

DIFI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNOUNCES GRANT TO FUND RESEARCH ON CONFLICT AND ARAB FAMILIES

HE Sheikha Hessa bint Khalifa Al Thani Calls for a Collective Response to Address the Impact of War on the Family Unit

Doha, Qatar, 17 October 2016 – The first day of the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) conference on Family Research and Policy, held under the theme ‘The Impact of Wars and Conflicts on Arab Families’, has explored family formation, socio-economic impact of wars on families, and gender dimensions during conflicts.

Regional and international policymakers gathered at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) to examine the role of public policies in promoting and protecting the well-being of Arab families in ongoing conflicts.

Delegates were welcomed to the conference by Ms Noor Al Malki Al-Jehani, Executive Director of DIFI, who announced the second edition of the Osra Research Grant to fund research on the impacts of conflict on family formation and breakdown, parent-child relationships, and the policies related to these topics.

Established by DIFI in collaboration with the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a member of Qatar Foundation (QF), the Osra Research Grant offers researchers from Qatar and other Arab countries up to \$50,000 a year to conduct research on the impact of wars on the family structure.

Highlighting the impacts of war during her welcome address, Ms Al-Jehani said: “The short and long term implications of conflict affect the unity of society and the entire family unit. It is crucial for us to differentiate between these implications in order to be able to ascertain the appropriate mechanisms and measures to address them.”

HE Sheikha Hessa bint Khalifa Al Thani, Special Envoy of the Arab League Secretary General, for Humanitarian Affairs; Rami Khouri, Senior Fellow, Issam Fares Institute, American University Beirut; Luay Shabana Ph.D., Regional Director of Arab States, UNFPA; and Nahla Haidar, Member of CEDAW Committee, took part in the first plenary session, moderated by Amal Mohammed Al Malki, Ph.D., Founding Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU). Titled ‘Impacts of Wars and Conflicts on Families’, panellists explored how conflict compromises families.

“Today the destruction of the social and economic infrastructure due to conflict is tearing families apart and destroying communities. It is our collective responsibility to do all we can to preserve families that are under threat by not only offering aid and support, but by exploring all possible ways we can protect them against the devastating impact of

war," Sheikha Hessa urged.

Rami Khouri called for policies to address the detrimental impact of conflict on the family unit. "The major problem we face in terms of the negative impact of conflict on families is the lack of policies to address these challenges. Qatar is one of the few countries in the region that is committed to research and policies on how war and conflict compromises the family structure," Mr Khouri noted.

In the panel session entitled 'Witness to the Human Story', Al Jazeera journalists delivered sobering accounts of their on-the-ground experience in war and conflict zones in the Arab region.

DIFI is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), and aims to support research programmes and policies to promote the development of Arab families.

Image Caption

Image 1: Ms Noor Al Malki Al-Jehani, DIFI Executive Director, speaks at the opening of the Second Annual Conference on Family Research and Policy.

Image 2: A group of attendees during the first day of the annual conference.

Image 3: Panellists of the first plenary session discussing the impact of wars and conflicts on families.

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Doha International Family Institute (DIFI)

DIFI is a pioneer international organization in the State of Qatar that supports research programs, policies and social outreach to promote the development of Arab families. Focusing primarily on research, DIFI supports a wide range of national, regional and international evidence based studies pertaining to marriage, family building, women, fertility, demographics, children, family safety, child safety, fatherhood and motherhood. DIFI comprises of two divisions: family research division and family policy division. DIFI is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development and has

a special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNECOSOC).

Qatar Foundation- Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organization that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world.

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's strategic mission focuses on education, research, science and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing solutions through key sciences. QF also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, please visit: <http://qf.org.qa>

Al Jazeera Media Network (AJMN)

Al Jazeera strives to deliver content that captivates, informs, inspires and entertains. Launched in 1996, Al Jazeera was the first independent news channel in the Arab world dedicated to providing comprehensive news and live debate. It challenged established narratives and gave a global audience an alternative voice—one that put the human being back at the centre of the news agenda—quickly making it one of the world's most influential news networks. Since then, it has added new channels and services, with more than 70 bureaus around the world, while maintaining the independent and pioneering spirit that defined its character. Each subsidiary follows the same principles—values that inspire it to be challenging and bold, and provide a 'voice for the voiceless' in some of the most underreported places on the planet.