ost of us are in the enviable position of being able to take our education for granted, but for millions of children around the world, the notion of an education is a far-fetched dream. At ROTA, we adhere to the guiding principle of Qatar Foundation that education is key to the development of society. We believe that every child deserves the right to an education, and we relentlessly strive to deliver this fundamental right to children across the region.

Throughout this newsletter, you will read about the many projects that ROTA has taken to address this global challenge, in line with Qatar Foundation's principle that a nation's greatest resources lies in the potential of its people.

Our efforts stretch across the region to assist countries like Nepal, Palestine and Yemen, to name a few. ROTA's INSPIRE project in Pakistan, for example, involved the building and rehabilitation of schools, and our collaboration with CARE International in Afghanistan not only addressed the lack of educational facilities and resources, but also encouraged the involvement of young girls into the educational system.

We continuously work to ensure that people affected by crisis in these countries have access to education despite their circumstances, and we do this with a little help from our supporters – volunteers who tirelessly dedicate themselves to our cause, and sponsors and partners who share our passion towards empowering communities to improve their quality of life.

Our Ramadan project, Shared Blessings, was an exemplary display of their generosity that collectively made a difference to hundreds of lives. It was a particularly rewarding exercise that gave volunteers the opportunity to give something back to the community. The project, which ran all through the Holy Month of Ramadan, involved activities such as community iftars, the packing of groceries for families in need, a Garangao event for children in various hospitals, and the renovation of a run-down family home. The support from our volunteers and sponsors was overwhelming, and the results phenomenal!

Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director, ROTA
**The Empower Youth Declaration: A Call to Action**

In accordance with the theme of ROTA’s 6th Annual Empower Youth Conference, a group of youth leaders from Qatar, and from across the world, convened to develop ideas on what governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), corporations, and other important stakeholders should do to unlock the power of sports for the benefit of youth in the society.

The group of youths from across the GCC, came together to call upon the different stakeholders to use sports as a tool for human development, especially youth development. Through the Empower Youth Declaration 2014, they called upon the different stakeholders to work together to contribute to the following aims and corresponding actions:

- **Schools** to provide equitable and gender-sensitive physical education classes and use these as a means to strengthen key life skills among children.
- **NGOs** to use sport as a tool to advocate, promote and engage youth in their own development and education.
- **Youth-led organizations** to use their existing programs and networks to raise awareness and understanding of the value of sports as a tool for youth development.
- **Private sector and sports industry** to use sport to help youth acquire transferable life skills to increase employment opportunities; and use sport programs and sport equipment production to provide youth with jobs and skills development.
- **Media** to promote positive sport for development activities, which in turn, will help raise awareness on how sports can be a tool to accomplish individual, social and philanthropic goals within communities.
- **Athletes** to act as role models and to use their influence and experience to encourage the younger generation to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- **Governmental organizations (NGOs), corporations, and other important stakeholders** should do to unlock the power of sports for the benefit of youth in the society. This declaration is being shared widely at conferences and with various United Nations agencies, NGOs, government ministries, youth-led organizations, organizations that implement sports for social change programs, and with other youth groups around the world.

**Rotा’s Inspire Project Rebuilds Young Lives in Pakistan**

With help from volunteers, partners and local communities, ROTA rebuilt two schools, renovated 40 others, supplied teaching materials, implemented teacher-training programs and operated youth development initiatives through sports.

Commenting on the impact the INSPIRE project has had in Swat Valley, Waleed Rauf, CARE Pakistan's Country Director, said: “ROTа’s INSPIRE project has played a vital role in helping communities rebuild, and the people of Swat recover after the devastation brought on by flooding and militancy.

“The project has increased the local communities’ and government’s commitment to support girls’ education and realize that educating girls is critical to having prosperous and peaceful communities in the future,” he said.

**The Project In Numbers**

- **3 years** The project duration
- **$1,647,580** The project cost
- **296** Number of recreational events in schools
- **5,600 students** The beneficiaries
- **280 teachers**
- **42 parent-teacher associations**

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**Rota Manager Voted into International Board of Trustees**

Abdulla Al Bakri, Community Development Manager, ROTA, and Secretary-General, Qatar Youth Hostels Association, is now a member of the prestigious Board of Trustees of the International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF).

Al Bakri was voted into position at the 50th International Conference & General Meeting of IYHF, which was held from 3-7 August 2014 in Bangkok. More than 80 countries from around the world participated in the conference.

Speaking on his new appointment, Al Bakri said: “Qatar will continue to represent all Arab countries in the International Youth Hostel Federation in order to support the development process inaugurated by Arab Youth Hostels.

“As part of my membership, I will do my best to highlight the important role of the Qatar Youth Hostels Association, and other Youth Hostels Associations in all Arab countries and across Asia,” he added.

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**In Short**

International Conference and General Meeting of IYHF
6 August 2014

Abdulla Al Bakri (extreme left) at the conference with other international delegates
Moving Mountains

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Thani, Brand Ambassador for ROTA, during his Everest climb

ROTA BRAND AMBASSADOR SET TO LEAD A GROUP OF YOUNG CLIMBERS ON A HIKE UP MOUNT KILIMANJARO TO RAISE FUNDS FOR GAZA CHILDREN

A seasoned mountaineer, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Thani has already climbed Mount Kilimanjaro twice in the past. He has also been to the summit of Mount Elbrus (Europe), Mont Blanc (Europe), Mount Vinson (Antarctica), Mount Kosciuszko (Australia) and Mount Aconcagua (South America). He is scheduled for a trip to the South Pole in January 2015.

The 12 volunteers are all new to climbing. Each of them have undergone rigorous training in order to be fully prepared for the physical ordeal, as well as receiving a full briefing on all details of the expedition.

Elevate To Educate is sponsored by El Jaish Sports Club (official sponsor), Qatar National Bank (Gold sponsor) and Qatar Financial Centre Authority (Platinum sponsor).

Students and teachers recognized for their efforts at iEARN-Qatar open house

Every year, ROTA offers selected schools in Qatar the opportunity to showcase their work at the International Education and Resource Network (iEARN) Open House. This year, 115 students and 35 teachers, representing five schools, showcased 17 projects that were put on display at the College of Education building, Qatar University.

The iEARN-Qatar program is run in partnership with Qatar University’s College of Education as one of the programs of the National Center of Educator Development (NCED). The curriculum aims at connecting classrooms around the world via an online network and is designed to fit school syllabus.

Speaking at the iEARN-Qatar Open House, Dr. Hessa Sadiq, Dean, Faculty of Education, Qatar University, said: “Showcasing project outcomes and exchanging ideas and lessons during the annual Open House is a great opportunity to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in our schools. The iEARN-Qatar program helped our students and teachers in Qatar to improve their skills through experiential learning and online collaboration within the global iEARN network.”

Dr Sadiq added that the co-operation between ROTA and NCED was an essential step for the development of schools and universities in Qatar.

Mohamed Al Naama, Acting Executive Director, ROTA, said that iEARN-Qatar is in line with ROTA’s goals. “At ROTA, we have always believed strongly in the use of technology to develop education and promote global collaboration and debates. iEARN-Qatar was a perfect platform that allowed us to showcase educational activities, school partnerships, new internet-based professional development tools and the collaborative efforts of youth and educators from across the world,” he said.

The annual iEARN-Qatar Open House event has grown in popularity and importance since ROTA initiated the iEARN program in 2008, which has reached out to 1,400 students and trained 450 teachers from 95 schools across Qatar.
In an effort to raise funds to support the educational needs of underprivileged children in countries around the region, ROTA launched a fundraising initiative called My Education… My Hope as part of its Ramadan campaign.

In keeping with the belief that every child has a right to an education, the campaign channeled funds to help children in Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Nepal and Pakistan.

“The purpose of this initiative is to help raise awareness and funds... our aim is to secure a better future and provide hope to these vulnerable children to ensure they can receive support for their educational needs,” said Essa Al Manaai, Executive Director, ROTA, during the campaign launch.

“Together with our valued volunteers and esteemed partners, ROTA will once again make a difference to disadvantaged communities in all of our neighboring countries during the Holy Month of Ramadan,” he added.

Efforts to raise funds included a series of fundraising suhoors and a silent auction, held at Hamad bin Khalifa University Student Center, which featured photographs taken by local artists.

There was also a My Education... My Hope merchandise booth set up in the Virgin Megastore, Villaggio Mall, to raise funds during the Holy Month of Ramadan.
**PAKISTAN**

**The Mission**
Institutional support for participatory, inclusive and responsive education

**The Approach**
- Increasing access to educational facilities, projects and resources
- Improving the quality of education
- Engaging youth as leaders in defining and advocating for innovative solutions
- Improving access for girls to receive formal education above primary level

**The Funds**
QR4.36 million

**The Beneficiaries**
2,100 youths

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**PALESTINE**

**The Mission**
To contribute in developing and upgradening the educational sector in the West Bank

**The Approach**
- Capacity building and skills development for teachers
- Promoting the culture of reading
- Empowering educational, behavioral and physical skills through sports activities
- Promoting the use of the Arabic language and the development of educational resources in Arabic
- Development of practical skills through vocational training

**The Funds**
QR6 million

**The Beneficiaries**
10,500 students and teachers

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**LEBANON**

**The Mission**
To provide education for Syrian children in Lebanon affected by the Syrian crisis in Tripoli and Akkar

**The Approach**
- Providing community-based education
- Recruiting, training, deploying and supporting teachers from the community
- Providing school furniture, heating, teacher training and materials for local teachers
- Offering children a safe space for learning and providing a sense of normalcy and stability
- Developing structured play and creative activities

**The Funds**
QR3,650,000

**The Beneficiaries**
2,000 Syrian children
16,000 families

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**YEMEN**

**The Mission**
Towards better economic opportunities for youth in Sana’a and Hajjah

**The Approach**
- Providing youth with skills and knowledge needed for self-employment and entrepreneurship
- Offering youth access to information and support services to enable them to harness local resources
- Helping youth advocate for a stronger business-enabling environment and self-employment opportunities
- Identifying good practice and replication potential of livelihood opportunities

**The Funds**
QR4.36 million

**The Beneficiaries**
2,100 youths
ROTA’S RAMADAN PROJECT GIVES BACK IN A BIG WAY

Nothing warms the heart more than generosity – whether you are the giver or the receiver – and ROTA, along with its partner Occidental Petroleum of Qatar Ltd (OXY Qatar), was the vehicle that made possible this special act of kindness for hundreds of volunteers and beneficiaries.

ROTA’s eighth annual Ramadan project, called Sharing Blessings, was aimed at improving the lives of the less fortunate and involved a series of activities to bring the spirit of Ramadan to the needy. These programs included several community iftars, the celebration of a Garangao event with children in hospitals, the distribution of groceries for families in need, the renovation of six kindergarten classrooms, and an outdoor playground at the Bangladesh MHM School in Abu Hamour.

In a statement thanking volunteers and sponsors, Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director, ROTA, said: “Thank you and congratulations to each of our incredible volunteers for working tirelessly for their community – not only as caring neighbors, but as role models. In addition, I would like to thank our exclusive sponsor and long-time partner OXY Qatar for making this significant undertaking possible. The impact of Sharing Blessings, which aimed to give back to the community that has given us so much, will be felt by families in need, students and civic workers in Qatar beyond the Holy Month of Ramadan.”

Classroom Renovation
One of the oldest secondary schools in Qatar, the Bangladesh MHM School was a recipient of the Sharing Blessings initiative. More than 80 ROTA volunteers and students from the school worked on sprucing up six kindergarten classrooms. The initiative also involved the construction of a new covered playground area in the school.

Community Iftars
In the spirit of Ramadan, ROTA volunteers organized and hosted iftars for residents at the Residential Care Compound (a care facility for psychiatric patients) and for workers at Qatar Municipality. The iftars were a way for ROTA volunteers to engage and reach out to the community. Residents at Qatar Foundation for Elderly Care were also treated to an iftar that saw ROTA volunteers serve and dine with the elderly. Speaking at the iftar, Her Excellency Dr Sheikha Aisha bint Faleh Bin Nasser Al Thani, Board Member, ROTA, said: “The residents at Qatar Foundation for Elderly Care have given us so much over the course of their lives, which is why we are so proud and eager to spend time with them and give back to the wider community during the Holy Month of Ramadan. Each year I am heartened by the joy I see among residents and the enthusiasm of ROTA’s volunteers as they help elderly residents and enjoy a meal together.”

Groceries For The Needy
Two hundred underprivileged families received carefully selected grocery packs, which were handed out by ROTA volunteers as part of the Sharing Blessings campaign. The packs contained items like cooking oil, pasta, milk and flour, among others. Sixty volunteers gathered at Qatar Table Tennis Federation to assemble the packs. ROTA’s volunteers worked with the SDC to identify families in need.

Garangao Joy
ROTA volunteers brought the joy of Garangao to children at Hamad Hospital’s Pediatric Ward and Rumailah Hospital’s Children’s Rehabilitation Center. The volunteers spent time playing with the children and distributed party packs filled with sweets and toys.
SCHOOLS FOR AFGHAN CHILDREN

ROTA INAUGURATES THE LAST OF THREE SCHOOLS UNDER ITS COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM IN AFGHANISTAN

OTA’s presence in Afghanistan has made an impact on several young lives since its inception in 2011. Together with CARE International Afghanistan, ROTA, under its Community Based Education (CBE) program, has completed its mission of building three schools – two in the Khost province, which were completed in 2012, and a third recently completed school in the Kapisa province.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the school in Kapisa, Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director, ROTA, said that the CBE project is aimed at providing a strong educational foundation for Afghan children. “ROTA believes that the provision of education to the new generation is of key importance to ensure that gradually more Afghans are equipped with the right tools to play an active role in their country’s development,” he said.

The project, which started in July 2011, concluded in June 2014.

What is Community Based Education About?

In a nutshell, it aims at providing sustainable and long-term development in Afghanistan through education. The program delivers primary education, transition to secondary education for girls, capacity building for teachers, advocacy for extending Ministry of Education facilities to remote areas, and mobilizing and building communities to take an active part in educating their children.

CBE adopts a three-pronged approach:

1. To improve access to quality education (grades one to nine) for children living in rural areas and temporary settlements in approximately 35 communities.
2. To improve capacities of local stakeholders (communities, Ministry of Education, community-based organizations, etc.) for education service-delivery in underserved areas.
3. To improve the quality of teaching and education by training teachers and ensuring their certification and support as Ministry of Education teachers.

THE YOUNG ACHIEVERS

Without hope of an education, the future was bleak for the children in Afghanistan, until ROTA and CARE International came to their aid. Here is their story:

Shima, aged 18

In a society riddled with poverty and where girls are not allowed an education, Shima, who lives in the Kapisa province of Afghanistan, has come a long way. Lack of access to school, insecurity in the region and family restrictions put a damper on her wish to further her studies after completion of her primary education. “One of the major challenges facing school girls here is the weak economy. Some families are not able to afford sending girls to school... but there was a great chance for me when CARE established Lower Secondary Community Based Education (LSCBE) in our village in 2011,” she says.

Now a teacher at a primary CBE facility, Shima is pursuing her dream of a complete education. “I recently completed my lower secondary education and now I will continue my education beyond lower secondary in one of the nearby Ministry of Education (public) high schools,” she says. “I’m sure that this success could not have been possible without the support of the CBE project...my sincerest thanks to CARE and ROTA for providing education opportunities for me and for other girls.”

Nabila*, aged 17

Nabila was one of the first students in the Khost province to participate in CARE’s Lower Secondary Community Based Education (LSCBE) project. Enrolled in the seventh grade class, she thrived in school and took part in several enrichment opportunities, including peer groups formed by CARE.

“The peer groups were very useful for me... I gained knowledge on topics such as health and sanitation and how to share my learning with others,” she says. The peer groups also helped Nabila develop her self-confidence and public speaking skills – skills that proved useful as she studied to become a teacher through LSCBE’s vocational training activities.

Now with her high school graduation fast approaching, Nabila has big ambitions. “After graduating from 12th grade, my wish is to pursue my higher education. I want to help and serve people, either as a doctor or teacher.”

* Name has been changed to protect identity

Did You Know...

That ROTA first started work in Afghanistan in 2008? ROTA signed a three-year partnership with Turquoise Mountain and together they worked on improving the lives of the local community in Murad Khane. The project focused on women and children, and was initiated to create long-lasting bonds between Afghan communities and the people of Qatar. The co-operation was in the context of Literacy, Primary Education and Community Development programs and included a public school, literacy and skills training for Murad Khane women, delivery of community development programs, and the creation of a courtyard for use by women and children.

Nabila* developed her self-confidence and public speaking skills through a peer group. Her biggest wish is to become a teacher. “I hope my education opens doors for women like me,” she says. 

LSCE EQUIPS GIRLS WITH THE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO BECOME EITHER PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OR VILLAGE HEALTH WORKERS UPON COMPLETION OF 9TH GRADE, OR TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION IN PUBLIC UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS. THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COMPONENT HELPS FILL A CRITICAL NEED FOR FEMALE TEACHERS AND HEALTH WORKERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.