



وزارة التخطيط التنموي والإحصاء
Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics

State of Qatar Paper to the High-Level Political Forum 2016 on Sustainable Development 2030

New York, July 11-20, 2016

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“The welfare of our children and of the future generations demands that we use our resource-wealth wisely. Qatar must continue to invest in its people so that all can participate fully in economic, social and political life. Qatar must invest too in world class infrastructure to create a dynamic and more diversified economy in which the private sector plays a prominent role. This requires continuous improvements in the efficiency, transparency and accountability of government agencies”.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Qatar National Vision 2030

1. Introduction:

Since its independence in 1971, the State of Qatar focused on sustainable development with all its economic, social and environmental dimensions. Accordingly, Qatar has established many institutions and government agencies aimed at achieving sustainable development, such as the Higher Council of Planning, the General Secretariat for Development Planning, and the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics. Since the launch of QNV 2030, which is based on four pillars: human development, social development, economic development and environment development, the Government of Qatar aimed to make a radical change to life in Qatar. And since the adoption of the National Development Strategy 2011-2016, sustainable development became the everyday language of ministries, government institutions, civil society organizations and other specialized committees in the state. By following a result-based strategic planning approach, the economic, social and environment development is no longer separate sectors, but it has become an integrated process that looks forward to achieving Qatar Vision over the next two decades. The above-mentioned national development strategy has produced 14 (fourteen) coherent sector strategies, and in turn every sector therein enables the other sectors. Thus, 129 (one hundred and twenty nine) targeted national development results in all pillars and sectors were identified by QNV 2030, including the institutional development pillar. The implementing agencies have been assigned to set up plans to achieve these results. In addition, the State of Qatar has launched its population policy in April 2009. It includes a number of direct and indirect data and actions, aimed at quantitative and qualitative impact on demographic behavior in society¹.

2. National Development Strategy 2011-2016

The National Development Strategy 2011-2016, launched in March 2011, represents QNV 2030’s commitment to achieve sustainable development with full responsibility. It aims to lead the state towards a sustainable development path that ensures prosperity, and harmonizes economic, social and environmental results. The above-mentioned development

¹ http://www.ppc.gov.qa/ar/poppolicy/Documents/ppc_workplan_ar.pdf

strategy has indeed been successful on many levels. The awareness of the importance of sustainability has increased, as priorities have been identified in a better way. After more than five years since its launch, NDS1 achieved reasonable results, and it is expected to reap more benefits from NDS2. Here below are some of the progress that has been achieved:

3. Social Protection:

The national development strategy resulted in the creation of a coherent social protection system that protects the civil rights of all citizens and provides them with an adequate income in order to maintain a decent healthy life. The Ministerial Decree No. 46 of 2014 was issued to determine the value and rules of the pension payable to the categories set forth in the Social Security Act, where the value of pension increased manifold the previous value for all ten beneficiary categories: the divorcee, the needy family, family of the elderly, family of a missing person, the abandoned wife, the widow, family of the prisoner, people with disabilities, the incapacitated for work and the orphan. More specifically, the social protection system includes the following:

- Social security, which includes cash benefits provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for widows, families with no breadwinner and orphans.
- Social security system, which includes pensions for government and public companies' employees, pensions from private companies, unemployment benefits, pensions for survivors, disability compensation and others.
- Social services, such as healthcare, education grants and economic empowerment programs.

4. Human Development:

As for the human development, Qatar has continued investing heavily in modern healthcare and education systems, in order to enable citizens to live in dignity and enjoy a better health, so that they can participate in economic, social and political life, and contribute to the preservation of environment. Qatar has also reinforced education and training programs, scientific research and innovation and entrepreneurship.

5. Economic Development:

In terms of sustainability of the economic boom, the government of Qatar is committed to responsible exploitation of hydrocarbon resources, particularly investment of revenues wisely for the benefit of current and future generations. Noting that infrastructure is a permanent priority, investments continue in institutions, frameworks and policies. Improving the use of resources is a platform to increase efficiency and sustainability, and further contributes to supporting private sector development through the expansion of the capabilities and chances of citizens, and to the diversification of economic activities.

6. Environment Preservation:

In terms of preserving the environment, the environment sector strategy confirmed the national commitment to achieve compatibility between economic growth, social development and environment protection through long-term reforms in order to improve environment management and contribute to sustainable development. A progress has been achieved by

building a new center for household solid waste management. The gas flaring has also been dramatically reduced through the adoption of new technologies in the industrial plants.

7. Lessons Learned From NDS1 2011- 2016

- NDS has reinforced the concept of strategic planning in the state and its institutions.
- The State's development efforts are focused on specific and clear objectives.
- NDS has mobilized government and people's efforts towards the achievement of specific development goals across 14 sectors.
- It stressed the importance of official and public partnership in achieving the desired results.
- It stressed that development sustainability and integration are the perfect solution to achieve the desired social welfare.
- It showed that defining development priorities is very important, and would make a quick leap towards achieving the national dream envisaged in QNV 2030.
- It demonstrated that the monitoring and reporting system is indispensable in monitoring the progress made in the various targeted sectors.

8. The Second National Development Strategy (NDS2) 2017-2022

The Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics (MDPS), in collaboration with partners, has started mobilizing national efforts to prepare NDS2 (2017-2022). For this purpose, MDPS began to form the required task teams comprising representatives of ministries, government agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations and others, to work on the preparation of sector strategies. NDS2 is expected to include the following sectors:

Sector One: economic diversification and development of private sector

Sector Two: environment sustainability, natural resources and built environment

Sector Three: education and training

Sector Four: Healthcare

Sector Five: social protection

Sector Six: public safety and security

Sector Seven: culture and sports

Sector Eight: international technical cooperation

It is worth mentioning that MDPS is about to integrate the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets, within sector projects.

From MDGs to the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030

Qatar has made great strides towards achieving MDGs in many fields, especially in the field of universal education and healthcare, and improving people's living standard. This has been translated by Qatar's advanced rank in the Human Development Report 2015 (32nd globally)

2. Qatar was also ranked among the group of countries that enjoy a very high human development. The MDGs fifth National Progress Report issued by the State of Qatar shows that the first goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger does not pose any challenge to Qatar which has been able to provide a decent living for all residents on its territory by providing them with sustainable livelihoods, safety and social care networks. Through social security system, Qatar provides salaries to all persons who have no source of income or no breadwinner, so that they can have a safe, peaceful and stable life. In addition, it provides healthcare, education and other services to enable them to live decently.

With respect to universal primary education for all, the State of Qatar is close to achieve the entire goal of ensuring that all children have access to primary education, where enrollment rates of both sexes exceeded (92%), thanks to the actions and policies taken by the State in the education sector, particularly primary education, and the financial allocations to expand education infrastructure and develop its services.

Regarding the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, the State of Qatar has recorded a significant progress in achieving gender parity in access to education in all its stages, and has made a remarkable progress in the field of higher education, where the rate for girls exceeds that for boys, with gender parity rate at (1.75). Nevertheless, the economic participation of Qatari women in the labor market is still low and poses a challenge, which requires encouragement of women to engage in non-traditional occupations such as scientific occupations. Another challenge is to strengthen the political participation of Qatari women, which is still low and requires the development of a plan to raise their level of representation in elected national councils and in leadership positions in the next phase.

In the area of "reducing child mortality", Qatar has been able to achieve this goal for children under the age of five by two-thirds. This is due to the effective social, economic and health policies which contributed to the provision of essential health requirements for children and to ensuring their quality, by establishing "Healthy Child Clinic" in most of healthcare centers that are widespread in the state, and by carrying out vaccination campaigns against epidemic and infectious diseases, which included all children, as well as health education and awareness programs carried out by various child health stakeholders.

In the area of "improving maternal health", Qatar has exceeded the implementation of this goal, which requires the reduction of maternal mortality by three quarters, as all births take place in the state under the supervision of skilled health professionals, and all women have access to reproductive health services. With regard to the eradication of malaria and infectious diseases, Qatar was able to stop the spread of malaria and declare the State of Qatar as malaria-free, in addition to reducing the spread of TB in half before the deadline. This also applies to the dissemination of HIV/AIDS treatment, where Qatar has provided antiretroviral therapy for all those infected. Qatar continues in its efforts to prevent the introduction or spread of this dangerous disease in the country, and to protect Qatari society through health education and awareness programs, especially in light of the State's openness and receiving a large number of expatriate workers to implement various development projects.

² http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf

With regard to "environment sustainability", Qatar confirmed that it was able to achieve most of what this goal is intended for, as it introduced environmental considerations into the development planning process within NDS 2011-2016. It also provided safe drinking water and proper sanitation, and was able to reduce the negative effects of the loss of biodiversity, through the expansion of nature reserves onshore and offshore, where the percentage of onshore and offshore reserves of the total area of the country has exceeded the target set by the Convention on Biological Diversity. With regard to "global partnership for development", the State of Qatar has effectively contributed to the development of this partnership, as Qatar today is a donor country and an influential partner in international development aid.

The development aid is a fundamental pillar of Qatar's foreign policy. Hence, the number of countries covered by Qatari aid has increased to more than 110 countries in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. Despite the great development achievements made by the state, one cannot deny the existence of some challenges related primarily to a number of social behaviors that need to be changed, and to find an appropriate path for social development with regard to the empowerment of women. Also, all social groups (young people, children, women, and the elderly) need to be educated and integrated in the development process so as to expand participation therein, and to follow up the integration of the various Millennium Development Goals in NDS 2011- 2016.

9. Sustainable Development Agenda 2030

The Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, along with its goals and objectives, is a step forward compared to MDGs, both in terms of the process of preparation, or in terms of its universal nature, scope and ambition, particularly in terms of its ability to address environment disparities and deterioration. To implement this agenda, it is necessary to follow the steps recommended by the United Nations Development Group, in order to translate the goals and objectives into national targets. The following is a review of some of the implementation steps to be pursued by the State of Qatar in the implementation of the said development agenda based on the recommendations of the United Nations Development Group:

1. Building awareness and knowledge on sustainable development agenda at the national level and its importance and intersection with NDS 2017-2022, and emphasizing the importance of implementing the goals and objectives in a timely manner as they constitute an international commitment, through organizing national forums to discuss its contents, learning from the lessons resulted from MDGs experience at the national level.
2. Adopting multiple-partner methodology in order to integrate sustainable development agenda 2030 in NDS 2017-2022. This may require the establishment of community dialogue in this regard, while allowing for civil society organizations to contribute to the adoption of the mentioned agenda, and considering it as part of the development process.
3. The integration of sustainable development agenda in the national and sub-national context. In this regard, the high-level team in-charge of the sustainable development agenda will take into account the process of setting goals and objectives of the development agenda within NDS2 sectors in accordance with national priorities at the national and sub-national levels.

4. Preparing integrated indivisible policies that achieve balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. planning, implementation and M&E.
5. Adopting a sustainable funding plan for the implementation of the sustainable development agenda at the national level.
6. To develop a system for monitoring and reporting at the national level, and to provide regional and international organizations with needed indices on regular basis.

10. Challenges That May Face the Implementation of Sustainable Development Agenda

- To have an effective management of the implementation process of the sustainable development agenda, and make it aligned with NDS.
- To have adequate human resources for this huge work.
- To provide statistical data for the preparation of various international, national and sector indicators (231 indicators) in a timely manner in order to build a monitoring, follow-up and evaluation system.
- To set an effective communication strategy aimed at stakeholders in all sectors.
- To engage all partners in executive works of the sustainable development agenda and national development strategy.
- To provide an assisting legal environment.

That was with respect to the goals and objectives of the Sustainable Development Agenda. As for the indicators framework adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 47th session, amounting to approximately 231 indicators, MDPS has already begun to assess the availability of such indicators from available statistical sources. Moreover, MDPS will cooperate with partners in building indicators at the national level, in particular the thematic indicators relating to some categories of the society, such as a group of indicators for children, people with disabilities, the elderly and others. MDPS will also build an electronic platform to post multidimensional indicators on its webpage. In order to provide indicators for those involved in the formulation of national policies in a timely manner and good quality, it is necessary to update the entire statistical system, requiring a comprehensive data revolution that deals with the whole statistical process.

11. Modernization of Qatar Statistical System

The process of updating the official statistics in the State of Qatar indicates the following:

- Adopting an integrated approach in national statistics.
- Allowing a change in the organization and management of statistical outputs.
- Updating the quality framework of statistical data and outputs.
- Reviewing the legislations governing the process of data collection and dissemination.
- Using technical and statistical standards in data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- Considering the Human Resources Strategy as an integral part of the modernization strategy.
- Qatar's accession to the project of the transformative agenda on modernizing statistical systems managed by the United Nations Statistics Division.

12. Modernizing Steps of the Statistical System to Support the Sustainable Development Agenda:

The process of updating the statistical system to support the Sustainable Development Agenda aims to achieve the following:

1. Build partnerships involving representatives of ministries and government agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations that produce and use official statistics. Such partnerships will clearly set out the responsibilities relating to data collection in accordance with international standards. This is to be done through signing memoranda of understanding with the stakeholders to agree on specific roles with respect to the production of international indicators for the Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly the national and thematic indicators which are determined in accordance with the priorities of national development.
2. Assess the current statistical situation: This step includes an in-depth assessment of the statistical products according to the agreed upon technical theme framework, sources, quality, methodologies and classifications used, methods and mechanism of dissemination, and to identify the statistical system's ability to produce the aforementioned indicators.
3. Identify the gaps in the statistical system, and identify the topics that need to be taken into account in order to modernize them within a reasonable time frame.
4. Formulate an integrated national program for the advancement of official statistics that garners official support and partners' advocacy. Such program must include the objectives and expected results, according to the needs of national and international development, in particular, to identify operational schedule of statistical processes, outputs, partners, and the necessary budget over the period of update.
5. Develop a system of advocacy and communication in order to establish a coordinated and integrated system for official statistics that enjoys the support of official partners in institutions and the private sector, reduce opposition of data providers, and explain the importance of building a database at the national level.
6. Build an integrated system for official statistics that requires the creation of administrative and programmatic changes, untraditional solutions and high-quality team of the relevant institutions.
7. Design the integrated system, which requires details on operational steps, estimation of costs, and estimation of the added value of this process, while identifying the expected challenges.
8. Assess the update process that requires a system for monitoring and follow-up in order to identify the progress made in the statistical processes and products of the indicators needed to monitor the implementation of the goals of the Sustainable Development Agenda and the National Development Strategy.

To ensure the success of the integration of Sustainable Development Agenda in NDS2, and to provide statistical data and indicators necessary for monitoring and reporting, MDPS has

decided to form a high-level task team concerned with the work necessary for the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. The tasks of this team are as follows:

13. Tasks of the High-Level Task Team on Sustainable Development Agenda 2030:

The task team will assume the following:

1. Work as a strategic leadership for the implementation of sustainable development goals and objectives, monitor its progress, and prepare the periodic reports.
2. Ensure the integration of sustainable development goals in NDS 2017-2022 according to priorities of national development.
3. Approve the list of national indicators on sustainable development to be used to measure the progress at the national level.
4. Support the action plans aimed at raising the level of awareness about the importance of community participation in the implementation of SDGs, and ensure that the sustainable development does not exclude anyone.
5. Give advice on creating partnerships at the national level in order to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda .
6. Form a technical task team comprised of representatives of ministries, departments, major corporations, universities and civil society organizations in order to facilitate the integration of the goals and objectives of NDS , collect data and prepare the necessary indicators for national and international reports.
7. Contribute to the development of visions on national capacity-building in the field of the preparation of indicators and national reports, and contribute to providing the report of the Secretary General of the United Nations with the necessary data.
8. Provide institutional support to MDPS with a view to reach the statistical sources that enable the preparation and provision of the necessary indicators for monitoring and reporting on national and international levels.
9. Approve an action plan aimed at setting the trends of the Sustainable Development Agenda into practice, and form working groups of experts in SDGs to develop an integrated operational plan for the Sustainable Development Agenda and related indicators.
10. Oversee the preparation of M&E dashboard for the aforementioned agenda, especially the periodic reports that will be submitted to the UN.
11. The task team seeks to find the required funding to finance its activities in accordance with the approved plan.
12. H.E. the Minister of Development Planning and Statistics shall lead the work of this team, whereas MDPS will assume the role of the Secretariat of the team.

Furthermore, MDPS has decided to form a technical team concerned with goals and objectives; in particular the indicators, and to update the statistical process in Qatar. The following are the technical team's tasks.

14. Technical Team's Tasks:

According to the guidelines of the high-level task team on Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, the technical team shall perform the following tasks:

- Review the goals and objectives of the Sustainable Development Agenda, and integrate such goals and objectives in NDS2.
- Review the international indicators approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission, and examine their availability.
- Identify gaps and propose the statistical data sources necessary for the preparation of unavailable indicators.
- Develop an action plan to provide the necessary statistical data from administrative records, household surveys, demographic and economic censuses, etc.
- Form specialized working groups to collect data from their sources and evaluate them.
- Develop programs to build the capacity of the working groups by organizing workshops and training courses .
- Prepare the national and thematic indicators, and post them on electronic platforms.
- Prepare national reports related to Sustainable Development.
- Provide the High-Level Task Team with periodic reports on work progress.
- Set a timetable for the work assigned by the High-Level Task Team to the technical team.
- The technical team shall elect from among its members a chairman and a rapporteur.

15. Conclusion:

It is clear that the State of Qatar has adopted the Sustainable Development as a strategic option as articulated in QNV 2030, where NDS 2011-2016, launched in March 2011, represented the commitment of QNV 2030 towards the achievement of Sustainable Development with full responsibility aiming to lead the country towards a sustainable development path that ensures prosperity and harmonizes economic, social and environmental results. The mentioned development strategy has indeed been successful on many levels, with the growing awareness of the importance of sustainability. In order to complete the developmental process, MDPS, in collaboration with partners, is preparing NDS2 2017-2022, taking into account the challenges and successes, particularly with regard to the integration of the goals of Sustainable Development Agenda in NDS sectors, while committing itself to international commitments to achieve the goals and objectives of the agenda within 15 years.

This is in addition to updating and building a modern statistical system that meets the needs of users of statistical data necessary for monitoring the progress at the level of national development, for producing national reports, and for providing international organizations with required indicators to issue international reports. It should be noted that Qatar has quickly responded to the call to implement the goals and objectives of the Sustainable Development Agenda, as it has formed a high-level national team that serves as a strategic

leadership on this matter and has supplemented it with a technical team and working groups to translate the goals into reality.

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