

WISH CELEBRATES PARTNERSHIP WITH WEYAK THROUGH ‘SHIDA’ EVENT TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SOMALIS

Weyak Organizes Fourth Annual Forum of the Somali Community in Qatar

Doha, Qatar, May 13, 2017: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) recently sponsored ‘Shida’, the Fourth Annual Forum of the Somali Community in Qatar, organized by Weyak, a Doha-based voluntary organization that works to foster understanding of mental health issues with outreach activities both regionally and within the local community. Weyak partnered with Hersare Foundation, a Somali NGO supporting vulnerable and neglected people in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, to host ‘Shida’ on April 28 in Doha.

‘Shida’ is the result of an agreement between WISH and Weyak, signed in March this year, establishing a cooperative framework to raise awareness of mental health in Qatar. The collaboration allows the two organizations to exchange ideas and information on mental health issues across various media platforms, including websites and social media, through community events. ‘Shida’ aims to raise awareness among Qatar’s Somali community about the causes of direct and indirect mental illnesses among Somalis living around the world and to highlight how to avoid these issues.

Sultana Afdhal, Partnerships and Outreach Manager, WISH, said: “We continue to support events like ‘Shida’ that work to address social isolation and other significant challenges faced by people with mental health issues. The Somali demographic includes one of the highest refugee populations in the world. When considered in the context of the trauma of war, issues such as displacement, substance abuse, and mental illnesses combine to create some uniquely challenging problems that the people of Somalia have to endure on a day-to-day basis. WISH is proud to partner with Weyak to support ‘Shida’ and highlight the socio-cultural problems that need to be tackled to improve the mental health of Somalis everywhere.”

The event was attended by a large number of Qatar’s Somali residents and their families, as well as representatives from numerous other nationalities. Attending dignitaries included H.E. Hassan bin Abdullah Al Ghanim, Qatar’s former Minister of Justice and Deputy Chairperson of Weyak; H.E. Hussein Osman, Deputy Health Minister of Somalia; and Mr. Galma Mukhe Boru, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Qatar.

Mohammed Albinali, Executive Director of Weyak, said: “Our association’s mission is to spread awareness about mental health. We are extremely happy and proud to organize ‘Shida’ for the Somali community in Qatar with our partners WISH and Hersare Foundation, and we look forward to our future collaborations with WISH on other successful outreach projects and activities.”

Several speakers with unique education and career backgrounds gave thought provoking talks that addressed topics like khat addiction in Somalia, and the challenges faced by people with physical disabilities and those experiencing mental illness. Speakers included Khalid Al Naama, a presenter at Al



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Rayyan TV; Safya Salad, Deputy Chairperson of Somali British Deaf Community; Mukhtar Isack, Chairman of Baidbao Disabled Farmers Union in South Somalia; Abukar Awale, a former khat addict who spearheaded a long campaign to ban khat in the United Kingdom and who now aspires to ban it in Somalia; and Dr. Nasir Warfa, a professor of Psychological Therapies and Transcultural Mental Healthcare at the University of Essex, Queen Mary University, London, and Harvard Medical School.

WISH, an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has a longstanding commitment to raising awareness of issues around mental health and to developing evidence-based research to address related policy challenges. Among events recently organized by WISH was a workshop on April 25 led by Liverpool Football Club's official charity, LFC Foundation, and attended by several local organizations. This workshop included a briefing session aimed at helping Qatar-based sports coaches to learn the skills needed to establish local football training programs for children with autism and other disabilities.

Image Captions:

Image 1: Mohammed Albinali, Executive Director of Weyak, addresses 'Shida', the Fourth Annual Forum of the Somali Community in Qatar.

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About the World Innovation Summit for Health:

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential



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Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global research and development challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>