EMPOWERING YOUTH GLOBALLY

OTA has always placed great importance on youth – be it the empowerment of Qatari youngsters, or those in distant regions. OTA’s aim is to reach out to youth in disadvantaged communities around the world, and provide them with academic support, technological assistance, and skills for self-employment.

OTA has been collaborating with several like-minded sponsors and partners to achieve these goals.

Our Yemen initiative, a joint effort with CARE International and Silatech, is improving economic opportunities for hundreds of youth. Our collaboration with Mercy Corps in the West Bank in a project called Supporting Palestinian Education and Employment Development will increase job opportunities for Palestinian youth.

In Tunisia, we work with Islamic Relief-Tunisia to improve the quality of education through capacity building of schools and libraries. Primary and vocational schools are also being built in Cambodia, thanks to our collaboration with the Monithapana Foundation.

OTA’s work doesn’t stop there. As part of our ongoing efforts to provide underprivileged youth in Asia with education, a group of Qatar University students was recently sent to Indonesia to help expand the skills of local students there. An initiative in Nepal, called Not Your Average Spring Break, saw university students visit western Nepal to provide opportunities through workshops. Trips like these are also beneficial to OTA volunteers who develop their own life skills through volunteering.

OTA’s Youth Service Clubs are also aiding the development of leadership skills and an understanding of international and community building issues. The highlight of OTA’s youth-centric efforts, however, was the recent EMPOWER conference that discussed challenges of entrepreneurship while generating opportunities for youth innovation. We hope that all those who attended benefited from the opportunity to practise the knowledge they acquired during the conference.

We are committed to helping youth interact and learn from each other, and through this, OTA hopes to develop compassionate global citizens of the future.

Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director, OTA
**IN SHORT**

**ROTA LAUNCHES NEXT PHASE OF LITERACY PROGRAM**

ROTA’s second phase of the Training of Trainers (ToT) program 2015-2016 complemented both the Adult Arabic Literacy (RAAL) and Adult English Literacy (RAEL) programs.

ToT ran from January 23 until the end of April. A collaboration between several Qatar Foundation (QF) members, including the Academic Bridge Program and Awsaj Academy, the program reflected QF’s mission to unlock human potential to develop a knowledge-based economy. ToT’s volunteers provided training to 450 low-income workers.

This year, under RAAL, 20 volunteers developed their Arabic communication skills to learn about Qatari society for an informed cultural respect between Qatar and other countries.

RAEL’s 170 volunteers became Literacy Trainers, using ROTA’s custom-designed English literacy curriculum to help workers improve language abilities, life opportunities and acquire personal goals.

Other entities involved in the training initiative included the Doha Expressway, a Public Works Authority of Qatar (Ashghal) project, and Qatar Diar Vinci Construction’s Light Transit System.

Community Development Manager Abdullah Albakri said the program reflected ROTA’s strong belief in investing in Qatar’s human potential.

**EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN NEPAL’S TERAI**

Most districts in the Terai region of Nepal have a literacy rate below 50 percent. Hence, education and quality of life are poor and job opportunities scarce.

This is forcing many young people to migrate to India and the Gulf. ROTA and its co-funding partner, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, along with implementing partner READ Global, have initiated a project called Expanding Educational and Livelihood Resources in the Terai with specific focus on ICT and Youth. The focus of the project is on engaging youth and providing them with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.

Libraries are being set up to provide youth with access to educational resources, information, and livelihood opportunities.

The four-year project uses a hub-satellite model to create interdependencies between READ Centers (or “hubs”) and smaller ‘satellite’ centers. This will ensure access to information for 100,000 people across 12 centers.

Three hub libraries have been upgraded and three of nine satellite libraries have been set up. So far, 72,686 people have used these resources and 4,716 youth have found self-development opportunities through Twelve Youth Leadership Sub-Committees. They have also gained life skills training, and sports and academic support.

A Facebook group, Youth in Community Libraries, has also been created by locals.

Six of the planned 12 centers are fully equipped, with each having an ICT section — all free of cost. To cover the operating expenses, five centers have launched activities to generate income.

**ROTA AND QATAR CHARITY PLEDGE $2M FOR YEMEN**


Held in collaboration with 13 regional and international humanitarian organizations, the conference saw ROTA, in partnership with Qatar Charity, pledge $2 million for the education sector in Yemen.

Qatar Charity invited ROTA Executive Director Essa Al Mannai to chair the education workshop.

“Our participation,” he said, “is in line with our mission to provide education to people struck by poverty, war, and conflict. We were focusing on the development of education opportunities in Yemen long before the current crisis. However, today it seems more urgent than ever to join global efforts and share our expertise to provide effective and immediate solutions for the half a million students who have been forced out of education due to political conflicts.”

While thanking Qatar Charity, Al Mannai added, “At ROTA, we are proud to support our partners.”

The conference brought together over 150 experts in humanitarian assistance in the fields of education, health, water and environment, and economic empowerment.

Qatar Charity CEO Yousef bin Ahmed Al Kuwari said: “We would like to thank ROTA for the support it has provided. This includes pledging $2 million in collaboration with Qatar Charity, which reflects its commitment to support education in Yemen.”

**1,100 YEMENI YOUNGSTERS LEARN BUSINESS SKILLS**

In partnership with CARE International and Silatech, ROTA has provided training and entrepreneurship orientation to 1,100 Yemeni youth over the last two years.

The initiative was part of the $1.2-million project titled Toward Better Economic Opportunities for Youth in Sana’a and Hajjah.

The project was designed to offer alternatives to formal employment in a country disadvantaged by joblessness and a growing population of young people.

Through training and mentorship, the project provided youths with relevant business skills, training, entrepreneurship, orientation, and linkages to youth-friendly financial services. The project was launched in early 2014.
**ROTA, HBKU TIE-UP ON MISSION NEPAL**

OTA, in partnership with Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU), recently travelled to Nepal with 14 students on a mission to develop the capabilities of Nepali youth.

The initiative, Not Your Average Spring Break, required students from HBKU and other universities in Education City to visit the Agyauli Community Resource Centre in the Nawalparasi district of western Nepal.

The HSBC-sponsored trip is part of ROTA’s International Volunteer Trips Program. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and READ Nepal are also collaborating on the four-year initiative in Nepal.

ROTA National Programs Director Mohammed Al Saleh said: “ROTA believes in providing conducive opportunities which enable youth from both Qatar and Nepal to interact and learn from each other, thus developing socially responsible global citizens.”

Director of Student Life at HBKU Ameena Hussain said that the trip provided students with invaluable opportunity to contribute to the work of ROTA.

**QU STUDENTS TRAVEL TO INDONESIA AS VOLUNTEERS**

OTA has coordinated an international volunteer trip, sponsored by HSBC Bank, for 20 Qatar University (QU) students to Indonesia, as part of its efforts to provide underprivileged youth in Asia with access to quality education.

Workshops were held for 200 students from Grade 1-6 at a school in the Bayat village of the Yogyakarta province to expand the knowledge and skills of students.

ROTA National Programs Director Mohammed Al Saleh stated: “Education is the key to alleviate poverty and empower youth. Our initiatives across Asia allow for effective knowledge transfer, making a positive impact in the lives of youth and their wider communities.”

Qatar University Associate Vice-President for Student Life and Services Abdullah Al-Yafei said: “We are grateful to ROTA for granting our students this incredible opportunity. Community service abroad is an eye-opening experience for students.”

A volunteer, Mohammed Al-Shoraim, believes that it has been a learning experience, while another volunteer Mohammed Khader “was impressed by the students’ desire to learn despite their difficult financial situation”.

HSBC Bank Qatar CEO Abdul Hakeem Mostafawi said education offered people the chance to develop their skills and contribute to society.

**VOLUNTEERS RETURN FROM CAMBODIA**

 Fifteen volunteers have returned from an eight-day trip to Cambodia, which began on February 13 as part of ROTA’s initiative. In collaboration with its Cambodian partner, Monithapana Foundation, the volunteers visited Vihear Suork School in Kandar district and the Dubai Islamic School community.

Several workshops were held which will benefit more than 700 students.

The trip strengthened the psychosocial skills and experiences of ROTA beneficiaries and Qatar-based volunteers.

Last year, 26 volunteers travelled to Cambodia to train local schools.

Volunteer Program Coordinator Bashayer Al-Ali said: “This will raise awareness among volunteers about the importance of education in addressing local community needs and will inspire them to engage in Qatar-based volunteering activities.”

A volunteer, Abdulla Al-Kaabi, said: “I have been on several international trips with ROTA that have helped me realize the importance of sharing. This trip reinforced my belief in supporting teachers and children to enable them to succeed.”

**CONNECTING VOLUNTEERS**

Tamm is an organization co-founded by Silatech, Social Development Center, ROTA, Qatar Center for Voluntary Activities, and designed to connect volunteers with the currently existing volunteer programs and initiatives in Qatar into one comprehensive online database.

To find out more on how to become a volunteer or a member organization, log on to www.tamm.qa
ExxonMobil Qatar will sponsor ROTA’s Youth Service Clubs (RYSCs) for the next two years. As a network of self-directed, extracurricular clubs, these groups are designed to unlock the potential of youth by providing them with a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills and gain an understanding of international and community development issues.

The clubs also offer practical experience to carry out creative projects that address local and international issues. These issues range from marine conservation and environmental awareness, to sports, road safety, and social entrepreneurship.

According to ROTA National Programs Director Mohammed Al Saleh, “The Youth Service Clubs are at the core of ROTA’s mission to unlock youth potential. These offer an informal platform to secondary schools and university students to develop the skills and experiences required to cultivate a responsible, talented, civic-minded youth community. We cannot provide these services without support from companies such as ExxonMobil Qatar, whose belief in investing in the next generation is aligned with ROTA’s vision to develop the communities of the future through education and training.”

Since 2009, over 2,000 young people in Qatar have benefited from ROTA activities and gained the confidence and skills needed to become leaders of tomorrow. ROTA’s programs aim to empower 16 to 26-year-olds to become active members of their communities and the wider world. The clubs will focus on issues from marine conservation and environmental awareness, to sports, road safety, and social entrepreneurship.

“The youth who are taking part in RYSCs are part of the largest generation of youth in history. Their actions and support can drive progress and help achieve sustainable development, not just locally, but globally as well,” said ExxonMobil Qatar President and General Manager Alistair Routledge.

“One of the greatest contributions we can make in Qatar as responsible corporate citizens is to help provide the energy to drive human potential. We do this by working with our local partners, such as ROTA, so we invest in programs that are meaningful and contribute to Qatar’s already flourishing society. ROTA has given us a wonderful opportunity to do all this and more,” added Routledge.

The RYSC network is open to students in the age group of 16 and 26. In order to be eligible to take part, potential participants need to attend the annual RYSC Leadership Training session held in October each year.

Another dynamic youth organization is Top Shabab, which was started in 2009, and has been contributing to the Qatar National Vision 2030. The 40-member body is focusing on empowering youth and making them able future leaders. Among its programs is the ‘IRead’ campaign, launched in 2010, to instil reading habits in children. The ‘I Care’ initiative, meanwhile, aims at improving the conditions of local workers, besides promoting activities like reading sessions, workshops and campaigns.

**HOW TO DONATE**

1. **Bank transfer:**
   - Beneficiary Name: The Reach Out Fund
   - QA Account Number: 0035-004919-001
   - Bank Name: Qatar National Bank (QNB)
   - Branch Name: Qatar Foundation Branch
   - Swift Code: QNBAQAQA
   - IBAN No: QA11 QNBA 0000 0000 0035 0049 1900 1

2. **Online donation**
   - https://www.reachouttoasia.org/donation

3. **By SMS:** send SMS to 92678 (QAR10 will be deducted for each SMS – Note: “you can type any text”)

4. **Call us on +974 44 54 22 88**

5. **Address a cheque to “Reach Out To Asia”**

6. **Make a cash donation at one of our donation stations or boxes**
EXPERTS CONVERGE AT 13TH EDITION OF DIHAD 2016


The event titled The Importance of Innovation in Humanitarian Aid and Development kicked off on March 21 at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

It brought together experts from around the world to discuss solutions to challenges related to food security, water and sanitation, healthcare, and transportation.

Participants sought innovative solutions to support communities in the light of the increasing global humanitarian crises.

A high-ranking delegation, chaired by ROTA Executive Director Essa Al Mannai, held bilateral meetings to exchange expertise and promote cooperation.

ROTA Acting Executive Director and Senior Management Representative Mohammed Jassim Al Naama said: “We are also seeking to forge strategic partnerships with international organizations to step up efforts in support of relief work providers.”

Officials and representatives of a large number of volunteer organizations, non-government agencies, and public companies from across the region and the Arab world participated.

COMMUNITY CENTERS SET UP IN NEPAL TO SERVE 100,000 PEOPLE

OTA has set up two Community Library and Resource Centers (CLRCs) in Nepal under a project launched in 2014. The project, developed in partnership with READ Global and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will serve an estimated 100,000 people, with 35,000 being directly impacted in four rural districts, throughout central and western Terai. The four-year program will run till 2017.

The project aims to empower youth and provide them with information and communications technology (ICT) facilities.

Twelve CLRCs will be established and upgraded to facilitate educational, social, and economic opportunities.

The delegation, led by ROTA Director of Quality, Impact & Strategy Abdulla Al-Abdulla, opened the Deukhuri CLRC in Dang District, and the Kalika CLRC in Bardiya District in March.

The Deukhuri CLRC was constructed in 2015 at the Gadhawa village in the Rapti Zone of Nepal, where 68 percent of the total population of 12,453 are literate.

The Kalika CLRC is in the Bheri Zone and is home to a population of 15,910 and has a literacy rate of 86 percent.

The centers will focus on creating livelihood opportunities for youth as well as women through vocational and skills training. Leadership development programs will also be offered.

The project budget is segregated into two components. The first includes enterprise management and building construction while the second is reserved for ICT equipment and technology improvements.

“Through our partnership with ROTA, we seek to facilitate sustainable enterprises that address community needs and offer training programs in livelihood skills, literacy, health, and technology,” said READ Global’s Executive Director Tina Sciabica.

FOURTH PHASE OF ‘BETTER CONNECTIONS’ LAUNCHED

The fourth phase of the Better Connections Program was recently launched by ROTA. The program, initiated by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, is an information and communications technology (ICT) framework aimed at educating low-income workers in Qatar.

The program is sponsored by Msheireb Properties in partnership with Microsoft Qatar and Sheikh Thani Bin Abdullah Foundation for Humanitarian Services.

The training of the fourth batch of volunteers began on February 12 at the headquarters of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Designed to improve the living conditions of migrant workers, the program will equip them with ICT skills.

Last year, 65 volunteers from the local community received training by ROTA. Currently, there are over 35 ‘Digital Champions’ in basic computer and internet communication skills who will continue the knowledge-sharing premise by passing on their skills to other workers.

This innovative cascade model of training is expected to reach over 4,000 low-skilled workers.

“Empowering humans, regardless of their position, is at the core of ROTA’s values... ROTA is committed to providing support for migrant workers and helping to develop their digital knowledge,” said ROTA Program Manager Arwa Musaaed.
Hairperson of ROTA Her Excellency Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad Al Thani inaugurated the eighth edition of the youth-led EMPOWER conference at Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU) in Education City on March 17.

Organized by ROTA, the opening ceremony of the three-day conference was attended by Qatar’s Minister of Economy and Commerce HE Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim Al Thani; ROTA Board Member Her Excellency Doctor Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh Al Thani; and ROTA Executive Director Essa Al Mannai, in addition to several VIPs from Qatar and the region.

The conference, which had the theme Innovation in Youth Social Entrepreneurship, brought together over 450 participants from 31 countries. In line with Qatar Foundation’s (QF’s) overarching mission, it aimed to unlock the potential of youth by motivating them to use innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial talents.

Youth social entrepreneurship aims to address skills development, education, and investment in young people; motivating them to utilize their capabilities and to achieve success and independence. The methodology has gained momentum across the region in recent years due to the emergence of an increasing number of startups and successful projects that are both socially responsible and sustainable at a financial level.

Aiming to raise awareness of opportunities and entrepreneurship challenges, the conference featured panel discussions, keynote speeches, exhibitions, and group workshops. Topics such as crowdfunding, innovation in product creation, entrepreneurship, and the power of social networking were discussed.

Participants reviewed solutions to increase the contribution of youth in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Qatar National Vision 2030, using the youth social entrepreneurship business methodology. This year, the Youth Planning Committee included 72 members, and took the responsibilities of planning, execution, and coordinating some of the vital elements in the conference, such as planning meetings, time management and resources management, to ensure that the resources were managed effectively and on time.

Praising the event, a participant from Oman, Saleh Mohammed Al-Masoudi, said: “Karim Qassim, a lecturer at EMPOWER, told me about the conference, which featured discussions on obstacles and challenges, and solutions presented by experts. I participated in several interesting workshops and I thank the organizers for the great support they offered participants in terms of reception and accommodation.”

Commenting on the event, Al Mannai said: “We are honored to host the eighth annual EMPOWER conference. Every year, it continues to demonstrate its significant contribution to youth empowerment, and to finding solutions to local and international challenges. This year’s conference aims to help bolster youth leadership and management skills,
enabling participants to manage projects in a sustainable and professional manner.

Among the other attendees were Arab youth entrepreneurs who had dedicated considerable time and effort in their roles as ambassadors. They include an Arab scientist working at NASA, Essam Heggy, and CEO of International Inspiration Jehangir Malik.

From Qatar, Abdulrahman Al-Romaihi, Aisha Al-Naama, Maryam Al-Thani, and Mohammed Fakhro participated, while from Saudi Arabia an entrepreneur, Firas Al Jarrah, and Founder of Tasami Foundation in Saudi Arabia Lojain Aloibaid took part.

Several trainers and speakers from Qatar led the sessions, including Maryam Al Subaiey, Hussain Habib Al-Sayed, Salah Al Yafei, and Abdallah Al Buainain. Numerous workshops were conducted by local entities such as Qatar Development Bank, Bedaya Center, Qatar Debate, Entrepreneur Middle East, Qatar University, Sheikh Thani Bin Abdullah Foundation for Humanitarian Services, Qatar Charity, Qatar Scientific Club, Qatar Science and Technology Park, and Qatar Computing Research Institute. Over 15 experts from the regional office of the United Nations Development Programme also conducted training sessions.

The conference concluded on 19 March with a highly anticipated Sponsors Award Ceremony and Closing Ceremony.

The participants took an opportunity to tour some of QF’s partner universities, including Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar. They also visited Qatar Business Incubation Center, Qatar Scientific Club, and participated in activities facilitated by the United Nations Development Program at Hamad bin Khalifa University Student Center.

Commenting on the conference, Heggy said: “What’s important is the fact that EMPOWER takes place annually and sends out a message that empowering youth is, and must be, a continuous effort.”

Participants reviewed solutions to increase the contribution of youth in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
OTA Goodwill Ambassador Ghanim Al Muftah has launched a campaign after he travelled to the Palestinian refugee camp of al-Bared River in Lebanon. There, he met children and pledged to make their challenges known in Qatar, and beyond.

His talks on the difficulties faced by children at the al-Bared River camp had a deep impact on people, who now wish to be a part of the campaign titled With You We Reach One Million Riyals.

Al Muftah was received warmly and his work was acknowledged wherever he went. His multiple visits to schools in Qatar also received a good response from students and parents alike.

Overwhelmed by the huge response, Al Muftah said: “I was moved by the plight of Palestinian refugee children in Lebanon. I appreciate the efforts of Qatar Academy Al Wakra, Sherborne School, and Doha Academy. The students, their parents, and the general public came forward in every which way. Only because of them, With You We Reach One Million Riyals can become a reality.”

Several initiatives were undertaken by the schools to provide sports facilities to Palestinian youth and improve their employment chances through vocational training.

A large number of donations were also collected through fundraising programs. Donations can be sent through an SMS to 92362 or by visiting the Just Giving website at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ghanim-Al-Muftah.
JOINT INITIATIVE IN THREE ASIAN COUNTRIES

OTA has launched projects under the 1 in 11 Campaign, a joint initiative with FC Barcelona Foundation and UNICEF in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal.

In Indonesia and Nepal, the project will offer sporting programs, especially aimed at surpassing social barriers for the children incapable of immersing themselves at school. The focus on inclusive education in Indonesia will create learning opportunities for children with disabilities, using sports as a key tool in formal and informal setting.

Around the world, one in 11 primary school-age children, or 58 million out of 650 million children, are out of school.

From March to April 2016, representatives undertook diagnostic missions in each country to determine the location, potential partnerships and the general context for the project.

The visits allowed engagement with local communities for a clearer picture of the needs of youth, geographic focus, scope for sports, etc.

In many schools, sporting programs are non-existent, despite the fact that such initiatives see vast educational and health benefits for children.

FutbolNet Methodology will offer boys and girls a chance to engage in organized physical activity by providing them with sport materials, and an inclusive environment to practice. It also promotes inclusion, equitable learning, and key life skills.

UNICEF field offices are finalizing the list of schools and centers that would be part of the program. An adaptation workshop will be organized in the three countries between June and July to facilitate the process.

RAISING FUNDS FOR ROTA IN BANGLADESH

A youth group raised a whopping QR373,328 during a gala dinner for supporting ROTA’s educational efforts in Bangladesh. One of the three organizers of the event, Zuhur Fardan, said the large attendance, comprising friends, families and invitees, reflected the success of the event.

“Our support to ROTA’s projects means our support to humans. Humanitarian crises in some societies and the suffering of its people motivate us to help them through education,” she said. Appreciating the efforts of the youth group and the benevolence of people, ROTA’s Senior Fundraising Representative Mohammed Al Naama stated that the children in Bangladesh were deprived of their right to education.

ROTA, along with Dhaka Ahsania Mission, has also launched another project for Bangladesh. Titled ‘Joyful Journey of Out-of-School Children & Youths For Quality Learning’, the project will create a conducive environment for children and young people to grow with full potential and shape the development of their communities. It will benefit over 9,400 primary, junior secondary, and higher education students.
REACHING OUT TO VULNERABLE SOCIETIES

ROTA places great importance on educating underprivileged children around the world. Along with partners that support this mission, ROTA’s efforts have stretched into the rural areas of Cambodia, Tunisia and West Bank, targeting societies that most need help.

Cambodia

In July 2007, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between ROTA and Cambodia’s Monithapana Foundation (MF) to expand the Vihear Suork Schools by building primary, secondary and vocational schools in the Kandal Province of Cambodia. Construction of the schools was launched in September 2009 and was completed in 2011 which constituted Phase 1 of the project. ROTA and MF signed an agreement on 3 November 2014, for the implementation of the two-year Technical Vocational Education and Training program (phase 2) at the Hun Sen ROTA School. Major components of the work include construction of state-of-the-art technical laboratories, as well as the procurement and installation of modern tools and equipment. Nearly 200 students every year receive technical and vocational electrical and electronics training under the program.

Tunisia

ROTA and its co-funding partner, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, along with implementing partner Islamic Relief-Tunisia, have initiated My Education, My Hope to improve the quality of education in the Medenine Governorate through capacity building of 15 primary schools and 16 libraries. The project will help 7,397 schoolchildren to enhance learning and train teachers to improve their knowledge in advanced teaching methods. Library staff will also be trained in the basic ICT applications to develop the link between schools and libraries and provide greater options for learning, including access to internet and the use of training facilities. The project will also refurbish facilities and develop sports, ICT, and reading clubs to make the school environment more attractive.
Palestinian youth between the ages of 15-29 represent 30 percent of West Bank/Gaza's total population. One-third of Palestinian youth are unemployed. This is a labor force primarily made up of university graduates, whose numbers are rising. ROTA's project Supporting Palestinian Education and Employment Development (SPEED) is being implemented by partner organization Mercy Corps. It will increase job opportunities for 3,000 youth and strengthen the capacity of 10 Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. The project will take a market-driven approach to work with TVET institutions to reach out to youth. This will be done through the use of technology and ICT and modern teaching methods.