

About Us

Acknowledging the importance of the family in society, the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) was established in 2006 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF). It was then known as the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (DIIFSD).

DIFI's mandate is based on the Doha Declaration on the family. This Declaration resulted from the Doha International Conference of the Family, which was organized by the State of Qatar to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The Declaration was noted in a United Nations General Assembly resolution. DIFI has a Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

DIALOGUE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ACROSS GENERATIONS



United Nations
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development



عضو مؤسسة قطر Member of Qatar Foundation

SUMMARY

The United Nations (UN) Program on the Family and the UN Program on Youth, of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), organized, in cooperation with DIFI, an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Dialogue and Mutual Understanding Across Generations, on 8 and 9 March 2011 in Doha, Qatar.

Experts dealing with various aspects of social development were invited from a broad geographical distribution to participate in the meeting in their personal capacities. The experts included youth delegates, to reflect the theme of the meeting and promote the participation of young people in line with the objectives of the International Year of Youth.

Experts were asked to present a paper, participate in group discussions, and provide specific policy recommendations on the topics under discussion, as well as in other areas they considered relevant to the main theme of the EGM. They were also asked to provide examples of good policies/practices and to give their professional opinion on policy recommendations for strengthening dialogue and mutual understanding across the generations. This was done in the context of examining the role young people play in advancing dialogue and mutual understanding; the role of the family in providing a space for intergenerational dialogue; the challenges and opportunities for dialogue across generations; and the

examination of existing regional frameworks and mechanisms for intergenerational dialogue and mutual understanding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth Participation

1. Promote the full and effective participation of young people at local, national, regional, and international levels, with particular attention to marginalized youth;
2. Recognize and promote the independence of youth groups and youth organizations;
3. Promote the concept of young people as assets and work towards the elimination of negative stereotypes of youth;
4. Invest in and ensure the increased participation of girls and women in development;
5. Strengthen partnerships with and for youth among all stakeholders to enhance commitment and holistic youth development.

Research

6. Foster research and knowledge building on youth, by youth, to better inform real world policy programs;
7. Conduct in-depth regional research and analysis to capture the political, social, and psychological dynamics defining youth;

8. Establish a permanent mechanism for researchers and policymakers to share information, particularly information that is not widely distributed or accessible;
9. Promote shared or joint research projects conducted by youth;
10. Collect data for comprehensive, comparable and participatory research on youth, both qualitative and quantitative;
11. Promote research on:
 - Young people older than 18 who remain at home and are supported by their parents;
 - Good practices on work-family balance;
12. Assist the development of youth as researchers, and hold a youth researcher summit (UNESCO);
13. Establish an intergenerational pool of consultants for youth development at the UN.

Family Policy

14. Provide better support to families in encouraging youth participation, empowerment, and intergenerational cooperation;
15. Support families in performing their different functions, such as caregiving, nurturing, and caring for the young and the old;

16. Strengthen and support policies that enhance resilience and are beneficial to the needs of all family members.

Education, Workplace, and Community

17. Implement policies to best harness the benefits of youth migration;
18. Develop and implement regional and national policies and initiatives that address barriers to long term and sustainable youth employment, such as vocational training, in order to improve the transition from education to employment;
19. Work towards the promotion and development of a variety of educational tools, such as online learning and educational exchanges;
20. Strengthen and develop public spaces and programs in communities that are youth friendly and allow intergenerational interaction;
21. Provide quality formal and non-formal education while improving the curriculum to reflect the needs of society;
22. Invest in intergenerational solidarity opportunities in the workplace, particularly in mutually beneficial mentorship programs;
23. Improve frameworks for the recognition of volunteering across the ages.

Fostering Positive Intergenerational Relations

24. Promote and facilitate youth mentoring and youth leadership;
25. Promote the development of school-based programs that involve parents/older adult volunteers in schools;
26. Develop mechanisms that allow for the flexible and voluntary involvement of retired persons in society;
27. Adopt an intergenerational lens approach to reviewing and evaluating programs and policies;
28. Strengthen community development programs that support intergenerational relations;
29. Provide a platform for intergenerational dialogue, for example by setting up intergenerational councils at local and national levels;
30. Invest in activities to improve dialogue and mutual understanding, and acceptance of others across generations, for example in schools, families, communities, and the labor market;
31. Design policies that encourage reciprocal wealth transfer, mutual protection, mentoring, and respect between generations;
32. Encourage governments to enhance the self-reliance of elderly people to facilitate their continued participation in society. In consultation with elderly people, governments should ensure that

the necessary conditions are developed to enable elderly people to lead self-determined, healthy, and productive lives and to make full use of the skills and abilities they have acquired in their lives for the benefit of society. The valuable contribution that elderly people make to families and society, especially as volunteers and caregivers, should be given due recognition and encouragement.

National, Regional, and International Institutions

33. Increase commitment and investment in youth within the UN system, in particular supporting the UN program on youth and mainstreaming youth issues throughout the UN system;
34. Enhance regional coordination and call upon the member states of the UN to develop and implement participatory, cross-sectoral, and evidence informed youth policies, focusing on creating mechanisms for youth participation;
35. Urge high-level political leaders to advance youth development;
36. Encourage the development of regional guidelines for youth policies to promote a common understanding of their formulation, implementation, and evaluation within the framework of the **WPAY**;
37. Review the plans and strategies targeting youth in light of current developments in the Arab region;

38. Encourage strategic engagement on youth issues at national, regional, and international levels using multisectoral and cross-cutting approaches;
39. Ensure a strong youth perspective in the post-2015 agenda.

Funding and Resources

40. Encourage governments to provide resources for families to care for younger and older members of society;
41. Call upon governments and the private sector to allocate resources to ensure sustainable long-term funding for youth development;
42. Call upon governments and the private sector to allocate resources to ensure sustainable long-term funding for programs developed and led by youth.

Technology

43. Engage with new technologies in promoting dialogue across generations and enhance access for marginalized people, including indigenous people and minorities, including those who speak minority languages.

Conflict

44. Give priority and support to young people affected by conflict in varying contexts, such as foreign occupation or civil war.