

## Developing A Model of Islamic Waqf in Achieving Sustainable Development in Saudi Arabia

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### Abstract

Islam has paid a great attention to the issue of sustainable development and the way to protect human lives. The main objective of this research is to identify the role of the Islamic Waqf in achieving sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The research adopts the descriptive analytical approach, as it uses interview, induction, and observation. The research seeks to describe a specific phenomenon, while studying and analysing it to reach the desired results. Accordingly, in conducting this research, the researcher will rely on two basic approaches: descriptive analytical and field survey research, which are two approaches suitable for this type of social studies. The research concluded with several results, the most important of which is that Islamic waqf plays an essential role in enhancing sustainable development and progress, and that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enhances the efforts of supporting sustainable development all over the Kingdom.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Islamic Waqf.

### Introduction

Development is considered one of the basic rules that all countries in the world seek in order to bring about radical changes in developing economic, political, administrative fields to advance the productive sectors and improve human life. These countries seek development through huge plans, programs and capabilities that differ according to the capacity of each country. Improvements in living standards resulting from development may be lost at the expense of environmental deterioration in health and quality of life. It is reasonable to consider development as one of the means to improve society so that it can live in an environment that is consistent with its rights and human dignity (Abdel-Daem, 2018)

“Waqf” represents a major role in the life of Islamic societies throughout history as a sign of righteousness and goodness. Since the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Muslims have set the greatest examples in the aspects of Waqf. They endowed countless Waqfs and donated countless funds. Their Waqfs were in all aspects of life. Thus,

waqfs played very important and influential roles throughout the Islamic eras in establishing civil society institutions and covering the permanent needs of society (Lakhdari, 2019).

The Islamic Waqf system is considered one of the basic human features of Islamic civilization throughout history. While Islam urges this principle of benevolence and humanity, it articulates the basic resources for meeting these needs and demands, such as zakat, Islamic religious beliefs, atonement, vows, etc. Despite the importance of all the above-mentioned resources, donations with a distinctive character and style remain unique and wonderful methods that are distinguished by their exceptional humanity and generosity, which are characteristics of Islamic civilization and Islamic legislation (Lisan al-Arab 359/9; Bonqab, 2021).

Waqf is based on a legal basis from the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and the consensus of the nation. It is diversified to include all aspects of human, social, educational and economic life. The Waqf, through its resources, plays a prominent role in developing independent community institutions and maintaining state and family entities (Abu Hossa, 2002).

Waqf is a charitable source with a voluntary capacity and Muslims are not obligated to make it. Therefore, when a Muslim voluntarily donates part of his money, this represents Islam's compassion for all human beings, liberating them from the narrowness of individualism and selfishness. Waqf helps a person move out of a narrow space into a wider social space (Al-Bukhari, 6011).

### **Background of the research**

The issue of sustainable development is one of the concerns of many countries, to the point that it occupies a priority in their economic and social planning, because of its role in ensuring the rights of future generations, and the prospects for achieving this development vary depending on the economic system. We are about to discuss the greatest economic system in the universe, which is the Islamic economic system, we shall mention the most important Islamic financial tools that distinguish it, which is the waq, considering that it is a financial worship, an economic support, and a developmental investment. It plays a major role in building Islamic civilization, thanks to the divine characteristics that they have made Islamic civilization a subject of study and interest for many people to investigate how it rose and remained at the top for many centuries (Al-Hashemi, 2020).

The issue of development in its various aspects has occupied a prominent place in all societies, and has received the attention of many scholars, researchers and thinkers at the regional and global levels, regardless of their intellectual affiliations, as it is the best means to achieve a better life for societies, a better standard of living for individuals, and a method and starting point for liberating energies. Therefore, it can be said that development is a necessary process. It is vital to move societies and move them from one situation to a better situation that begins with the society and ends in its favor. (Alker, 2020).

If development is the issue of this era, then community development is one of the most important issues of developing countries, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it is a collective process in which a work team of various specializations participates. It also requires the gathering of different skills, specializations, and abilities to work on its projects, considering that humans are the goal of community development and at the same time its tool. Therefore, it can be said that community development is an integrated process that depends on governmental and private efforts to bring about the intended change and

modernize and develop the services provided to community members while ensuring their equitable distribution. (Abdel-Daem, 2018).

### **Research Objectives**

The study aims to achieve the following objectives

- Identify the role of the Islamic Waqf in achieving sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Highlight the social and cultural impact of waqf on the local community and identify its role in enhancing social cohesion and Islamic values.

### **Research Questions**

- What is the role of the Islamic Waqf in achieving sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
- What is the social and cultural impact of waqf on the local community, and what is its role in enhancing social cohesion and Islamic values?

### **Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research stems from the following

- Contribution to Islamic Studies: The study of the waqf and its role in achieving sustainable development in Islamic studies promotes Islamic values and principles of sustainability.
- Enhancing understanding of the waqf: The study enhances our understanding of waqf and its importance in Islamic societies.
- Highlighting the role of education: The study emphasizes the role of education in promoting sustainable development. Education is a crucial element in the development process, and the study sheds light on how waqf contributes to education.
- Promoting sustainable development: The study emphasizes the role of waqf in promoting sustainable development. By investing in education and social care, waqf contributes to sustainable development.
- Strengthening social care: The study highlights the importance of waqf in enhancing social care. It contributes to the well-being of society by providing education and support to those in need.
- Providing a model for other Islamic societies: The study will serve as a model for other Islamic societies on how to use waqf to promote sustainable development. It has demonstrated how waqf can be used to promote education and social welfare.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Rabab Abdel-Daem's study entitled: "Waqf and its impact on sustainable development".**

When properly organized, waqf is one of the most important tools to help achieve balanced development and the highest financial return to society. This article explores the nature of sustainable development through extremism, its concepts, characteristics, goals, principles and dimensions. The study aims to examine the reality of donation as part of the Islamic financial system, defines the nature of its development and emphasizes the sustainable development of the concept of donation. The early Muslims were the most important pioneers of sustainable development of the early part of the Islamic state to meet the needs

of society. Economic and social waqfs also contribute to the development of various aspects of sustainable development. The researcher used a descriptive and analytical approach to highlight the role of waqf to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Noha Al-Hermel's research entitled: "Mechanisms of Civil Associations to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals,"**

The research addresses the most important mechanisms through which civil society can achieve sustainable development. It also addresses the importance of coordinating efforts between the government and the private sector to achieve development and improve the quality of life. The study aims to identify the political dimensions of economic, social, environmental and sustainable development. The researcher concluded that coordination between civil society organizations helps development and cooperation between governmental and private efforts, and that community participation contributes to community development and progress. The study recommended the necessity of training for community development, increasing the skills and experience of social workers and using technology to develop activities and services provided to improve quality in the community.

**Ezz El-Din Sharon's research entitled: "The Role of Cash waqf in Promoting Scholarly waqfs: Experiences of Islamic Countries."**

The research aimed to identify the role of the cash waqf in promoting scientific waqf and experiences of Islamic countries. The research dealt with several elements represented in: first, the concept of the cash waqf. This element dealt with several points represented in the cash waqf in language, the cash waqf in terminology, and the legitimacy of the money endowment. Second, The historical development of the money waqf. This element dealt with several points, including the emergence of the cash waqf, the recent cash waqf, and the role of the cash waqf in developing the capital. Third, the human capital, which addressed several points, including the concept of human capital, the waqf for scientific research and Islamic channels, and the contribution of the endowment to achieving educational development. The results of the study asserted that the cash waqf plays an important role in sustainable development. With legal conditions and controls, scientific waqfs are of great importance, contributing to identifying areas of economic and social need and then directing and allocating resources towards them. It also stressed that it is more likely than others to establish a joint waqf or collective waqf. The research recommended the need to spread community awareness about cash waqf and its social and economic importance, which contributes to the development of the waqf sector in general, and opens doors for investing the cash waqf in particular.

**Abdel Wahab Shelly's study entitled: "Analysis of the relationship of the Islamic waqf with the sustainable goals of education and health for the 2030 horizon"**

This study explores the possibility of using Islamic foundations to support the achievement of some of the goals of the United Nations 2030 Plan for Sustainable Development. In the Sustainable Development Goals of the Islamic Foundation for 2030, education and health are mentioned as the most important goals in this area, with reference to the adoption of the plan by Arab countries. Management and investment will make it one of the sustainable mechanisms for embodying most of the goals governing education and health that are commensurate with the cultural identity of the Arab-Islamic society.

**Laila Joudi's study entitled: "The Sustainable Nature of the Islamic Endowment".**

This study seeks to highlight the role of the Islamic waqf in achieving sustainable development, emphasizing that waqf is one of the basic pillars of supporting sustainable development plans. Islamic thought integrates all elements of sustainable development as long as it does not deviate from the principles of Islam. There is a meeting point between positive thinking and Islam in the field of sustainable development. The study concluded that the Islamic waqf has a sustainable developmental nature, embodied in the link between waqf and economic development. On the environmental level, the Environmental waqf is a financial contribution to finance environmental work to ensure resources for future generations.

**Methodology**

The research adopts the descriptive analytical approach, as it uses interview, induction, and observation. The research seeks to describe a specific phenomenon, while studying and analysing it to reach the desired results. Accordingly, in conducting this research, the researcher will rely on two basic approaches: descriptive analytical and field survey research, which are two approaches suitable for this type of social studies.

The researcher will use two main sources for collecting the data, which are the following

▪ **Primary Sources**

The researcher collected data to address the analytical aspects of the topic from primary sources which are the interview tool as the main research tool, specifically designed to serve the purposes of the study. It will be with the employees of the Furqan Society for Quran Memorization.

• **Secondary Sources**

The researcher will focus on the theoretical aspect of secondary sources, represented by modern writings and references, newspapers, articles, research and studies related to the subject of the study, and searching and reading on Internet sites to study information that enriches the subject of the study in its various aspects.

**Discussion**

**The Concept of Sustainable Development**

This concept began to appear in international development literature in the mid-eighties under the influence of new concerns about preserving the environment and as a result of the concerns raised by the famous Club of Rome studies and reports in the seventies about the necessity of preserving depletable natural resources, the environment, and the fundamental balances in ecosystems. The use of this concept is due to the proliferation of environmentally harmful events and the high degree of pollution globally. Opinion has gradually settled that development policies, in order to lead to sustainable development, shall not only respect the elements of the environment in which people live, but shall also take into account the ability of all social groups to bear change and benefit from it equally. For these reasons, the scope of the concept has been extended to issues related to humanity. Humankind development theories have become concerned with development, that is, the human being and his cultural and political conditions, in contrast to previous eras in which attention was paid to the means of material development that is concerned with increasing the rate of economic growth.

The term sustainable development has continued to be unclear, especially during the 1970s, and has remained confined to closed scientific circles and seminars that are trying to find an acceptable definition consistent with the requirements of the environment.

The word “Sustainable” means “sustainable” or “durable.” It also means “endurable”. The reports of the United Nations development programs related to human development use “sustainable development” in their translation into Arabic. Sustainable development is that which finds within itself what supports its continuation, and thus it is a “supportive development,” and it cannot be so if it is not possible and acceptable to all segments of society.

### **The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Sustainable Development**

Islam emphasizes the importance of developing and rebuilding the earth through hard work rather than waiting. Islam encourages hard work and considers it a sentence an integral part of the religion as every Muslim must work hard to fight poverty. Therefore, it is important to direct donations in the appropriate way, whether material or in-kind, through efforts to address many of the economic problems that society suffers from, such as unemployment and poverty, through development programs aimed at addressing social issues (Abdel-Daem, 2018).

If we look at the concept and goal of sustainable development, we find that it focuses on securing the needs of current generations – the present time – without neglecting future generations and their needs, through harmonizing the economic dimension, the social dimension, and the environmental dimension, in a way that achieves a benefit that is characterized by sustainability and has a scope that affects all segments of society (Lakhdari, 2019).

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Waqfs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia played important and influential roles throughout the Islamic eras in establishing civil society institutions and covering the permanent needs of society. This is the important role of the endowment in development in the past, which was characterized by continuity and permanence despite the changing circumstances and the fluctuation of circumstances. This is because the waqf is a type of social cohesion, a link to

connect the predecessors to the successors, and a means for the development of various social and economic charitable institutions.

### **Waqf and Sustainable Development**

What distinguishes Islamic civilization is that it is compatible with the advantages of human instinct. The charitable nature is the pillar and solid foundation of Islamic civilization, and the history of the Islamic nation cannot be viewed in isolation from the characteristics of Muslim society as individuals and groups. In Islamic civilization, donation in the broad sense is the most accurate and clearest form of voluntary charitable work in Islamic Sharia. The ability to develop methods of dealing with it is considered an integral part of the existence of the waqf system, as it carries the seeds of its existence and potential for future development (Sari, 2018)

Nowadays, the need is increasing greatly to activate the role of retirement institutions to perform their practical role in various fields, especially after the reduction in the field of social services in many countries, in addition to the need to create an effective role for citizens in labor institutions – the third sector – and it has been highlighted in many reports by international organizations, cultural forums, and scientific research (Al-Turaif, 2018).

Attention is drawn once again to the waqf as an important source of support for financing development needs and achieving sustainable social development. There is no doubt that the right start in returning the fund to its rightful place in the wheel of comprehensive sustainability is to make it the focus of attention of community intellectuals, and a source of scientific and practical interest (Hermel, 2020).

Economic definitions of sustainable development are concerned with the optimal management of natural resources through obtaining the maximum benefits of economic development, provided that the services and quality of natural resources are maintained.

It is recognized that development in general, at the end of the analysis, is only one aspect of reform that is concerned with stimulating the economic movement and enhancing the growth rate of the national economy, as it is called economic development, and as it is concerned with establishing the rules of justice and balance, and then stability in society. It is therefore comprehensive and effective development that takes upon itself the advancement of natural resources in meeting all the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Research concluded with the following results

- Islamic waqf plays an essential role in enhancing sustainable development and progress.
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enhances the efforts of supporting sustainable development all over the Kingdom.
- Sustainable development is one of the goals that Islamic Sharia seeks to achieve to maintain and protect people life.

*Consequently, the research reached the following recommendations*

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall publish its experience with sustainable development to benefit other countries.
- Arab and international universities shall hold conferences that highlight the role of waqf in enhancing sustainable development.

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