA. International cooperation is managed by two departments: the Department for International Development and the Department of International Technical Cooperation.

The Department for International Development is responsible for forming development assistance policy; organising and directing development assistance in conformity with Qatar's priorities and international resolutions; monitoring and evaluating official development assistance (ODA) and proposing the level of assistance; offering technical assistance to government and non-government bodies concerned with providing development assistance; and concluding partnerships with regional and international development organisations.

The Department of International Technical Cooperation is responsible for the management of technical cooperation programmes of government agencies with international organisations, including the follow-up of programmes, studies and research.

The MOFA's annual Foreign Aid Report provides an overview of its international cooperation activities and the flows of its aid disbursements to countries, regional and multilateral organisations.

Source: MOFA (2014).

Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

**Al Faisal Without Borders Foundation**—a global humanitarian organisation aiming to promote sustainable development and empower people globally.

**Alasmakh Charity**—a national NGO whose mission is to empower women and children, including through building international partnership with counterpart organisations in developing countries.

## Trends and distribution of development assistance

For many newly emerging donors, as well as for the traditional donors, the reasons for engaging in international cooperation range from fostering favourable conditions for addressing regional and global issues, ensuring sustainable socio-economic development of recipient countries, strengthening political and economic ties and responding to humanitarian crises. Humanitarian aid is generally short-term assistance given in response to crisis situations, whereas development aid is longer-term assistance designed to increase economic growth, reduce poverty and improve human development.

The volume of Qatar’s aid and its share of GDP have increased considerably in recent years (figure 7.1). In 2008 Qatar’s total international development assistance

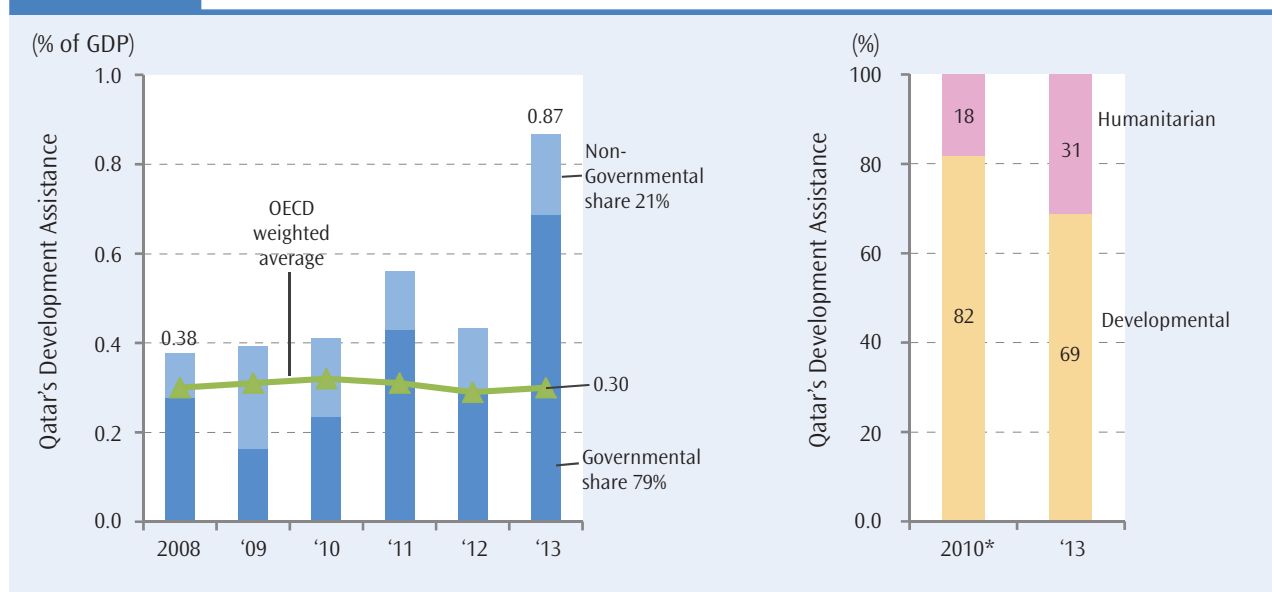
amounted to USD 433 million, rose to USD 949 million by 2011, and reached USD 1,758 million by 2013. Qatar allocated an average of around 0.5% of its GDP to ODA between 2008 and 2013, albeit with sharp year to year fluctuations civil society organisations—an amount that is higher than the average (0.31%) of OECD countries, but lower than the 0.7 target set for ODA by the United Nations. However, in 2013 Qatar’s level of ODA at 0.87% of GDP exceeded the international target.

A large share of Qatar’s total international assistance comes from private NGOs and foundations. In 2013 slightly more than one-fifth of the total aid spend of USD 1.8 billion was made by the NGOs, down from 26% in 2008 (figure 7.1). The largest of these NGO donors being Qatar Charity, Sheikh Eid Charitable Association, the Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah for Humanitarian Services (Raf) Foundation, ROTA, and the QRC.

An increasing proportion of Qatar’s ODA spend is being allocated for humanitarian purposes, the share rising from 18% in 2010 to 31% in 2013 (figure 7.1). A large part of this is going to support initiatives in Syria, Yemen and neighbouring countries affected by conflict and large refugee flows. Qatar has also supported earlier victims of floods and earthquakes in Pakistan, Haiti and Iran, as well as victims of the tsunami in Japan. Based on data collated

Figure 7.1

Qatar development assistance exceeded 0.7% of GDP target in 2013



Note: \* Mean of 2010 and 2011.

Sources: MOFA (2012 and 2014) and OECD (2014).

**Table 7.1** Qatar government's development assistance predominantly focused on Arab countries

	Share of assistance (%)					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Arab Countries	82.9	44.6	75.9	95.2	82.8	92.5
Americas	2.9	1.4	1.6	2.2	3.7	0.4
Africa	6.4	20.5	14.4	0.2	0.1	0.2
Europe	1.2	8.3	6.1	2.0	1.0	3.0
Asia	1.2	0.7	1.9	0.4	10.0	2.9
Oceania	0.0	-	-	-	-	0.0
Others	5.5	24.4	0.0	-	2.3	1.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
USD million*	318.2	158.9	294.6	727.7	550.1	1,394.5

\* Currency converted at 1 USD = 3.65 QR  
 Source: MOFA (2014).

by the Global Humanitarian Assistance, Qatar was the 20th largest provider of official humanitarian assistance among the top 20 government donors (GHA 2014). In 2012 of total global humanitarian assistance provided by these countries, amounting to USD 14.3 billion, about USD 105 million was provided by Qatar.

While Qatar has steadily increased its participation in international and regional development institutions and funds that promote development in developing countries, the bulk of assistance is, however, provided on a bilateral basis in the form of grants. Most of the assistance is untied and provided to facilitate local ownership of development goals and means. This approach is in line with the tradition of untied aid practiced by Arab donors who have

built a reputation for receiving limited material benefits from aid contributions (Rouis 2010).

The bulk of Qatar's ODA spend, some 93% in 2013, goes to countries in the Arab region (table 7.1). While the level tends to fluctuate from year to year the trend appears to be increasing and is likely associated with the complex humanitarian crises that several Arab countries have been experiencing in recent years. In 2013 just 7% of the country's ODA was extended to countries beyond the Arab world. Large providers of development cooperation outside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) tend to focus on assistance to neighbouring countries: Qatar is no exception.

**Table 7.2** Top 5 recipients countries of Qatari development assistance, 2013

Rank	Government		Non-government	
	Country	USD (M)	Country	USD (M)
1	Syria	422.2	Palestine	63.7
2	Morocco	250.0	Yemen	32.5
3	Palestine	239.2	Lebanon	21.3
4	Egypt	168.8	Syria	17.7
5	Yemen	161.0	Somalia	17.6
Top 5 as % of total		89	42	

Note: Currency converted at 1 USD = 3.65 QR  
 Source: MOFA (2014).

In 2013 just five countries accounted for 89% of the government's ODA spend. Syria was the largest recipient, receiving USD 422 million with much of this going for humanitarian purposes (table 7.2). In recent year Syria, the occupied Palestinian territories and Egypt feature regularly in the top five receivers of government aid. Palestine was the largest beneficiary of support from Qatar's NGO and foundation sector, followed by Yemen and Lebanon. These countries are typically the main beneficiaries of support from this sector.

Frequent changes in aid patterns can reduce aid effectiveness. This is one reason traditional donors tend to maintain existing priorities and not to change the list of partner countries until their development gives cause to do so.

As part of its wider efforts to support international cooperation, Qatar also contributes to various regional and international development funds, including the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Arab Monetary Fund, International Fund for Agricultural Development and Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' Fund for International Development. However, the bulk of its ODA is given on a bilateral basis.

### **Monitoring and reporting of Qatar's foreign aid flows**

While the MOFA has developed an integrated information system which enables the government and humanitarian organisations to enter aid information into it using standardised templates to facilitate regular reporting, the currently available data on Qatar's foreign aid flows are limited. There is a need to improve the quality and detail of statistical information on aid flows to be consistent with international best practice definitions and methodology as adopted by the OECD-DAC. This would help to increase transparency and enable the MOFA to improve the quality and detail of its aid reporting in its annual Foreign Aid Report. Making information publicly available on its website would also enable public scrutiny and strengthen accountability.

Towards this end the MOFA's Department for International Development, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs held a training workshop in 2013 for Qatar's humanitarian organisations to discuss guidelines and concepts of a financial tracking service. The system aims to provide accurate information on Qatar's foreign aid spending

for all local, regional and international initiatives. The Department for International Development plans to engage with international organisations, audit and management consultancy firms to develop further mechanisms and procedures to measure, analyse and evaluate Qatar's foreign aid spending, including efficiency of use and development impact.

## **Development initiatives**

One major priority of development cooperation for Qatar is to help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as part of the global partnership for development. Helping countries achieve these goals is a major objective of several projects under Qatar's international cooperation framework. Poverty reduction, including through employment in rebuilding and infrastructure projects, improved health and education, as well as better management of the environment are the main areas of focus of Qatar's international cooperation.

### **Economic and trade assistance**

Qatar's efforts to contribute to MDG8, the Global Partnerships for Development, can be assessed in terms of progress to developing further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Qatar is an open economy with a measure of openness of 80% . It trades freely with all countries and has signed economic and trade agreements with many countries around the world. Since 1996, Qatar has been a member of World Trade Organization, and since 1994 a member of General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATT).

As articulated in the National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS), Qatar plans to further liberalise trade in services under the GATT. In terms of foreign investment, minority ownership of 49% is allowed to foreign investors, and in some sectors 100% ownership is allowed after authorisation. Certain rights are also guaranteed to foreign investors, including unrestricted transfer of funds and assurances against expropriation (WTO 2014). Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) net inflows have as a result of the country's non-discriminatory financial system and the provision of a friendly investment climate grown from USD 252 million in 2000 to a peak of USD 8,125 million in 2009, averaging more than USD 4,500 million between 2006 and 2010. These net inflows have since recorded a reverse investment of USD 840 million in 2013. FDI net

outflows continued to increase from USD 18 million in 2000 to USD 8,021 million in 2013 (UNCTAD 2014).

### **Reducing Arab youth unemployment—Silatech**

Founded in 2008, Silatech is a dynamic social initiative that works to create jobs and expand economic opportunities for young people throughout the Arab world. The Arab region contains over 100 million young people aged between 15 and 29 many of whom are unable to find decent employment, and consequently are prevented from realising their full potential as productive members of society.

As the largest provider of youth-focused microenterprise services in the Arab world, Silatech promotes large-scale job creation, entrepreneurship, access to capital and markets, and the participation and engagement of young people in economic and social development. It seeks innovative solutions to challenging problems and works with a wide spectrum of NGOs, governments and the private sector to foster sustainable positive change for Arab youth.

Silatech has financed over 78,000 youth-owned businesses, created or sustained over 103,000 jobs, and trained over 2,350 youth-focused NGO staff (Silatech 2015). In 2013 Silatech raised over USD 95 million in co-funding from regional and international partners and allocated more than QR 10.5 million to capacity building initiatives in the region (MOFA 2014). Silatech has expanded the reach of its programmes throughout the Arab region with programmes in 16 countries.

### **Increasing access to education—Education Above All**

Founded in 2012, Qatar Foundation's EAA global initiative brings together three programmes—Al Fakhoora, Educate a Child (EAC) and Protecting Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC)—that provide educational opportunities, especially to children living in low-income settings or facing complex humanitarian crises.

Education Above All (EAA) works with global, regional and local partners with a shared belief that education is the key to progress and prosperity. It unlocks personal potential and encourages peace, collaboration and sustainable development. EAA protects the right to education wherever it is under threat, implements proven and innovative interventions in education and equips children, youth and women with the tools to learn. Projects span primary education, access and enrolment, higher education and wider concerns such as health, well-being and basic rights. EAA reached some two million children within 2013/4.

The Kakuma Refugee Camp Project in Kenya is EAA's latest project launched in November 2014 in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The four-year pilot project aims to bring together different sectors and partners to work together in a holistic way, using education to help refugees develop the confidence to build their futures and be productive members of the community. EAA will fund and coordinate experts in solar technology, sports, water and sanitation to work together to create a multisector ecosystem conducive to the provision and sustainability of quality education, and is expected to reach more than 70,000 individuals.

Al Fakhoora, launched in January 2009, is a programme to support education in Gaza. Its mission is to measurably improve the lives of Palestinian students by providing access to quality education. Al Fakhoora works in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Qatar Red Crescent (QRC). In addition to supporting students through higher education, it simultaneously works to empower students' families to become financially independent. Al Fakhoora's focus areas include vocational training, reconstruction projects, health and social care and connecting with the world. Its key achievements:

- 100 undergraduates awarded scholarships annually and more than 300 students provided with full scholarships for their undergraduate studies since January 2009.

*“The goal of universal primary education, a promise broken for decades, can be achieved in the next seven years. But we really need people to commit themselves. We need politicians to understand the power of education for their own countries, for their economies.”*

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, 2014 (Coughlan 2014)

- 30 postgraduate students have benefitted from the Al Fakhoora's international master's programme.
- 250,000 families in Gaza have been screened for disabilities and over 300 disabled youth and their families have been assisted.
- Over 1,400 children are being supported through Al Fakhoora's psycho-social support programmes.
- 224 families have been supported in starting businesses.

PEIC was founded in 2009 to promote and protect the right to education in areas affected by crisis, conflict and insecurity. PEIC is a policy, research and advocacy programme of EAA, and brings together practitioners and specialists in education, international law and child protection. PEIC's works towards strengthening monitoring and reporting of harm to education in situations of insecurity and conflict. It contributes to increased implementation of education-related international, regional and domestic law, builds capacity for implementation of crisis-sensitive planning and programming by education and related ministries and deepens knowledge of the impact of insecurity and conflict on education and effective preventive and protective responses.

EAC, launched in November 2012, aims to give all children access to primary education by 2015/6. It focuses on young people being denied their fundamental right to learn due to poverty, conflicts, natural disasters or prejudice. EAC, together with its partners including United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the British Council, Care and Save the Children, is active in 24 countries with 44 approved projects, bringing education to more than two million children, with a target to reach 10 million by 2015/6.

### **Expanding high-quality education—Reach out to Asia**

Launched in December 2005, Reach out to Asia (ROTA) aims is to increase access to primary and secondary education. Many children, especially girls, in low-income or crisis affected countries either do not go to school, or are in poorly equipped and underresourced schools. ROTA envisages a world in which all young people have access to the education they need to realise their full potential and contribute to the development of their communities.

Together with partners, volunteers, and local communities, ROTA encourages intercommunity relationships and helps create a safe environment for teaching, reviving the educational process in fields beset by crises and disasters.

ROTA is currently active in 10 countries in Asia and the Middle East and in 2013 it provided QR 62 million in aid for various educational and cultural initiatives.

One of ROTA's many initiatives implemented between 2012 and 2014, was the *Enhancing Non-Formal Education for Palestinian Youth Program* in north Lebanon. It provided vocational training services and increased the employability of 200 students as well as providing learning support to 600 elementary students to improve their school performance and enhance their language skills. Some 133 teachers and partner NGO management staff, as well as 3500 Palestinian refugee youth benefitted.

### **Environmental protection—climate change and food security**

In March 2014 the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on human rights and the environment, recognising that states are obligated to ensure the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and that the enjoyment of the corresponding human rights and fundamental freedoms can be facilitated by assessing environmental impact, making environmental information public, and enabling effective participation in environmental decision-making processes and promoting best practices relating to the use of human rights in environmental policy-making.

Qatar's Permanent Constitution affirms that the state shall preserve the environment and its natural balance in order to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development for all generations. QNV 2030 calls for Qatar to support international efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, and to play a proactive and significant regional role in mitigating its negative impacts, especially on countries in the Gulf.

There is increasing global realisation that the earth belongs to everyone and all have a responsibility to be stewards of the environment. Being part of the Gulf region, where the ecological system is impacted by actions of those outside the country means that Qatar must work with regional and international parties to address environmental and climate change issues. Qatar is already playing a role in global initiatives aimed at mitigating climate change effects as well as forging consensus around climate change and sustainable development. In 2009 Qatar joined the World Bank programme as part of its broader efforts to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from gas flaring (box 7.2).



## Box 7.2

Qatar is active in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from gas flaring

When drilling for crude oil, gas usually comes to the surface and often is vented or flared, instead of being put to better use for private or commercial consumption. The World Bank's Global Gas Flaring Reduction Partnership (GGFR) between governments and the private sector attempts to minimise the environmentally harmful waste of gas and thus reducing global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Qatar's participation in the GGFR, the first Gulf country to join this partnership, reflects its commitment to achieve a target of zero-flaring. It has resulted in significant changes in gas flaring, despite the increase in production and expansion of oil and gas facilities. The National Flaring and Venting Reduction Project has further reduced emissions from gas flaring, between 2007 and 2012, with the share of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from gas flaring falling from 14% to 7%.

In 2007 Qatar introduced its first United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Clean Development Mechanism, the Al Shaheen Oil Field Gas Recovery and Utilization Project, which reduced flaring by about 80%. The Al Shaheen Oil Field is a production oil and gas field off the northeast coast of Qatar in the Arabian Gulf, 180 kilometres north of Doha. The oil field lies over the North Gas Field, the largest gas field in the world. Facilities completed at the Al Karkara field in 2011 are designed to achieve zero gas flaring by injecting excess sour gas back into the reservoir.

Shipping is a critical link in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) value chain that extends from Qatar's North Gas Field to markets throughout the world. In 2008, research by Exxon Mobil Corporation in partnership with Qatar Petroleum (QP) resulted in an industry breakthrough in LNG carrier design and size, enabling transport technology that can carry 80% more liquefied natural gas than current carriers and substantially reducing the energy used per delivered unit.

The government is actively addressing knowledge and capacity deficits that can impede development of environmentally sustainable management systems and a knowledge-based economy. The Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), established in 2009, promotes corporate research, technological development and commercialisation through engagement with international industry leaders and research institutions.

A number of on-going initiatives and research projects that reflect the national commitment to proactively address climate challenges include renewable energy projects that target to replace 10% of total energy used for electricity generation and water desalination with solar power by 2018; research into clean technologies at the QSTP for transport and LNG; a 10-year joint project by Shell, QP, QSTP and Imperial College London on carbon capture and storage technologies and Chevron's Project for Sustainable Energy Efficiency, which is concerned with developing solar cooling panels for the Gulf climate.

*Sources:* WB (2009) and MDPS (2014k).

Qatar hosted the 18th session of the United Nations Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP18) in 2012. Countries successfully launched a new commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, agreed to a firm timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 and agreed on a package of measures called the Doha Climate Gateway to raise necessary ambition to respond to climate change.

This includes the completion of new institutions and agreed ways and means to deliver scaled-up climate finance and technology to developing countries. At COP18 Qatar Foundation and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research announced a partnership to set up a climate research centre in Doha to undertake research in the natural and social sciences to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Desertification, land degradation and natural droughts affect the livelihood of more than two billion people who live on 40% of the land in arid and semi-arid areas in the world. This issue falls within the purview of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Qatar played an important role in global efforts towards combating desertification through its leadership in the *Arid Lands Initiative: Partnership for Food Security*. During the proceedings of the 66th United Nations General Assembly session, Qatar paved the way for the establishment of the *Global Dry Land Alliance*—a base of joint action by the countries of arid lands and the most affected countries to meet the challenges facing food security through a commitment to new mechanisms and methods of response. The alliance supports new research and innovation by member states. It includes dry land countries with common challenges and is open to accept partnerships with all countries and multilateral institutions.

## Humanitarian initiatives

The needs for humanitarian assistance have markedly increased with the rising number and severity of conflicts, especially in the Middle East. This has resulted in growing numbers of children, women and older persons traumatised by conflict many of whom are displaced from their homes. Qatar is responding to many of these humanitarian emergencies.

Qatar is committed to helping people affected by all types of crisis situations—wars, earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters—through humanitarian assistance, while abiding by the principles of impartiality and neutrality. Its humanitarian assistance takes many forms and includes medical care, food, water and shelter. Qatar has also, in collaboration with Turkey and the Dominican Republic, established an international forum—the *Hope For* initiative—to discuss the best means to improve the efficiency of military and civil resources in natural disaster responses.

### Qatar Charity

Qatar Charity, an international NGO established in 1992, has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Qatar Charity works in the sectors of humanitarian relief in 41 countries, particularly in Africa and Asia, in partnership with agencies such UNICEF, the

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Health Organization and the United Nations World Food Programme; with private foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Fundación Kanouté; and with Islamic agencies such as the Islamic Development Bank and OIC.

Qatar Charity's aid contributions grew from QR 78.0 million in 2006 to QR 448.5 million in 2013—the largest contribution among Qatar's humanitarian organisations. In 2013 its projects included providing tuition fees for 3,000 impoverished students in 16 countries and constructing 10 schools, sponsoring 6,000 orphans in 25 countries and partnering with The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on the *Global Polio Eradication Initiative* (GPEI) in Pakistan. Qatar Charity launched a campaign to collect donations to support the GPEI's goal to eradicate polio by the year 2018 and supported polio vaccination campaigns to protect children in target areas. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will match all amounts raised by Qatar Charity during the campaign.

In 2013 Qatar Charity focused significantly on Syrians who were internally displaced and those living as refugees in the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, spending QR 24 million for the benefit of 1.3 million people. In 2014, Qatar Charity's emergency relief included the distribution of food and shelter materials, which benefited around 23,000 people affected by floods in Khartoum.

### Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRC)

QRC works under the umbrella of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies that represents 187 national humanitarian societies worldwide. QRC implements programmes in 46 countries by investing in achieving economic and social empowerment, creation of an enabling environment for the inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the workforce, and expansion of the participation base through building international smart partnerships in the areas of sustainable development. Its core disciplines are disaster preparedness and response; health care services; rehabilitation and advocacy for the weak; provision of first aid training as well as disaster management; and enforcement of international humanitarian law. It also supports vulnerable communities to achieve self-sufficiency and enable them to overcome the

consequences of natural disasters. Among its key challenges are:

- Lack of funding to respond to all development needs in countries where it operates.
- Local political situations and bureaucracy that negatively impact project implementation, for example in Palestine.
- Security of volunteers and staff, for example wars and armed conflicts in Darfur, Somalia and Mali.
- Weak local human resource capacity in the health sector, and the lack of data to support development work, for example in Comoros and Somalia.
- Natural disasters, for example droughts in Somalia and volcanic activity in Comoros.
- Linking information technology and e-networking to institutions involved in the Global Partnership for Development to facilitate access to information and ensure speed and quality of data, documentation and management of services to beneficiaries.

Its key achievements include:

- Increased core revenue for humanitarian programmes from QR 30 million in 2008 to QR 90 million in 2012. Operational revenue increased from QR 18 million to QR 40 million during the same period.
- Implemented and funded more than 120 relief, development and health projects around the world in multiple partnerships, including the MOFA and the Islamic Development Bank.
- Assisted more than 4.7 million people through relief and development projects in 2012/3.
- Managed and supervised many medical centres and hospitals worldwide.

QRC's foreign spending on international relief and development projects reached over QR 108 million in 2012/3, of which 65% was spent on relief projects primarily in Palestine, Syria, Sudan, Somali and Yemen. Out of 106 development projects recorded in 2011/2, 50% were for health and medical services (21), disability services (20), water and sanitation (8) and education (3) in the West Bank and Gaza.

### **Rebuilding livelihoods—tsunami and Fukushima disaster**

Immediately after the earthquake and tsunami disaster in Japan, in March 2011 Qatar announced the establishment of the Qatar-Japan Friendship Fund to assist in relief efforts to accelerate the rehabilitation of victims. His

Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir allocated USD 100 million for this and a committee was established under the leadership of His Highness the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and included the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who was charged with follow-up on implementation. The importance of this fund lies in providing prompt and effective support to the victims of the disaster-affected areas through rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. The fund supports 11 projects that meet the urgent, critical and continuing needs of a large number of beneficiaries. It focused on five priority areas over the period 2012-2014: children's education, fisheries, health care, entrepreneurship and social welfare.

An example of Qatar's support to the fisheries sector is the preservation facility in Karakwoa-Chou, Kessennuma. This project aimed at contributing to reviving the fishing industry in the area of Sanriku, and included the construction of a fish preservation facility which supports the development of marketing skills for fishermen. Before the Tsunami disaster, 80% of families in Kessennuma were working in the fisheries sector. After the tsunami, many families lost their fish processing facilities, which hampered the recovery of the local economy. Among the project results were improvement of fishermen's income and the provision of job opportunities for residents. In addition, the project contributed to raising the selling prices of fish. In the long run it is expected that it will help in the revival of the city and its surrounding areas, while benefitting 330 people directly and 746 families engaged in fishing indirectly.

A *Living Cell System* project in Kamaishi City aims to freeze seafood products without destroying their cell membranes. It provides an opportunity to achieve integration between the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors by creating value-added products and direct selling at the national level.

### **Post-conflict reconstruction**

One aspect of Qatar's international cooperation strategy has been the sponsoring of peace talks to stop armed conflicts and fighting, and defuse tensions, such as in Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon, and Palestine (box 7.3). Following peace talks, Qatar initiates or plays a leading role in donor conferences so as to mobilise resources for development in these place and establish a comprehensive framework for peace and development in the areas of conflict. This is aimed at laying the foundation for long-term recovery, development, peace and stability.

Qatar has long been supporting the right to development (RtD) of Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian Territory, although the changing political landscape has been a challenge. In 2013 Qatar gave over USD 302 million of aid to Palestine to support humanitarian and development initiatives, 79% from the government and 21% from NGOs.

A historic visit by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, to the Gaza Strip in October 2012 led to a USD 254 million plan to rebuild and modernise Gaza. This was the biggest injection of reconstruction aid for the Palestinian enclave since it was devastated in an Israeli military offensive in 2008/9. Qatar prepared the reconstruction designs, provided financing and was to complete the construction before handing over to the relevant Palestinian authorities. The project provided much needed employment for Palestinian youth, as well as being a source of income for local contractors and small businesses. In 2013 work began on a highway that runs the length of the Mediterranean coastal strip and will include the development of a new residential district in southern Gaza and a new hospital in northern Gaza.

In 2014, Qatar Charity and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) signed an agreement to support the UNRWA health programme in Gaza. Under this agreement, worth USD 1 million, UNRWA procured urgently needed medicines and physiotherapy equipment for Palestine refugees through UNRWA's network of health centres.

In 2014 another war erupted between Israel and Hamas causing much destruction and a major humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The United Nations reported that 18,000 homes were destroyed or severely damaged and 108,000 Palestinians were made homeless. A Gaza Crisis Appeal requested USD 551 million to support the most vulnerable population groups affected by the hostilities, focusing on displaced persons, the injured, older persons, children, and women, as well as farmers and fishermen who lost their livelihoods. Working onsite, Qatar Charity one of 69 agencies coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs focused on providing emergency food security for over 33,000 beneficiaries.

Qatar continued to provide ad-hoc contributions to Palestine to avert crisis situations including paying for the price of fuel to the Gaza's only power station and contributing to paying salaries of civil servants for three months. The ongoing salary crisis, compounded by one of the highest unemployment rates in the world, nearly 45%, has further undermined the food security of the population.

In December 2014, 30 international donors met in Cairo to discuss the reconstruction of Gaza which the Palestinians estimated would cost USD 4 billion over three years. Donors promised USD 2.7 billion (Qatar pledged the largest amount of USD 1 billion) to rebuild war-ravaged Gaza. However, the donors agreed that reconstruction efforts would be futile without permanent peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Donors plan to funnel the aid through the Palestinian Authority which will carry out the reconstruction plan with full responsibility and transparency in coordination with the UN, bilateral donors, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector.

*Sources:* UNOCHA (2014); UNRWA (2015); The World Post (2014); Doha News (2012).

Convinced that investing in development in Darfur can help to break the cycle of violence and begin to sow the seeds of peace in this region of Sudan, in September 2014 Qatar signed a USD 88.5 million grant agreement with the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund, administered by UNDP, to finance recovery and reconstruction. It is the single largest donation of Qatar to the United Nations and covers half of the requirements for immediate needs identified in the Darfur Development Strategy. The total financing needs envisioned in the six-year plan is USD 7.2 billion.

This support is one of the main outcomes of the Darfur peace agreement, signed in Doha in 2011, and will launch the implementation of the immediate priorities outlined in the Darfur Development Strategy, launched at the International Donor Conference in April 2013. The three pillars of the Darfur Development Strategy are reconstruction; governance, justice and reconciliation; and economic recovery.

The United Nations Fund for Recovery Reconstruction and Development in Darfur is established to support the efficient implementation of key components of the Darfur Development Strategy. Specifically by end 2019, it seeks to restore peace, security and social stability; improve government functionality and civil administration; reconstruct and construct physical, institutional and social infrastructure; and implement a comprehensive structural reform of health and educational institutions, especially universities, in order to transform Darfur into a developed society in terms of technology, industry, agriculture and trade.

## South-South initiatives

South-South cooperation functions as an ever more important complement to traditional North-South cooperation. Its focus on mutual benefit, capacity building and knowledge sharing makes it well suited to tackle challenges of a changing world. An initiative, launched by southern partners, is underway to explore how to better map South-South cooperation efforts for enhanced mutual learning and better development results.

Qatar is strongly committed to strengthening cooperation with countries of the south through the promotion of South-South cooperation. Doha hosted the second South Summit in 2005, in which southern leaders committed

to redouble their efforts to promote cooperation. The Summit adopted the Doha Declaration and the Doha Plan of Action, which called for the expansion of trade among the countries of the south and cooperation in the field of human and technical resources, including areas of information and communication.

Qatar contributed substantially to help launch the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance as the development fund of the influential Group of 77 countries (G77) and China. The idea of creating the fund was formally presented at the second South Summit held in Doha in 2005 in which 132 developing nations participated. The fund was launched by Qatar with an initial contribution of USD 20 million. China and India funded an additional USD 2 million each.

The South Fund aims to consolidate the efforts of the developing countries in complementing traditional cooperation with the establishment of a common assistance mechanism for dealing with economic and social issues. The fund became fully operationalised in September 2008 with Qatar playing a leadership role in its implementation and coordination.

Qatar hosted the *First Arab States Regional South-South Development EXPO 2014* to share southern solutions, extend the impact of development solutions through concrete scaling-up and replication efforts. This regional event served as a strategic networking opportunity for all South-South cooperation champions and participants in the Arab states. It provided a practical platform for matching capacities of solution-providers with the needs of solution-seekers in response to shared development challenges facing the Arab region.

The 2014 Doha EXPO provided an opportunity to discuss how Arab countries can jointly operationalise the Arab South-South cooperation and establish concrete partnerships and solutions to respond to the needs of the peoples in the Arab region. It showcased solutions on the themes of youth and women's employment, energy efficiency and renewable energy and on water and food security. Hosting the EXPO demonstrated the catalytic leadership role of Qatar in offering other Arab states and the countries of the global South a platform to exchange relevant solutions.

## Multicultural dialogue supporting peace and security

Qatar has been steadily promoting dialogue through the use of soft power diplomacy initiatives in regional and international affairs. Under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, Qatar's international relations focused on the consolidation of peace and stability, consistent with the Permanent Constitution. This approach is based on the principles of encouraging settlement of international disputes by peaceful means and supporting the right of people to self-determination.

This strategy is based on maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries, the formation of strategic alliances with major powers, regional and international agencies, and branding the country. Qatar's impartiality has led to it being approached by countries to mediate and create platforms for dialogue between different factions, for example as in 2008 when it brokered a peace agreement between the various factions in southern Lebanon following 18 months of political crisis. Subsequently Qatar played a major role in financing reconstruction.

The Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) was established as a permanent institution in 2008 as a result of a recommendation of the fifth Doha Interfaith Conference held in May 2007. DICID's vision is to be a leading model in achieving peaceful coexistence between followers of different faiths and an international reference for interfaith dialogue. The centre aims to promote the co-existence between different religions and cultures.

DICID's main role is to spread the culture of dialogue, the peaceful coexistence of humanity and the acceptance of others. It organises annual conferences, workshops and seminars that provide an opportunity for dialogue among faith leaders, academics, and other practitioners on aspects of their respective religious from different viewpoints. DICID attempts to reach common and harmonious cooperation from the perspectives of the world's monotheistic religions to lay the foundation for world peace.

Working with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations platform for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation which connects governments, civil society organisations and other stakeholders committed to promoting understanding across diverse communities, Qatar established a National Committee for the Alliance of Civilisations in March 2010. The committee works to consolidate the role of Qatar in highlighting the contribution of the Arab and Islamic civilisation and it seeks to achieve closer cooperation between ethnicities, religions and cultures. In 2012 the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, designated His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al Nasser, who had served as president of the 66th United Nations General Assembly session, to the distinguished position of High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations.

## Conclusions

International cooperation can be an effective means whereby wealthier countries can support the efforts of poorer countries to help achieve the RtD. Inspired by QNV 2030, Qatar is playing an increasingly prominent role in international development cooperation. The amount of its development assistance spend for international cooperation has increased significantly in recent years with the majority of its aid going to a relatively small number of Middle East and African countries. Between 2008 and 2013 Qatar allocated an average of around 0.5% of its GDP to ODA, albeit with sharp year to year fluctuations.

Helping countries achieve internationally agreed development goals is a major objective of several projects under Qatar's international cooperation framework. Poverty reduction, including through employment creation in infrastructure projects, improved health and education as well as better management of the environment, are the main focus areas of Qatar's international cooperation.

The needs for humanitarian assistance have markedly increased with the rising number and severity of regional conflicts. Growing numbers of children, women and older persons have been traumatised by conflict and

displaced from their homes. Qatar is responding to these humanitarian emergencies through government assistance as well as through support by its international NGOs and philanthropic foundations.

Private foundations have become a key source of Qatar's development cooperation, particularly in critical sectors such as health and education. Foundations, by operating outside official bureaucratic channels, can take higher risks and invest in more innovative projects. They can sometimes respond more quickly to emergencies with lower transaction costs and reduce risks of misappropriation. But these advantages accrue only to those which adopt best practices, and have to be set against dangers of fragmentation, weak coordination, high procurement costs and poor accountability.

Qatar has been steadily promoting dialogue through the use of soft power diplomacy initiatives in regional and international affairs. Qatar's international relations have focused on the consolidation of peace and stability, maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries, the formation of strategic alliances with major powers, regional and international agencies, and branding the country. It encourages settlement of international disputes by peaceful means and supporting the rights of people to self-determination. Qatar is committed to strengthening cooperation with countries of the South through the promotion of South-South cooperation.

Qatar's institutional arrangements for the coordination of international development assistance comes under the MOFA. A good practice in many traditional donor countries is the establishment of dedicated aid coordination agency to manage aid effectively as well as to monitor development impact.

As Qatar expands its presence in international cooperation, it needs to formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy. The strategy should build on the elements in the QNV 2030 framework and include priority countries for support; areas for cooperation, taking into account Qatar's comparative advantage, needs and what other donors are doing in those countries; expected results; timelines and budgets. It should also coordinate with other donor countries to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of its programmes. The strategy would develop a multiyear roadmap for establishing cooperation and the principles for engagement such as national ownership. The strategy should ideally be integrated into Qatar's second National Development Strategy 2017-2022 so that it can be transparently monitored for effectiveness and results.

While the MOFA has developed an integrated information system to enable the government and NGOs to enter aid information, the currently available data on Qatar's foreign aid flows are limited. There is a need to improve the quality and detail of statistical information on aid flows to be consistent with international best practice definitions and methodology as adopted by the OECD-DAC. This would help to increase transparency and enable the MOFA to improve the quality and detail of its aid reporting. Making information publicly available on its website would also enable public scrutiny and strengthen accountability.

Moving forward Qatar's development cooperation will have to help support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. A new narrative of development cooperation is required that supports the scope, scale and impact of changes needed to achieve the sustainable development goals. It should embolden new ways of working together and partnerships driven by innovative practices, passion and international best practice.





# 8

## Realising Qatar National Vision 2030 The Right to Development – Recommendations





# Realising Qatar National Vision 2030

## The Right to Development – Recommendations

### Changing laws, building capacity and accessing justice

*Review, amend and promulgate legislation to remove obstacles to exercising the RtD and human rights, and strengthen institutional capacity to implement and enforce them.*

Qatar is contemplating ratifying the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (1966). By doing so Qatar can take its human rights obligations and human development aspirations to the next level of implementation.

Human development policy takes its starting point from the legal framework that organises relationships and requirements in society, including rights and obligations. Laws that are obstacles to realising human development should be amended. Many such laws have been mentioned in this report including: the nationality law; the sponsorship law and others affecting foreign worker-related rights and obligations; the law on association; and the law on freedom of expression.

There is also the need to promulgate new laws and/or implement affirmative national action plans (NAP) to combat discrimination. A NAP would articulate a comprehensive strategy that includes legislative reform, procedural reform, awareness raising, civil society participation and an indicator framework for monitoring progress.

Areas of focus would include promoting women's participation in decision-making, persons with special needs; support and protection of children; youth and older persons; and protection of domestic workers. There is also a need to expedite the establishment of a National Mental

Health Law to protect the rights of people with mental health conditions.

One challenge is the lack of national technical and human resource capacity in human rights work necessary to support the legislative and administrative work that emerges from accession to human rights conventions and treaties. There is also a lack of institutional and human resource capacity needed to implement, monitor and enforce existing laws, including rights violations. Enforcement, dispute resolution and judicial review capacity have to be expanded and made results-oriented.

Foreign workers who experience denial of their rights often lack information and knowledge as well as the linguistic abilities to make formal complaints. The NDS 2011-2016 proposed the establishment of a special labour tribunal to improve access to justice to solve routine labour disputes with the aim that they could be adjudicated upon within a limited period of time. Ensuring effective access would necessitate providing information in multiple languages, having interpreters available, and that workers are not charged fees. Mechanisms for ensuring its decisions are enforced must also be put in place.

### Promoting civil society participation

*Strengthen and expand civil society organisations' freedoms.*

Participation in development is an important component of the RtD. A participatory approach in the context of the RtD framework needs to be accompanied by a culture that sees development not as the responsibility of the government alone but as a society-wide effort. Opening new space for civil society participation would help further in creating a participatory and right-based culture.

The progressive development of such a culture will require concerted action towards strengthening training of the young in participatory values, human rights and awareness of their role in national development.

Civil society organisations can offer multiple benefits to society including providing constructive criticisms to government on policies, programmes and service delivery and advocacy for underrepresented citizens, such as disabled or older persons, on issues that matter to them. Most of Qatar's civil society organisations work in charitable and humanitarian causes.

Compared with international best practices, the enabling environment for civil society is constrained. Given rapid growth in the country's population and the increasingly complex and diverse range of development challenges, there is a need to increase the number of civil society organisations and broaden their scope of engagement. A strategy for strengthening and expanding civil society organisations would further support national development.

## Raising Awareness

*Promote a culture of rights through improved communication and awareness raising on rights and obligations including through, inter alia, interactive internet forums.*

People have to be aware of their rights to exercise them. Lack of awareness of human rights by women for example has been identified as a weakness. Women need to be better sensitised to their constitutional and legal rights in order to increase their agency, voice and participation in the full range of national and community decision-making. The importance of communicating and raising awareness of workers' rights is part of the process of creating a human rights culture. This has to be done consistently not only among workers, but also with rights-holders such as employers, government personnel and members of the public.

Qatar has well-developed information dissemination and interactive internet forums. The existing internet-based government websites can be used better as platforms to inform, educate and engage the broader public for ideas or views, including on policy matters. Some of these mechanisms are already used by some ministries and service providers. More focused efforts can support

the creation of participatory values and human rights awareness.

## Reducing inequalities

*Address inequalities and exclusion among individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised.*

A rights-based approach to development calls for efforts to be undertaken to address inequalities and exclusion which tend to mirror rights not observed. Qatar, because of its recent persistent strong economic performance and high levels of income derived from its natural hydrocarbon resource base, has no absolute poverty. The NDS 2011-2016 adopted a national relative poverty line to help determine a monetary social protection floor for Qataris. Nearly one-tenth of Qatari households experience relative poverty and the incidence of children in Qatari households living in relative poverty has increased. And there is a significant divide in social prosperity between the most urbanised Qatari households and those less urbanised. There are gaps in a wide range of social, demographic and economic variables that have implications for policies and programmes—in the establishment of education facilities, including preschools, health and community facilities and employment, as well as public services.

While the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women affirms that state parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children, this is inconsistent with the Qatari Nationality Law since citizenship is granted based on the nationality of the father. Although there are some measures to ensure that the children of Qatari women with foreign husbands receive the same treatment as children of Qatari nationals in the areas of education and health this does not extend to all entitlements.

There is also a need to do more for persons with disabilities (PWD) by supporting children with special needs and through stronger job placement measures to enforce current law which mandates an employment rate for disabled people of at least 2%. An effective monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure that this target is being met. The government alone cannot realise the RtD of persons with disabilities. Support and collaborative efforts of civil society, the private sector, communities and families is needed. PWD should have opportunities to access their rights within their own communities through affordable and relevant services.

A comprehensive and holistic approach is required to mainstream PWD into the development agenda so that they can enjoy their rights.

## Strengthening women's empowerment

*Establish a centralised government agency with a strong mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on gender equality and women's empowerment.*

Qatar's high international ranking in human development contrasts with its low score on gender equality and women's empowerment. Impressive progress in achieving gender equality in education and health has not been matched by commensurate progress in employment and political empowerment. Underlying social and cultural norms as well as stereotyping affects women's employment choices and make women reluctant to take up certain types of work. Tapping women's potential as vital human capital will support the country's economic and social advancement. Relatively few women are in top senior management positions.

Following the review of Qatar's report to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in early 2014, the United Nations recommended that the country establish a centralised government agency with a strong mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on gender equality and women's empowerment, with a view to ensuring the systematic implementation of the provisions of the convention. This recommendation is of heightened importance given that women's issues previously carried out by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs were absorbed into the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in early 2014.

## Reducing violence and abuse

*Monitor and raise public awareness about all forms of violence and abuse affecting children, women and domestic workers and provide appropriate support for them.*

Gender-based violence, which includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, can permanently affect victims and has social and economic costs for society. It prevents victims from enjoying their human rights. Reported cases of domestic violence are on the rise. Many incidents of

violence against women go unreported and do not feature in official statistics. CEDAW's Committee cited concern with low levels of coordination between governmental and non-governmental organisations that are responsible for protecting families from domestic violence. Cultural sensitivities hinder collection and sharing of abuse-related data across organisations.

Cases of violence and abuse of children in Qatar are growing: by parents, family members, caretakers, teachers or even other children. Many cases go unreported and the magnitude of the problem is hard to quantify. There should be regular health monitoring, school awareness programmes, establishment of counselling entities, better supervision in schools where abuse is more common, and in-depth studies to understand the root causes of such violent behaviour.

## Respecting and protecting human rights of younger persons

*Incorporate a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, and respect and protect the human rights of those living with HIV/AIDS.*

Drug abuse is a major public health problem impacting young people in all societies. Yet little is publicly known about it in Qatar, including what drugs are being used and the magnitude of the challenge. Qatar has moved away from treating drug addiction merely as a criminal matter and is recognising it as a health and social challenge. The right to health includes the right to obtain health services without fear of punishment. By incorporating a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, Qatar could improve access to treatment and reduce the prevalence of substance abusers.

Qatar has experienced the spread of HIV/AIDS. The true level, especially among Qataris, is difficult to ascertain as the population is not screened and there is significant social stigma and fear attached to the disease. Young people, especially females, have little knowledge about prevention of HIV transmission. HIV/AIDS-related human rights issues, such as stigma and discrimination; punitive laws; policies and practices; and poor access to justice, have been identified as obstacles to achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support. A rights-based response to HIV/AIDS involves

investing in enabling legal and social environments and promoting, respecting and protecting human rights of those with HIV/AIDS.

## Empowering older persons and extending social benefits

*Amend relevant legislation that negatively affects the well-being of older persons, including providing better social protection for older non-Qataris who have lived in and contributed towards the development of the country for many years.*

Older persons make a significant but often unrewarded contribution to development. Qatar supports the promotion of active ageing and empowerment of older persons through opportunities to participate in all spheres of life—social, economic, cultural and political. Giving older people a voice in the formulation of policies and the design of programmes, especially those affecting their rights, including age-appropriate health care and services, retirement pensions and an enabling physical environment, are becoming of increasing importance. The well-being of older persons needs to be enhanced by amending legislation negatively affecting their well-being.

An increasing number of long-term expatriates, having worked in Qatar for 20 years or more, would like to remain permanently upon reaching retirement age. In some cases returning to their countries of birth may not be a viable option for a variety of reasons. While their past service to the country may be considered worthy of social benefits, such as pension and health care, they currently have no entitlements.

Implementation of the NDS 2011-2016 proposal to establish a permanent residency category would accommodate the needs of this group, especially if access to social benefits could be extended to them.

## Enhancing international cooperation

*Formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy detailing priority countries, areas of support and principles of engagement.*

As Qatar expands its presence in international cooperation it needs to formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy. The strategy should build

on the international cooperation elements in the Qatar National Vision 2030 framework and include priority countries for support; areas for cooperation, taking into account Qatar's comparative advantage, needs and what other donors are doing in those countries; expected results; timelines and budgets.

Qatar should also coordinate with other donor countries to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of its programmes. The strategy would develop a multiyear roadmap for establishing cooperation, and principles for engagement, including ownership. The strategy should ideally be integrated into Qatar's second National Development Strategy 2017-2022 so that it can be transparently monitored for effectiveness and results.

## Strengthening the evidence base

*Strengthen the collection and analysis of data on population subgroups so as to better monitor progress towards the RtD.*

Strengthen the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data so that policy and programmes relating to the RtD are based on stronger evidence. Periodic special in-depth surveys on satisfaction with service delivery are also required to supplement routine household surveys. Areas of focus include:

- (i) Violence against women: there is a need for robust indicators that capture the prevalence of the various types of violence and women's access to justice; studies that will lead to a better understanding of discriminatory social and cultural factors that cause violence; as well as the longer-term consequences;
- (ii) Persons with disabilities: available data needs to be significantly improved if better measurement and monitoring of the RtD outcomes are to be realised;
- (iii) Mental health: there is a need for data on the prevalence of mental health challenges by type; and
- (iv) Aid flows: improve the quality and detail of statistical information on aid flows to be consistent with international best practice definitions and methodology as adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee. This would help to increase transparency and enable the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to improve the quality and detail of its aid reporting. Making such information publicly available on publicly accessible websites would facilitate public scrutiny and strengthen accountability.



**Table 8.1****Summary of recommendations and illustration of expected benefits**

Recommendations	Illustration of expected benefits
Review, amend and promulgate legislation to remove obstacles to exercising the RtD and human rights, and strengthen institutional capacity to implement and enforce them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laws supportive of the RtD.</li> <li>• Improved institutional and human resource capacity to implement, monitor and enforce legislation.</li> </ul>
Develop and implement a strategy to strengthen and expand civil society organisations in support of the RtD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater voice of civil society on human rights issues.</li> <li>• Increased support for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>
Promote a culture of rights through improved communication and awareness raising on rights and obligations including through, inter alia, interactive internet forums.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved awareness and understanding of human rights.</li> <li>• Increased use of e-platforms to interact on development policy.</li> </ul>
Address inequalities and exclusion among individuals and groups whose human rights have not been fully realised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced relative child poverty rates and increased equity.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>
Establish a centralised government agency with a strong mandate and adequate human and financial resources to coordinate the national machinery on gender equality and women's empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased policy focus on women's issues.</li> <li>• Reduced gender gaps.</li> </ul>
Monitor and raise public awareness about all forms of violence and abuse affecting children, women and domestic workers and provide appropriate support for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced levels of domestic violence.</li> <li>• Improved institutional support for victims of violence.</li> </ul>
Incorporate a human rights perspective into the process of legislative reform in the laws and policies governing drugs, and respect and protect the human rights of those with HIV/AIDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to treatment for drug users and persons living with HIV/AIDS.</li> <li>• Reductions in prevalence of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.</li> </ul>
Amend relevant legislation that negatively impact the well-being of older persons, including providing better social protection for older non-Qataris who have lived in and contributed towards the development of the country for many years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation and improved well-being of older persons.</li> <li>• Social protection for long-term expatriates.</li> </ul>
Formulate a comprehensive international technical cooperation strategy detailing priority countries, areas of support and principles of engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater coherence and effectiveness of international cooperation.</li> <li>• Increased transparency of technical cooperation support.</li> </ul>
Strengthen the collection and analysis of data on population subgroups so as to better monitor progress towards the RtD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger evidence for policy.</li> <li>• Strengthened accountability towards the RtD.</li> </ul>

# Annex 1: Declaration on the Right to Development

General Assembly Resolution 41/128 (1986)

*The General Assembly,*

*Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations relating to the achievement of international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,*

*Recognizing that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom,*

*Considering that under the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in that Declaration can be fully realized,*

*Recalling the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,*

*Recalling further the relevant agreements, conventions, resolutions, recommendations and other instruments of the United Nations and its specialized agencies concerning the integral development of the human being, economic and social progress and development of all peoples, including those instruments concerning decolonization, the prevention of discrimination, respect for and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the maintenance of international peace and security and the further promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter,*

*Recalling the right of peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they have the right freely to determine their*

*political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development,*

*Recalling also the right of peoples to exercise, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, full and complete sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources,*

*Mindful of the obligation of States under the Charter to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,*

*Considering that the elimination of the massive and flagrant violations of the human rights of the peoples and individuals affected by situations such as those resulting from colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, foreign domination and occupation, aggression and threats against national sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity and threats of war would contribute to the establishment of circumstances propitious to the development of a great part of mankind,*

*Concerned at the existence of serious obstacles to development, as well as to the complete fulfillment of human beings and of peoples, constituted, inter alia, by the denial of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and considering that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent and that, in order to promote development, equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the implementation, promotion and protection of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and that, accordingly, the promotion of, respect for and enjoyment of certain human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot justify the denial of other human rights and fundamental freedoms,*



*Considering that international peace and security are essential elements for the realization of the right to development,*

*Reaffirming that there is a close relationship between disarmament and development and that progress in the field of disarmament would considerably promote progress in the field of development and that resources released through disarmament measures should be devoted to the economic and social development and well-being of all peoples and, in particular, those of the developing countries,*

*Recognizing that the human person is the central subject of the development process and that development policy should therefore make the human being the main participant and beneficiary of development,*

*Recognizing that the creation of conditions favourable to the development of peoples and individuals is the primary responsibility of their States,*

*Aware that efforts at the international level to promote and protect human rights should be accompanied by efforts to establish a new international economic order,*

*Confirming that the right to development is an inalienable human right and that equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative both of nations and of individuals who make up nations,*

**Proclaims the following Declaration on the Right to Development:**

**Article 1**

1. The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

2. The human right to development also implies the full realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, which includes, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources.

**Article 2**

1. The human person is the central subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development.

2. All human beings have a responsibility for development, individually and collectively, taking into account the need for full respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as their duties to the community, which alone can ensure the free and complete fulfillment of the human being, and they should therefore promote and protect an appropriate political, social and economic order for development.

3. States have the right and the duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom.

**Article 3**

1. States have the primary responsibility for the creation of national and international conditions favorable to the realization of the right to development.

2. The realization of the right to development requires full respect for the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

3. States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development. States should realize their rights and fulfill their duties in such a manner as to promote a new international economic order based on sovereign equality, interdependence, mutual interest and co-operation among all States, as well as to encourage the observance and realization of human rights.

**Article 4**

1. States have the duty to take steps, individually and collectively, to formulate international development policies with a view to facilitating the full realization of the right to development.

2. Sustained action is required to promote more rapid development of developing countries. As a complement to the efforts of developing countries, effective international co-operation is essential in providing these countries with appropriate means and facilities to foster their comprehensive development.

#### **Article 5**

States shall take resolute steps to eliminate the massive and flagrant violations of the human rights of peoples and human beings affected by situations such as those resulting from apartheid, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, colonialism, foreign domination and occupation, aggression, foreign interference and threats against national sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity, threats of war and refusal to recognize the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination.

#### **Article 6**

1. All States should co-operate with a view to promoting, encouraging and strengthening universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without any distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

2. All human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent; equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the implementation, promotion and protection of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

3. States should take steps to eliminate obstacles to development resulting from failure to observe civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

#### **Article 7**

All States should promote the establishment, maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security and, to that end, should do their utmost to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as well as to ensure that the resources released

by effective disarmament measures are used for comprehensive development, in particular that of the developing countries.

#### **Article 8**

1. States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realization of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices.

2. States should encourage popular participation in all spheres as an important factor in development and in the full realization of all human rights.

#### **Article 9**

1. All the aspects of the right to development set forth in the present Declaration are indivisible and interdependent and each of them should be considered in the context of the whole.

2. Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as being contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, or as implying that any State, group or person has a right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the violation of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights.

#### **Article 10**

Steps should be taken to ensure the full exercise and progressive enhancement of the right to development, including the formulation, adoption and implementation of policy, legislative and other measures at the national and international levels.

# Annex 2: Qatar's Human Development Indicators, 2000 – 2013

## 1. Human Development Index and component indices and values

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Human Development Index	0.811	0.840	0.847	0.840	0.850	0.851
Life Expectancy Index	0.740	0.834	0.886	0.921	0.920	0.898
Education Index	..	..	0.720*	0.709*	0.727*	0.686
GNI Index	0.870	0.938	0.952	1.000	1.000	1.000

.. Data not available.

\* MDPS.

Source: UNDP (2014).

## 2. Components of Human Development Index

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Live expectancy at birth (years)	69.6	75.0	76.0	78.4	78.5	78.4
Mean years of schooling	..	..	9.1*	8.4*	8.6*	9.1
Expected years of schooling	..	..	14.0*	13.5*	13.8*	13.8
GDP per capita (PPP USD)	27.2	49.2	79.4	107.7	87.5	119.0

.. Data not available.

\* MDPS.

Source: UNDP (2014).

## 3. Demographic trends

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total population (millions)	0.61	0.91	1.71	1.73	1.83	2.00	2.22
Annual population growth rate (%)	4.6	13.5	4.7	1.0	5.8	9.3	10.6
Qatari annual population growth rate (%)	3.4	3.9	7.2	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.8
Non-Qatari annual population growth rate (%)	5.2	16.6	4.2	0.7	6.3	10.4	11.8
Total fertility rate Qatari (births per woman)	4.5	4.2	4.2	4.0	3.6	3.9	..

.. Data not available.

#### 4. Economic performance

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
GDP (USD billion)	17.8	44.5	124.8	169.3	189.8	202.7
GDP <i>per capita</i> (USD '000)	28.8	50.1	72.8	97.7	103.5	101.1
GDP <i>per capita</i> annual growth rate (%)	36.2	20.2	22.3	34.2	6.0	-2.3
Average annual change in Consumer Price Index (%)	1.7	6.4	-2.7	2.1	2.0	3.5

#### 5. The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Health expenditure (% of GDP)	Public	1.31	2.28	1.6	1.5	1.8	..
	Private	0.08	0.08	0.5	0.4	0.4	..
	Total	1.39	2.36	2.1	1.9	2.2	..
Health expenditure per capita, PPP (constant 2005 international USD)	1,733*	2,486	1,663	1,740	1,986	..	
Health expenditure per capita, (current USD)	736*	1,633	1,489	1,911	2,263	..	
One-year olds, fully immunised against tuberculosis (%)	100	100	97	97	97	..	
One-year olds, fully immunised against measles (%)	91	100	98	100	97	..	
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Number of physicians and dentists (per 1,000 people)	2.2	3.1	4.0	2.9	3.2	..	
Number of physicians (per 1,000 people)	1.9	2.6	3.5	2.4	2.5	..	
Number of nurses (per 1,000 people)	4.2	7.3	6.2	5.6	5.8	..	
Population with sustainable access to affordable essential drugs (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	11.7	8.2	6.8	7.6	6.2	6.7	
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	13.1	10.4	8.5	9.0	7.9	7.8	
Death rates from diabetes disease per 100,000 population aged 60+, Qatari. (three-year moving average)	503	597	657	558	526	462	
Death rates from cardiovascular disease per 100,000 population aged 60+, Qatari. (three-year moving average)	1,766	1,324	764	712	596	607	
Death rates from trauma per 100,000 population, Qatari. (three-year moving average)	37	57	33	31	34	35	
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	Qatari	..	16.0	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Non-Qatari	..	28.0	8.5	7.7	6.9	0.0
	Total	8.3*	22.4	10.3	4.8	4.7	0.0

.. Data not available.

\* Refers to year 2001.

## 6. The right to education

			2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Public expenditure on education	As % of GDP		3.0	3.4	3.3	2.4	3.0	3.0
	As % of total government expenditure		9.0	13.0	11.2	8.9	10.2	9.7
Adult literacy rate (% aged 15+)	Qatari		..	..	94.8	95.3	95.7	95.6
	Non-Qatari		..	..	96.4	96.5	96.8	97.6
	Total		87.8	90.6	96.3	96.4	96.4	97.4
Net primary enrolment ratio (%)			83.1	91.2	92.6	90.5	93.8	92.2
Net secondary enrolment ratio (%)			78.8	81.7	87.4	85.9	87.7	88.0
Gross tertiary enrolment ratio (%)	Qatari	Male	22.2	24.5	27.8	29.5	37.4	..
		Female	43.6	48.1	56.3	62.3	71.7	..
		Total	43.6	36.3	41.7	45.4	54.1	..
	Non-Qatari (persons in regular households)	Male	..	..	20.6	21.8	25.5	..
		Female	..	..	26.7	34.3	39.7	..
		Total	..	..	20.6	27.7	32.2	..
Percentage of new graduates in knowledge economy disciplines	Qatari		..	..	56.1	62.5	68.6	..
	Total		..	..	63.9	68.0	75.9	..

.. Data not available.

## 7. The right to work

			2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Labour force participation rates (aged 15+) (%)	Qatari	Male	66.1	66.7	65.7	63.6	68.1	70.0
		Female	27.4	27.4	36.3	34.1	34.6	34.7
		Total	46.4	47.9	50.7	48.7	51.3	52.1
	Non-Qatari	Male	94.8	94.8	98.0	98.0	97.7	97.9
		Female	43.8	43.8	50.7	58.6	58.4	59.0
		Total	82.2	83.4	91.0	91.3	90.7	91.1
Unemployment rates (aged 15+) (%)	Qatari		11.6	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.0	1.5
	Non-Qatari (excluding persons in collective units and maids)		..	..	1.5	1.5	2.1	1.3
Female economic activity rate (aged 15+)	Rate (%)		35.2	40.6	52.2	52.1	52.4	53.1
	As % of male rate		38.7	44.3	54.4	54.4	54.8	55.2
Female employment by economic activity (%)	Agriculture	Female	0	0.1	0	0	0	0
		Male	4.3	3.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6
	Industry	Female	1.9	3.1	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.4
		Male	38	47.6	61.9	60.9	58.5	58.4
	Services	Female	98.1	96.8	96.2	95.8	95.7	95.6
Male		57.7	49.2	36.5	37.5	39.9	40.0	

.. Data not available.

## 8. Workers complaints

	2006	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of complainants ('000) received by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	6.7	11.3	8.9	8.7	10.8	9.4
Number of complaints received by National Human Right Committes	..	..	..	..	1,929	..

.. Data not available.

## 9. Components of Gender-Related Development Index

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gender Inequality Index <sup>1</sup>	Index	..	..	0.671*	0.549	0.546	0.524
	Rank/Total	..	..	94/138*	111/146	117/148	113/152
Gender-Related Development Index <sup>1</sup>	Index	..	0.863	..	..	..	0.979
	Rank/Total	..	37/157	..	..	..	32/148
Gender Development Index	Female	..	..	..	..	..	0.838
	Male	..	..	..	..	..	0.856
Life expectancy at birth, Qatar (years) <sup>2</sup>	Female	78	78	79	79	79	..
	Male	76	77	77	77	78	..
Life expectancy at birth, Qatari (years)	Female	74.8	75.8	77.6	78.6	79.8	80.9
	Male	71.2	72.7	74.9	75.7	75.8	76.5
Mean years of schooling	Female	..	9.3	10.5	9.8	9.8	10.4
	Male	..	8.0	8.8	8.1	8.3	8.7
Expected years of schooling	Female	..	..	14.8	14.0	15.0	14.9
	Male	..	..	13.3	12.9	12.9	13.0
GDP per capita (PPP USD '000) <sup>1</sup>	Female	..	..	..	..	..	45.9
	Male	..	..	..	..	..	141.5

.. Data not available.

\* Refers to 2008.

<sup>1</sup> UNDP (2014).

<sup>2</sup> WB (2015).

## 10. Components of gender empowerment measure

	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Female legislators, senior officials and managers (%)	6.6	8.1	10.8	10.4	11.0	12.8
Female professionals and technical workers (%)	25.9	24.5	22.8	23.9	23.2	23.5

## 11. Gender inequality in education

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Adult literacy	Female rate (% aged 15+)	84.2	87.5	95.4	95.6	95.8	97.1
	Female rate as % of male rate	92.2	93.5	98.9	98.9	98.8	99.5
Youth literacy	Female rate (% aged 15–24)	97.3	98.4	98.3	98.7	99.8	99.3
	Female rate as % of male rate	98.5	99.2	102.0	101.2	101.2	100.5
Net primary enrolment	Female ratio (%)	93.0	94.6	94.0	90.6	94.0	92.5
	Ratio of female to male	1.23	1.07	1.03	1.00	1.00	1.01
Net secondary enrolment	Female ratio (%)	87.6	93.8	88.8	86.1	90.9	90.2
	Ratio of female to male	1.23	1.3	1.04	1.01	1.07	1.07
Gross tertiary enrolment	Female ratio (%)	36.7	28.5	34.0	36.7	43.9	..
	Ratio of female to male	3.8	5.1	5.8	6.7	6.3	..

.. Data not available.

## 12. Protection of women

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Unemployment of Qataris (aged 20-24)	Female rate (as % of female labour force)	52.3*	27.7 <sup>1</sup>	16.7	18.6	15.2	11.3
	Female rate % of male rate	352*	243 <sup>1</sup>	510	638	371	1,027
Unemployment of Qataris (aged 15+)	Female rate (as % of female labour force)	22.0*	4.9 <sup>1</sup>	8.1	8.0	6.4	3.3
	Female rate % of male rate	307*	123 <sup>1</sup>	470	460	492	471
Adolescent fertility rates (per 1,000 Qatari women aged 15-19)		20.4	18.5	17.1	14.9	13.4	11.8
Number of maternal deaths (per 100,000 live births)		8.3	22.4	10.3	4.8	4.7	0

.. Data not available.

\* Refers to 2001.

<sup>1</sup> Refers to 2004.



### 13. Rights of persons with disabilities

		2001	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of disabled centres in Qatar		3	7	9	12	13	12
Number of employees in disabled service centres		..	323	766	1,520	1,477	1,477
Number of staff providing services at Rumeilah Hospital	Nurses	..	..	250	580	546	691
	Total staff	..	..	501	856	965	1,212
Persons with disabilities registered at Rumeilah Hospital	Children (aged 0-14)	..	..	2,608	2,976	3,989	4,012
	Adults (aged 15+)	..	..	5,992	6,361	5,527	5,804
Persons with disabilities admitted (inpatients) at Rumeilah Hospital	Children (aged 0-14)	..	..	421	542	305	337
	Adults (aged 15+)	..	..	694	863	1,167	1,296
Number of persons with disabilities	Qatari	2,119	2,587	3,481	3,787	3,936	4,283
	Non-Qatari	1,298	1,615	2,595	2,749	3,006	3,156
Number of persons with disabilities per 1,000 population	Qatari	12.1	12.9	14.1	15.0	15.2	16.0
	Non-Qatari	2.8	2.3	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8
	Non-Qatari (residents)	..	5.7	5.4	6.2	6.1	6.0
Schools equipped to meet the needs of disabled children (%)	Independent	..	80	68	78	86	..
	Private Arabic	..	11	33	21	19	..
	International	..	..	22	23	28	..

.. Data not available.

### 14. Rights of children

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of children arrested/detained per 100,000 children (aged below 18)		73	0	221	224	192	..
One-year olds, fully immunised against (%)	Tuberculosis	100	100	97	97	97	..
	Measles	91	100	98	100	97	..
	Hepatitis B Vaccine 3	83	97	95	92	95	..
	Haemophilus Influenzae	97	97	95	94	95	..
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Qatari	10.7	7.7	6.7	6.6	6.3	7.4
	Non-Qatari	12.8	8.7	6.8	8.1	6.2	6.3
	Total	11.7	8.2	6.8	7.6	6.2	6.7
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Qatari	12.8	10.5	8.1	8.3	7.6	8.7
	Non-Qatari	13.5	10.4	8.7	9.4	8.1	7.4
	Total	13.1	10.4	8.5	9.0	7.9	7.8

.. Data not available.

## 15. Rights of youth

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Youth population ('000)	Qatari	31.0	37.6	48.3	49.9	50.5	52.1	
	Non-Qatari	55.1	117.2	207.1	224.2	231.2	242.3	
	Total	86.1	154.8	255.4	274.1	281.7	294.4	
Share of youth in total population (%)		14.0	17.1	14.9	15.8	15.4	14.7	
Youth literacy rate (% aged 15-24)	Qatari	..	..	99.5	99.5	99.9	99.5	
	Non-Qatari	..	..	96.2	97.4	98.9	98.4	
	Total	98.0	98.9	96.8	97.9	99.1	98.5	
Qatari youth gross tertiary enrolment ratio	Male	22.2	24.5	27.8	29.5	37.4	..	
	Female	43.6	48.1	56.3	62.3	71.7	..	
Qatari youth labour force participation rate (%)	Male	15-19	18.6	14.7	15.3	13.4	26.0	16.6
		20-24	76.6	70.0	68.7	69.9	63.7	72.6
	Female	15-19	3.5	3.8	6.8	3.0	6.0	4.4
		20-24	22.8	32.7	36.8	38.0	39.1	31.4
Qatari youth unemployment rate (%)	Male	15-19	42.5	16.6	12.8	0.0	0.6	0.8
		20-24	14.9	11.4	3.3	2.9	4.1	1.1
	Female	15-19	81.2	54.8	41.1	0.0	37.7	19.2
		20-24	52.3	27.3	16.9	18.6	15.2	11.3
Road traffic accidents (number of deaths)	Qatari	36	69	54	49	44	72	
	Non-Qatari	85	137	174	156	160	174	
Road traffic accidents (deaths per 100,000 persons)	Qatari	21	34	22	19	17	27	
	Non-Qatari	19	19	12	11	10	10	
HIV/AIDS cases	Male	..	11	5	4	13	..	
		..	3	2	3	2	..	
	Qatari	..	2	4	1	5	10	
		Non-Qatari	..	12	3	6	10	8

.. Data not available.

## 16. Rights of older persons

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	
% of population aged 60+ to total	Qatari	Male	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.6
		Female	3.7	4.0	4.2	4.4	4.5	4.7
		Total	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6
	Non-Qatari	Male	1.9	1.7	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
		Female	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
		Total	1.8	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Older persons literacy rate (% aged 60+)	Qatari	..	..	60.1	67.8	80.7	72.1	
	Non-Qatari	..	..	85.8	88.7	92.0	89.7	
	Total	..	..	76.2	82.2	89.1	83.7	

.. Data not available.

## 17. Participation in development

		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Internet access (% of population aged 4+)	Qatari	..	41*	71	76	74	79
	Non-Qatari	..	39*	57	46	48	52
Computer access (% of population aged 4+)	Qatari	..	54*	74	79	80	84
	Non-Qatari	..	47*	61	46	50	54
Cellular subscription (per 1,000 people)		194	900	1,430	1,330	1,430	1,660
Voice of Accountability Index (percentile rank) <sup>1</sup>		37.5	35.6	24.2	19.7	25.6	23.7
		1999	2003	2007	2011		
Women participation in Central Municipal Council election	Actual voters	Number	7,484	2,985	7,054	6,120	
		% share of actual voters	43	39	51	45	
	Elected candidates	Number	0	1	1	1	
		% share of elected candidates	0	3	3	3	

.. Data not available.

\* Refers to 2004.

<sup>1</sup> WB (2014).

## 18. International cooperation

		2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Official development assistance (USD million)		143.6	513.7	948.6	822.4	1,758.3
Official development assistance as % of GDP	Government	0.27	0.16	0.24	0.29	0.69
	Non-government	0.05	0.23	0.18	0.13	0.14
	Total	0.32	0.40	0.54	0.43	0.87

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