

## QF MEMBER DIFI FOCUSES ON FAMILY HOUSING AT THE UN

*Doha Briefing discusses investment in affordable housing and social protection issues*

**New York, US, February 13, 2020:** Ways of tackling a lack of affordable and adequate housing for families have been placed in the spotlight at the United Nations, through Doha International Family Institute’s annual Doha Briefing.

“Social protection policies play an important role in addressing family wellbeing, as well as tackling the lack of adequate and affordable housing structures,” said Dr. Sharifa Noaman Al Emadi, Executive Director of the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), speaking at United Nations Headquarters.

“Such policies have the untapped potential to contribute to the achievement of development goals at national, regional, and global level. We joined other countries through our Doha Briefing to discuss the challenges faced in addressing the assurance of, and access to, adequate and affordable housing and its impact on family wellbeing, and put forward endorsed measures to facilitate the access to affordable housing.

“DIFI also aimed to identify the challenges facing parents during these changing times, including familial conflict and housing instability, and highlighting solutions towards family stability and cohesion, such as investing in parenting programs.”

The Qatar Foundation member’s briefing in New York was held at the 58th Session of the Commission for Social Development, titled ‘Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness’, and focused on how access to housing and social protection systems are vital to nurturing strong and stable families.

Held in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar, the briefing’s first session was held in collaboration with the United Nations (UN), the Division for Inclusive Social Development within the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and Qatar’s Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs. Participants were welcomed by Her Excellency Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UN, with the session being moderated by Renata Kaczmarek, Focal Point on the Family within the Social Inclusion and Participation Branch in UNDESA’s Division for Inclusive Social Development Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Speakers included His Excellency Ghanem Mubarak Al Kuwari, Assistant Undersecretary for Social Affairs, Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs, Qatar, who gave a presentation on ‘The State's Role in Protecting Family Cohesion by Providing Housing Care: Regulations, Policies, Priority’. Dr. Susan Roylance, Director of International Policy, United Families, spoke about families and housing instability in the context of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, with DIFI researcher Ahmed Aref’s presentation focusing on the case for family-sensitive social protection.

The second session of the Doha Briefing was organized by DIFI in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the UN, UNICEF and the International Federation for Family Development (IFFD) under the theme of ‘Families and Housing Instability: Investing in Parenting Programs’. It explored how housing instability can affect family cohesion and child wellbeing, highlighted the housing challenges facing parents, and advocated for policies and programs that can support parents in safeguarding their children.

After opening remarks from Dr. Al Emadi, the side event – moderated by Ignacio Socias, Director of Communications, IFFD – heard the perspectives of Dr. Froma Walsh, Co-Director and Co-Founder of the Chicago Center for Family Health, on family resilience and housing instability; and Chemba Raghavan, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF, as she discussed the need for family-friendly policies that reduce the impact of poverty on children. The session concluded with Dana Al Kahlout, Senior Program Specialist at DIFI, giving a presentation outlining the case for investing in parenting programs.

DIFI is a global policy and advocacy institute working to advance knowledge on Arab families through research and promote evidence-based policies at a national, regional, and international level. The institute has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

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**About Doha International Family Institute (DIFI)**

The Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), was established in 2006. The Institute works to strengthen the family through the development and dissemination of high-quality research on Arab families, encouraging knowledge exchange on issues relevant to the family and making the family a priority to policy-makers through advocacy and outreach at the national, regional and international levels. Among the Institute's most important initiatives is the Annual Conference on the Family; and the OSRA Research Grant in collaboration with the Qatar National Research Fund, an annual research grant which encourages research related to the Arab family and family policy. The Institute has special consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council.

### **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, please visit: [www.qf.org.qa](http://www.qf.org.qa)

For any media inquiries, please contact: [pressoffice@qf.org.qa](mailto:pressoffice@qf.org.qa)