**Eleanor Fenner**

**Topic 1: Women and Sustainability**

**Qatar**

**Commission of the Status of Women**

With 36/CP. 7 Qatar has put women at the negotiating table for UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). This is all in the interest of making gender sensitive decisions regarding climate change policies. Qatar is also one of the least susceptible places for natural disasters and therefore the government of Qatar has not made any plans for what would happen in the event of a natural disaster. The QNFSP (Qatar National Food Security Plan) had provided for 70% of the country’s four key sectors of food needs (agriculture, water, renewable energy, food manufacturing) in 2013. It continues to provide for the country’s food needs at an exemplary rate considering the country's low rainfall, high evaporation rates and lack of arable land. Menstrual products are widely available in Qatar’s capital of Doha but are less easily found elsewhere in the country. Qatar also has no specific plan for menstrual waste. Women in Qatar are able to run in municipal elections however, only 0.1% of the Qatar government is made up of women. Qatari women tend to take government jobs in education, health, and social affairs. Qatar is an Emirate, ruled by an Emir. The Al Thani is the royal family of Qatar.

“Qatar has recently signed defence pacts with the United States and United Kingdom, as well as with France earlier in 1994. Qatar plays an active role in the collective defence efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council; the other five members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the UAE, and Oman.”

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**Eleanor Fenner**

**Topic 2: Elimination of Gender Based Violence**

**Qatar**

**Commission of the Status of Women**

Arranged marriages are very common in Qatar. A young man’s mother or sister will approach a potential bride and see if she is interested and then the groom will discuss it with the parents of the young woman. There are however, differences that Qatar has from the other Gulf States when it comes to arranged marriages. One of them being that the girl can refuse the proposal herself if she does not want to marry the young man. In all of the their Gulf states the woman has little to no say and her family makes the decision for her. Another difference is that marriages usually happen between separate families. In the other Gulf States many citizens marry their cousins.

Sexual assault statistics are low in Qatar, but there are probably a number of rapes that go unreported as well as marital assault which is not a crime. A witness does not have to be present for the person who allegedly committed the crime to be proven guilty. There does, have to be signs of a struggle on the victim’s body. “She could push him (or) resist the movement by moving her hands – that would show a mark or scratch, which proves that she was under a physical struggle,” he said. “But if that doesn’t show, she’s lying. That’s clear for any investigator.” -Dr. Najeeb al-Nuaimi, Doha News. Domestic violence is not criminalizes in Qatar. Under Provisions of Law No. 22 of 2006 article 58 states that it is the wife's responsibility to look after her household and care for her husband.

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**Topic 3: Women in Education and Employment**

**Qatar**

**Commission on the Status of Women**

There are several schools and universities in Qatar where women can get a very good education and get degrees. The University of Qatar (opened in 1977) offers several courses in their seven different colleges: the College of Education, the College of Humanities and Social Studies, the College of Science, the College of *Shari’a* and Islamic Studies, the College of Engineering, the College of Administrative Sciences and Economics and the College of Technology. These are all open to anyone including women and the university has separate campuses for men and women so that they do not mix. 50.8% of the women in Qatar are part of the labour force. Women are also able to drive, vote, run in municipal elections, and are able to participate freely in all parts of public and social life. They are, however, expected to dress modestly (abayha on their bodies and a Sheila on their heads) and they must obtain their husband’s permission before getting a driver’s licence. There actually more educated women than educated men in Qatar.

All children have free education from age six to age 14. Public school exist which makes it easier for Qatari parents to send their children to school. 98% of Qatari children are enrolled in primary school. Education after primary school is not obligatory in Qatar. 65% of girls and 96% continue to secondary school.

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