

REGULATIONS, AWARENESS, AND PARTNERSHIPS CRUCIAL TO IMPROVED URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN QATAR

Proper Regulations by the Government will Pave the Way for the Private Sector to Play Active Role in Qatar's Urban Development

Doha, Qatar, May 20, 2017: More than 100 urban development, public policy, and sustainability experts, as well as government decision-makers, have highlighted the need for improved regulations for urban development in Qatar. The discussions took place last week as part of an event co-organized by Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) and UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign (WUC) entitled 'Urban Thinkers Campus' (UTC).

Attendees at the various sessions explored the future of Doha's urban development in line with the principles of UN-Habitat's 'New Urban Agenda'. The discussions were focused on three main areas, including: Intelligent Cities; Sustainable Neighbourhoods; and Private Sector Engagement in Urban Planning and Development.

The need for improved urban development regulations was highlighted as one of the main challenges Qatar needs to overcome to effectively achieve UN-Habitat's 'New Urban Agenda'. Engineer Meshal Al Shamari, Director, QGBC, said: "It is important to find consistency in implementing and safe-guarding existing regulations in Qatar. Additionally, improved regulations will help pave the way for private sector engagement in policy formulation and enforcement when it comes to urban development in the country."

Commenting on urban development in the GCC states and in Qatar, Dr. Tarek El-Sheikh, Regional Representative for Gulf States and Director of the UN Habitat Office in Kuwait, said: "Urban development across the GCC is still in its infancy, and there is considerable potential for further improvement. Governments across the region, especially in Qatar, strive to make serious enhancements as part of their national development visions. The main challenge the region needs to overcome is to build further partnerships across the economy and engage private stakeholders further on various levels."

Mr. Yasser Salah Al Jaidah, Chief Executive Officer, Qatar Cool, highlighted that Qatar struggles between balancing economy, environment, and social development. "In order to push sustainability forward, it is vital to ensure that it is demanded by the people and the community. The relevant stakeholders should endeavour to raise awareness about sustainability and address the various misunderstandings of the concept in a timely manner," added Mr. Al Jaidah.

Dr. John Kilani, Director of Sustainable Development, The Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah International Foundation for Energy and Sustainable Development, said research and development forms an important part of urban development. "Informed decisions in the area

of urban development in Qatar will only come as a result of supplying accurate information, which is a direct outcome of in-depth and timely research into the available issues,” Dr. Kilani said.

Dr. Mohamed Evren Tok, Assistant Professor of Public Policy at Qatar Foundation’s Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) and facilitator of the roundtable discussion, focused on the role of private sector in urban development in Qatar, saying: “Urban development is heavily affected by the various public policy decisions taken at government level. Defining the role of the private sector in the process is a key decision that needs to be looked at carefully. Engaging the private sector in urban development not only ensures effective urban policy formulation, but also serves as an incentive for these organizations to pursue responsible business in the long-term.”

The full report on the status of urban development in Qatar, including the challenges and suggested solutions, will be made available in the near future for the public and decision-makers.

QGBC, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), is working towards creating a sustainable future for Qatar through research, outreach, and education.

Image Caption

Image 1: Expert panel discussion at ‘Urban Thinkers Campus’ (UTC), jointly hosted by Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) and UN-Habitat’s World Urban Campaign (WUC), to explore state of Doha’s urban development.

Image 2: Interactive discussions at the ‘Urban Thinkers Campus’ (UTC) focused on studying the potential of Doha to become an ‘intelligent city’.

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About Qatar Green Building Council:

Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) is a non-profit, membership-driven organisation providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in conducting environmentally sustainable practices for green building design and development in Qatar. QGBC also aims to support the overall health and sustainability of the environment, the people, and economic security in Qatar for generations to come. The council, a member of Qatar Foundation, was formally established in 2009 by a decree signed by Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and is helping Qatar on its journey to establish a post-hydrocarbon, knowledge economy and progressive society. Through QGBC, Qatar is part of a network of 80 countries that run active national green building councils under the umbrella of the World Green Building Council.

QGBC's members include, representatives from government, real estate developers, investors, facilities managers, consultants, constructors, manufacturers & suppliers, oil & gas, professional firms, financial services, telecom/technology, academia, NGOs & media.

QGBC is setting up operations from its HQ, organising awareness events, knowledge seminars, training, forums, and networking sessions with the like-minded. To learn more, please visit www.qatargbc.org.

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global research and development challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

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

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