

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)

SUMMARY

Violence against Women (VAW) is a universal problem that continues to persist and constitutes a widespread violation of human rights and a real obstacle to peace and development.

Violence against women is present in all countries, cutting across boundaries of culture, religion, education, and age. No society can claim to be free from such violence. Specific groups of women are more exposed and more vulnerable, including minority, indigenous, migrant, refugees and those in armed conflict as well as women with disabilities and the elderly.

The family is often equated to a place where members seek love, security, and safety. However, in many cases, it becomes the place where violence is perpetrated against women and children.

In recent years, women organizations have provided leadership in raising awareness about VAW and thanks to their tireless efforts and work, there has been a greater understanding of domestic violence, and an international consensus has developed on the need to deal with this problem at all levels.

Since the adoption, in 1993, of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which constitutes the first international human rights instrument to deal exclusively with this phenomena, and the Fourth Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 that included VAW as one of its 12 strategic objectives, a growing

IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON THE FAMILY



Violence against Women “never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable”

Ban Ki-Moon

United Nations Secretary General

momentum has compelled a better understanding of the causes and consequences of violence against women and seen plenty of positive action taken in many different countries.

A Special Rapporteur on violence against women was appointed by United Nations (UN) in 1994 with a mandate to seek and receive information from governments, organizations, and individuals on VAW and to recommend measures to eliminate such violence.

Violence against women is a complex problem and there is no strategy that will deal with it in all situations. All strategies and policies should be defined within a comprehensive and integrated approach and should take into account partnership with different stakeholders: family, the local community, and society in addition to state and international organizations.

The launch in March 2008 by the UN of a multiyear campaign to end violence against women strengthened political commitments and enhanced efforts at all levels to end violence as well as find specific answers to this issue. At this occasion, the Secretary General of the UN presented an in-depth study on violence against women that included key finding and recommendations.

Guided by the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, and inspired by Her beliefs on better educating and strengthening the family as a basic unit of society, the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), in collaboration with the Supreme Council

for Family Affairs, contributed to this campaign by organizing in Doha on 19 and 20 November 2008 a colloquium on the impact of violence against women on the family. It the first event, after the launch of the campaign in the Middle East and North Africa region.

During two days, UN representatives, specialized agencies, professors, jurists, experts from Arab and regional organizations and regional and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):

- Contributed to raise awareness on the nature, extent, and causes of violence against women in the region and worldwide;
- Build collaboration among different stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers international organizations, and civil society, particularly NGOs, in order to exchange information and best practices and provide effective and efficient responses;
- Supported innovative and integrated approach as well as social and legislative actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

International Legal Framework

Ratify UN human rights treaties, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the Optional Protocols to CEDAW and CRPD;

Ensure implementation of all human rights treaties, in particular reflecting their provisions in national legislation;

Utilize the reporting process established by human rights treaties to highlight violence against women and children;

Initiate a process of discussion of reservations to human rights treaties, particularly CEDAW;

Ensure implementation of regional human rights instruments;

Consider initiating a process to develop an instrument on women's human rights and violence against women to the Arab Charter on Human Rights.

Advocacy

Launch national campaigns with the participation of women and men to support the Secretary General's campaign on violence against women, including adopting national action plans or strategies to eliminate human rights violations;

Explore the linkage between poverty, economic disempowerment, and violence against women and children.

Law and Policy Reform

Ensure that legal provisions address all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, psychological violence, harassment, and harmful cultural and traditional practices;

Review all procedural and evidentiary rules so that they provide a gender-sensitive legal framework;

Ensure that laws, policies, and programs address the special needs of migrant women workers, refugees, displaced and trafficked women, and women with disabilities.

Men and Boys

Emphasize the responsibility of men in the elimination of violence against women;

Raise the awareness of boys in respect to violence.

Elimination of Stereotypes and Transformation of Attitudes

Address all stereotypical ideas and attitudes of the roles of women and men in society, including through education at all levels, modification of curricula, and educational tools and consider the portrayal of women, men, girls, and boys in the media;

Emphasize the positive role that media can play in the elimination of all forms violence against women and children;

Take measures to build the confidence of girls and to ensure that girls are valued;

Underline that HIV/AIDS is a cause and a consequence of violence against women.

Data Collection and Research

Strengthen data collection, including by developing indicators on the number of incidents, as well as the prevalence of all forms of violence against women;

Create a regional observatory on violence against women to collect statistics, research, good practices, and lessons learned, as well as information on the impact of strategies to address violence against women;

Initiate research into the root causes and consequences of violence against women, including risk factors;

Partnerships to Eliminate Violence Against Women

Emphasize that the elimination of violence against women is a shared responsibility of the entire community and requires a multisectoral approach;

Underline the important role of parliaments, national human rights institutions, and civil society, including religious institutions in advocacy, raising awareness, and the provision of services to address violence against women.

Building National Capacity

Ensure that police and criminal justice curricula and training includes human rights and issues relating to violence against women;

Build the capacity of health sector professionals, in particular medical practitioners, in relation to human rights and issues relating to violence against women,

including issues in the curricula of such professionals at all levels, as well in recurrent education and training;

Convene judicial colloquia and workshops to provide judges with an opportunity to learn from each others' experiences on implementation of human rights instruments and approaches to address violence against women.

Follow-up

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Qatar should be encouraged, with the participation of all stakeholders, to create a national strategy on violence against women;

DIFI should convene a colloquium on violence against women every two years and serve as a regional umbrella organization for the collection of research on good practices and lessons learned. It should also establish a network on violence against women;

DIFI, in partnership with UN and regional institutions and NGOs should explore the possibility of convening an international conference on violence against women in **2010**.