

# October 2023 Newsletter

## News

### A Seminar on Labor Market Challenges and Career Opportunities in Qatar and the MENA Region

The Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) in collaboration with the College of Business and Economics (CBE), Qatar University (QU) organized a one-day seminar on 18 October 2023 titled “Theme 1: Current Labor Market Challenges of Qatar and the MENA region”. The seminar was attended by HE Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, Minister of Labour, Dr. Omar Al-Ansari, president of Qatar University, Prof. Mariam Ali Al-Maadeed, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

Max Tuñón, Head of the ILO Project Office, International Labour Organization and Prof. Kaltham Al-Ghanim, Director of the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute. The seminar was also attended by a large number of faculty members and researchers both inside and outside of QU. This seminar comes as part of a seminar series on labor market challenges and employment opportunities in Qatar and the MENA region.

Policy stakeholders, officials from government agencies, stakeholders from non-governmental organizations, academia, young researchers, graduate students (master’s and PhD) from QU and other academic institutions in Qatar were also present at the seminar.

Speakers at the highest levels in the field of policy-making, along with labor market experts and academics, shared their insights on a range of important issues and policies related to the discussion session’s topic. The discussion attracted government policymakers, academics, stakeholders, and facilitated knowledge exchange between them, as well as with new researchers and graduate students.



### Participation in Fourth International Sustainability Conference (ISC 2023)

Prof. Arokiasamy Perianayagam, Research Professor, participated as a speaker in “Session 1 on Climate Change and Sustainability” at the Fourth International Sustainability Conference (ISC 2023), Qatar University (QU) held on 30-31 October 2023. The conference was organized by QU’s Center for Sustainable Development (CSD).

Prof. Arokiasamy’s presentation on the topic of “Urbanization and Sustainable Cities in the Gulf States” focussed on current urbanization levels in the gulf states, past and future trends of urbanization, how urbanization and spatial distribution of the population matter in SDGS, the production and consumption linked to CO2 emissions, the urban context of unsustainable consumption and the environmental challenges, the current urban development strategies and future challenges and, the critical public policy changes needed to promote ‘globalness’ and ‘sustainability’ of the gulf cities including human wellbeing and economic wealth, and the long-term sustainability of both.



## Recent Publications

### A Published Paper: Mapping Urban Living Standards and Economic Activity in Developing Countries with Energy Data

Dr. Muhammad Rashid Memon, Research Assistant Professor, published a paper entitled “Mapping urban living standards and economic activity in developing countries with energy data” in PLoS One Journal with an impact factor of 3.7.

In this study, Dr. Rashid and his coauthors examine the potential of georeferenced residential electricity meter data and nighttime lights (NTL) data in the megacity of Karachi, Pakistan. First, they used nationally representative survey data to establish a strong association between electricity consumption and household living standards. Second, they compared gridded radiance values from NTL data with a unique dataset containing georeferenced median monthly electricity consumption values for over 2 million individual households in the city. Finally, they developed a model to explain intra-urban variation in radiance values using proxy measures of economic activity from Open Street Map.

Overall, they found that NTL data are a poor proxy for living standards but do capture spatial variation in population density and economic activity. By contrast, electricity data were an excellent proxy for living standards and could be used more widely to inform policy and support poverty research in cities in low- and middle-income countries.

For more info:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0291824>

## Workshops

### Workshop on Project Design for Policy Influence

Qatar University’s Social and Economic Survey Research Institute and the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) conducted a workshop on first of October of this year on ‘Project Design for Policy Influence.’

The workshop was attended by more than 40 participants from academia, government, and the private sector, who discussed means to improve the design of projects and government interventions to influence policy changes in countries. This training workshop strives to provide a hands-on training and guide to policy researchers and entrepreneurs on the step-by-step process of designing and implementing a development intervention with the aim of developing procedures for formulating and implementing policies.

