

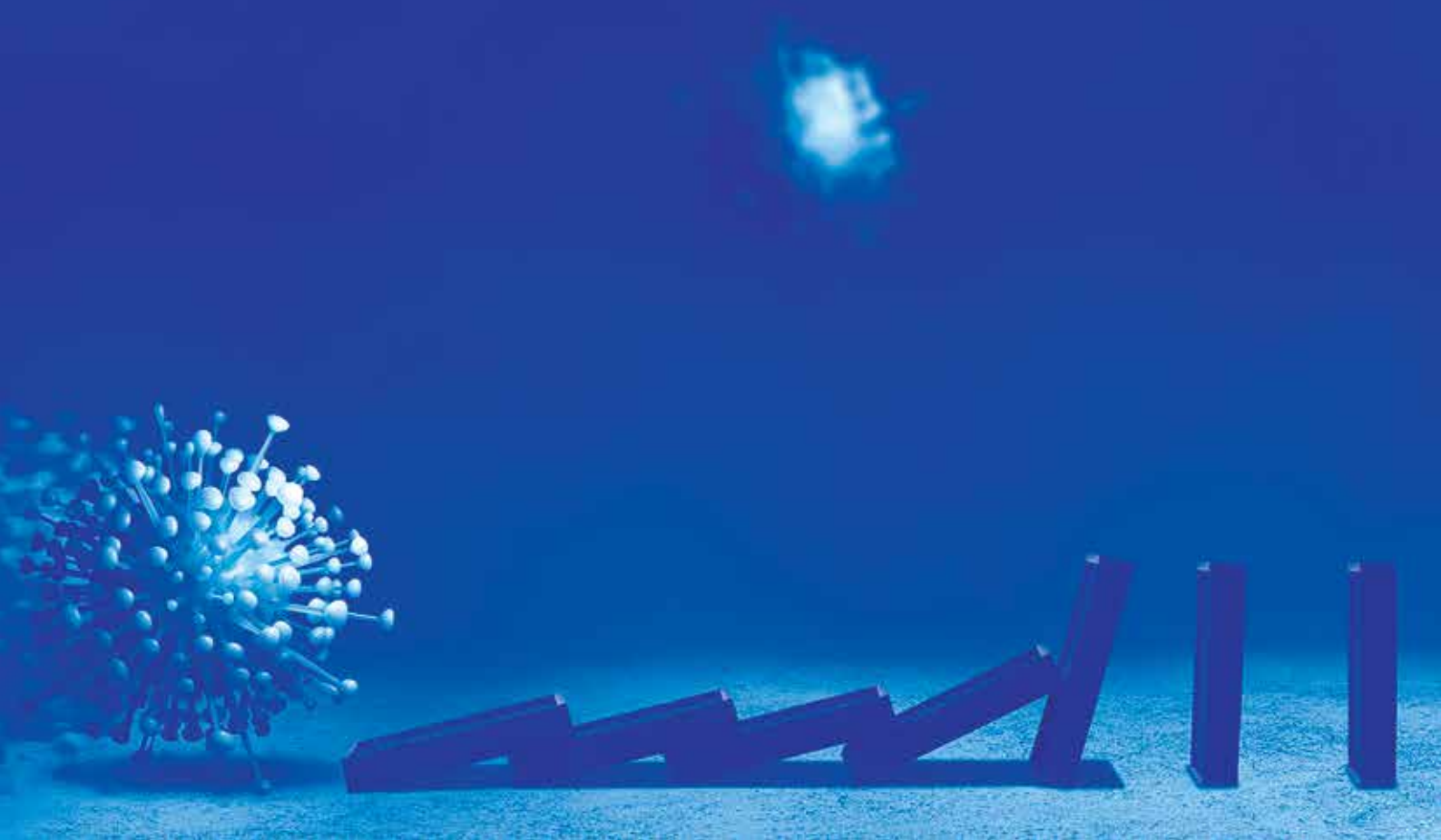


Population

Towards Better Life For Population

A quarterly Review issued by the Technical Office of the Permanent Population Committee in the Planning and Statistics Authority Issue 51, March 2022

- **Work Program of the Fifth Phase (November 2021-October 2022) of the Follow-Up to the Implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy (2017-2022)**
- **Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management during COVID-19 in Qatar: Health Approach in All Policies – Strategies and Actions to Enhance Preparedness for Health Emergencies**



Sukkan Population

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General Supervisor

I am delighted to present to the honorable reader the 51st issue of Sukkan «Population» Magazine, whose first topic includes preparation for the fifth and final phase of the follow-up to the implementation of the work program of the Second Population Policy (2017-2022). The outputs will be used to inform the evaluation of this policy on the one hand, and to kick off the preparation of the Third Population Policy on the other. The program for this phase includes four main parts: the time plan, the follow-up questionnaire, the implementation of an opinion poll on the most important population challenges facing Qatari society, and the tasks and responsibilities of the heads and members of the working groups.

This issue's main article presents the Ministry of Public Health's approach to policies and emergency preparedness during the COVID-19 crisis in the State of Qatar. This article shows how Qatar established an emergency response command structure under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. It is a measure involving the National Health Strategic Command Group (NHSCG), which is supported to take evidence-based decisions by a national dedicated Scientific Reference and Research Taskforce (SSRT) on COVID-19 in order to contain the spread of the pandemic.



Dr. Saleh M. Al-Nabit
Chairman of the Permanent Population Committee

Work Program

Fifth and Final Phase (November 2021-October 2022) of the Follow-up to the Implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy (2017-2022)



Prepared by Dr. Youssef Brik, the Permanent Population Committee

The Fifth and Final Phase of the Follow-up to the Implementation of the Work Program of Qatar's Second Population Policy will be of a paramount importance, as the outputs will be used to inform the evaluation of this policy on the one hand, and to kick off the preparation of the Third Population Policy on the other hand.

This phase program includes four main parts:



First: Time Plan

Event		Date	Authority
1. Preparation of the Fifth Phase Work Program	Preparation of the first draft of the work program Preparation of a survey on the most important demographic challenges	1-31 December 2021	Technical Office
	Finalization of the work program, sending it to the groups, and training them on the included follow-up questionnaire		
2. Start of information collection		Early January 2022	Working groups
3. Deadline for submission of completed follow-up questionnaires		Late February 2022	
4. Implementation of a survey on the most important demographic challenges		March 2022	
5. Review and audit follow-up of questionnaires and analysis of their data		Until the end of March 2022	Technical Office
6. Review, audit and classify results of surveys		Until the end of April 2022	
7. Preparation and revision of the first draft of the Third Population Policy		April to late June 2022	
8. Preparation of the "Qatar Population Status 2022" Report		July-October 2022	
9. Preparation of the "Five-year Evaluation of the Second Population Policy" Report			

Second: Follow-up Questionnaire

At this phase, the follow-up questionnaire that was implemented

in the first follow-up phase (November 2017-October 2018) of the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy will be re-applied in each of the six axes included in this policy. This phase follow-up questionnaire differs from its predecessors in terms of structure and purposes. In terms of structure, a summary of the results of the first follow-up phase is included in the relevant field, as shown in the following example:

First Axis: Population and Labor Force

Goal 1: Increase the Number of Citizens

Procedure 1: Issuance of the Marriage Fund Legislation

Target Indicator	Actual status as per phase follow-up results:								Final statement (after five years)
	First (November 2017-October 2018)				Fifth (November 2021-October 2022)				
	Existing, and is in:								
	Implementation	Legislation	Planning	Does not exist	Implementation	Legislation	Planning	Not existing	
There is a tendency to issue the Marriage Fund Legislation									

Procedure 2: Introduce dowry and wedding cost reduction in educational curricula

The presence of educational and guidance materials calling for a reduction in dowries and marriage costs										
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Procedure 3: Increase the number of low-cost wedding halls in major cities in the State.

Number of low-cost wedding halls	15 halls			
Etc...				

SECOND AXIS: URBAN GROWTH, HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Goal (3) Provide a clean urban environment and ensure sustainable natural resources, especially water and energy

Procedure 2: Increase in green spaces and number of trees, gardens and parks.

Measure of increase in green spaces and number of trees, gardens and parks									
Target Indicator	Actual status as per phase follow-up results:								Final statement (after five years)
	First (November 2017-October 2018)				First (November 2017-October 2018)				
	Existing, and is in:								
	Implementation	Legislation	Planning	Does not exist	Implementation	Legislation	Planning	Does not exist	
Area of green spaces (m2) as per municipality	Area of green spaces (m2)		Municipality		Area of green spaces (m2)		Municipality		
	804739		Doha				Doha		
	1110040		Al Rayyan				Al Rayyan		
	78073		Umm Salal				Umm Salal		
	12904		Al Sheehaniya				Al Sheehaniya		
	84311		Al Wakra				Al Wakra		
	45690		Al Daayen				Al Daayen		
	302428		Al Khor and Al Thakira				Al Khor and Al Thakira		
	35506		Al Shamal				Al Shamal		
	Source: Ministry of Municipality and Environment								

In terms of purposes, the data to be collected in this questionnaire will be used to compare between the results of the first phase and the fifth phase, which helps to identify the extent of progress made towards the implementation of the procedures and achievement of the goals approved in the population policy document after five years of its implementation, according to the weighing mechanism and evaluation methodology prepared for this purpose.

Accordingly, the work program included a host of rules and guidelines for filling out the aforesaid questionnaire, the most important of which are:

- Permanent Population Committee (and of course PPC Technical Office and the various working groups) realizes that it is an agency tasked with following up on the implementation of the Population Policy Work Program and not its implementation. Thus, data and facts on quantitative and qualitative follow-up indicators must be obtained exclusively from their source, and not from any other party.
- The data obtained must be accompanied by the consent of its source and duly documented. Before going to the authorities concerned with implementing the Population Policy Work Program in order to obtain quantitative and qualitative data and facts on the follow-up indicators, it is necessary to have an insightful look at the follow-up questionnaire and adhere to the following instructions:
- Not to add, modify or delete any information contained in the field related to the results of the first phase, and focus on filling in the field for the fifth phase only.
- If the procedure is of a qualitative nature, as shown in the previous example, a reference is made in the column that applies to the actual status of the procedure in the fifth phase and is present in one of the following cases: (implementation / legislation / planning / not existing), and then include a summary of the final statement about what has been achieved in this procedure after five years of its implementation.

- Yet, if the procedure is of a quantitative nature, as shown in the previous example as well, then none of the four different boxes (implementation / legislation / planning / not existing) is filled in, but the statistical data is displayed in the follow-up results box for the fifth phase, with no need to display a summary in the final statement box.

Data of this survey will be used to produce two separate, but complementary, reports, namely:

- Qatar Population Status 2022 Report: It will include the results of the fifth and final phase of the follow-up to the implementation of the Second Population Policy, as well as the general statistical profile of the population policy implementation period, in each of the six axes of the population policy.
- The Five-Year Evaluation of the Second Population Policy Work Program Report: Along with Qatar Population Status 2022 Report, the aforementioned five-year report will be issued. Most notably, it will include the results of the comprehensive review and extensive evaluation of the Second Population Policy after five years of implementing and following up on its work program. The purpose is to identify actual progress achieved in terms of objectives and procedures adopted in this program.

Third: Implementation of a survey on the most important demographic challenges facing Qatari society as per the point of view of the agency to which each of the six working groups belongs on one of the areas assigned to it:

Immediately after completing the questionnaire for the fifth phase of the follow-up to the implementation of Qatar's Second Population Policy at the end of February 2022, the working groups must, during the month of March 2022, carry out the aforementioned survey to identify the



point of view of their agency on the uppermost population issues or challenges that can confront the Qatari society in the foreseeable and medium term, which justifies the development of a Third Population Policy aimed at intervening to solve such challenges or at least limit their effects in the following areas:

- Population and labor Force
- Urban growth, housing and the environment
- Education, Training and Youth
- Public Health and Reproductive Health
- Women and Childhood
- The Elderly people and Persons with disabilities

The findings of this questionnaire, together with the results of the Five-Year Evaluation of the Second Population Policy, will be the basis on which to draw up Qatar's Third Population Policy (2023-2027) during the period (April - May 2022).

The introduction of this survey was as follows:

Brothers and sisters, heads and members of working groups

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you,
For a brighter future for all those living on the land of Qatar, and out of our desire to engage everyone in making this future, the Permanent Population Committee invites the working groups and the agency to which they belong to express their opinion and submit estimated proposals about the demographic challenges that the Qatari society is currently facing, and that it may face in the future. This shall also include ways to confront such challenges, in preparation for the development of a new population policy for the State of Qatar that stems from everyone and for the benefit of everyone. Accordingly, we kindly ask you to provide us with any idea that concerns you and your agency about demographic challenges and ways to confront them in the axis of your group, and write them down as follows:

Challenges	Confrontation Methods
.....	

The working groups must adhere to the guidelines related to the implementation of the aforementioned survey in March 2022, as follows:

- At the beginning of March 2022, head of working group will meet with the members of his group to hold a brainstorming session on the most important demographic issues or challenges that the Qatari society is currently facing, and that it may face in the future, from the viewpoint of the attendees.
- In addition to the working group members, head of working group may invite whomever he desires from administrators, experts and researchers related to the topic of brainstorming to participate in the meeting session.
- Head of working group nominates a rapporteur for the aforementioned brainstorming session from the members of his group or even from outside the group. The rapporteur shall have sufficient experience in writing down the ideas of attendees with honesty, accuracy and respect for each opinion presented.
- Then, minutes of the meeting are organized to summarize the proceedings of the brainstorming session and write down all the ideas and proposals contained therein, and then presenting them to the participants.
- The minutes are sent in its final form, after approval of attendees, to the Technical Office at the end of March 2022.

Fourth: Duties and responsibilities of working groups heads and members:

This paragraph included tasks and responsibilities of the working group head, i.e. following up the practical and applied procedures related to the achievement of the sub-goals of the Population Policy goals and procedures. Moreover, he also oversees full coordination between the various institutions involved in the implementation of the relevant axis of the Population Policy and overcoming obstacles. As for the group member, he is directly responsible for following up all the practical and applied procedures determined by the Population Policy Implementation Team, in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the relevant axis of the Population Policy as set forth in its approved program, in consultation and coordination with the team leader.



Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management during COVID-19 in Qatar: Health Approach in All Policies

Strategies and Actions to Enhance Preparedness for Health Emergencies



Sadriya Al Kohji,

Medical Director for Children and Adolescent Health Services at Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) - Ministry of Public Health

Since urbanization is one of four demographic mega-trends that are expected to continue, it is therefore crucial that health emergency preparedness in urban settings is addressed explicitly through policy development, capacity building, and concrete activities, undertaken at the national, subnational and city levels. Given the importance of cities in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from health emergencies, a stronger focus on urban settings is necessary for countries pursuing improved overall health security. Health emergency preparedness is multi-stakeholder and multisectoral by nature, as it extends far beyond health. This requires further coordination, collaboration, and the sharing of capacities, resources, data, and information. Moreover, this impacts financing, service delivery, risk assessment, capacity building, sustainability of actions, and measurement of impacts. Most importantly, stakeholders should adopt a perspective and working culture of solidarity across sectors by synergizing budgets towards an overall better environment for crisis management. A collaborative, multisectoral working culture should be complemented with dedicated enabling funding mechanisms and instruments. Further, community members participating from the earliest stages of policy and programme formulation help clarify local priorities, challenges, and pathways for practical and sustainable action. Moreover, leadership is needed at all levels of governance, including mayors and other local political and community leaders in cities and urban settings, in order to make prompt, evidence-based decisions and to facilitate coordination across multiple sectors beyond health.



Moreover, strong health systems are important for health security; therefore, health facilities in urban areas need to be safe, flexible, and resilient to disasters and emergencies. This includes preparedness capacities to be built in service delivery, scalable capacities, providing safe services to patients, visitors and staff, and investments in health infrastructure. This requires adequate

investments into health system components for emergency preparedness - the "building blocks" of leadership; financing; service delivery; health workforce; information; medical products, vaccines and technologies.

Comprehensive response to COVID-19 at a systems level Guided by WHO and the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP), the UN health response sets out to control the virus, support the development of a vaccine, diagnostics and treatment, and strengthen preparedness. As health is the quintessential global public good, the response focuses on whole-of-society responses, solidarity with developing countries and special attention to people at greatest risk so as to address the devastating socioeconomic, humanitarian and human rights aspects of the crisis. This requires a wide-ranging effort to safeguard both the lives and livelihoods.



Promoting Effective Communication and Reliable Information

Misinformation and disinformation have complicated the health response. Therefore, the health sector and the media must combat COVID-19 misinformation by increasing the volume and reach of trusted and accurate information. It is also important to strengthen communications efforts at country level in traditional and social media outlets, including by translating health information and guidance into languages accessible to minorities, migrants, refugees and workers. Besides, it is best to choose social media platforms that are appropriate for different races and cultures of the country.

Ensuring Extra Support for the Most Vulnerable Groups

Informal workers, migrants, refugees, older persons, persons with disabilities and those on low incomes are more likely to suffer devastating consequences from COVID 19 pandemic. Women also

face specific challenges as the vast majority of front-line health care workers.

Maintaining Essential Health Services

COVID-19 is overwhelming health systems and has caused disconcerting and alarming interruptions in other essential health services, immunization campaigns and access to care. Therefore, it is essential that countries ensure that essential health care services, including vaccination, equipment and medical information, are maintained for the entire community.



Managing health emergencies in Qatar through COVID-19-Health with health approach observed in all policies

The information underneath sheds light on the ongoing collaborative efforts in the health and other sectors to combat "COVID-19" in the State of Qatar such as developing guidelines, regulations, supporting policies and protocols and implementing health promotion and protection measures.

Ease of entry and spread of the COVID-19: This introduced unique dynamics that directly impacted the services provided to society across sectors. These dynamics shape the authorities' ability to provide an effective and collaborative response.

In response to Covid-19 pandemic, Qatar has established an emergency response command structure under supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. This includes the National Health Strategic Command Group (NHSCG), which is supported to take evidence-based decisions by a national dedicated Scientific Reference and Research Taskforce (SSRT). Additionally, Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach has been adopted for response efforts, ensuring collaboration and coordinated action across sectors. Rapid decisions have been taken and implemented across sectors to contain the spread of the pandemic. Examples include:

- The 16000 hotline was set up to answer questions and enquiries related to COVID-19, including suspected infection and referral to ambulatory services or health service providers after remote evaluation, in addition to providing psychological support services and organizing drug delivery by mail.
- EHTERAZ application was created, which is the official contact tracing application for the State of Qatar and is owned, operated, and approved by the Ministry of Public Health.
- EHTERAZ aims to protect and safeguard the health of citizens, residents, and visitors in the State of Qatar to support the national effort in preventing and reducing the spread of COVID-19. EHTERAZ has been developed to establish an effective and rapid tracking and tracing mechanism and registration of vaccinations.
- Hamad International Airport was closed for arrivals from all countries except for citizens and, at a later stage, residents, with the continuation of transit and freight services.
- Events, exhibitions and conferences were either cancelled or postponed.
- All scheduled appointments in all health centers and outpatient

clinic appointments in hospitals were cancelled, with the exception of the Well-Baby Clinic services, communicable diseases clinics, urgent radiology and ultrasound appointments, while establishing a remote consultation service and telephone consultations to provide telehealth services.

- Doha Metro and public transport bus services were halted.
- All restaurants, cafes, food outlets and food trucks were closed across Doha starting from crowded areas and expanding to other areas.
- All public parks and beaches were closed, and all forms of gatherings were banned.
- Police patrols were undertaken, and checkpoints were set up in different parts of the country, and a hotline was established to file complaints about any violation.
- Part of the Industrial Area was placed into lockdown after the increase in the number of cases in order to ensure the safety of the residents of the area through examination and prevention of spread to other areas.
- Regular study in public and private schools and universities were suspended and switched to distance/online learning.
- Number of employees in the workplace was reduced to 20% of the total number of employees, while 80% of employees worked remotely from their homes with all meetings held online.
- Financial and economic support and incentives were provided to the public and private sectors.
- Bubble groups were set up for entertainment, commercial and sports events.
- Strict travel and return protocols were put in place.
- The COVID-19 Green List countries was identified and published on the Ministry of Public Health website and announced by the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority. The list is also reviewed and updated regularly.
- Vaccination requests were placed very early to ensure that the entire population of Qatar is covered through a carefully tailored vaccination strategy that prioritizes the most vulnerable populations and expands in a phased approach, where capacity allows coverage for all.
- A cross-sectional study in Qatar aimed to determine the psychological impact of home isolation and social distancing on children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic in Qatar, and strategies used to cope with these measures. The findings provided key information to support decision-making by education authorities concerned with students' psychological well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic or similar crises in the future.

Challenges:

- Limited capacity for emergency preparedness before the pandemic, which is unexpected and therefore challenges emerged from the outset, including establishing the required structures, effective communication channels, and clear roles and responsibilities, as well as allocating the necessary budget for response efforts.
- Heterogeneous population in Qatar entails different living conditions, cultural backgrounds and educational levels among different segments, which in turn requires different strategies and customized messages in multiple languages to respond to the pandemic
- Fear of exposure to COVID-19 in the population resulted in missed healthcare appointments, including childhood immunizations, check-up appointments, etc.
- The tiredness caused by COVID-19 is increasing inaction and neglect among the population.

Activities and Events of PPC Technical Office

PPC Organizes Annual Celebration of Qatar Population Day 2021



The Permanent Population Committee (PPC) marked the Qatar Population Day 2021 under the slogan «Following up the Implementation of Qatar's Population Policy in Light of Corona Pandemic» on Tuesday (19/10/2021) in the Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA) premises (20th floor). PPC is keen to celebrate Population Day every year in line with the UN declaration issued by UNGA in 1989 to establish an annual event to observe the World Population Day, and based on the decision of the Honorable Council of Ministers at its regular meeting (27) on Oct. 6, 2010 approving the organization of the Qatari Population Day in the month of October of each year.

The celebration was attended by PPC members, heads and members of the working groups charged with following up the implementation of the Population Policy Work Program, the regional director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the Arab Region, directors of PSA departments, directors of planning and quality departments in government ministries, as well as a number of experts, specialists and those interested in population and demographics issues.

The celebration aimed to:

- Identify the difficulties and challenges that faced the process of following up on the implementation of the Population Policy Work Program,

- Attempt to list the impacts of Covid-19 on Qatar population in various aspects of life,
- Spread awareness of current population issues

Qatar Population Day 2021 activities were divided into two sessions as follows:

❖ First Session: Opening Ceremony

The activities of the Qatar Population Day were kicked off by H.E. Dr. Saleh Bin Muhammad Al-Nabit, President of the Planning and Statistics Authority and Chairman of the Permanent Population Committee, with a speech in which he welcomed the guests, thanked them for their presence and participation in this celebration, which is being held this year in light of the continuing outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.



H.E. stressed that the celebration slogan "Following up the Implementation of Qatar's Population Policy in Light of Corona Pandemic" indicates that despite the circumstances imposed by this pandemic, PPC and its Technical Office, along with the working groups charged with following up on the implementation of the Second Population Policy of the State of Qatar (2017-2022), have fully committed to the tasks entrusted to them in the work program of this policy, while taking the necessary precautionary measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

In a related context, H.E. affirmed that the results of the fourth phase, extending from Nov. 2020 to Oct. 2021 of the follow-up phases of the implementation of the Population Policy Work Program, have realized a number of important achievements and gains in the six axes of this policy. This includes the implementation of many related measures, and tangible progress in achieving the goals, the most prominent of which is the demographic return resulting from the change in the age structure of the State's population, which was manifested by a number of indicators, including the high rate of participation in the labor force, the decrease in the unemployment rate, and the demographic dependency ratio. On the other hand, H.E. noted that, despite the achievements made in implementing the population policy, there are still some challenges and difficulties that impede achieving some of the goals of this policy, such as the

imbalance of the demographic structure and future careers gap. This was followed by a video-recorded speech delivered by His Excellency Dr. Luay Shabaneh, UNFPA Arab States Regional Director, in which he expressed his happiness to participate in Qatar Population Day 2021, congratulating PPC on its successful choice of the celebration slogan at a time when the world is overwhelmed by the effects of the Corona pandemic at various levels.



H.E. focused on the importance of the existing cooperation between PPC and UNFPA, praising the role of the Population Policy of the State of Qatar in placing population at the top of its national agenda, which was positively reflected on development indicators related to well-being, progress and prosperity.

At the conclusion of the opening session, a short film was shown on Population Policy of the State of Qatar (2017-2022) and its various axes.

❖ **Session Two: A panel discussion on “The Impact of the Corona Pandemic on the Population in the State of Qatar”**

Dr. Abdullah Al Hammadi, the consultant expert in PPC Technical Office and the Chair of this Session, welcomed the participants from the experts and specialists in population and development issues, reviewing the biography of each of them before making his presentation as follows:



1. Dr. Sharifa Noaman Al Emadi

Executive Director of Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) Dr. Sharifa Noaman Al Emadi reviewed a study carried out by DIFI on the social determinants of fertility in Qatar and the factors that affect its low rates. She went on to clarify the factors that determine the decision to have children, including personal, economic, structural, educational, and health factors, and others related to work-family balance policies. Moreover, she stressed the need to follow policies that achieve a balance between work duties and family obligations, financial support for marriage and childbearing, and spreading awareness to raise fertility rates and adopt policies related to increasing childbearing, such as surgeries.

2. Dr. Mohammed Saif Al Kuwari

Dr. Muhammad Saif Al-Kuwari, an environmental consultant and expert, gave a presentation on the role of climate change in the spread of diseases and epidemics among the population. He began the presentation by discussing the clear catastrophic effects of climate change at the global level, explaining the impact of global warming on precipitation in unprecedented quantities, the occurrence of floods, desertification, forest fires, and high levels of carbon dioxide and other gases that contribute to the exacerbation of global warming. Dr. Al-Kuwari pointed out the close relationship between these climatic changes and human health through the outbreak or emergence of dangerous epidemics such as malaria, Asian flu, AIDS, plague, swine flu, and the emerging Covid-19, and so on.

3. Sadriya Mohamed Al Kooheji

Dr. Sadriya Mohamed Al Kooheji, Assistant Medical Director for Children and Adolescent Health Services at Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), explained the efforts of the public health sector in confronting Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, she addressed the initiatives and measures taken to limit its spread, through the application of precautionary and preventive measures, and the provision of necessary care for infected people without prejudice to other health services. She noted that this pandemic has significantly increased the burden on health facilities. In a related context, Dr. Sadriya indicated that the state dealt professionally with this crisis by following global treatment protocols that depend on successful experiences and expertise from various countries and the World Health Organization (WHO).

4. Dr. Darwish Abdulrahman Al-Emadi

Dr. Darwish Al-Emadi, Advisor to Qatar University President's Office, reviewed QU efforts to confront the challenges of the Covid-19 outbreak by taking all measures and procedures and participation in emergency and crisis management committees. He also presented an overview of the efforts of the various educational sectors in QU and their role in providing the necessary support to students through electronic platforms and programs to continue teaching and events in order to achieve its goals and provide the necessary support to deal with the crisis.

This session was concluded after discussing the presentations of the participants, and the session chairperson summarized the most important ideas that were presented in these presentations.



The activities of Qatar Population Day 2021 concluded at approximately 11:30 am.

Recommendations emanating from the activities of the Qatar Population Day:

Regarding the social determinants of fertility in Qatar, they are as follows:

1. Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities

- Amending the Labor Law to include granting pregnant employees (in the public, private and mixed sectors) paid

maternity leave for six months to be extended by an additional unpaid six months.

- Mainstreaming the work-from-home approach, whenever the nature of job permits, and adopting accounting systems to evaluate work on the basis of achievement instead of working hours.

2. Policies for marriage and childbearing financial support

- Establishment of a Marriage Fund, which provides financial rewards to newlywed couples and those who intend to marry, the value of which is commensurate with the financial situation of the couple, so that the lower their income, the higher the value they are rewarded.
- Establishment of a Child Development Fund, which provides monthly subsidies, the value of which increases as the number of children in the family increases.
- Establishment of specialized centers to rehabilitate those who are about to get married, under the supervision of specialists in psychology, education and sociology. Such centers shall organize mandatory training courses, and the marriage contract shall not be concluded until after they have passed such courses. Moreover, those who are about to marry shall be obliged to abide by the results of the Premarital Screening, and not to conclude the marriage until after ensuring that both parties enjoy the appropriate health conditions for marriage and childbearing.
- Establishment of a specialized committee headed by the Ministry of Health and with membership of medical and health authorities to study fertility data from health files and related statistics, and to submit a national action plan to address deficiencies in this regard.

Regarding the role of climate change in the spread of diseases and epidemics among the population, the recommendations were as follows:

- Raising awareness among the population to adapt to climate changes and protect themselves from the spread of diseases and epidemics by adopting modern means and methods specialized in preventing the spread of epidemics.
- The population must take care of personal hygiene; refrain from coming in contact with the infected persons or use their personal supplies; and stay away from places crowded with people. In addition, it is essential to employ modern health methods to protect the elderly and people suffering from chronic diseases.
- Developing an emergency plan based on a comprehensive health strategy that ensures the protection of the population from the spread of diseases and epidemics that can be caused by climate change.
- Motivating and encouraging citizens, residents, the private sector, companies and institutions to preserve natural resources and local plants and to plant more trees and green spaces, as they are a natural source of air purification that helps preserve the environment, which positively affects the health of the population.
- Paying attention to applied scientific research to invent effective solutions to environmental problems, including problems that cause the spread of diseases and epidemics among the population.
- Enacting strict and deterrent laws to hold individuals, companies, institutions and other entities that contribute to the deterioration of the environment accountable. This includes air pollution, destroying farmlands, disposal of waste on land, sea,

beaches, coasts, green spaces, and so on.



The Permanent Population Committee participated in the activities of the National Sport Day on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 under the title «Count My Steps». The idea of this competition is based on calculating the number of employees' walking steps during the National Sport Day by using a walking application on mobile phones, so that the person with the highest number of steps wins a valuable prize. There will be a winner in men's category and in women's category. PPC participation in the event aims to enhance the role of sports in Qatari society, based on the human development pillar; one of the pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030 and its goal, towards a healthy population, physically and mentally, in a society that adopts a healthy sustainable lifestyle. This competition comes in celebration of the National Sports Day, as Emiri Decree No. (80) of 2011 stipulates that the second Tuesday of February of each year will be a National Sports Day.

PPC also participated in the activities of the International Women's Day that falls on the 8th of March each year, which is organized by the Planning and Statistics Authority. This year's celebration comes under the theme «Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow» - a theme that recognizes the contribution of women and girls around the world, and values what women offer in all fields and their important role in building the future of nations.

PSA Marks International Women's Day

On the occasion of the observation of International Women's Day on Tuesday, 8 March 2022, and based on the pivotal role of women in life, PSA marked this occasion out of its belief in the pivotal role of woman in development as a mainstay in society and the shaper of future generations. The celebration highlighted the achievements made by Qatari women over the years and their contributions to achieving Qatar National Vision 2030. The ceremony's agenda included inspiring sessions under the theme: «You are the Shining Beacon of Homeland.» The ceremony was attended by preacher Badriya Al-Yaqout, a social and educational activist, and Mrs. Haya Al-Maadeed, Executive Director of the Family Court.



Studies and Reports



Prepared by Dr. Mostafa Kharoufi, the Permanent Population Committee

Planning and Statistics Authority: National Quality Assurance Framework for Official Statistics in the State of Qatar, November 2019

The National Quality Assurance Framework for Official Statistics in the State of Qatar is one of the basic statistical methods that contribute to the development of the State's statistical system and the standardization of statistical methodologies and practices according to the UN recommendations and international criteria ensuring that national statistics and indicators reach comprehensiveness and high quality.



The concept of comprehensive quality of statistical work covers the following aspects: the integrity of the legal and institutional framework for statistical work and the quality of statistical processes. The statistical process includes collecting, processing and analyzing data to produce statistical outputs. The survey is generally used to cover any activity to collect or obtain official statistical data, including the population census, sample survey, data collection from administrative records, derivative statistical activities, benefiting from big data sources. The statistical process also includes developing and updating statistical records, where the inputs are similar to those for statistical production.

This framework constitutes a key reference document for those working in official statistics production in Qatar and supports them in the performance of their tasks, in a way that contributes to drawing up policies and making rational decisions based on reliable and high-quality statistics.

Besides, this reference includes the four guidelines for statistical data quality assurance; namely: management of the national system, which includes coordination and cooperation between all producers and users of statistics in the national statistical system, management of relations with data users and providers, statistical standards management, and institutional environment management.

The United Nations (UNESCO) - Groundwater: Making the Invisible Visible; 2022

The purpose of this edition of the United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR) is to shine a spotlight on groundwater, calling attention to its specific roles, challenges and opportunities in the context of water resources development, management and governance across the world. Groundwater - accounting for approximately 99% of all liquid freshwater on Earth and distributed over the entire globe, albeit unequally - has the potential to provide societies with tremendous social, economic and environmental benefits, including climate change adaptation. Groundwater already provides half of the volume of water withdrawn for domestic use by the global population, and around



25% of all water withdrawn for irrigation, serving 38% of the world's irrigated land. Yet, despite its enormous importance, this natural resource is often poorly understood.

In this vein, the capacity of groundwater systems to offer various services depends on their geographically varying properties and is dynamically influenced by ongoing natural and human processes. These services include:

- Provisioning services, which allow groundwater to be withdrawn for (human) water use purposes;
- Regulatory services, which reflect the buffer capacity of aquifers;
- Cultural services linked to leisure activities, tradition, religion or spiritual values.

Moreover, groundwater offers a number of additional opportunities, such as expanding geothermal energy generation, enhancing storage for improved water security, and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Groundwater storage depletion occurs when discharge exceeds recharge. Although climate variability and climate change can play a role, most cases of long-term groundwater storage depletion result from intensive abstraction. The rate of global aggregated groundwater storage depletion is considerable: for the beginning of the present century, the estimates are mostly between 100 and 200 km³/year (accounting for roughly 15 to 25% of total groundwater withdrawals).

However, groundwater pollution reduces the suitability of abstracted groundwater for drinking purposes and also affects groundwater-dependent ecosystems. There are many sources of anthropogenic groundwater pollution: most of them are located at or near the land surface, but several other sources inject pollutants into the subsurface at greater depth below the surface. Agricultural pollution is widespread, it is a diffuse source that often includes large quantities of nitrate, pesticides and other agrochemicals. Groundwater pollution is a virtually irreversible process: once polluted, aquifer zones tend to remain with polluted water.

Thus, point sources of pollution can be regulated through permits as well as through general effluent and/or ambient water quality standards. Non-point source pollution from diffuse or indistinct sources requires prevention measures: regulation of land uses and/or imposition of best agricultural and environmental practices.

In the coming decades, the groundwater dependence of innumerable cities appears to be intensifying, such that nearly 50% of the global urban population today is estimated to be supplied from groundwater sources. However, many urban poor live in peri-urban settlements, which are unplanned and lack legal status, and where public water infrastructure and services are not provided. Unfortunately, the Arab region is one of the most water-scarce in the world and groundwater is the most relied-upon water source in at least 11 of the 22 Arab states. Over-extraction of groundwater in many parts of the region has led to groundwater table declines, especially in highly populated and agricultural areas. This is particularly alarming as groundwater is the primary source of water for vulnerable groups that are not formally connected or do

not have access to public sources. Most groundwater resources in the Arab region are non-renewable.

The importance of groundwater for the region's water security under a changing climate demands improved governance through policies and legislations, innovative management approaches, enhanced use of technologies, dedicated funding for better understanding of the resource, and heightened regional cooperation.

UN Economic and Social Commission (ESCWA). Regional Emergency Response to Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19; 2022

It is noted that the delivery towards sustainable development has been disrupted by a global health threat that has severely impacted the Arab region. During Covid-19 confrontation, the focus is on urgent action to save lives and repair livelihoods for millions of people. This crisis is a stark reminder of why an efficient and effective public sector is the first line of defense in addressing systemic risks. This perilous pandemic is spreading through the Arab region at a time when economies are already battered by conflict and mounting fiscal pressures. To mitigate the mounting threat of COVID-19, people across the region must work together to limit transmissions and fatalities by thinking of and protecting others, especially the most vulnerable. The virus knows no borders and has severely affected the lives and livelihoods of people from all social and economic backgrounds. This Regional Emergency Response is not about bailing out countries, industries or financial institutions - it is about saving thousands of lives. Therefore, human welfare and social solidarity must be at the core of any recovery initiative to eradicate this contagion and allow governments to resume their efforts towards a secure, just and prosperous world for all.



UNDP: UN Good Practices: How the Universal Periodic Review Process Supports Sustainable Development - New York. 24 February 2022

Captured from over 60 experiences shared from across the UN system, this report contains a compilation of UN good practices on how the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) supports sustainable development. It shows how the UPR and human rights protection recommendations are increasingly integrated and aligned in UN efforts at achieving the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. Additionally, key findings show that UPR has been essential and practical problem-solving tool to address sensitive and priority development challenges.

Within the UN system, multiple mechanisms are available to support governments, state entities, civil society, business, and other actors in their efforts to bring about lasting peace, reduce inequalities, promote, and protect human rights, build greener economies, and ensure sustainable development. As well, such mechanisms assist countries as they progress in fulfilling their international obligations and commitments to people, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One such mechanism is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) - a unique process, established in 2006, taking place every five years. It is informed by observations and recommendations made by human rights treaty bodies, special procedures mandate holders, the UN in-country system as well as regional and national mechanisms. The UPR provides an opportunity for all states to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situation in their countries. As of 2021, the UPR is in its third cycle and there is now 100% participation by member states

On average, each state receives over 200 recommendations covering all human rights including specific issues relating to women and children, health, education, Labour, the environment,



climate, migration, displacement and, where relevant, international humanitarian law. Those UPR recommendations present important entry points for positive engagement and advocacy in areas within the mandate of UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and peace missions, even in the most difficult human rights environments. It is clear now that recommendations from the UPR have delivered real change (including stronger national protection systems, more independent and effective institutions, as well as laws and practices more consistent with international human rights standards).

The purpose of this report is to show how UNCTs have used and engaged with the UPR as an effective tool for action and advocacy and a source of information for technical cooperation and to inform programmes to fully integrate the advancement of human rights. This report builds on the UN Practical Guidance to support progress by member states on human rights and the achievement of the SDGs as well as conflict and violence prevention, and sustaining peace initiatives. It also presents an analysis of how the UPR can be and has already been used to respond to challenges such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Institute for Demographic Studies: Population Ageing in High-Longevity Countries: Demographic Dynamics and Socio-economic Challenges; Paris 2021

This issue of Population Affairs Magazine is devoted to aging issues. If aging affects all the world's population in all countries, then the differences will be even more pronounced by country: the young population is still large in some countries, such as the countries of the South, in contrast to European countries, North America or Japan, for example. As such, the phenomenon of aging has already amplified, although the timing and extent of the phenomenon may vary. Now that the life expectancy continues to extend and baby boom generations have entered their 60s, population ageing is accelerating rapidly, posing many immense challenges to society as a whole: individuals, families, institutions, and governments.

This demographic and socio-economic research shines a spotlight on such issues, with focus on a group of 40 countries that are relatively homogeneous in terms of health, social and economic development. Authors describe the current and future situation, present a number of documents on the questions posed: how is this aging measured and what indicators are most appropriate for comparing countries and predicting future developments? What are the demographic dynamics of aging and its rate of change? Who benefits from improved life expectancy at birth? What are the health conditions of the elderly? How are they supported? What roles should families and institutions play in the care of the elderly? How do pension systems adapt to the increase in the number of the elderly? Globally, the dynamics of ageing vary from one country to another, and at the global level ageing is still not very pronounced. The young population is still large, and numbers decrease with age due to persistently high mortality in many countries. However, while the speed and scale of ageing vary across world regions in line with each country's demographic history, the number of over-65s is nonetheless projected to surge from 700 million in 2020 to 1.5 billion in 2050, increasing from 9.3% to 15.9% of the world population.

The challenges of population ageing are immense. Decreasing mortality and rising longevity have been accompanied by profound and lasting changes in demographic behaviors, especially regarding fertility and marriage. These transformations describe what is called the demographic transition. The first transition corresponds to the decrease in completed fertility. The second corresponds to a change in the behaviors and timing of men's and women's life cycles: the timing of education, leaving the parental home, singlehood and childlessness, family life, working life, and finally retirement and old age.





Photo of the Issue

Aspetar is the first specialized Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital in the Gulf region. It provides the highest possible medical treatment for sports-related injuries in a state-of-the-art facility. In 2009, Aspetar was accredited as a "FIFA Medical Centre of Excellence" by FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre (F-MARC).

Surrounding Aspetar Hospital are a range of sports and support facilities designed specifically to meet the needs of athletes, including fitness assessment, nutrition, psychology, physiology and physical training. These facilities also include Aspire Academy.