

QATAR

**Reply by the State of Qatar
to the Questionnaire to Governments
on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
and the Outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General
Assembly (2000)**

Supreme Council for Family Affairs

2004

Note:

This report contains data on measures taken by the State of Qatar between 2000 and the date of this report to honour its commitments relating to the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000).

Wishing to avoid the needless repetition of data that were presented in an earlier report submitted to the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly, the team responsible for preparing the present report suggests that the latter should be read in conjunction with the former.

Part I: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

The State of Qatar has made giant, fundamental strides in enhancing the status of women and promoting gender equality since the time of its first report on women, which was presented at the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Women's issues have been included among the State's developmental priorities and are high on the agenda of decision-makers. From 1995 to 2003, the country's legislation has been extensively amended, evolving along lines of relevance for the status of women, the Government has undertaken additional spending for programmes relating to the advancement of women in the fields of health, education, vocational skills and social matters generally, and institutions concerned with women's issues have been upgraded.

The past five years have witnessed three important developments that have had a substantial impact on the strengthening of the role played by women in Qatari society. The first of these developments, which has directly affected that role, was the establishment in December 1998 of an institutional mechanism concerned with women's issues, namely the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, and a subsidiary body, the Women's Affairs Committee. The Council has assumed responsibility for women's issues, replacing the Women's Directorate within the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs. The Ministry had previously prepared a national plan aimed at the advancement of women and enhancing their status in the State of Qatar in the light of the Beijing Declaration and its accompanying Platform for Action containing 10 objectives. The plan and political support for its implementation were instrumental in achieving substantial gains in the fields of education, health and employment. The plan included one objective relating to the establishment and strengthening of government agencies and civil society institutions working for the advancement of women, and conferring responsibility for those agencies upon women themselves.

After the Council had been established, it became necessary to amend the plan to bring it into line with the overall trend prevailing in the State. Accordingly, the Council, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), undertook the task of preparing a new strategy for the advancement of Qatari women, consistent with the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and based on a diagnosis of the situation of Qatari women in all fields. This strategy was announced on International Women's Day in 2003.

The second development has been an increase in the numbers of women holding leadership posts compared to the preceding period. A woman Minister of Education has been appointed, the first ever, not only in Qatar but in the entire region. Women now occupy a variety of other important, influential posts as well. In general, we may say that the period here under review has been marked by greater participation by women in public life. Much of the credit for this is due to the unstinted support by His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, for women's issues, and the leadership role played by Her Highness, Sheikha Mouza bint Nasser al-Misnad, the wife of His Highness the Emir, in many important institutions.

The third major development has been the emergence of the private sector and non-governmental organizations in the field of social development generally, and the field of the advancement of women in particular. An example of this is the role played by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development in the educational and social sectors, and, more particularly, the activities of the Foundation's Social Development Centre, which offers women-oriented programmes. Furthermore, a number of private institutions concerned with women's issues have been founded, such as the Qatari Institution for the Protection of Women and Children. At the same time, women have been participating in volunteer work to a noteworthy extent. This period has also been characterized by increased private- and mixed-sector participation in supporting organizations and projects addressing social development and issues of relevance for women and the family.

In the course of this period, the State of Qatar has reaffirmed, through many actions, its continuing commitment to strengthening human rights and the place of the individual in society, and this has had a positive impact on the advancement and empowerment of women. The draft permanent Constitution of Qatar, which was adopted by the people of Qatar in a referendum held in April 2003, provides that all citizens are equal in rights and duties, that the people are equal before the law, that all citizens enjoy the right of assembly, the freedom to establish societies, the right to address the public authorities, and freedom of expression and scientific research, that freedom of the press and freedom to print and publish are guaranteed, that education is a right of every citizen, and that freedom of worship and belief is guaranteed for all. The draft Constitution also provides that an elected Advisory Council shall be established, and no distinction between women and men is drawn as regards the right to stand for election to membership of the Council and the right to vote for candidates.

In this context, in May 2002 His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of our beloved country, issued a decree establishing a National Human Rights Committee to be made up of representatives from civil society and the Government and to include three women members.

The present situation indicates that Qatar is moving toward greater gender equality. Gender issues have become a key theme of social development programmes and strategies, and the first report on women and men, published in 2004, measures the gender gap in society. However, more time and effort will be required to make the concept of gender equality a central focus of concern to most governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Part II: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Women and health

In the State of Qatar, women are entitled to a full range of health care, including both primary and specialized care, and also a complete maternity care programme. This health care system has helped the country attain the health-related objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action, the outcomes identified at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the goals and targets set forth in the Millennium Declaration. For the sake of a clearer picture of the situation, an overview of health indicators for Qatar is presented in the paragraphs below.¹

- No deaths in childbirth since 1997 (in that year there were three cases of women who died in childbirth). This is evidence of the level of health care available to women in Qatar;
- Longevity: Qatari women enjoy a long life expectancy compared to other developing countries. In 2001 the figures were 75 years for women and 73 years for men, slightly below the corresponding figures for 1997, which were 77 years for women and 73.6 years for men;
- The infant mortality rate declined from 12 per thousand in 1977 to 9.2 per thousand in 2001. This substantial decline over a short period points to the quality of health care available to pregnant women, which in turn is reflected in the health of newborn infants. Another health care quality indicator is average infant birth weight, which is currently 2.5 kilograms, exactly the international average figure used by the World Health Organization;
- Lower infant mortality rates for girls than for boys: in the case of the former, the rate declined from 11.0 per thousand in 1997 to 8.9 per thousand in 2001, while in the case of the latter, the corresponding figures were 12.8 per thousand and 9.4 per thousand. A similar situation is observable for under-five mortality rates, which stood at 10.5 per thousand in the case of girls and 12.1 per thousand in the case of boys in 2001. These figures represent marked declines over a short time span, as the corresponding figures for 1997 were 14.3 per thousand and 15.2 per thousand respectively;
- Declining fertility rates among adolescent girls (the 15-19 age group) over the period 1997-2001, from 21.0 per thousand to 13.0 per thousand. This is a substantial decline that indicates a change in fertility trends and lifetime fertility levels. It is a good indicator suggesting that young girls are becoming progressively less subject to the risks of pregnancy and childbearing, which are higher during that period of life;
- Most births now take place under medical supervision: in 2001, 99.9 per cent of all births took place in hospitals. This figure has held steady since 1997. The high value of this indicator, which is comparable to the values observed in the developed countries, shows that medical services are available to all population sectors, regardless of state of health.

¹ Source: *Women and Men in the State of Qatar: a statistical portrait* (Qatar: Supreme Council for Family Affairs, 2004) (in Arabic)

Qatar has continued to be concerned with strengthening health care services in the field of mother and child health. Some examples of programmes and projects executed in that field during the period 1999-2004 are presented in the paragraphs below.

- A clinic for women who have had repeated miscarriages was founded in 1999. This clinic is the first of its kind in the Middle East;
- Under an executive order issued by the Minister of Public Health (Order No. 3 of 2000), an obstetrics and gynaecology committee has been established with a mandate to conduct a systematic, long-term study on maternal mortality and morbidity. The committee has been provided with adequate resources to ensure its continuity, and its scientific observations will yield reliable indicators for evaluating the level of reproductive health services in Qatar and comparing them with regional and world data;
- In July 2002, a Maternal-Fetal Medicine Division was established within the Primary Health Care Directorate. The Division diagnoses fetal disease conditions during pregnancy and provides early medical assistance. This service will help prevent many fetal deaths. The Division is equipped with the most up-to-date technology available in the developed countries;
- The country's first molecular genetics laboratory was opened in September 2002. The laboratory is providing important medical services in its initial phase, including research into the causes of repeated miscarriages in some women, and research into the causes of the tendency to thrombosis that has been observed in successive generations of some Qatari families. The laboratory's plans for the future include research on 30 molecular genetic lines, which will contribute to the treatment of many hereditary disorders;
- At present, Qatar has no legislation requiring medical examinations for persons contemplating marriage. However, a clinic attached to the Hamad Medical Corporation has been founded for premarital and pregnancy consultations;
- Tumours are the third most common cause of death in Qatar, and they occur more frequently in women than in men. The incidence of tumours was 7.9 per cent in 2001, down from 12.2 per cent in 1997. Despite this decline, the State has established the Al-Amal Hospital for the treatment of tumours. This is Qatar's first centre specializing in the treatment of cancers. It will treat approximately 600 cases per year, using the world's most up-to-date medical systems.

Development of the health care delivery system and anticipated impact on women's health:

The health care delivery system in Qatar is undergoing a comprehensive development process aimed at upgrading health services and making those services available at all levels to everyone who needs them in communities outside the capital, Doha. For example, there are plans to open hospitals in outlying districts to reinforce the services provided by health centres there. This will tend to foster equal access to health care services in all parts of the country and improve the health of citizens and residents, especially women.

Under Law No. 14 of 2002, the object of which was to organize the Hamad Medical Corporation and designate its areas of competence, primary health care centres were detached from the Ministry of Public Health and placed under the jurisdiction of the Corporation. This was an important step in the development of the health care delivery system, in that overall

responsibility for health care was vested in the Corporation, facilitating coordination between medical personnel and health centres and hospital outpatient clinics. Formerly, the health service oversight function had been fragmented, and this was identified as a major obstacle in a diagnostic study of women's health care services.

In the same context, His Highness the Emir issued an decree in 2003 restructuring the Hamad Medical Corporation, appointing a woman Chair of the Corporation's Board of Directors and specifying that two members of the six-member Board must be women. The Board is mandated to facilitate the tasks of committees established by the Corporation to design and execute programmes aimed at developing the Corporation and enhancing its delivery of health care and medical treatment services of various kinds and at different levels, and to develop optimal ways of coordinating the efforts of various governmental and private bodies responsible for medical treatment and medical education in Qatar. The object is to integrate the activities of those bodies and thereby achieve a qualitative shift in health care service delivery in the country. Participation by women in the supervision of Qatar's official medical institution, for the first time, contributes significantly to ensuring that women's concerns are addressed in health care policies and services.

Women's education and training

Qatar believes that education and development are closely related. The development of national human resources heads its list of priorities, along with equal educational opportunity for persons of both sexes. This shows how successful Qatar has been in implementing the educational objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the goals and targets set forth in the Millennium Declaration. To illustrate these matters, a number of indicators are reviewed in the paragraphs below.²

- Declining illiteracy rates among adult women, from 19.1 per cent in 1997 to 13.5 per cent in 2001. The corresponding rates for men were 15.8 per cent in 1997 and 10.4 per cent in 2001. These figures show that illiteracy has declined to approximately the same extent in the case of both men and women. This situation indicates that Qatar's literacy effort is characterized by equality, especially in view of the fact that illiteracy rates for the younger age groups are closely similar. Disparities between men and women are observed only among the older age groups, in which illiteracy rates for women may be 20 to 30 per cent higher than for men, increasing progressively with age;
- 86.5 per cent of Qatari women were able to read in 2001, up from 80.9 per cent in 1997. The corresponding figures for men were 89.6 per cent in 2001 and 84.2 per cent in 1997;
- In 1996-1997, 96 Qatari girls attended lower primary school for every 100 boys who did so, while the corresponding figures for 2000-2001 were 95 girls for every 100 boys. While this is a very small disparity, further effort is needed in order to close the gender gap and eliminate it completely;
- In 2000-2001, 97 girls attended higher primary school for every 100 boys, while 98 girls attended secondary school in that year for every 100 boys who did so;

² Source: *Women and Men in the State of Qatar*.

- In 1996-1997, there were 6191 women students attending university in Qatar, while the corresponding figure for 2000-2001 was 5685. There was a noteworthy increase in the numbers of women students attending specialized colleges during that period;
- The numbers of Qatari women graduating from university increased by 34.7 per cent during the period 1996-1997 – 2000-2001;
- Women accounted for 71 per cent of all university graduates in 1996-1997, and for 72 per cent of the total in 2000-2001;
- Ministry of Education data indicate that there is a small disparity between numbers of boys' schools and number of girls' schools: in 1997 Qatar had 100 schools for girls and 105 schools for boys, while in 2001 the figures were 99 girls' schools and 102 boys' schools. Specialized schools are for boys only, except the school of nursing. Girls' and boys' schools are equal in terms of computer equipment, with girls' schools boasting 2074 computers, compared to 1784 for boys' schools. Girls' schools have a total of 1378 classrooms, compared to 1300 for boys' schools. Average class size is 28 pupils in the case of girls' schools and 27.5 in the case of boys' schools. Girls' schools have an average of 359 pupils each, while the corresponding figure for boys' schools is 332.

Despite Qatar's achievements in the field of education, women continue to be confronted with a number of challenges:

- There is little diversity in the educational opportunities available to women. It is noteworthy that most women students, especially in specialized and higher education, enrol in the theoretical sciences. Specialized secondary schools and engineering and law at the University of Qatar are not open to them. As a result of this situation, women graduates of Qatar's education system tend to have the same set of skills, and this makes it difficult for them to find suitable employment;
- Men and women are not equal in terms of opportunities for scientific study abroad, and there is little diversity in the opportunities available to women. The numbers of women students sent to study outside the country have increased: 33 per cent of all such students were women in 1997, while by 2001 the figure had grown to 37 per cent. However, male students still enjoy a greater range of opportunity for study abroad than their female counterparts. This situation does not indicate an official policy so much as a cultural reality bound up with the situation of women in society and their limited freedom to travel, even for scientific or professional reasons.

Development of the government-funded education system and private-sector educational initiatives, and their anticipated impact on women

Qatar is striving to build a modern, world-class education system that will provide its citizens with skills and prepare them to cope with the challenges of the twenty-first century. Accordingly, in November 2002 His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar, issued a decree establishing the Higher Council for Education and its affiliated institutions as the authority responsible for enhancing educational quality and standards at the lower primary, higher primary and secondary levels. Under the same decree, the Council is also responsible for developing educational policy in Qatar and supervising its development. This is regarded as an

integral part of the comprehensive socio-economic evolutionary process that Qatar is currently undergoing.

At the present time, there are two agencies operating under the aegis of the Council which bear direct responsibility for ensuring that the objectives of the development plan are attained:

- the Education Agency, which is responsible for supporting the establishment of independent schools and supervising their performance;
- the Evaluation Agency, which is responsible for conducting and developing standardized tests and monitoring the performance of students and schools.

In addition, there is a plan to establish a Higher Education Agency shortly as the authority responsible for advising students on vocational and employment options and higher education options within Qatar and abroad, and also administering grant programmes and student exchange programmes.

The establishment of the Higher Education Agency is expected to ease the problem of oversupply in particular fields of specialization, or the tendency to select fields of specialization for which there is little demand in the labour market. At present these factors are contributing to high unemployment among women in particular. The Agency will also orient general secondary-school graduates of both sexes toward a variety of available fields of specialization, thereby opening up to women, in particular, new prospects that have not been open to them hitherto.

Over and above these efforts to develop government-funded education, in 1995 the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development was founded as a non-profit organization by a decree issued by the Emir, H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. Its stated purpose was to develop the country's human capacities and turn them to account by establishing outstanding educational and social centres and the distinctive Education City project, which accommodates branches of some of the world's most renowned universities.

While society as a whole, including both men and women, will benefit from the development of the government-funded education system and the private educational institutions affiliated to the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, it is essential to note that women will benefit directly because of the system's non-discriminatory character as regards the educational opportunities available to persons of both sexes. The public education sector development initiative is still in its infancy, but the Foundation's contribution to women's education is already beginning to bear fruit in that women are being offered, on a footing of equality with men, the freedom to choose any fields of specialization they wish at the branches of world-renowned universities that have been opened in Education City. These include the Canadian College of the North Atlantic, the Weill Cornell Medical College, Texas A and M University and Carnegie-Mellon University, in addition to Virginia Commonwealth University, which admits women only.

Safeguarding the right to education

As evidence of the priority that Qatar gives to education, article 49 of the Constitution (which, as we have seen, was adopted by the people of Qatar in a referendum held in 2003) provides that

“Education is the right of every citizen. The State shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory public education in accordance with the laws in force.”

Under a decree issued by the Emir (decree No. 25 of 2001), education was made compulsory for all children to the end of the intermediate level or until the age of 18, in accordance with Qatar’s obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Qatar acceded in 1995. Pursuant to that decree, the Ministry of Education issued a ministerial order establishing a committee responsible for implementing its provisions and taking all necessary measures to that end, subject to the Ministry’s capacities and plans.

Examples of programmes and projects in the field of education and training

- The Academic Bridge Programme was founded under the auspices of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development in 2001 as a private institution offering a programme for secondary-school graduates from Qatar and the Gulf region. ABP’s mission is to prepare top-calibre secondary-school graduates for admission to and success at the Foundation’s university and other world-class universities. Under the student exchange plan administered by the Ministry of Education, exchange students are enrolled at world-class universities in Qatar and in other countries. This programme has helped ease the difficulties formerly faced by women exchange students by providing them with an opportunity of taking further English-language studies within the country.
- A graduate studies programme has recently been introduced at the University of Qatar, with courses offered in several divisions of the various colleges, and more currently under consideration. This will promote equality of opportunity between the sexes in the matter of higher education, and will be particularly advantageous to women who are unable to travel abroad to take master’s and doctoral degrees. In addition, new fields of specialization have been introduced at the University, in the Science Department, for example, which was formerly open to male students only, the Computer Science Department and the Computer Engineering Department in the College of Engineering. The University’s Geography Department offers a diploma in architectural planning, and a Department of International Relations is scheduled to open in the autumn of 2004.
- As a means of filling posts in many State institutions, some major governmental organizations seek to attract a number of graduates with general secondary diplomas every year to study in specific fields of specialization, offering numerous incentives for that purpose. A good example of this is Qatar Petroleum, which pays its trainees a monthly stipend plus a travel allowance for groups of students from within Qatar, and a monthly stipend plus a subsistence allowance for groups of students from outside the country. Other incentives include various bonuses and premiums, and years of training count toward years of service if the student completes his training period satisfactorily. Under this programme, 129 women trainees have been sent to study at universities inside Qatar and abroad, in various fields of specialization.³ Similar programmes are operated by other national institutions, such as the Hamad Medical Corporation and the Qatar Telecommunications Company

³ Source: data obtained from Qatar Petroleum for purposes of this report.

Government spending on health and education

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, recently issued directives for the creation of two endowments, one for health and one for education, out of revenues from one of the country's largest natural gas projects, to provide stable funding for the health and education sectors and ensure that they would be immune from any negative impacts as a result of world economic crises that might affect Qatar.

Women and the economy⁴

Participation by women in the labour force has grown in recent years, although women's contributions to the economy are still predominantly invisible and unrecognized, since the work they do is largely unpaid work. The labour force participation rate among Qataris in the 15-and-over age group was 74.3 per cent in 1997 and 74 per cent in 2001. The corresponding figures for women were 35.2 per cent and 37.6 per cent respectively during that same period, indicating that a growing percentage of women are holding jobs. The figures include both Qatari women and non-Qatari women. For the former, the labour force participation rate was 22.3 per cent in 1997 and had risen to 27.5 per cent by 2001, a substantial increase indicating that Qatari women are becoming more receptive to the idea of entering the job market. The data show a corresponding decline in the percentage of Qatari women who were not economically active, from 64.7 per cent in 1997 to 62.4 per cent in 2001.

However, the data indicate a decline in participation by women in the senior management and administration category in 2001, with 4.7 per cent of posts in that category being held by women, down from 6.6 per cent in 1997. The number has increased again more recently.

Despite these gains, statistical indicators reveal a number of challenges in the area of women's labour force participation. These include:

- Low economic participation rates, in spite of the increase noted above. Women accounted for only 11.6 per cent of all economically active persons (men and women) in 2001, up only slightly from 1997, when women accounted for 10.3 per cent of the total. In brief, economic participation by women remains very limited;
- Women are concentrated in the service sector: nearly 100 per cent of them have jobs in that sector, very few in other economic sectors, especially industry and business and finance;
- Women are concentrated in a small number of occupations, mainly teaching and clerical work. In 2001, 56 per cent of employed women were schoolteachers and 26 per cent clerical workers, mainly in government agencies, while they were nearly absent from other employment categories. This concentration in particular occupational fields is the result of the fact that women tend to have similar skills and qualifications;
- Women participate only to a very limited extent in investment activities, and there are no mechanisms to support those who might be interested in investing or provide them with incentives. There is a need for greater investment awareness among women, especially in view of the fact that many of them have substantial savings at their disposal. At present

⁴ Source of statistical data: *Women and Men in the State of Qatar*.

they do not know how to invest their money and are not familiar with sound investment practices.

Qatar is endeavouring to provide an appropriate climate for greater economic participation by women by, among other things, enacting legislation to protect the rights of working women. Some major innovations in this area since 2000 have been the following:

1. Enactment of Law No. 1 of 2001, the Civil Service Act (which deals with government employees) and Council of Ministers Order No. 13 of 2001, implementing regulations for that Act. The Law provides that men and women are equal in rights and duties, and also grants women additional rights, such as maternity leave for a period of two months with full pay, such leave not to be counted against other leave entitlements, and the right for an employed Qatari woman whose husband dies to draw full pay for a period of four months and ten days following the date of his death, or until the date of delivery if she is pregnant, whichever period is shorter, such period not to be counted against other leave entitlements. In addition, a woman is entitled to nursing breaks totalling two hours for a period of one year following the end of her maternity leave. Furthermore, a Qatari woman employee is allowed leave to care for her children after she has been in government employment for four years, such leave not to exceed two years at any one time, and subject to a maximum of two such periods of leave during the whole of her service, except where her child has special needs.
2. Enactment of the Law on Retirement and Pensions, which is designed to ensure that the retired person and his or her family can lead a life of dignity. The law makes provision for benefits for the family of a retired government employee in the event of his death, and where the widow has employment income, she may combine her own earnings, her pension entitlement from her late husband, and child benefit payments under the latter's pension. Other categories of women are also entitled to benefits: a sister, for example, is entitled to benefits under her deceased brother's pension, and a granddaughter is entitled to benefits under her deceased grandfather's pension.
3. Enactment of the new Labour Law (Law No. 14 of 2004), replacing Law No. 3 of 1962, which had been in force for over 40 years. The new law is consistent with modern labour laws in that it is designed to build working relations characterized by balance between the parties to the productive process, who represent a broad stratum of society. The law provides for equality between men and women in rights arising from working relations, including pay, opportunities for training, promotion and the like, and it safeguards working women's rights in these matters.

In addition, some line ministries have introduced training programmes for holders of secondary school leaving certificates, both men and women, and recycling programmes for university graduates who have specialized in fields for which there is little market demand. These programmes are designed to facilitate the integration of the persons concerned in other employment sectors, both governmental and private. Some examples of these programmes which are directly beneficial to women are as follows:

- Opening of a training centre administered by the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing, designed to qualify trainees for posts in the private and mixed sectors. Training

is provided at the centre in accordance with a plan prepared on the basis of a study of labour market requirements in Qatar. There were 197 women participants in the first session, representing 85 per cent of the total of 233 trainees. After their training, these women were employed in governmental and private organizations, depending on the mix of skills required by the organizations concerned. The centre's training programmes, especially in the hotel and banking sectors, have been very well received by women participants;

- A recycling programme for University of Qatar women graduates in fields of specialization for which there is little market demand. The programme is designed to qualify them for work in the primary education sector. It is administered by the Educational Training Centre, which is an arm of the Ministry of Education. The Centre retrained 515 women graduates over the period 1997-2004.⁵

Women in the business and trade sector

In recent years, women have begun to enter the business and investment market. As the privatization policy has taken hold and many new corporate ventures have been founded and shares offered to the general public, many women have begun to invest their savings by buying stock and participating in Qatar's commercial paper market.

A number of mechanisms have been established in recent years to support participation by women in this sector, including the Women's Investment Company of Qatar and the Businesswomen's Club, which is a branch of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Unfortunately, there are not yet enough of these mechanisms. A study currently under way is investigating the desirability of founding a new mechanism aimed at other groups of women, such as retired women and women who possess moderate amounts of capital.

Women in power and decision-making

Qatari women have benefited from the fact that the Government has had the political will to support them by appointing them to influential leadership positions, especially in 2003: that year saw the appointment of the first woman Minister of Education, a woman President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs with the rank of Minister, a woman President of the University of Qatar, a woman Dean of the Faculty of Sharia and Law at the same university, and a woman Chair of the Board of Directors of the Hamad Medical Corporation, which is the country's official health organization. In addition, many women have been appointed to head divisions of line ministries and important policy-making committees. As a result of these and similar appointments, women's concerns are expected to be taken into account in national policies, plans and programmes more fully than has been the case hitherto.

Moreover, Her Highness, Sheikha Mouza bint Nasser al-Misnad, the wife of His Highness the Emir, is encouraging Qatari women to participate effectively in national development by providing them with a high-level model. She plays a leadership role as President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and Vice-Chair of the Higher Council for Education, besides serving as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and

⁵ Source: data obtained from the Centre for purposes of this report.

Community Development. In addition, Her Highness has an international function by virtue of her position as the Special Envoy of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for Basic and Higher Education.

The proportion of leadership positions held by women in various sectors is expected to increase in the next few years, especially in view of the fact that Qatari women have taken to earning scientific diplomas and joining the labour market, not only in traditional professions but in many other economic fields as well. Furthermore, society is increasingly able to integrate gender issues into both official and unofficial categories of economic activity.

Participation in elected assemblies is still a novelty in Qatar, both for women and for men: both women and men were granted the franchise and allowed to stand as candidates for the first time in the country's history at the elections for the first Central Municipal Council in 1999, under Law No. 12 of 1998 regulating the Central Municipal Council, and the Emir's Decree No. 17 of 1998, on the system for electing members of the Council. Women took part in those elections both as candidates and as voters: there were six women candidates, although none of them was elected.

At the elections for the second Central Municipal Council, which were held in April 2003, one woman candidate was elected and took her seat as a member of the Council.

Women are expected to take part in the elections for Qatar's first elected Advisory Council, since the draft permanent Constitution does not discriminate between women and men in the matters of standing for election as a member of the Council or voting for candidates.

It is noteworthy that women hold leadership posts in many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the posts of Chair of the Board of Directors of the Social Development Centre, the Qatari Red Crescent Society, the Qatari Centre for Voluntary Work, the Family Consultation Centre and the Mothers' and Children's Cultural Centre.

Women and poverty

Poverty in Qatari society is a relative term, as that society enjoys high standards of living. Average per capita income is close to the mean for industrialized States at \$22 000 per year. However, this does not mean that there are no social strata with lower income, or groups that are in need of support, including women.

Census data from 1997 show that 96.7 per cent of all Qatari households were headed by a man, compared to 3.3 per cent that were headed by a woman. The data also show that there were 2807 women receiving social assistance, and women accounted for 47.1 per cent of all social insurance beneficiaries as recently as 2001. Since the census data go back to 1997, the Planning Council is currently conducting a census of buildings, dwellings, families and institutions. Under an agreement between the Planning Council and the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, this census will also count the total number of families and the number of poor families headed by women, with a view to providing the latter with support immediately following the completion of the census.

The most important challenges in Qatar's effort to combat poverty in general and poverty among women in particular are as follows:

- 1 – The spread of the culture of consumption and the decline of the culture of saving.
- 2 – The phenomenon of social shame, which prevents some people from accepting the social assistance made available by the State, despite the fact that they are in need, and the community culture, which sometimes imposes upon a citizen obligations which he does not have the material resources to meet.
- 3 – A preference for government work and a disinclination to accept other kinds of work, or an insistence on working in a particular (segregated) environment, which is tantamount to behavioural unemployment in most cases.

Qatar has adopted a number of policies aimed at combating poverty and social exclusion, including free health care, general and university education for all citizens, social insurance⁶, government-provided housing and support for basic commodities, besides free electricity and water for all citizens. An increase in social insurance benefits is currently under consideration to enable recipients to cope with economic pressures, and the possibility of adding new groups of beneficiaries is also being examined.

The training and vocational development policies administered by government agencies and NGOs are aimed basically at women who lack the skills they need in order to join the labour force, who are deemed to be at greatest risk of poverty, compelled as they are to remain unemployed or to accept jobs that do not call for modern skills or low-paid jobs.

The Social Development Centre, a developmental NGO affiliated to the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, plays an important role in that it has adopted a policy of assistance to these groups with the aims of promoting self-reliance, empowering them economically through training and vocational development programmes, establishing operational productivity units, and helping to set up small projects and making small loans available to them.

Women and the media

Media activity is regarded as an important activity in Qatar, and participation by women in that activity is a recent phenomenon indicative of the changing picture of women's position in society. Women are now employed as journalists, reporters, writers, broadcasters and producers, all functions that serve to deepen women's participation in public life, especially now that the State has abolished censorship of the media and citizens enjoy freedom to express their views as they see fit.

⁶ Under Law No. 38 of 1995, groups entitled to receive pensions from the State are widows, divorced women, needy families, disabled persons, orphans, persons who are unable to work, elderly persons, the families of persons in prison, deserted wives, and the families of missing persons. The Law regulates the conditions under which these pensions are payable. The value of social insurance benefits was increased by an executive order of the Council of Ministers (Order No. 8 of 1997).

There are unquestionably a number of obstacles and challenges confronting women's participation in the media, including social custom, which continues to restrict women's work to a limited number of areas. Another barrier is women's lack of interest in taking the necessary training and becoming qualified to work in the media field; women who lack the appropriate skills have few opportunities for creative employment and little chance of rising to leadership positions, but must remain in secondary posts. An additional factor is the fact that the media themselves tend to focus on traditional roles and present a stereotyped picture of women, not showing them as working, creating and innovating or discussing their fundamental issues and problems in all areas of life.

Available data indicate that women's participation in this type of activity is slight. Despite the fact that women publish opinion pieces in daily newspapers, write on various subjects and are active in radio and (to a lesser extent) television, the number of women who work in the media is comparatively small. In 1995, 103 Qatari women were employed in that sector, and by 2002 the number had risen to 279.⁷ However, the trend is unmistakably upward, and the number of women employed in the media is expected to increase, thanks to the new capacity-building facilities now available to women as a result of the opening of a Media Department at the University of Qatar. Women's names have begun to appear to a noticeable extent as writers of television serials, writers of stories and journalists. This shows that women are becoming qualified professionals in this sector and need more encouragement and support so that they will continue to contribute to the role of the media in furthering the development of their community.

Women and violence

Statistics on the number of women at risk of various forms of violence are scanty, but it seems likely that some women have been victims of domestic or social violence as a result of the socio-economic changes that Qatari society is experiencing, including the changing roles of women and the fact that they are entering the work force and participating more extensively in public life.

There had never been any organizations or associations working to combat violence against women in Qatar and keep track of reported cases, apart from the machinery of the criminal law system, which is administered through the security directorates and other agencies belonging to the Ministry of the Interior. In 2001, however, the Supreme Council for Family Affairs set up the "Children's Friend" telephone service as a help line to receive calls from children. This showed that there was a need for a specialized mechanism to deal with violence against children and women. Accordingly, the Qatari Institution for the Protection of Women and Children was established in 2003. The Institution's objectives include protecting women and children from deviant practices in the home, in society and in the workplace and addressing problems arising from such practices. A help line has been set up to enable children to reach the Institution as well. A family consultation centre was opened in that same year, also with a help line to take calls from family members, including women, and help them solve their family problems. All the above are private institutions founded by Her Highness, Sheikha Mouza bint Nasser al-Misnad, the wife of His Highness the Emir.

⁷ Source: Planning Council, *2003 Statistical Yearbook*.

Women and the environment

Official and popular concern with the environment get under way in an organized, intensive fashion in Qatar in 1996, when the Supreme Council for the Environment and Natural Sanctuaries was founded. This step is regarded as an indication of the evolution Qatari society is undergoing in the present stage of its development. In addition to the Council, an NGO known as the Centre for Environment Friends has appeared on the scene. The office of Sheikha Mouza, the wife of the Emir, also plays a role by sponsoring a yearly environmental project known as “A Flower Each Spring”, while the Supreme Council for Family Affairs sponsors another such project known as “Green Qatar”. The University of Qatar boasts an environmental studies unit, which is headed by a woman.

Women’s role in environmental issues is becoming noticeably more prominent, especially in connection with projects sponsored by Sheikha Mouza. However, women continue to be largely absent from the activities of the Supreme Council for the Environment, and it is clear that an effort must be made to integrate women into the Council’s important work in the area of environmental issues. Women must also be encouraged to engage in volunteer work in that area, and the means to that end is to offer encouragement to grassroots organizations concerned with the environment.

A major challenge in this area is the fact that data and information on women and the environment are scanty at best. Moreover, environmental issues are not covered in school curricula, especially the issue of the home environment, and there are no environmental training or vocational development programmes for women.

Women and the family

The most striking of the changes that Qatari families are experiencing is that they are becoming smaller. In addition, the traditional extended family is giving way to the independent nuclear family consisting of two parents and their children. The 1997 census indicated that nuclear families accounted for 57 per cent of all families, while extended families accounted for 26 per cent of the total.⁸

The main challenges confronting Qatari families and women’s position in the family may be summed up as follows:

- High divorce rates: the incidence of divorce was 31.9 per cent in 1995, and approximately 31.1 per cent in 2002. In view of the adverse consequences resulting from divorce, ranging from responsibility for the care and education of the children to socio-economic impacts, which tend to bear disproportionately upon the woman involved, it is clear that women are confronted by a serious challenge here, one that has a negative effect on their psychological and socio-economic abilities and capacities;

⁸ See the previous source, table 63, which contains percentage data extracted from the 1997 general population census.

- The distribution of roles within the family based on gender: the man's tasks and roles are those deemed to be appropriate to his sex, and this has implications for his socio-economic situation, and the same applies to the woman;
- A mother has the right to nurture her children as long as they are minors, while the father has a duty to provide for their subsistence and shelter. A court may order such fraction of the father's income or salary as it deems appropriate for that purpose to be withdrawn directly and irretrievably from his bank account, to prevent any negligence or fraud on his part.

In addition, Qatari law allows a woman to seek a divorce and free herself from her husband if she wishes. The court will consider the reasons for her petition and grant her a divorce if it appears that she cannot continue to live with her husband. Examination of cases of divorce in Qatar, however, indicates that few of them involve this procedure.

The State has established appropriate facilities for the care and protection of the family, notably the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, which develops family-oriented policies and plans and reviews legislation relating to the family. The Council's most important achievements are outlined in the paragraphs below.

1 – Review of the Personal Status Law. The task of studying that law and recommending amendments to it was entrusted to the Council's Women's Affairs Committee, which enlisted the assistance of experts from Qatar and other Arab States. Thanks to close cooperation and coordination between the Council and the Committee and unstinted support from the political leadership, most of the proposed amendments were accepted. A revised law is expected to be adopted shortly, one that will contribute to the protection of families and the rights of all its members before and during marriage and after termination of the marriage.

2 – Establishment of mechanisms designed to protect the family and groups affiliated to it. These mechanisms include the Family Consultation Centre, the Qatari Institution for the Protection of Women and Children, the Qatari Institution for the Welfare of Orphans, the Mothers' and Children's Cultural Centre and the Qatari Institution for the Welfare of the Aged. All these institutions were founded in 2003. The Council is also sponsoring an initiative aimed at establishing a fund with the aim of encouraging young people to marry and making it easier for them to do so.

Lessons learned

The task of preparing the national strategy for the advancement of women in Qatar involved the formation of a number of national work teams, one for each of the various themes, in 2002. Next came reports on women prepared by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, including the present report. The process as a whole has afforded an excellent opportunity for reviewing and evaluating the situation of women, the performance of the various institutions involved, the adequacy of the programmes, the effectiveness of the services and the success of the policies adopted by the State in the area of the advancement of women. The outcome is that it has become clear which aspects have contributed to the success of programmes and the attainment of objectives, and which have hindered the progress of some programmes.

Success factors :

- The political will to support the advancement of women and the leadership role played by Sheikha Mouza bint Nasser al-Misnad, the wife of the Emir and President of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, in encouraging women to participate in all aspects of the national development process;
- The fact that adequate resources have been available to execute the programmes;
- Appropriate infrastructure for purposes of the services and programmes;
- Qatar's small population, which has facilitated the task of dealing with the various issues;
- Progressively greater NGO participation in efforts aimed at the advancement of women;
- Progressively greater involvement of the private sector in funding family-oriented programmes generally;
- Cooperation with regional and international organizations concerned with women and the family.

Factors hindering attainment of the objectives:

- Despite laws and official practices in favour of enhancing the status of Qatari women, there are still various social structures and organizations characterized by cultural factors that exert something of an adverse impact on the social situation of women, and thus restrict the extent to which they are able to benefit from the development opportunities available in society;
- **Statistics-related factors** : gender-disaggregated statistics are not available in all sectors, and this has been an impediment to the task of delimiting the gender gap and disparities between men and women in various areas and evaluating Qatar's progress toward gender equality;
- **The unsatisfactory role played by the media** in supporting women's issues: the media tend to focus on traditional roles and present a stereotyped view of women, neglecting their contributions in the areas of work, creativeness and innovation and the fundamental issues and problems confronting them in all areas of life. This is undoubtedly an obstacle to greater participation by women in all fields;
- **The fact that there have been very few scientific studies on women's issues**, especially in the areas of health, the economy and the environment, is an obstacle to planners and policy-makers.

Part III: Institutional development

National mechanisms relating to women's issues

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs is the main mechanism concerned with women's issues. The Council owes its present powers and functions to Decree No. 23 of 2002, amending and strengthening a 1998 decree under which it was originally established.

The decree just mentioned clearly sets forth the Council's areas of competence in women's affairs:

- 1 – To enable women to participate in social, economic and political aspects of public life;
- 2 – To work for the advancement of women.

The decree strengthened the Council's capacities by:

- 1 – Placing it directly under the jurisdiction of His Highness the Emir (it formerly reported to the Council of Ministers);
- 2 – Giving the Vice-President of the Council the rank of Minister;
- 3 – Making the Council financially independent.

By virtue of the powers vested in it, the Council's functions are:

- 1 – To prepare national plans, makes proposals for public policies, submits draft legislation relating to the family in general, including women;
- 2 – To gather data and statistics on the family, and to establish a central data network in that field;
- 3 – To coordinate and consult with ministries and other Government agencies, public institutions and other bodies working in the area of the family, mothers, children and young people;
- 4 – To offer comments on draft conventions dealing with the protection of the family, and to monitor their implementation;
- 5 – To cooperate with international and regional organizations and other bodies concerned with family issues, and to represent the State at conferences held to consider those issues;
- 6 – To organize conferences, seminars and symposia to discuss and investigate the subjects with which the Council is concerned.

The Council has established a Women's Affairs Committee made up of experts and other persons of both sexes who are active in the area of women's issues. The Committee's duties are, among other things:

- 1 – To propose policies, plans and programmes required for women's cultural, social and political development with a view to their participation in the building and advancement of society and the enhancement of their own place within it;
- 2 – To propose means of developing women's capacities and skills and enhancing society's awareness of their rights and duties;
- 3 – To propose studies and research required to investigate the nature and determine the scope of issues relating to women;
- 4 – To submit draft legislation, plans and programmes of relevance to women and to their political, social and occupational rights;

- 5 – To propose appropriate plans and programmes for the protection and welfare of women at risk of violence, abuse and mistreatment;
- 6 – To offer comments on plans and programmes designed to promote the advancement of women and to solve the problems confronting them;
- 7 – To study regional and international conventions on women’s issues and to offer comments on any such conventions that may be drafted in the future.

Since it was founded, the Committee has been able to place women’s affairs on the agendas of decision-makers and policy-makers in Qatar. Its main achievements over the past five years have been as follows:

- 1 – Supervision of the preparation of Qatar’s national strategy for the advancement of women;
- 2 – Studying the draft Personal Status Law and proposing and following up amendments to the text, disseminating awareness of its provisions throughout society, recommending amendments to some of the provisions of the Civil Service Law and the Housing Law, recommending amendments to the Social Insurance Law in the matter of the groups covered by the Law and the value of the benefits available to them under its terms;
- 3 – A review of the Housing Law in cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Housing, and preparation of suggestions for ensuring that the law would benefit Qatari women;
- 4 – A study of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the organization of a seminar to discuss Qatar’s accession to it;
- 5 – Organization of a global symposium entitled Women and Policy and Women’s Role in Development, and a training workshop on managing electoral campaigns;
- 6 – Organization of awareness campaigns on women’s issues, such as the early detection of breast and cervical cancer.

Coordination with line ministries and Government institutions :

The Council would like to coordinate with all ministries and Government institutions, but coordination is a bureaucratic process, not an organized process. Typically, ministries do not have any committees, divisions or units responsible for gender mainstreaming within planning or policy-making bodies, and the result is that in many instances, coordination occurs on an isolated basis in connection with single programmes, even though all Government agencies cooperate willingly with the Council in such matters as training and the organization of joint programmes.

As part of the process of preparing a national strategy on the advancement of women, some progress was made with the establishment of a network of information officers in all ministries and relevant Government institutions and in NGOs concerned with issues relating to women and the family, and members of this network were given training in mainstreaming a gender perspective. Unfortunately, the network has proved ineffectual because of the novelty of the gender concept in Qatari society, and because some of its members did not hold decision-making posts in their organizations or have been transferred to other duty stations.

Accordingly, the task of mainstreaming a gender perspective in those institutions is one of the Council’s priorities during its work on the preparation of a national plan and action programme for implementation of the national strategy for the advancement of women. To that end, it proposes to reactivate and strengthen the network, or to reconfigure it.

In this context, the Council is working for the establishment of a gender unit within the Planning Council, which is one of our most important partners, inasmuch as it is the body responsible for national strategy, plan and policy development. It is also in charge of the preparation and publication of national statistics in all fields.

Monitoring and follow-up mechanisms

The Council is endeavouring to take appropriate measures to strengthen the process of monitoring and evaluating services for women. Its actions to this end have included:

- 1 – Enhancement of the Council’s own capacities in this area by establishing a Women’s Department to be responsible for, among other things, monitoring the implementation of conventions of relevance for women that have been ratified by the State of Qatar, in coordination with the competent authorities of the State, studying obstacles to implementation, monitoring initiatives, programmes and projects relating to women at the national, Arab and regional levels and formulating recommendations on them, and delivering training programmes for persons involved with women’s issues in the fields of the judiciary, health care, income development and political participation, in coordination with official and non-governmental organizations;
- 2 – Preparation and publication of the first national statistical report on women and men in the State of Qatar, in cooperation with the Planning Council, and coordination to ensure the continuation of a gender statistics programme within the Planning Council, which is the body responsible for producing official statistical data;
- 3 – Action to develop databases on the family in Qatar, identify current gaps in the data, and develop plans aimed at generating the desired data, in cooperation with the Planning Council and other Government agencies producing sectoral data.

The role of the parliament (the Advisory Council) in promoting women’s issues:

The present Advisory Council, which assists His Highness the Emir, plays an important role in formulating national legislation, especially at this vital stage in the history of Qatar, with intense legislative activity in response to the requirements of the draft permanent Constitution, as well as legislation made necessary by the continuing process of evolution and modernization under way in Qatar.

The State is ready for the first elections for the new Advisory Council, two thirds of the members of which will be directly elected. Women will be allowed to stand as candidates for election to the Council. However, the date of these elections has not yet been set. Great reliance is being placed on the forthcoming Council’s action to promote women’s issues. The Supreme Council for Family Affairs has established a Standing Committee on Elections to prepare society to participate in these elections, both as candidates and as electors. The Committee intends to target women in particular, urging them to participate, and is preparing programmes designed for that purpose. It recently held a training session on managing election campaigns which was attended by 17 women.

The role of NGOs :

NGOs are a comparatively recent phenomenon in Qatar. Their work had always been essentially charitable in nature rather than development-oriented, but this situation is changing rapidly as society has evolved and has come increasingly to need development programmes targeting men and women alike. One of the Council's first actions was to establish a committee mandated to provide coordination between grassroots associations and private institutions in an effort to enable them to work effectively together and avoid duplication of efforts, and to build institutions' capacities and encourage them to meet the developmental requirements of Qatari society. The committee has been largely successful in performing these tasks.

However, it appears from a study conducted for the purposes of the present report that most of these organizations have not adopted the Platform for Action or the actions identified at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in their own plans, programmes and future projections.

Main challenges and action to address them:

One initiative undertaken in the context of the preparation of Qatar's national strategy for the advancement of women was an assessment of the situation of women in various fields. The framers of the strategy, relying on the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session and referring to the assessment just mentioned, identified the following strategic objectives:

- 1 – Action aimed at transforming the present situation of women, characterized as it is by a low level of participation in social life, into a more active situation that will enable women to play a meaningful and effective partnership role in a dynamically evolving society;
- 2 – Action to promote broader participation by women in power structures and decision-making;
- 3 – Action to alter social orientations and values that are not receptive to effective participation by women in comprehensive development projects;
- 4 – Affirmation of Arab and Islamic values and principles that serve to integrate the roles of women and men as a means to building a society that will be both modern and true to its origins.

The strategy comprises eight themes: social aspects (including women's issues, poverty and violence against women), education, the economy, health care, legislation, the environment, politics, and the media. Clear-cut objectives and actions have been identified under each of these themes.

The Council is currently working in cooperation with its partners to monitor implementation of the strategy and prepare a national implementation plan containing a list of priorities and specific time frames.

Statistical annexes

Indicator	1997		2001	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
I. Table of health indicators ¹				
1. Life expectancy	77 years	73.6 years	75 years	73 years
2. Infant mortality rate (per thousand live births)	11.0	8.9	12.8	9.4
3. Under-5 mortality rate (per thousand)	14.3	15.2	10.5	12.1
4. Deaths in childbirth (per 100 000)	3	-	-	-
5. Percentage births attended by medical personnel (per 100 000)	99.9%	-	99.9	-
6. Miscarriages (as percentage of number of births)	9.2%	-	10.4%	-
II. Education indicators ²				
1. Prevalence of illiteracy	19.1%	15.8%	13.5%	10.4%
2. Possession of reading and writing skills	80.9%	84.2%	86.5%	89.6%
3. Lower primary school attendance rate	107	106	104	101
4. Higher primary school attendance rate	99	103	93	89
5. Secondary school attendance rate	102	90	92	76
6. Women graduates as a percentage of all graduates	71%	29%	72%	28%
7. Number of girls' and boys' schools, three levels:				
(a) Lower primary level	52	59	48	56
(b) Higher primary level	26	29	27	23
(c) Secondary level	22	19	24	18
(d) Specialized schools	-	3	-	5
Total	100	105	99	102
8. Women exchange students sent to study abroad	33%	67%	37%	63%

1. Source: State of Qatar, Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Planning Council, report entitled *Women and Men in the State of Qatar: a Statistical Portrait* (2004)
2. Source: the above report and State of Qatar, Planning Council, *2003 Statistical Yearbook*.

III. Economic indicators ³				
1. Labour force participation rate (15 and over age group), men and women	35.2%	91.0%	37.6%	90.2%
2. Economically inactive population (15 and over age group), men and women	64.7%	9.6%	62.4%	9.8%
IV. Percentage share of leadership posts held by women ⁴	6.6%	93.3%	4.7%	95.3%
V. Number of women employed in the media sector ⁵				
1. Radio and television	99 (1998)	1463 (1998)	170 (2002)	1360 (2002)
2. Newspapers and magazines	48 (1998)	620 (1998)	50 (2002)	644 (2002)
VI. Marriage and divorce indicators ⁶				
1. Marriage at an early age (15-19) (No. of cases)	389 (1995)	60 (1995)	374 (2002)	36 (2002)
2. Incidence of divorce as a percentage of all marriages	31.9% (1995)		31.1% (2002)	

3. Source: *Women and Men in the State of Qatar* and *2003 Statistical Yearbook*

4. Source: *2003 Statistical Yearbook*

5. Source: *2003 Statistical Yearbook*

6. Source: *2003 Statistical Yearbook*