

Case Study:

Qatar – Building the Future of Healthy Ageing with WHO-GAPS

Qatar is undergoing a profound demographic transition. With life expectancy rising to nearly 79 years and projected to exceed 84 by 2050, the population aged 60 years and above is set to increase more than tenfold, from just over 60,000 in 2016 to nearly 690,000 by mid-century. Preparing for this shift, Qatar has become a regional leader in advancing healthy ageing, investing in evidence, innovation, and policy reform.

Launch of the National Ageing Survey Qatar using WHO-GAPS

In 2024, the Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation, the Planning and Statistics Authority, and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Ageing and Dementia, launched the **National Ageing Survey Qatar (NASQ)**. This was the first nationally representative study of older adults in the country, designed to align with the WHO Global Ageing Population Survey (GAPS) and the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030).

Using WHO-endorsed survey modules, state-of-the-art **computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI)**, and biomarker collection, NASQ captured detailed insights on demographics, healthy ageing status (intrinsic capacity, functional ability, enabling environment), health and long-term care needs, and well-being of older persons and caregivers. Importantly, the survey included both Qatari nationals and non-Qatari residents, reflecting the country's unique demographic structure.

<https://www.qatar-tribune.com/article/146760/nation/moph-and-partners-announce-launch-of-national-ageing-survey>



Qatar National Research Team implementing GAPS under the leadership of Prof. Hanadi Al Hamad.

Policy impact and next steps

Findings from the NASQ are directly informing the National Health Strategy 2024–2030 and Qatar’s Healthy Ageing Strategy, which aim to extend healthy life expectancy, improve dementia care, and strengthen integrated health and social care. The evidence base is guiding the development of community-based services, family caregiver support, and long-term care models that respond to Qatar’s evolving demographic realities.

Qatar’s leadership in applying GAPS demonstrates the value of internationally harmonized, nationally owned ageing data. By investing in robust evidence and aligning with global best practices, Qatar is ensuring that its older population can live not only longer, but also healthier and more meaningful lives.

“With GAPS data, Qatar is turning today’s evidence into tomorrow’s solutions for a healthier, more dignified ageing future.” Prof. Hanadi Al Hamad, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Long-Term Care, Rehabilitation & Geriatrics.

Why Qatar’s Case Matters Globally?

The Qatar case illustrates how GAPS can accelerate the data-to-policy cycle. From rigorous sampling and biomarker collection to standardized analysis using GAPS Dx, the NASQ represents a gold standard for ageing surveys in the Middle East. As other countries embark on similar efforts, Qatar’s experience shows that high-quality data, strong partnerships, and a commitment to healthy ageing can drive system-wide change—ensuring no one is left behind.