

مؤتمر الدوحة الدولي للإعاقة والتنمية

DOHA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

DISABILITY

& DEVELOPMENT

ديسمبر 7-8
2019 DECEMBER

CONCEPT NOTE

Harnessing the Power of Sustainable Social Development to Advance the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities

“ **Leave No One Behind** ”



1. Overview:

- The background and rationale for convening the Conference in 2019
- The theme of the conference and its focus sub-themes
- Content and session modules
- Expected Outcomes and Impacts

2. Background and Rationale:

Qatar Leading a New 21st Century Opportunity for Change

In its 20th anniversary, under the wise guidance of the Founder H.H. SH. Moza bint Nasser, Al-Shafallah Center, has passed through transformational stages to become a center of excellence for setting global disability standards.

With the advent of Qatar Social Work in 2013 and the launch of its corporate strategy in 2015, Al-Shafallah Center, among its 6 in-country partner civil society centers, has powerfully championed a new strategic direction that aims at empowering disability rights at the forefront of whatever we do.

Under the Second National Development Strategy 2018-2022, Al-Shafallah Center, led by Qatar Social Work, has placed a forceful priority on transforming the lives of people with disabilities through advocating development that “leaves no one behind”.

The proposed conference will mark a turning point whereby Qatar will be helping to develop and advance a new approach to harness the power of sustainable development to advance human rights of persons with disabilities - a visionary 21st century approach that will positively impact on worldwide 1.5 billion persons with disabilities.

The conference will bring together the collective voice of persons with disabilities, important actors in the UN system and regional systems responsible for human rights, sustainable development and development assistance and innovative practice from around the world.

The conference will produce a landmark Doha Declaration which will contain clear guidance and a roadmap for the international community on how to carry forward individual rights alongside appropriate and sustainable social development.

The conference would be of intrinsic interest to a range of international and regional actors not only on the human rights side of the UN but also others involved in sustainable social development (e.g., World Bank, UNDP, UN-ESCWA, ECOSOC, NGOs, Academic and Research Centers, relevant Private Sector institutions, etc.).

3. Why this Theme?

Many things have radically changed since the foundation of Shafallah in 1999.

- Back then, the Convention on Disability Rights was not adopted.
- Rights and justice were generally biased to others but not for people with disabilities.
- Concepts of social development certainly did not include persons with disabilities.
- The Millennium Development Goals 2000-2015 disregarded disability issues.
- Until relatively recently, the 1.5 billion disabled persons remained invisible.

What a difference of 20 years makes? Over this period, Shafallah center has witnessed:

- Adoption of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (2006) with its emphasis on dignity, autonomy, equality and inclusion.
- Adoption of Sustainable Development Goals 2015-30, which, for the first time, explicitly covers disability.
- The two new drivers of change have shifted the Center's development strategy to coincide with the shift internationally from the medical model to a social and human rights model of disability.

4. What will the Conference look like?

The conference will address opportunities and challenges represented by the twining of the new two drivers. Culminating in the Doha Declaration, it will not only seek to clarify the nexus between the two drivers but will also chart a way forward to make sure the international community can make both drivers work effectively together to enhance the status of persons with disabilities.

The conference is composed of eight sessions, some of which are parallel. The assigned sessions across the two days of the conference will examine identified topics or groups of concern to both drivers while, as well it works towards setting a positive agenda for the future of disability-inclusive development.

Conference Day 1

- **Opening Remarks:** To set the stage and signal a high-level political engagement, to underscore the global challenges and to demonstrate local and regional commitment.
- **Plenary Session:** This session will lay out the various lines of connection between both drivers (content, implementation, monitoring mechanisms).
- **Inclusive Education:** This session will look at how both sets of drivers can help move the goal of inclusive education forward. And how to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all children with disabilities.
- **Inclusive Employment:** This session aims to address how the interaction between the two drivers can improve the conditions that lead to full and productive employment and decent work for persons with disability.

Parallel Sessions

- **Inclusive Public Health and Wellbeing Session:** Ensure Healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all persons with disabilities. This session examines how public health can be reshaped within both drivers (UNCRPDs and UNSDGs) to realizing the highest attainable standard of health and wellbeing of persons with disabilities.
- **Inclusive Sexual and Reproductive Health Care session:** access to sexual and reproductive health-care services and reproductive rights for all persons with disabilities. This topic will be discussed with the context of engaging both drivers together.
- **Data and Research Session:** This session will examine best practices on how to make data work in favor of people with disability. It will also tap into the topic of “Data Revolution” and how it can serve to make invisibles visible
- **Towards Smarter Policies:** This session looks at how smarter policy processes can be embedded in devising disability inclusive programs and societies.

4. What will the Conference look like?

Conference Day 2

- **Children with Disabilities: A Human Rights & Community Challenge Session:** This session looks at how we can realize the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children within the framework of the interaction between both drivers.
- **Cities and Human Settlements Session:** this session will cover the topic of cities and human settlements and how to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable for persons with disabilities, within the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially “leave no one behind” and how it works in conjunction with the principles of the UNCRPDs.

Closing Session:

Session chairs will report on the recommendations and resolutions drawn from their respective sessions and Doha Declaration.

- Doha Declaration
- Closing Remarks: Qatar Foundation for Social Work

Strong support for this comes from UK DFID – the organizers of the UK Disability Summit in July 2018. There will be a high-level closing ceremony which will bring all the strands together (using a conference rapporteur) and which will adopt and launch the Doha Declaration on advancing the rights of persons with disabilities with and through sustainable social development.

A cross-cutting theme will be the role of the private sector. This is covered by the UNCRPDs and explicitly welcomed in the UNSDGs. Several Specialized Agencies of the UN now emphasize the potential for constructive engagement with the private sector for transformative social change. A prime example is the ILO’s Global Business and Disability Network of transnational corporations. This will be woven into the various thematic panels as appropriate throughout the programme.

5. Expected Outcomes and Impacts

Outcome:

The main outcome would be a Doha Declaration on human rights and sustainable development as drivers of change. Based on tangible case studies in discrete fields (e.g., inclusive education) and in partnership with civil society and innovative service providers, the Doha Declaration will become the core reference point internationally for policy development about human rights and sustainable development in the context of disability.

Impacts: Several impacts can be envisaged as follows:

Framing Global Policy Perspectives:

Such an event (and accompanied by Doha Declaration) would be of intrinsic interest to a range of international actors not only on the human rights side of the UN but also others involved in sustainable social development.

Informing Regional Policy Impact:

Regionally it will attract a lot of attention from regional entities.

Empowering Advocacy:

Civil society groups around the world are relatively well versed in the human rights approach. That needs to be matched with similar level of literacy with respect to the UNSDGs. This will be the first major event to aim to do so – with a view to strengthening their advocacy skills. This will enhance their advocacy for change and potentially lead to better and more sustainable outcomes.

Driving Reform efforts at national level:

Most countries around the world are only at the starting point in reflecting on how to give life to the UNSDGs. This affords a unique opportunity to frame how they approach the development of their own UNSDGs strategies in line with the UNCPRDs. This can help persuade Governments that change combining both sets of drivers is not merely desirable but also possible.



