**Round table discussion on "Islamic Social Finance for Sustainable Development"**

1. How has the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals changed ways of working? How has policy been translated into practice?

* The adoption of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has had a significant impact on the way that Islamic social finance organizations and practitioners approach development and social finance, including the use of sadaqah (charitable giving), waqf (endowment), and other Islamic social finance instruments. **The SDGs provide a framework for considering the environmental, social, and economic impacts of development initiatives and investments, and encourage a focus on sustainability, inclusiveness, and long-term planning.**
* One of the key ways that the SDGs have changed the way of working in Islamic social finance is by emphasizing the importance of **integrating sustainability into financial decision-making.** This has led to an **increased focus on environmentally and socially responsible investments, such as those that support renewable energy or affordable housing. In practice,** this has meant that Islamic social finance organizations are considering the potential impacts of their investments on people and the planet, and are working to ensure that they are aligned with the SDGs.
* For example, the **use of sadaqah and waqf for development and social finance purposes** has become more common in recent years, with a number of organizations and initiatives emerging that seek to align these instruments with the SDGs. One such initiative is the “**the Global Muslim Philanthropy Fund for Children”, a joint initiative by UNICEF and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).**
* The fund is specifically designed to harness the true potential of Islamic Giving by financing life-saving humanitarian aid and responding to the child-related Sustainable Development Goals (including SDG 1 No Poverty, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities, and SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals)in the 57 Member Countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.
* Another example is the “**Awqaf Properties Investment Fund”, launched by the IsDB , which aims to provide financing and technical assistance for the development of infrastructure and social development projects in IsDB member countries**, that assist to support the achievement of several of the SDGs (including SDG 1 No Poverty, SDG 3 Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals)
* Simmilarly, examples of the use of sadaqah and waqf for development and social finance purposes include the **Islamic Relief Worldwide's Sadaqah Fund, which supports projects related to health, education, and emergency relief**, and the **Global Waqf Foundation, which supports the development of waqf-based initiatives in various sectors, including education, healthcare, and microfinance.**
* Overall, the adoption of the SDGs has encouraged the use of sadaqah and waqf for development and social finance purposes, and has led to a greater focus on aligning these instruments with the SDGs in order to maximize their impact and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

1. Does the UN 2030 Agenda live up to its ambition to establish new and innovative partnerships to achieve the SDGs?

* The United Nations' 2030 Agenda, of which the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a part, aims to establish new and innovative partnerships between governments, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders in order to achieve the SDGs. In the context of Islamic social finance, there has been some progress in this regard, with the formation of numerous partnerships and initiatives focused on advancing the SDGs.
* One example of a partnership that has been established to support the achievement of the **SDGs is the Islamic Development Bank's (IDB) Sustainable Finance Framework**. Launched in 2018, the Sustainable Finance Framework is a collaboration between the IsDB and a number of private sector and civil society partners, including Islamic financial institutions, development banks, and philanthropic organizations. The platform aims to mobilize financial resources for the development of sustainable infrastructure and social development projects in IDB member countries, with a focus on supporting the achievement of several of the SDGs, including SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).
* Overall, while there have been some efforts to establish new and innovative partnerships in the Islamic finance sector to support the achievement of the SDGs, it is clear that much more needs to be done in order to achieve the ambitious targets set out in the 2030 Agenda. There is a need for greater collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and philanthropic organizations, in order to effectively address the complex challenges that the SDGs seek to address.
* <https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2019-11/IsDB%20Sustainable%20Finance%20Framework%20%28Nov%202019%29.pdf>
* <https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-06/IsDB_AR21_REPORT_EN_WEB_high_Amended_26.5.22.pdf>

1. Is there more acceptance for the SDGs than previous global agendas, and does it lead to better integrated aid policy and practice?

* There is **generally more acceptance for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** than there was for previous global development agendas, and this is reflected in the **widespread endorsement of the SDGs by governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders around the world, including within the Islamic finance sector**. This may be because the SDGs are **more comprehensive and address a wider range of issues**
* than earlier agendas, and because they have been widely promoted as a means of promoting global development and addressing pressing challenges such as climate change.
* In the context of Islamic social finance, the greater acceptance for the SDGs has likely contributed to better integrated aid policy and practice in a number of ways. First, the SDGs provide a clear and comprehensive framework for development and social finance activities, which has likely encouraged a more holistic and integrated approach to these activities. The SDGs also encourage the integration of sustainability into financial decision-making, which has led to a greater focus on environmentally and socially responsible investments and initiatives.
* For example, the **Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has adopted a number of initiatives that are aligned with the SDGs, and that seek to integrate sustainability into financial decision-making. These include a strategic fund for SME and Climate action, which provides financing and technical assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries**, **and the IDB-Climate Investment Fund, which supports the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in IDB member countries**. Both of these initiatives are designed to contribute to the achievement of several of the SDGs, including SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).
* In addition to the IDB, a number of other Islamic social finance institutions have adopted initiatives that are aligned with the SDGs and that seek to integrate sustainability into their operations. For example, **the Islamic Relief Worldwide has launched a number of initiatives that support the achievement of the SDGs, including the Sadaqah Fund, which supports projects related to health, education, and emergency relief, and the Zakat Fund, which provides financing for projects related to poverty alleviation, education, and healthcare**
* However, it is important to note that there are also challenges and limitations to the greater acceptance of the SDGs in the Islamic finance sector, and that more needs to be done in order to ensure that the goals are effectively integrated into national and local development agendas and that the goals are achieved in a sustainable and inclusive manner. One challenge is the need for greater coordination and collaboration between different stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and philanthropic organizations. Another challenge is the need for greater clarity and consistency in the interpretation and application of the SDGs within the Islamic finance sector, in order to ensure that they are effectively integrated into development and social finance activities.
* Overall, while the greater acceptance for the SDGs within the Islamic finance sector has likely contributed to better integrated aid policy and practice, it is clear that there is still much work to be done in order to ensure that the goals are effectively integrated into national and local development agendas and that the goals are achieved in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

1. To what extent does the global SDGs agenda align with the local agendas of Qatar’s institutions; are there any specific areas of difference or tensions?

* The extent the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda aligns with the local agendas of Qatar's institutions is largely dependent on specific priorities and goals of these institutions. However, it is likely that there are both areas of alignment and areas of difference or tension between the global SDGs agenda and the local agendas of Qatar's institutions.
* In terms of areas of alignment, **Qatar's institutions support the overall goals and objectives of the SDGs, including the promotion of sustainable development, poverty eradication, and the protection of the environment.**
* Qatar has made significant progress in recent years in a number of areas that are relevant to the SDGs, including the development of renewable energy and the promotion of economic diversification. In addition, **Qatar has adopted a number of initiatives that are directly aligned with the SDGs, including the Qatar National Development Strategy (QNDS) and the Qatar Sustainability Assessment System (QSAS), which are designed to support the achievement of the SDGs in Qatar.**
* However, there may also be areas of difference or tension between the global SDGs agenda and the local agendas of Qatar's institutions. For example, **Qatar's rapid economic growth and development have been accompanied by environmental challenges, including air pollution and water scarcity. These challenges are not fully addressed by the SDGs and may require additional efforts on the part of Qatar's institutions to address them.**
* Additionally, there may be differences in the priorities and priorities and goals of Qatar's institutions and those of the global SDGs agenda, and there may be differing views on the most effective ways to achieve the goals of the SDGs in Qatar. Also, there may be different cultural, political, and economic contexts that influence the way that the SDGs are perceived and implemented in Qatar, which could lead to tension or disagreement between the global and local agendas.
* Overall, while there are likely both areas of alignment and areas of difference or tension between the global SDGs agenda and the local agendas of Qatar's institutions, it is important for all stakeholders to work together in order to effectively address the complex challenges that the SDGs seek to address and to ensure that the goals are achieved in a sustainable and inclusive manner.