

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Islamic Values, Sustainability, and Mega-Event Legacies: A Case Study from the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

Deniz Can Ekren

ABSTRACT

Governments have increasingly leveraged sports as a tool for tourism marketing, aiming to attract visitors, stimulate economic activity, and generate global media attention (Bowdin et al., 2011). To maximize these benefits, host nations must adopt a holistic and strategic approach to event planning and operations to ensure positive social, environmental, and social impacts are realized both during and after the event. Qatar hosted the latest edition of the FIFA World Cup™ (FWC), which is widely considered one of the largest global sporting events, with the final event attracting close to 1.5 billion viewers around the world. This research explores Qatar as a case study using a unique lens to examine the event's alignment with Islamic values of *'adl* (justice), *mīzān* (balanced development), *amānah* (responsibility towards nature and society), and *maşlahā* (preservation of public

Received: 9 July 2024; accepted: 23 September 2024; published: 31 December 2024

© 2024 The Author(s), HBKU College of Islamic Studies.

Cite this article as: Ekren, D. C. (2024). Islamic values, sustainability, and mega-event legacies: A case study from the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. *Astrolabe: A CIS Research Journal*, (6).

<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/IslamicValuesWorldCup.pdf>

good). This study adopts an autoethnographic approach, drawing on the author's firsthand experiences and empirical insights gained over more than eight years of working with the organizers of the FWC 2022 in developing and implementing legacy and sustainability programming in Qatar. It proposes a theoretical framework to guide Muslim event organizers, non-governmental organizations, and governments in integrating Islamic values into the bidding and hosting of contemporary events, with the outcome of delivering a sustainable event with a lasting legacy. The primary objective of this study is to contribute to the academic discourse on mega-events and Islamic ethics, offering an assessment of how mega-events can be used as a catalyst for nationwide development by adopting positive value systems based on Islamic principles.

Keywords: Islamic values, sports tourism, mega-events, FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, sustainable development

1. INTRODUCTION

Masterman (2014) states that modern sports events trace their origin to ancient Chinese, Greek, and Egyptian cultures, emphasizing that sports have played a pivotal role throughout history by significantly contributing to the development of societies. Hamil and Chadwick (2010) support this notion, describing sports as a deeply embedded sociocultural phenomenon. Today, sports have evolved into a global industry with substantial economic, political, social, and technological significance. Notably, governments are increasingly leveraging sports events as a strategy for tourism marketing because of their capacity to attract visitors, boost economic activity, and capture media attention (Bowdin et al., 2011, p. 24).

Against this backdrop, Qatar's hosting of the latest edition of the FIFA World Cup™ (FWC), one of the largest sporting events in the world, with the final attracting close to 1.5 billion around the world, serves as a fascinating case study. This research examines Qatar's role as a host nation through a distinct lens, evaluating the event's alignment with Islamic values such as *'adl* (justice), *mīzān* (balance between environment, social, and economic development), *amānah* (responsibility), and *maṣlaḥa* (public good). Rooted in the Qur'an and the sunna of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), these values serve as guiding principles for fostering inclusivity, preserving relationships with nature and society, and ultimately benefiting the wider community, leaving a legacy post-event.

This study adopts an autoethnographic approach, drawing from the author's practical experiences and empirical insights gained over 8 years of engagement with the organizers of FWC 2022. The author's roles evolved from a Legacy Analyst to a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Specialist, CSR Manager, and Sustainability Manager, contributing to the development and implementation of legacy and sustainability programs in Qatar and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. The choice of an autoethnographic approach stems from its ability to provide a nuanced understanding of personal experiences, complementing conventional research method gaps as outlined by Amos (2022). These

personal reflections will be supplemented with secondary research on mega-events and Islamic values. The research seeks to answer the following questions, offering fresh insights into the existing literature:

1. What are the legacies of mega-events, and how do they align with the Islamic values of ‘*adl* (justice), *mīzān* (balance between environment, social, and economic development), *amānah* (responsibility), inclusivity/diversity, and *maṣlaḥa* (public good)?
2. How can these Islamic values inform the development of legacy strategies for mega-events, drawing from lessons learned from FWC 2022?
3. How can Muslim event organizers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and governments apply these strategies to create a decision-making framework that integrates Islamic values into modern events bidding, hosting, and legacy planning to ensure a lasting impact?

By addressing these questions, the research aims to offer unique insights into the intersection of mega-events, Islamic values, and sustainable development, contributing to future event management practices as well as policy frameworks. The research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- **Literature development:** Expand the body of research on mega-events and Islamic values by assessing how mega-events can drive nationwide development, particularly by embracing positive value systems rooted in Islamic principles, such as ‘*adl*, *mīzān*, *amānah*, and *maṣlaḥa*.
- **Framework development:** Propose a practical framework, informed by Qatar’s experience, to guide Muslim event organizers, NGOs, and governments in leveraging Islamic values to create sustainable event legacies.

To achieve these objectives, the research utilizes the FWC 2022 as a case study, analyzing the broader impacts of mega-event legacies on society, the environment, and the economy. Ultimately, it advocates for a return to Islamic values and ethics to foster a deeper understanding of sustainable development. This approach aligns with Senturk’s (2022) concept of “rooted revival,” emphasizing the need to contextualize and internalize modernization rather than blindly or uncritically adopting Western paradigms.

The research follows a structured approach to navigate through the literature, as illustrated in Figure 1. Section 2 reviews existing literature on mega-event legacies and sustainability and Islamic ethics, drawing insights from the FWC 2022. Section 3 proposes a theoretical framework for host nations to align mega-events with Islamic values to achieve long-term sustainability goals. Section 4 identifies key challenges and offers recommendations for decision-makers in the Muslim world, including event organizers, NGOs, and governments, on how to effectively embed Islamic values in event bidding, hosting, and legacy planning. Finally, Section 5 presents the study’s conclusions and broader implications.

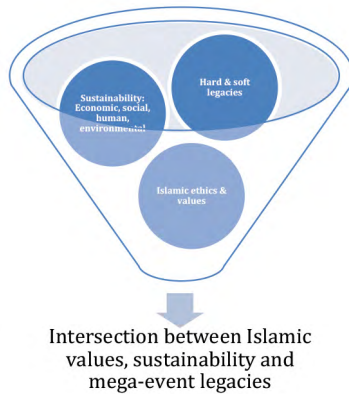


Figure 1. Funnel approach to literature review on mega-event legacies in the context of Islamic values and ethics.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Mega-Event Legacies

Matheson (2010) states that strategic planning for event legacies has emerged as an increasingly important phenomenon over the last two decades. The concept of legacy, its definition, and potential impact have been subjects of considerable debate among scholars, including Chappelet and Junod (2006), Preuss (2007), and Cornelissen et al. (2011). According to Chappelet (2012), the discourse on the legacy of mega-sporting events emerged in the 1990s, advocating a comprehensive approach that encompasses financial, economic, social, and environmental considerations. Preuss provides a concise definition of legacy as “all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sporting event that remain longer than the event itself” (2007, p. 211). In essence, legacy refers to what remains from the mega-sporting event after its conclusion. Legacy has emerged as a critical consideration when bidding for and hosting major sporting events. Key questions considered by host countries’ officials, scholars, and practitioners include:

- What are the potential tangible (hard) and intangible (soft), positive and negative legacy impacts on individuals, ecosystems, society, and knowledge development?
- Can the costs of hosting these major events be justified in terms of taxpayers’ money, considering potential legacy outcomes?
- What are the ramifications if heavy infrastructure investment leaves the host city in financial debt, with underutilized facilities as “white elephants?”
- What are the opportunity costs of hosting major events, particularly in terms of redirected investments away from critical areas such as public health, education, and other essential infrastructure needs of the host community?

Based on the insights gathered from more than 30 host cities and nations, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has formulated a framework delineating the advantages of hosting international events. Table 1 presents a summary of the OECD’s discoveries, organized according to primary and secondary benefits.

Table 1. Benefits of hosting international events. Source: OECD (2008).

No.	Primary Benefits	Secondary Benefits
1	Alignment of the event with sector and business growth strategies in the city or nation	Post event usages of improved land and buildings
2	Private-public investment partnerships	Connectivity and infrastructure legacies
3	Image and identity impacts attracting increased population, investment and/or trade	Labor market impacts and social/economic inclusion
4	Structural expansion of visitor economy and supply chain development and expansion	Secondary impacts in the property market
5	Environmental impacts, both in built and natural environments	Global positioning, events strategy going forward, and project management capability

These primary and secondary benefits described in Table 1 can further be broken down to include a broader spectrum of hard and soft event-related legacies, as described by Preuss (2007), and/or as tangible or intangible, as explained by Chappelet and Junod (2006), in areas of economic, human, social, and environmental impact. The impacts are experienced across local, national, regional, and global scales, as depicted in Figure 2. Moreover, according to Aicher et al. (2019), tangible legacy refers to observable, easily identified, or physical transformations within the host community that persist post-event. In contrast, intangible legacy encompasses nonphysical changes related to knowledge transfer, governmental reform, the accrual of emotional capital for residents, participants, and spectators, psychological enhancements to the city’s image, and alterations in social structure.



Figure 2. Types of event legacy. Source: Adapted from Preuss (2007), MacRury (2009), and OECD (2008).

Beesley and Chalip (2011) state that maximizing event benefits is possible through strategic planning and implementation to capitalize on the opportunities generated by events. Therefore, strategic planning efforts preceding event hosting should assess various economic, social, and environmental impacts and identify mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce adverse impacts and capitalize on potential opportunities.

The impact of hosting mega-events or the event legacies are often perceived positively by the host population (VisitScotland 2012). However, a historical review of mega-events hosted since 2000, including the Olympic Games and FWC, revealed mixed legacies, with some countries faring better than others in achieving wider legacy objectives. Figure 3 is also a testament to the globalization of sports, namely the FWC and Olympic games, highlighting how sports extend beyond national boundaries, reaching continents of Australia, Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America. This further supports the academic view of the globalization of sports, particularly football, as referenced by Dolles and Söderman (2005), Horton (2011), and Lee and Kim (2016), among others. The case for FWC 2022 will be discussed separately in Section 2.3.

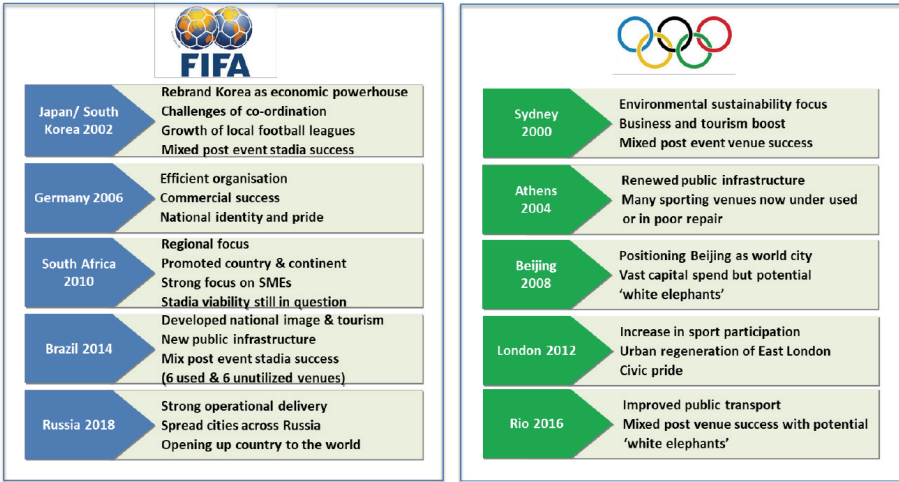


Figure 3. Comparative legacies from mega-events since 2000, including the Olympic Games and FWC. Source: Author’s analysis.

2.2 Islamic Principles

A widespread misconception suggests that legacy planning principles for sustainable development are not rooted in Islamic values and traditions, often viewed as primarily derived from Western sources introduced to the Middle East. However, a closer analysis uncovers that Islamic teachings have emphasized sustainability and the responsibility to create positive legacies as a fundamental duty for Muslims for nearly 1,400 years.

The first modern use of the word “sustainable” was introduced to the literature by the Club of Rome’s report “Limits to Growth.” Additionally, as introduced earlier, “Our Common Future” coined the term sustainable development in 1987. John Elkington further contributed to the literature by coining the term “triple bottom line” to explain that sustainability is an integration/intersection of social, economic, and environmental values.

The nexus between sustainable development and religion has been extensively studied. Narayanan (2013) identified three key ways in which religion can significantly contribute to fostering sustainable development: by drawing on its values and principles, promoting social and ecological activism, and aiding individual self-development. More recently, Al-Jayyousi et al. (2023) explored the connections between Islamic faith and sustainability, particularly in the context of climate policy. Their research examined how faith-based value systems and religion can play a pivotal role in shaping policy development and institutional practices.

Allah defines the creation in its perfect balance (mīzān) in Surah Ar-Rahman (The Merciful):

The Most Merciful,
Taught the Qur’an
Created Humankind

Taught him Eloquence
The sun and the moon move in precise calculation
And the stars and the trees prostrate
And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance
That you not transgress within the balance
And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance
(The Qur'an 55:1–9)

In Surah Ar-Rahmān (The Merciful), Allah describes the creation in perfect balance (*mīzān*), emphasizing the significance of sustaining the equilibrium and promoting justice (*‘adl*) in all actions, including stewardship of the environment. It is intriguing that the Club of Rome report (1972) concludes with the same idea of humanity imposing limits on itself to attain a state of global equilibrium, carefully balancing population and production.

The fundamental difference between the United Nations–led development agenda in the form of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Islamic value-driven approach lies in the comprehensive worldview and guidance offered by Islam, which encompasses all facets of life, including the relationship between humanity and the environment (Ahmed, 1998). Sarkawi et al. (2016) argue that the current concept of sustainability fails to account for the religious obligation of Muslims and their motivation to maintain balance in utilizing the Earth’s resources without harming nature. This practice is rooted in seeking God’s mercy and accumulating good deeds for the *akhirah* (the afterlife) in order to enter Paradise, which is regarded as the ultimate objective.

The Holy Qur’an repeatedly emphasizes the concept of *‘adl*, *mīzān*, *amānah*, inclusivity, and *maṣlaḥa*, underscoring the stewardship (*khalīfah*) role of humankind on earth and the imperative of maintaining balance in resource use and environmental protection. These five key Islamic values, encapsulating principles of sustainability and leaving a lasting legacy, form the foundation of this research. Illustrated in Figure 4, they are structured as a *Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa* model, with *‘adl* as the cornerstone upon which *mīzān*, *khalīfah*, *amānah*, and inclusivity rely, culminating in the assurance of *maṣlaḥa* symbolized as the roof of the house.

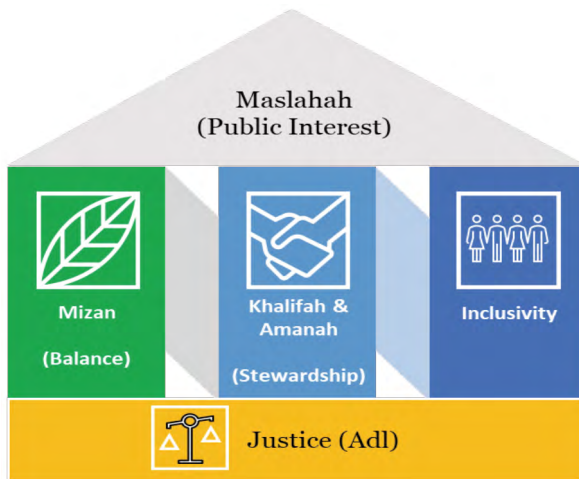


Figure 4. Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa—five core Islamic principles that drive sustainability and legacy approach. Source: Author’s analysis.

Imam Al-Ghazali (1993) elaborates on the concept of *maqāsid sharia* (objectives of Islamic law), which directly relates to maṣlaḥa and ‘adl, by outlining five essential elements: protection of *al-dīn* (religion), *al-naḥs* (life), *al-aql* (intellect), *al-naṣl* (lineage), and *al-māl* (wealth). These elements align directly with the pursuit of the five Islamic principles driving sustainability and legacy within the Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa model.

2.2.1 Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa: Five Core Principles

a. ‘Adl (Justice)

The Holy Qur’an emphasizes justice and fairness in all facets of our lives, from individual levels to business transactions and government policy. Justice (‘adl) forms the foundational concept of the Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa model (Figure 4), protecting fundamental rights and applying good governance practices (Al-Jayyousi, 2012). Allah mentions in the Qur’an, “O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice” (4:135). The verse urges Muslims to stand firm for justice and bear witness to it. Consequently, justice and fairness serve as foundational pillars for the other principles discussed in this study, which are aimed at promoting sustainable events. Isfahani (1987), as cited in Mohamed (2020), asserts that God used the word *al-mīzān* to refer to justice because justice results in balance, and balance exhibits itself in concrete actions of justice.

b. Mīzān (Balance)

Principles of ‘adl and mīzān are closely linked to each other as God planted them in all beings and things in the universe, which manifests divine justice (Mohamed, 2020). The

Islamic concept of *mīzān* is closely connected with the terminology *al-waṣaṭiyyah*, rooted in the Arabic word *waṣaṭ*, meaning moderation and fairness. Allah says in Surah al-Baqarah: “Thus, have We made of you an *umma* (community) justly balanced (*waṣaṭan*), that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves ...” (Qur’an 2:143). This describes Muslims as an *ummataṭan waṣaṭan* (justly balanced ummah), conveying Islam’s message of peace, justice, and moderation toward God’s creation (people, animals, and the natural environment). It should be noted that over 500 Qur’anic verses guide environmental stewardship, with Prophet Muhammed’s life (PBUH) serving as a role model for justice and equity (Hassan & Cajee, 2002, as cited by Aburounia & Sexton, 2022).

c. Inclusivity and Diversity

The Qur’an promotes inclusivity and respect for diversity, recognizing differences as signs of God. Allah revealed in the Holy Qur’an, “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you” (49:13). As stated in the verse, differences in sex, race, and language are all manifestations of God rather than reasons for superiority over one another. Allah encourages mutual understanding and getting to know one another, highlighting diversity as a unifying force among humanity. *Adamiyyah*—stemming from our common origin in Adam (PBUH)—is a source of unity rather than a cause for division. The only distinction between individuals in the sight of God is based on their deeds and righteousness.

d. Khalīfah and Amānah (Stewardship and Trust)

Islam teaches that humans are stewards of the Earth, responsible for its care and preservation as described by God in the Holy Qur’an: “He is the One Who has placed you as successors on earth and elevated some of you in rank over others, so He may test you with what He has given you. Surely your Lord is swift in punishment, but He is certainly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (6:165). Sarkawi et al. (2016) emphasize that humans’ responsibility to God aligns with stewardship toward nature. Furthermore, Bsoul et al. (2022) highlight how environmental protection, advocated by the SDGs, is deeply embedded in Islam and was practiced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the 6th century. The Qur’an encourages avoidance of excessive consumption and wastefulness and promotes social justice through sharing food with the poor: “It is He Who has brought into being gardens, the cultivated and the wild, and date-palms, and fields with produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and variegated. Eat of their fruit in season, but give (the poor) their due on harvest day. And do not waste, for God does not love the wasteful” (6:141).

e. Maṣlaḥa (Public Interest)

Morales (2016) defines *maṣlaḥa* as an Islamic legal concept that has been pivotal in understanding Islamic policy, governance, and discourse. Bsoul et al. (2022) argue that

only through improved ethical and moral relationships toward nature can we encourage responsible resource management, environmental protection, and sustainable development. However, this responsibility extends beyond the individual to wider public policy implications. The concept of *maṣlaḥa* underscores the importance of policy and actions benefiting society.

It is noteworthy that other models, as Al-Jayyousi (2012), explore development with “good life” (*ḥayāt ṭayyiba*) at its core, with a larger circle representing the construction of the universe (*imārāt al-kawn*). The four components he outlines are ‘adl (justice), *ihsān* (excellence), *arḥām* (social capital), and limiting *fasād* (mischief). However, unlike the theoretical model presented by Al-Jayyousi, my framework differs by focusing on the interplay between Islamic principles and the three pillars of sustainability—namely economic, social, and environmental dimensions—with an operationalized decision-making framework that aims to leave a lasting positive legacy from events. Nevertheless, both frameworks share a focus on ‘adl and limiting harm, as captured under *maṣlaḥa*.

The key Islamic principles outlined in the Bayt Al Maṣlaḥa model, including justice, balanced development, responsibility towards nature and society, and preservation of public good, are rooted in the Qur’an and the sunna. These principles serve as the building blocks for inclusive events that benefit all members of the community, preserving relationships with nature and society and ultimately benefiting the wider community, leaving a legacy. This is explored further in the case study of FWC 2022 and in the theoretical framework in Section 3 to guide event organizers’ decision-making.

2.3 FWC Qatar 2022 Case Study

Mega sporting events matter at sociological, political, cultural, and economic levels, driving nations towards a global society (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006). Historical experiences show that host nations of mega-events vary in economic, human, social, and environmental development trajectories, with a mix of developed and developing countries and a clear North–South divide (Figure 5). It is also clear that there are measurable differences in size, population, and culture between various host nations. Unique opportunities and challenges arise for each host, demonstrating that solutions successful in one setting may not immediately transfer to others.

Qatar’s unique position as a mega-event host is evident in its status as the smallest but wealthiest nation per capita to host the tournament (Figure 5). A comparison of the last four FWC hosts reveals stark economic contrasts, with Qatar’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (USD 87,661) over 13 times higher than of South Africa (USD 6,766) and over 6 times higher than of Russia (USD 15,270) (World Bank, 2022).

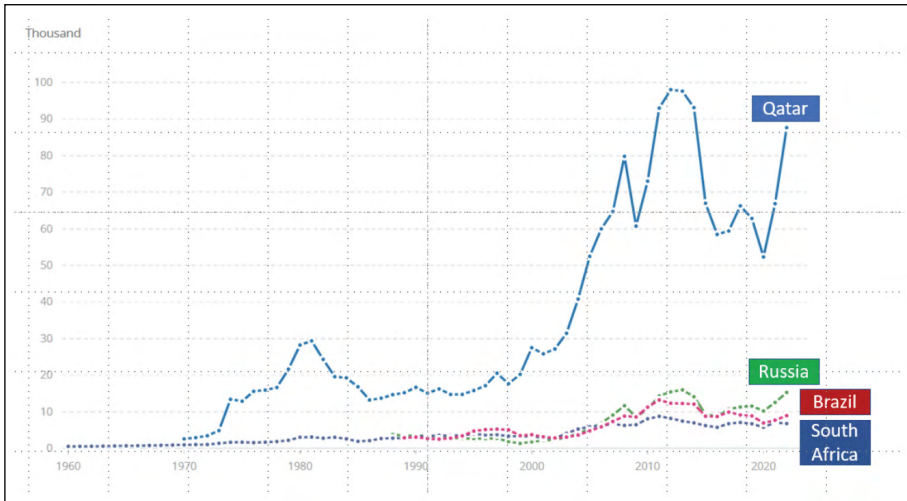


Figure 5. Comparison between the last four countries to host the FWC in terms of GDP per capita in USD in 2022. Source: World Bank Data (2022)

According to Brannagan and Giulianotti (2018), states pursuing soft power, like Qatar, risk soft disempowerment, inviting unwanted attention and greater international scrutiny that may potentially discredit the nations' (in)/actions. The soft disempowerment in the context of Qatar is centered around four main themes, mainly human rights concerns, including workers' welfare and LGBTQ+ rights, environmental impacts, financial costs, and legacy use of facilities post-event.

Each of these topics require deeper study to ensure themes are adequately addressed and explore underlying issues, validity of the criticism, and responses of the Qatari government in producing mitigation plans in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Considering that FWC 2022 was hosted a little over a year ago at the time of writing, the legacies from the mega-event are still being realized. Cornelissen et al. (2011) emphasize the importance of sustaining legacies well beyond the event itself to secure long-term impact, suggesting evaluations to be conducted for at least 20 years following the event.

Li and McCabe (2013) divide the time dimension of legacies into three stages: short-, medium-, and long-term. For FWC 2022, early signs of positive legacy transformation have been in infrastructure improvements across Qatar, including but not limited to new sporting facilities; and urban legacy, including hotels, parks, roads, and transportation networks, including metro, light rail, and buses (Figure 6). Figure 6 is a stark illustration of how Qatar in the 10 years from 2013 to 2022 developed its infrastructure at a more rapid pace than it has in more than 60 years from 1950 to 2013. Qatar's hosting of the FWC 2022 was a significant catalyst driving this exponential growth over the last decade.

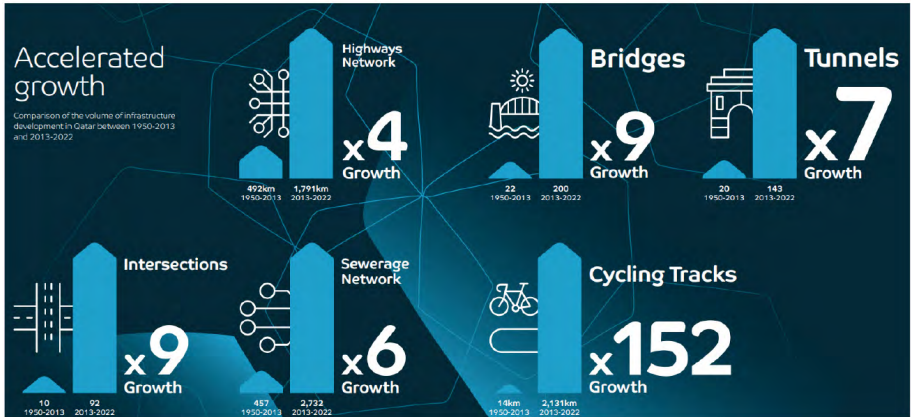


Figure 6. Comparison between infrastructure development in Qatar. Source: Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (n.d.).

It is important to note that in Qatar's case, due to its vast hydrocarbon wealth, their choice for hosting the mega-event did not result in the opportunity cost of not investing in other vital public services such as healthcare, education, and other services. Also, it did not leave the Qatari government in huge debt as in the cases of the Athens 2004 Olympics, FWC 2014, and the 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil (Becatoros, 2012; Smith, 2012). However, there are still question marks around whether Qatar will be able to utilize all its sporting infrastructure built for the FWC 2022, including seven new state-of-the-art stadiums and 32 team base camps. At present, we have already witnessed most of the stadiums being used during the recent AFC Asian Cup 2023 from January to February 2024, and several venues have already become home grounds for Qatar Stars League matches.

According to EuroNews (2023), organizers stated that two stadiums, namely, Ahmad Bin Ali and Al Janoub stadiums, will undergo a reduction in capacity by half, allowing Qatar to donate approximately 40,000 removed seats to sub-Saharan African nations to aid in the development of their footballing infrastructure. Such conversion costs for these two stadia and the maintenance costs for the other remaining assets will be an ongoing burden on the state, especially if they are under-utilized over their life cycle of 30 to 50 years.

Despite the criticism, Qatar's comparative country brand index, from 2010 to 2020, rose from 70 to 18 in the global rankings in 2020. This further demonstrates that before hosting the FWC, Qatar already began realizing its vision of delivering hard and soft legacy outcomes from the physical transformation of the country to increasing global awareness of Qatar, establishing an appealing hub for business and tourism.

Another positive legacy outcome already realized has been the increase in tourism post-event. The number of international arrivals to Qatar almost doubled between 2019 (taken as a pre-COVID-19 baseline at 2.1 million visitors) and 2023, reaching more than

4 million (Figure 7). Already, the first 2 months (January and February) of 2024 are showing promising tourism numbers, with close to 1.3 million visitors during this period. Whether the current boosted tourism figures can be sustained over the long term is yet to be seen. Even if it is sustained, there may be other variables that could boost tourism in the future, and it will be difficult to isolate any future economic and tourism impact occurring solely on Qatar’s hosting of the FWC 2022.

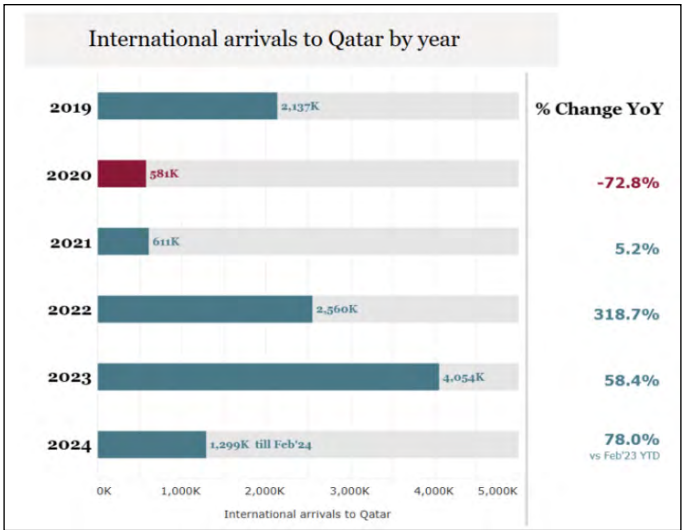


Figure 7. International arrivals to Qatar by year (2019–2024 February). Source: Qatar Tourism.

From a sociological perspective, the FWC has catalyzed fostering greater cultural exchange among people of diverse religions and cultures. The tournament unites fans from around the world to celebrate their shared love of football, breaking down cultural barriers and promoting mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect.

Qatari organizers have consistently promoted the event as a means of fostering unity and cultural cohesion between the East and the West. Hassan Al Thawadi, head of the FWC Qatar bid committee and the Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy responsible for organizing the event, stated that “uniting people, breaking down social barriers, and bridging the gap between East and West are all part of the legacy of staging the first FWC in the Middle East and Arab world.” Encouraging cultural exchange among stakeholders involved in the FWC, with a specific emphasis on deepening appreciation for the culture of Qatar and the wider region, was a key goal outlined in the FWC Qatar 2022 Sustainability Strategy.

Consistent with this strategy, one of the key outcomes of the FWC was an increase in cultural exchange through a rise in the number of tourists visiting the country. Tournament

organizers have reported that over 1.4 million fans from across the globe visited Qatar for the FWC. The mega-event showcased Islamic culture and Qatari hospitality, dispelling stereotypes and promoting acceptance of the religion and its followers. From this perspective, one can argue that this event served as a tool to promote greater understanding and acceptance of Islam and Islamic cultures.

Qatar’s hosting of the FWC 2022 also faced heavy criticism, mainly from Western media outlets and politicians, citing reasons such as the lack of a footballing culture, excessively hot weather for football, workers’ welfare, and LGBTQ+ rights, amongst others. There were instances where the criticism took racist and Islamophobic undertones as Muslims and Qataris were depicted as inferior and unworthy of hosting the FWC 2022. Green (2021) from Oxford Bibliographies defines Islamophobia as a “fear of and hostility toward Muslims and Islam that is driven by racism and that leads to exclusionary, discriminatory, and violent actions targeting Muslims and those perceived as Muslim.” Islamophobia refers to fear, prejudice, or discrimination against the Islamic religion or people who practice it. Georgetown University conducted an extensive research project on Islamophobia, stating that it does not occur randomly but is spread through generously financed networks of ideologues, media personalities, think tanks, and social and political entities.

This research captured instances where media criticism turned to racist and Islamophobic remarks as Muslims and Qataris were depicted as inferior and unworthy of hosting the FWC 2022. Below is a high-level overview of Islamophobic statements made in several European media outlets. Figure 8 depicts a cartoon published by French newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné*, depicting the Qatar National Football Team as angry terrorists holding weapons while playing football.



Figure 8. French newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné*’s depiction of the Qatar National Football Team. Source: Al Jazeera News.

In another incident, a Danish channel, *TV 2 News*, came under heavy criticism after their anchor, Soren Lippert, compared Moroccan players hugging their mothers during their celebrations with monkeys on live television (Figure 9).



Figure 9. A Danish news anchor holds an image of monkeys embracing and compared it to Morocco’s National Team players hugging their mothers. Source: Doha News.

Amidst the instances mentioned above, additional cases of Islamophobic remarks surfaced in Western media. For instance, Germany’s *Welt TV* alleged that the Moroccan team made an “Islamic State gesture” after defeating Portugal. The image (Figure 10) captured Moroccan players holding their national flag with raised index fingers, a symbol used by Muslims for years to affirm their oneness of God and of one’s faith. However, it is worth noting that this gesture is also commonly used in celebration by non-Muslim players like both Ronaldos from Brazil and Portugal. Despite this, *Welt TV* conflated the gesture with members of a terrorist group.

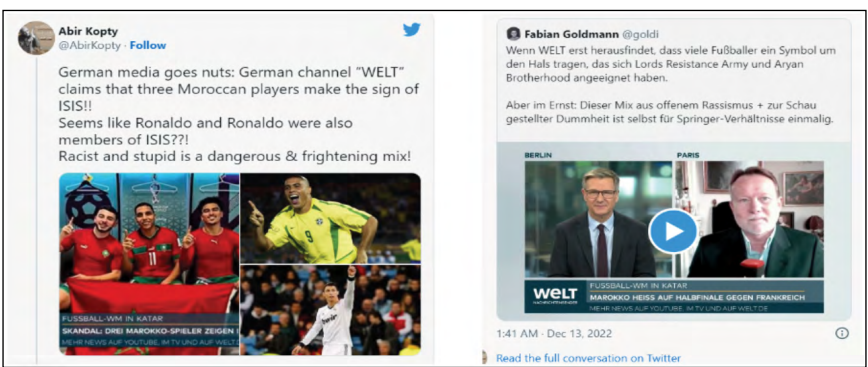


Figure 10. Moroccan players celebrating their victory. Source: Middle East Eye.

Last, a memorable moment during the Finals saw Argentina players, led by Lionel Messi, receiving honors on stage from the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who presented Messi with a *bisht*—a traditional and honored men’s cloak—as a symbol of respect and honor in Arab culture. However, this act was criticized as “a bizarre act that ruined the greatest moment in World Cup history” by the British newspaper *The Telegraph*, which has since changed its headline for the article, and “Absolutely grim” by Fox Sports headline (Figure 11).

It is interesting when criticism aimed at Qatar is compared with past events. For instance, at the 2004 Athens Olympics, athletes were often seen wearing olive wreaths, a nod to ancient Greece (Figure 13). Similarly, after Brazil’s 1970 World Cup victory in Mexico, Pele was photographed wearing a sombrero. Notably, there were no similar media narratives criticizing the use of these cultural symbols by athletes.

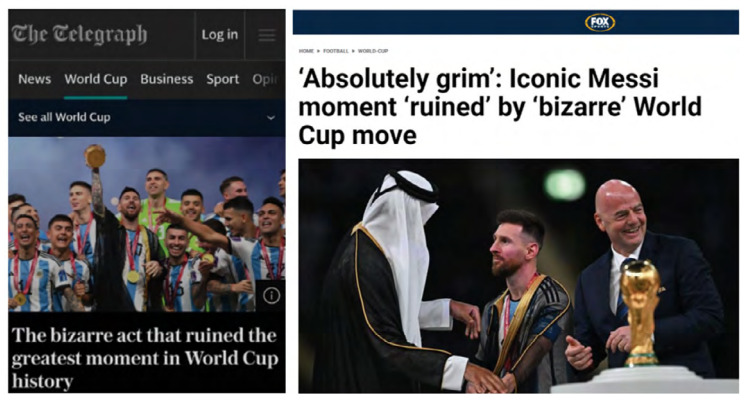


Figure 11. Western media (*The Telegraph*, UK, and *Fox Sports*, USA) coverage of Messi wearing the bisht. Source: Fox Sports.





Figure 12. The 2004 Athens Olympics and 1970 World Cup victory celebration by Pele in Mexico. Source: <https://nation.africa/kenya/sports/football/pele-shows-why-brazil-would-forever-be-world-cup-favourite-4020860>.

Elamin (2023) describes the prevalent media narratives during Qatar’s hosting of the FWC in 2022 as divisive and reinforcing the “East versus West” dichotomy. Furthermore, Nereim (2022) states that the mega-event brought a disproportionate array of negative coverage, which Qataris describe as giving descriptions of their country and people from an outdated and stereotypical perspective, painting an image of Qatar that is contrary to reality. Despite such criticism, Qatar has demonstrated that a Muslim and Arab nation can successfully host a spectacular FWC, lauded by FIFA’s president as the best edition to date. This sentiment was echoed by fans in the BBC poll after the event, with 78% naming the Qatar World Cup the “best of the century” (Figure 13).

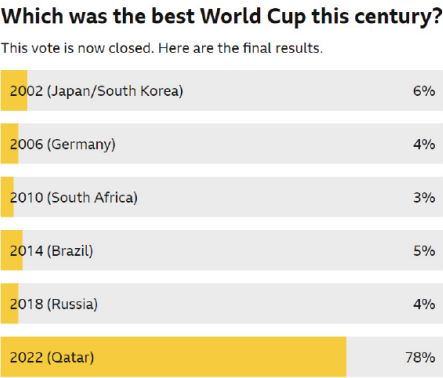


Figure 13. BBC poll on the best World Cup of the century. Source: BBC News

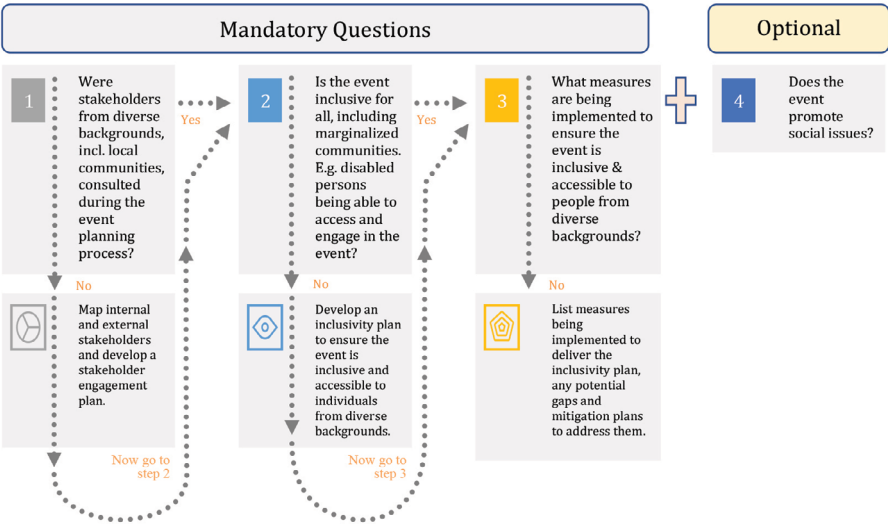
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing on my FWC 2022 experience and research in the field of sustainability and Islamic ethics, I have developed the following theoretical framework to assist decision-makers and event organization bodies in the Muslim world to apply Islamic values to contemporary event bidding and hosting processes to leave a lasting positive legacy. Expanding on Section 2.2, which introduced Bayt Al Maşlahā and its five core Islamic principles, this section proposes a decision-making tree methodology linked to Islamic principles and sustainability pillars. This approach outlines the process of the decision-making model in a flowchart with yes or no questions leading to possible pathways for event organizers to consider. It is important to note that the Islamic principles previously presented, such as justice, fairness, and inclusivity, have been grouped to give a stronger emphasis and avoid repetition.

3.1 Islamic Principles: Justice, Fairness, and Inclusivity

The Holy Qur'an emphasizes justice and fairness in all facets of our lives, starting at the individual and extending to business transactions and government policy. Similarly, events should uphold principles of justice and be inclusive in nature.

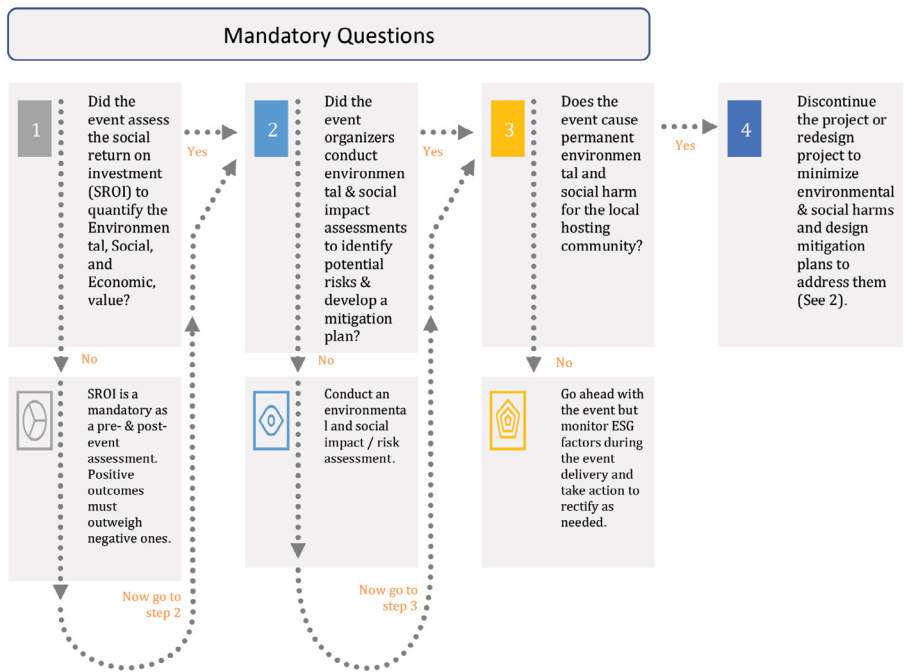
- Holy Qur'an 5:8: "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness."
- Hadith (Bukhari): "The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'Do you know who will go first on the Day of Resurrection to the shade of Allah? Those who are just in their rulings.'"



3.2 Islamic Principles: Balance

Principles of ‘adl (justice) and mīzān (balance) are closely linked to each other as they have originally been planted by God in all things and beings in the universe, which is a manifestation of divine justice according to Mohamed (2020).Hence, conveying Islam’s message of balance and moderation toward God’s creation, including people, animals, and the natural environment, should be embedded in event planning, delivery, and legacy.

- Holy Qur’an 55:7-9: “And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you not transgress within the balance. And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance.”
- Hadith (Tirmidhi): “The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ‘the best of your actions is the most balanced.’”

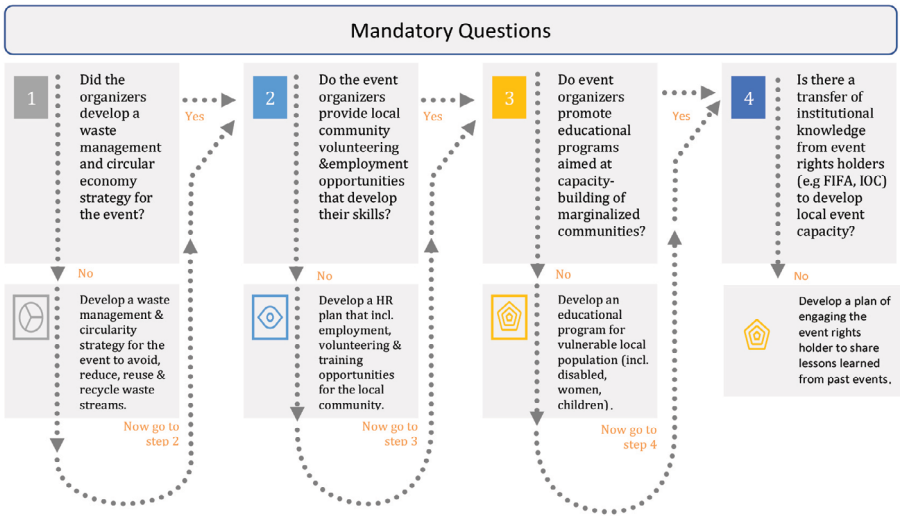


3.3 Islamic Principles: Stewardship and Responsibility

Islam teaches that humans are stewards (khalīfah) of the Earth, responsible for its care and preservation. Hence, event organizers have a responsibility to create positive social, environmental, and/or economic impacts meanwhile minimizing harm.

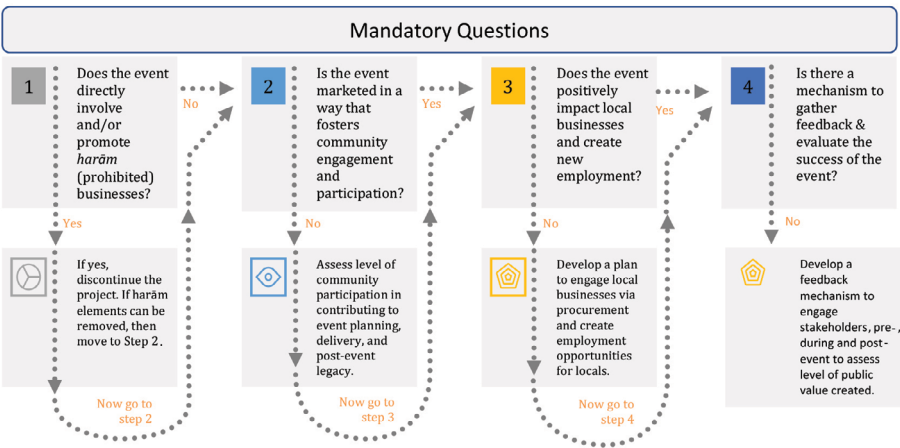
- Holy Qur’an 6:165: “And it is He who has made you successors (khalīfah) upon the earth ...”

- Hadith (Abu Dawood), “The Prophet (PBUH) said, ‘The world is sweet and green (alluring) and verily Allah is going to install you as vicegerent in it in order to see how you act.’”



3.4 Islamic Principles: Public Good

Imam Al-Ghazali states that *maşlahā* (public good) comprises factors aimed at ensuring a benefit or averting harm. Thus, asserting that safeguarding life, religion, intellect, lineage, and property all constitute *maşlahā*. From an event perspective, events should be designed to promote public good across economic, social, and environmental pillars.



4. CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed theoretical framework aims to offer valuable insights from Qatar for Muslim event organizers, NGOs, and governments globally, guiding them in applying Islamic principles to contemporary events and projects for enduring legacy. However, organizations may encounter various hurdles when transitioning to innovative, sustainable business models aligned with Islamic values. These challenges include resistance to change, financial constraints, lack of management commitment, culture supporting Islamic values and sustainability, and lack of capacity and resources to monitor, evaluate, and report on sustainability performance to environmental and social capital. Addressing these challenges requires strategic approaches by introducing design thinking as described below:

1. **Resistance to change:** Lack of management commitment and a culture supporting sustainability can hinder progress. According to Razzouk & Shute (2012), introducing design-thinking methodologies can aid in problem-solving, enabling teams to identify and solve business challenges, including adopting sustainable practices.
2. **Lack of understanding and implementation of Islamic values:** Key recommendation is to integrate Islamic values of 'adl, mīzān, khalīfah, amānah, and maṣlaḥa into organizational policies, procedures, and business models through design-thinking workshops, establishing governance steering groups for decision-making based on proposed framework, and offering capacity-building training to key decision-makers such as managers and supervisors, and assigning designated champions across the organization.
3. **Financial costs:** Incorporating Islamic values that drive sustainable innovation may incur initial expenses. Emphasizing long-term benefits such as cost savings, environmental impact reduction, reputation enhancement, and regulatory compliance can justify these costs.
4. **Measuring sustainable performance:** Lack of standardized methods for evaluating sustainability aligned with Islamic values, including impact on environmental and social capital, poses a challenge. Utilizing the proposed theoretical Islamic framework along international recognized standards like the Global Reporting Standards that sets standards based on Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics to report on the most material/important topics to organizations and its stakeholders, can support in addressing this concern. Technology can aid in data collection, including measuring greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, waste, and wastewater amongst other areas to measure, analyze, report, and outline corrective actions to mitigate adverse impacts and analysis for informed decision-making.
5. **Environment and social audits:** Organizations can conduct regular environmental and social audits internally and across its supply chain to identify areas of improvement. This means that working with suppliers is crucial to enforce any meaningful change and may require working directly with suppliers to build their capacity and provide resources for them on an ongoing basis.

However, relying solely on design thinking and theoretical frameworks can pose risks of being time-consuming and costly for organizations. Another potential risk is failing to fully assess the problem statement, resulting in a simplified assessment that overlooks root causes, key enablers, and/or barriers, which can hinder driving real impact and systemic change within the organization. Therefore, organizations should utilize the theoretical framework for key strategic decisions, such as event bidding decisions, post-award event planning and implementation, and post-event legacy assessment. It is not recommended to apply the proposed theoretical framework for every operational decision, especially major decisions and milestones as outlined here.

This thesis advocates for a revival within organizations to reconnect with Islamic values, promoting sustainability as internal concepts derived from Islamic values rather than exported from elsewhere to fit into the local context. This approach facilitates the easier adoption of sustainability pillars in the Muslim world by directly linking sustainability aspirations with local culture and traditions. However, further research is required to develop frameworks that effectively promote Islamic values and integrate them with operational sustainability-based standards and metrics, particularly tailored to serve host nations in Muslim-majority countries.

From the perspective of FWC in Qatar, further research is necessary to explore the post-event legacy, examining the human, social, environmental, and economic impacts over the potential mid-term (3–5 years) to long-term (5–10 years) periods, and how they have contributed to the country's development trajectory. Additionally, more research is needed to evaluate events hosted by other Muslim nations, analyze their experiences, adopt sustainability pillars, incorporate Islamic values, and identify existing gaps in this field. Sociologically, there is a gap in research in understanding the opinions and attitudes of non-Muslim fans visiting Qatar during the mega-event compared to the prevailing narrative in Western media. Investigating the potential shift (positive or negative) in fans' perspective of Qatar and Islam after the event, particularly focusing on two groups—specifically those who physically visited Qatar and those who watched the event on TV—would be intriguing.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This research introduces a novel approach for evaluating mega-event legacies by incorporating Islamic values into a theoretical decision-making framework. It highlights the shared principles between Islam and the concept of creating positive legacies for society and the environment. These principles, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, include *'adl* (justice), *mīzān* (balance), *maṣlaḥa* (public good), *khalīfah* (stewardship of the earth), and *amānah* (responsibility entrusted by God). The study leverages autoethnographic reflections and empirical insights gained from the author's involvement with the organizers of the FWC Qatar 2022, including contributing to the development and implementation of legacy and sustainability programming in Qatar and the region. This was supplemented by secondary research from the event management and sustainability literature as well as news coverage of the FWC 2022.

The article concludes that, while there were clear indications of alignment with Islamic values as a moral and ethical framework outlined in the Qatar National Vision 2030, Qatar did not explicitly articulate a strategy to promote these values during the FWC 2022. Nevertheless, Islamic principles organically influenced decision-making as implicit guidelines, reflecting Qatar's Arab Muslim identity and conservative Islamic ethos. This was largely facilitated by Qatari leadership, whose adherence to Islamic values was inherently embedded in the event's organizational processes.

The research emphasizes the need to transition from leadership-driven value generation to a more systematic approach to decision-making. It advocates for the development and application of an Islamic value-based framework, rather than assuming that Muslim-majority countries will naturally align with Islamic principles in their policies and actions when bidding for and hosting events. With event organizers often employing a globally diverse workforce, including managerial staff, a systemic approach becomes even more essential.

The study aims to enrich the literature on mega-events and Islamic values by examining how such events can drive national development through the adoption of positive value systems rooted in Islamic teachings. The proposed framework offers practical insights for Muslim event organizers, NGOs, and governments, providing strategies to integrate Islamic principles into modern events and projects to ensure lasting legacies. However, it notes that relying solely on theoretical frameworks can be resource-intensive and time-consuming. As such, the study recommends employing this framework for key strategic decisions—such as event bidding, post-award event planning and implementation, and post-event legacy assessment—rather than for all operational decisions.

A limitation of the research is its exclusive focus on Islamic values, which may limit its acceptance outside the Muslim world. Future research could explore the development of a parallel model based on shared Abrahamic values, incorporating the three major world religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Such a model would require close interfaith collaboration among religious leaders, businesses, communities, NGOs, universities, and research institutions.

A key recommendation of this study is to emphasize the importance of revitalizing these concepts and reestablishing the connection between sustainability and Islamic values, framing sustainability as an intrinsic aspect of Islamic teachings rather than an externally imposed idea. To foster greater acceptance of sustainable development and the SDGs within Muslim communities, policymakers, public and private institutions, and NGOs should revisit the deep-rooted links between sustainability and Islamic principles. However, a degree of localization is essential to tailor these overarching values to the unique needs and challenges of different regions and cities, ensuring the development of sustainable and inclusive events.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deniz Can Ekren

Deniz Can Ekren is a graduate of the master's program in Islam and Global Affairs (Class of 2024) from the College of Islamic Studies (CIS) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), with a previous master's degree in Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management from the University of York. His research and professional endeavors are centered around leveraging sustainability strategies to achieve lasting positive social, economic, and environmental impacts.

denizcanekren@gmail.com

REFERENCES

- Aburounia, H., & Sexton, M. (2022). *Islam and sustainable development*. The 6th international postgraduate research conference in the built and human environment, Salford, UK.
- "Absolutely grim": Iconic Messi moment "ruined" by "bizarre" World Cup move. (2022, December 18). *Fox Sports*. <https://www.foxsports.com.au/football/world-cup/fifa-world-cup-2022-lionel-messi-wears-robe-during-trophy-presentation-what-was-the-robe-reaction-gianni-infantino-argentina-vs-france/news-story/ff6eeb60a57c2471e46e620dce5a4dc4>
- Ahmed, A. (1998). *Discovering Islam*. Routledge.
- Aicher, T., Newland, B., & Paule-Koba, A. (2019). *Sport facility and event management* (2nd ed.). Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Al-Ghazali, I. (1993) *Ihya'Ulumuddin Juz III*. The Revival of Religious Learnings Imam Ghazali's Ihya'Ulumuddin. <https://www.ghazali.org/books/ihya-v3.pdf>
- Al-Jayyousi, O. (2012). *Islam and sustainable development: New worldviews*. Routledge.
- Al-Jayyousi, O., Hasan, W. N. W., Mohamed Saniff, S., Sever, S. D., & Tok, E. (2023). A critical discourse analysis on climate change in a globalized world: The nexus of Islam and sustainable development. *Sustainability*, 15, 14515. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151914515>
- Al Jazeera (2022, November 8). "Racism": Qataris decry French cartoon of national football team. *Al Jazeera News*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/8/islamophobia-qataris-decry-french-cartoon-of-football-team>
- Amos, D. (2022). Conducting research by mixed methods: An autoethnography account of a PhD research in facilities management from a developing country. *Facilities*, 40(13/14), 828–844. <https://doi.org/10.1108/F-12-2021-0124>
- Awang, S. (2017). The concept of charity in Islam: An analysis on the verses of the Quran and Hadith. *Journal of Usuluddin*, 45, 141–172. <https://doi.org/10.22452/usuluddin.vol45no1.6>
- Becatoros. (2012). Athens Olympics venues in decay 8 years after 2004 games. *The Daily Tribune*. https://www.dailytribune.com/years-later-athens-olympic-venues-in-decay/article_191f5019-17d0-574a-9ec2-bfb5f3424e81.html
- Beesley, L. G., & Chalip, L. (2011). Seeking (and not seeking) to leverage mega-sport events in non-host destinations: The case of Shanghai and the Beijing Olympics. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 16(4), 323–344. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14775085.2011.635016>
- Bowdin, G., Allen, J., O'Toole, W., Harris, R., & McDonnell, I. (2011). *Events management* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Brannagan, P., & Giulianotti, R. (2018). The soft power–soft disempowerment nexus: The case of Qatar. *International Affairs*, 94(5), 1139–1157. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiy125>
- Brown, A. (2019). Cultural development in Qatar: Enhancing soft power and promoting national identity. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 32(2), 89–105.
- Brundtland, G. H. (1987). Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. United Nations. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>
- Bsoul, L., Omer, A., Kucukalic, L., & Archbold, R. H. (2022). Islam's perspective on environmental sustainability: A conceptual analysis. *Social Sciences*, 11(6), 228. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11060228>
- Chappelet, J. (2012). Mega sporting event legacies: A multifaceted concept. *Papeles de Europa, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales (ICEI)*, 25, 76–86.
- Chappelet, J & Junod, T. 2006. A tale of 3 Olympic cities: What can Turin learn from the Olympic legacy of other alpine cities? In Torres, D (Ed.), *Proceedings of Workshop on Major Sport Events as Opportunity for Development*, 14–16 June, Valencia, Spain, pp. 83–90

- Cornelissen, S., Bob, U. & Swart, K. (2011) Towards redefining the concept of legacy in relation to sport mega-events: Insights from the 2010 FIFA World Cup. *Development Southern Africa*, 28(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2011.595988>
- Dallh, M. (2023). Accumulate but distribute: Islamic emphasis on the establishment of Waqf (Pious Endowment). *Religion and Development*, 2(1), 21–40. <https://doi.org/10.30965/27507955-20230014>
- Deery, M., & Jago, L. (2010). Social impacts of events and the role of anti-social behaviour. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 1(1), 8–28. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17852951011029289>
- Dolles, H., & Söderman, S. (2005). Globalization of sports - The case of professional football and its international management challenges. https://dijtokyo.org/publications/WP05_1GlobalizationOfSportsProfessionalFootballDollesSoederman.pdf
- Ekren, D., & Anagnostopoulos, C. (2023). Case study: What's the best (kept) secret about FIFA's 2022 World Cup™? The case of Qatar's Generation Amazing program. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 24(3), 570–582. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-08-2023-245>
- Elamin, M. O. I. (2023). Countering islamophobia through sports: Qatar's initiatives during the 2022 FIFA World Cup. *International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology*, 10(1), 1568–1578. <https://doi.org/10.15379/ijmst.v10i1.2997>
- Elkington, J. (1997). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business*. Capstone.
- FIFA World Cup 2014: Brazilian goals. (2014). *Colliers International*. <https://www.colliers.com/-/media/AABE48CE722C462BAC4169AAD920ADA9.Ashx>
- FIFA. (2020). *FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022: First Sustainability Progress Report*. <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/4710f6ecb27c535/original/qlsdb17ipsax0ndjqyup-pdf.pdf>
- FIFA. (n.d.). *FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Sustainability Policy*. <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/2797014fe0b78979/original/FIFA-World-Cup-Qatar-2022-Sustainability-Policy.pdf>
- FIFA. (2020). *FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022: Sustainability Strategy*. <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/5adbe651c67c78a3/original/o2zbd8acyiooxyn0dwuk-pdf.pdf>
- FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. (n.d.). [https://cdnlegacy.azureedge.net/files-en/Qatar_2022_Amazing_Delivered_EN.pdf](https://cdnlegacy.azureedge.net/files-en/Qatar_2022_Amazing_Delivered_EN.pdf/Fredline, L., Jago, L., & Deery, M. (2003). The development of a generic scale to measure the social impacts of events. Event Management, 8, 23–37. https://doi.org/10.3727/152599503108751676)
- Fredline, L., Jago, L., & Deery, M. (2003). The development of a generic scale to measure the social impacts of events. *Event Management*, 8, 23–37. <https://doi.org/10.3727/152599503108751676>
- Future Brand Country Index. (2010). https://sete.gr/_fileuploads/entries/Online%20library/GR/Future%20Brand%202010.pdf
- Future Brand Country Index. (2020). <https://www.futurebrand.com/uploads/Reports/Country-Index-2020/FutureBrand-Country-Index-2020.pdf>
- Gjevari, E. (2022, December 13). World Cup 2022: Outcry over German news outlet's "racist" Morocco coverage. *Middle East Eye*. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/qatar-world-cup-germany-news-outlet-outcry-racist-morocco-coverage>
- Green, T. (2021) Islamophobia. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780195390155/obo-97801953901550285.xml#:~:text=Islamophobia%20refers%20to%20the%20fear,and%20those%20perceived%20as%20Muslim.>
- Hamil, S., & Chadwick, S. (2010). *Managing football: An international perspective*. Elsevier. https://books.google.com.qa/books/about/Managing_Football.html?id=KAPHSLkv9h8C&redir_esc=y
- Holmberg, J., & Sandbrook, R. (1992). Sustainable development: What is to be done? In J. Holmberg (Ed.), *Policies for a small planet*. Routledge.
- Horne, J., & Manzenreiter, W. (2006). An introduction to the sociology of sports mega-events. *The Sociological Review*, 54(2_suppl), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2006.00650.x>
- Horton, P. (2011). Sport in Asia: Globalization, glocalization, Asianization. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221914282_Sport_in_Asia_Globalization_Glocalization_Asianization
- Human Dignity Trust. (n.d.). Qatar. <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/country-profile/qatar/>
- ISO 20121. (2024). *Event sustainability management systems: Requirements with guidance for use*. <https://www.iso.org/standard/86389.html>
- Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (4th ed.). University of Chicago Press. https://books.google.com.qa/books?hl=en&lr=&id=3eP5Y_OOuzwC&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&ots=xV2SGahKwH&sig=kZGJdBBF_6W4xCXTAhjGVs0zOU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
- Kuper, S., & Szymanski, S. (2014). *Soccernomics why England loses, why Spain, Germany, Brazil win, and why the US, Japan, Australia – And even Iraq – Are destined to become the kings of the World's most popular sport*. Nation Books.
- Lee, B., & Kim, T. (2016). A study on the birth and globalization of sports originated from each continent. *Journal of Exercise Rehabilitation*, 12(1), 2–9. <https://doi.org/10.12965/jer.150248>
- Levy, P. (2020). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice* (3rd ed.). The Guilford Ford. <https://shorturl.at/LbkWC>
- Li, S., & McCabe, S. (2013). Measuring the socio-economic legacies of mega-events: Concepts, propositions and indicators. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 15(4), 388–402. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.1885>

- Lisi, C. (2022, November 16). Teenager Pele shows why Brazil would forever be a World Cup favourite. *Daily Nation*. <https://nation.africa/kenya/sports/football/pele-shows-why-brazil-would-forever-be-world-cup-favourite-4020860>
- Ludvigsen, J. A. L., Rookwood, J., & Parnell, D. (2022). The sport mega-events of the 2020s: Governance, impacts and controversies. *Sport in Society*, 25(4), 705–711. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2022.2026086>
- Masterman, G. (2014). *Strategic Sports Event Management*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203114674>
- Matheson, V. A. (2010). Sports and the economy: Boon or burden? *ICSSPE Bulletin* (17285909), 60, 6.
- MacRury, I. (2009). London's Olympic Legacy: A "Think piece" report prepared for the OECD and Department of Communities and Local Government. *London East Research Institute*. <http://www.uel.ac.uk/wwwmedia/uelwebsite/contentassets/images/home/research/CLGOECDthinkpiece-finNov27.pdf>
- Maennig, W., & Porsche, M. (2008). The feel-good effect at mega sports events: Recommendations for public and private administration informed by the experience of the FIFA World Cup 2006 (IAS/NAASE Working Paper Series, No. 08-17). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6922427.pdf>
- Meadows, D. H., Meadows, D. L., Randers, J., & Behrens III, W. (1972). *The Limits to growth; A report for the Club of Rome's project on the predicament of mankind*. Universe Books.
- Mega-Events and Human Rights Violations in Rio de Janeiro Dossier World Cup and Olympics Popular Committee of Rio de Janeiro. (2015). Rio 2016 Olympics: Exclusion games. <https://www.streetchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Rio-2016-Olympics-The-Exclusion-Games.pdf>
- Meza Talavera, A., Al-Ghamdi, S. G., & Koc, M. (2019). Sustainability in mega-events: Beyond Qatar 2022. *Sustainability*, 11(22), 6407. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11226407>
- Mohamed, Y. A. (2020). The philosophical interpretation of justice in the Qur'ān. *The Straight Path*. 51–63. https://www.istikametdergisi.org/uploads/70676077-433b-4de6-91e1-4e2f1e54a019/831db915-1e36-47cd-ab30-6fb963f20520/6_Yasien%20Allie_The%20Philosophical%20Interpretation%20of%20Justice%20in%20the%20Qur%2E%80%99a%CC%84n.pdf
- Mohammed, H., & Jureidini, R. (2022). Umma and the nation-state: Dilemmas in refuge ethics. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 7, 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-022-00124-z>
- Momtaz, S., & Kabir, S. M. Z. (2013). Evaluating the effectiveness of environmental impact assessment system in developing countries: The need for an integrated holistic approach. In *Evaluating environmental and social impact assessment in developing countries* (pp. 5–28). <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-408129-1.00002-4>. Elsevier.
- Morales, Y. R. (2016, January 5). Maslaha as a Guide and Basis for Governance of Society. Ssrn.com. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2714669>
- Narayanan, Y. (2013). Religion and sustainable development: Analysing the connections. *Sustainable Development*, 21(2), 131–139. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1557>
- Nereim, V. (2022). Qataris bristle at what they see as double standards over their World Cup. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/25/world/middleeast/qatar-world-cup-criticism.html>
- Outrage as "racist" Danish channel compares Morocco players' embrace with mothers to monkeys. (2022, December 17). *Doha News*. <https://dohaneews.co/outrage-as-racist-danish-channel-compares-morocco-players-embrace-with-mothers-to-monkeys>
- Panagiotopoulou, R. (2013). The legacies of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games: A bitter-sweet burden. *Contemporary Social Science: Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences*, 9(2), 173–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2013.838297>
- Preuss, H. (2007). The conceptualisation and measurement of mega sport event legacies. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 12(3–4), 207–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14775080701736957>
- Qatari Law No. 11 of 2004 Issuing the Penal Code. (n.d.). <https://www.almeezan.qa/LawArticles.aspx?LawTreeSectionID=253&lawId=26&language=en>
- Razzouk, R., & Shute, V. (2012). What is design thinking and why is it important? *Review of Educational Research*, 82, 330–348. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654312457429>
- Sadd, D. (2010). What is event-led regeneration? Are we confusing terminology or will London 2012 be the first games to truly benefit the local existing population? *Event Management*, 13, 265–275. <https://doi.org/10.3727/152599510X12621081189112>
- Sakai, S., Yoshida, H., Hirai, Y., Asari, M., Takigami, H., Takahashi, S., Tomoda, K., Victoria Peeler, M., Weichert, J., Schmid-Unterseh, T., Ravazzi Douvan, A., Hathaway, R., Hylander, L. D., Fischer, C., Jong Oh, G., Jinhui, L., & Kim Chi, N. (2011). International comparative study of 3R and waste management policy developments. *Journal of Material Cycles and Waste Management*, 13, 86–102. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10163-011-0009-x>
- Salim, F. M. (2013). The Museum of Islamic Art: Form, perception, and environment. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, 6(1), 55–71. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1835-2014/CGP/v06i01/44421>
- Sariatli, F. (2017). Linear economy versus circular economy: A comparative and analyzer study for optimization of economy for sustainability. *Visegrad Journal on Bioeconomy and Sustainable Development*, 6, 31–34. <https://doi.org/10.1515/vjbsd-2017-0005>

- Sarkawi, A., Abdullah, A., & Dali, N. M. (2016). The concept of sustainability from the Islamic perspective. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, 9, 112–116. https://ijbel.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/KLiISC_52.pdf
- Senturk, R. (2022). Decolonizing social sciences: From uniplexity to multiplexity. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAmX8vYcZeo>
- Sherwood, P., Jago, L. K., & Deery, M. (2004). Sustainability reporting: An application for the evaluation of special events. In C. Cooper et al. (Eds.), *Annual conference of the Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education* [Paper presentation]. University of Queensland, Brisbane.
- Sherwood, P., Jago, L., & Deery, M. (2005). Unlocking the triple bottom line of special event evaluations: What are the key impacts? In J. Allen (Ed.), *Third International Event Management Research Conference, Sydney* [Paper presentation]. University of Technology, Sydney.
- Shin, H., & Li, B. (2013). Whose games? The costs of being “Olympic citizens” in Beijing. *Environment and Urbanization*, 25(2), 559–576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247813501139>
- Smith, A. (2009). Theorising the relationship between major sport events and social sustainability. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 14(2-3), 109–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14775080902965033>
- Smith, H. (2012). Athens 2004 Olympics: What happened after the athletes went home? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2012/may/09/athens-2004-olympics-athletes-home>
- Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy. (n.d.). *Qatar's FIFA World Cup Story: Amazing Delivered*. https://cdnlegacy.azureedge.net/files-en/Qatar_2022_Amazing_Delivered_EN.pdf
- Stakeholder Forum. (2011). *Stakeholder forum for a sustainable future: Annual report 2011*. <https://stakeholderforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SF-Annual-Report-2011.pdf>
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2008). *Local Development Benefits from Staging Global Events*. Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED). OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264042070-en>.
- United Nations Human Rights Council. (2009). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context*. <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/13session/A-HRC-13-20.pdf>
- Watch and vote for the best World Cup this century. (2022, December 24). *BBC Sport*. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/football/64075135>
- Watt, P. (2013). ‘It’s not for us’ regeneration, the 2012 Olympics and the gentrification of East London. *City*, 17, 99–118. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13604813.2012.754190>
- What will happen to Qatar’s World Cup Stadiums? (2023, February 16). *Euro News*. <https://www.euronews.com/2023/02/16/what-will-happen-to-qatars-world-cup-stadiums>
- Winans, K., Kendall, A., & Deng, H. (2017). The history and current applications of the circular economy concept. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 68(1), 825–833. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2016.09.123>
- World Bank. (2022). GDP per capita (current US\$) - Qatar, Russian Federation, South Africa, Brazil. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>