

# Access to financial system must for job creation, says Doha Bank CEO

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ACCESS to financial system can boost job creation, reduce income inequality and make people less vulnerable to unexpected losses of income, Doha Bank Group CEO R Seetharaman said while delivering a keynote speech at the International Banking Summit 2015 in Budapest recently.

Giving insight on financial inclusion scenario globally, he said that almost 62 percent of the world's adult population has an account, up from 51 percent in 2011.

"In 2011, 2.5 billion adults were unbanked, compared to 2 billion today. Hence there is a global push toward financial inclusion which is gaining strength," he said.

"People who are unbanked find it harder to save, plan for the future, start a business, or recover from a crisis," Seetharaman said.

Talking about Qatar's Digital Government 2020 strategy, he said, "The strategy focuses using technology to deliver real benefits to the people of Qatar, whether they are citizens, residents or visitors. It will enhance the customer experience, provide greater access to government services, and improve government efficiency, leading to better outcomes for the nation."

"Innovations in technology such as mobile payments, mobile banking, and borrower identification using biometric data makes it easier and less expensive for people to use financial services,

while increasing financial security," he said.

Highlighting the importance of digital society programme in Qatar, he said, "The programme aims to ensure all people in Qatar have the skills and capabilities to use ICTs in an effective and safe way. The digital society programs include digital inclusion, digital literacy, ICT skills and Digital impact and emerging technologies."

The digital society programme, he said, targets segments of society that are at the risk of digital exclusion by creating opportunities for access, learning and effective use of technology.

He said that the programme aims to raise awareness and foster a healthy cyber culture.

The ICT skills programme, he said, aims to develop a highly skilled and well-qualified ICT workforce to enrich Qatar's knowledge-based economy.

"The digital impact and emerging technologies programme focuses on studying the effects of ICT and the Internet on society, and enabling a better understanding of emerging digital technologies and their potential," he said.

He said, "The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (ictQATAR) works to bridge the digital divide in Qatar so that everybody can be a part of Qatar's information society through the digital inclusion programme which is the process of reaching out to the Qatar population. Qatar's financial inclusion model is first of its kind for financial stability."