

# October 2021 Newsletter

## The COVID 19 Pandemic in Qatar: Trends in Public Risk Perceptions, Behavioral Responses, and Determinants of Compliance with Preventive Measures

Amid the outbreak of the contagious novel Coronavirus (COVID 19), public risk perception and behavioral responses are crucial for preventing the spread of the epidemic. The success or failure of states' preventive measures—e.g., social distancing, quarantine, and vaccination—depends upon compliance from the general public. Yet, knowledge of public risk perceptions and behavioral responses surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic is still emerging, and clear quantitative data remain limited. This report summarizes the results of a SESRI study that investigated social attitudes, behavior, and consequences surrounding COVID 19 in Qatar. An original online survey was conducted in both Qatar and a comparison case (Kuwait) during a 3 month period from November 2020 to January 2021. A total of 4,597 citizens and residents of Qatar aged 18 years and older were recruited to participate, with 2,282 completing the full interview. A total of 2,671 citizens and residents of Kuwait (1,184 completed) also took part in the survey to provide a regional baseline.

### SESRI's Data Center Launched New Nationally Representative Survey Data Sets



### SESRI's Survey Clinic Resumes Work for Fall Semester



### Qatar's Labor Law Changes and Workers' Welfare: Attitudes & Perceptions for a Sustainable Future

The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University conducted a study on Qatari citizens and expatriates with high and low-income to measure their level of knowledge about the recent changes in Qatar's labor law. The study showed that they had a positive perception of the labor law and its impact on the Qatari economy and working and living conditions. Still, the results indicate that public awareness about the new legislative reforms remains low.

### E-government Adoption in the State of Qatar

The Qatari e-Government not only opened its information (services) and made it accessible to the public, but also embraced new communication tools using the latest social media platforms to engage and reach out to the public. All of that is to achieve a more transparent, effective, and accountable government. But why do the adoption and use of online services by the general public still lag behind in many areas of government online activity?

### Fish Processing, Quality and Safety in the State of Qatar

The second National Development Strategy (NDS) of the State of Qatar 2018–2022 aims to achieve 90 self-sufficiency in fish production by 2023 and balance food production with conservation of natural resources by promoting responsible consumption of food products. The high demand for fresh fish has shed light on the importance of managing the fishery sector in a sustainable way to avoid overfishing and stock extinction. One way to achieve this is to shift to processed fish consumption as a step toward supporting the growing economic diversification. The government actively works to encourage local investors and foreign companies to invest in food products in the country. This is done by the use of the latest technologies and modern methods to provide fresh and healthy food to citizens and residents in Qatar following the Standardization Organization for the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries.



The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute [SESRI] conducted its fifteenth "Qatar Semi-Annual Survey" [QSAS], in 2019, through telephone interviews of 1,354 participants (Qataris and residents) living in Qatar. The survey covered various topics and included a section dedicated to the fishery sector. This report presents consumers' perceptions toward the consumption of processed fish as well as fish safety and quality standards in order to provide policy recommendations that may help both investors and the government in achieving sustainable development in the fishery sector in Qatar.

### SESRI Assists UNEP on Qatar Food Waste Project

The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University has partnered with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) on a project aimed at studying and reducing food waste in the city of Doha. SESRI researchers working on the topic of food waste held a virtual meeting with UNEP project administrator, Mr. Paolo Marengo, and his team members, in order to share findings and insights from previous SESRI surveys on the subject of food waste in Qatar. SESRI also shared its extensive experience developing online survey tools to collect data about public attitudes and behaviors surrounding important social and economic issues in Qatar. Based on these consultations, the UNEP has released an initial project summary titled, "USING GREEN AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE AT THE CONSUMER LEVEL: CASE STUDY: DOHA, QATAR," and is making preparations to deploy its online survey tool for the next phase of the study.

### QU Internal Grant Award: Project Title: "Innovative Mobile Application for Reducing Food Insecurity and Food Waste in Qatar"

The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University has been awarded the Qatar University Internal Grant – High Potential Impact Projects on Food security titled: "Innovative Mobile Application for Reducing Food Insecurity and Food Waste in Qatar". The project belongs to policy department under the sustainable development desk that is led by Dr. Sana Abusin. The project aims to develop a mobile application that connects producers of food waste with consumers, including individuals suffering from food insecurity. The application, tentatively titled "Share Lilkhair" will provide a common solution for various users. For producers, it will facilitate easy disposal of excess food. For charities, it will notify them about the availability of surplus food to help redistribute the food to individuals facing food insecurity. Finally, the application would also benefit a second layer of end-users in the form of food recycling companies, who would receive information about available food waste that is unable to be consumed. A separate but related function of the application will allow consumers to alert authorities about expired food being sold in Qatar. This function will offer users the ability to photograph expired items and automatically share the location and other details to concerned governmental entities.

### An Online Panel Discussion to Examine the Factors of Marriage Failure in its Early Years, the Manifestations of this Failure and Ways to Overcome it

Prof. Kaltham Al-Ghanim, Director of the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute, presented an online panel discussion to examine the factors of marriage failure in its early years, the manifestations of this failure and ways to overcome it, in cooperation with Wifaq Center, on Wednesday, 27 October, 2021.



### Organized by SESRI: A Public Lecture on Indicators of Development Measurement, Social Progress Index

The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute at Qatar University organized a public online lecture titled "A Public Lecture on Indicators of Development Measurement, Social Progress Index" on Sunday, 24 October, 2021, via Zoom platform. The lecture was attended by researchers from Qatar University and key people from other institutions in the country such as the Planning and Statistics Authority, the Ministry of Municipality and Environment, and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.



and continuity of their lives and create conditions for individuals, which empowers them to reach their maximum potential."

