

**NO  
LIMITS**



# Accelerating Socioeconomic Equity

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Among the diverse set of problems facing us today exists the large wealth gap between the top 10% and the bottom 50% of the world population ([Executive Summary of World Inequality Report 2022](#)).

On a global scale, there are big opportunities to address economic inequities. According to [Worldometer](#), the bottom 50% represents over 4 billion people and the number is growing.

How can we pursue these chances to deliver impactful, systemic changes?

A close look into wealth gaps among many global communities reveals that the lack of widespread business ownership is one of the driving reasons behind wealth inequities. There are a number of actions that can be taken to fix this.

1. Expand opportunities for more people to develop the skills needed to start and sustain businesses.
2. Make more capital available to business startups.
3. Remove barriers (like limited access to broadband internet service) that prevent target customers from purchasing and using services.

All of these and other factors are relevant. Yet, according to [McKinsey & Company's research](#), the United States is not on pace to eliminate overall disparities for either Black or Latino residents over the next hundred years.

The global challenge is greater. The [World Bank estimates](#) it likely will take more than a hundred years to lift the world's poorest people above the poverty line of \$6.85 per day. This timeline obviously does not account for the time needed to remove overall disparities among the world population.

There are better options than just staying the course. One path is to bring together public-, private-, and social-sector stakeholders (collectively referred to as coalitions) to create broad, permanent change on complex issues.

Many times, however, these efforts fail for a variety of reasons. Lack of collaboration is one of them. Fragmented understanding of the important issues that results in uncoordinated and ineffective actions is another.

What is needed is an agreed-upon direction whereby each organization could realize its role in support of a more aligned strategy. In practice, it is frequently the case that the absence of good strategy is a major factor.

This document proposes using the ShuraForAll platform to improve the performance of coalitions in the following areas.

1. Constructing accurate and concise problem statements.
2. Determining the best course of action to take to solve problems..
3. Focusing on the most important part of problems that need the most attention.
4. Obtaining broad, active participation of coalition stakeholders.
5. Documenting self-assigned action steps that help accomplish objectives.
6. Measuring individual and team performance.
7. Holding everyone accountable to follow through on completing action steps.

Highlighting the essentials of the proposal, we embrace the challenge of improving the collective problem solving capabilities of people and their communities through consultation with each other. The reasoning is that achieving socioeconomic equity can be accelerated when there is a sufficient number of people who are linked with others in a way that neither can succeed without the other.

This is the heart of what needs to be done.



How do you develop a sufficient number of people? By designing and implementing training programs where we commit to the following.

We want to transition from the “as is” process where training programs are:

- ❖ Third party stakeholder designed.
- ❖ Instructor directed.
- ❖ Competitive individual focused performance training.

To the “to be” process where training programs are:

- ❖ Active participant stakeholder designed.
- ❖ Facilitator directed.
- ❖ Consultative team focused performance training.

Assisting this transition requires us to build in our communities the capabilities to use strategies, tools, and methods to collectively solve our problems. Unlike traditional approaches, strategies are developed through active participation by members from all coalition stakeholders.

Let's explain how this works in the context of an illustrative community that received consultative training on how to address a range of issues facing them. The descriptions are representative of many communities around the world.

Early “open community” discussions at various local sites were held. Among other issues, participants voiced their concerns and offered ideas about what should be done about the high number of adults who are unemployed. The general consensus was to set up a cash waqf (endowment) to fund programs that were thought to be essential to address these problems.


Many community stakeholders (residents, business owners, caretakers, etc.) stated that they were not familiar with how this would work. They needed consultative training support to help them understand the various tasks that must be performed and their roles in them.

After deciding to set up a shura to organize and manage the effort, one of the experienced community leaders was asked to start the shura process. Functioning as the engagement manager, she summarized the community suggested solution approach.

She also explained how establishing a waqf could fit the situation facing them, and documented the proposed objectives. All of this information was placed in the [Overview section of the shura](#).

The next step was to use the platform to invite all stakeholders to join the shura and start by participating in the Discuss phase. Platform generated email notifications prompted each person to bring their ideas and recommendations to the online conversation.



View a sample Discuss phase screenshot on the next slide.


 **Joyce Flynn**  
Ramadan 16, 1443 at 19:00

**Course of action:** Build our community capability to create new businesses and staff them with skilled people.

Since we know our community does not already have the required skills we are talking about, let's try to reach out to others to help us build them.

I think we will need to set up the following expense accounts... [\(Read More\)](#)

 Like  Dislike

 **Ahleyah Abdul-Rahman**  
Ramadan 16, 1443 at 21:52

For each of these accounts I propose we allocate a certain percentage of the cash waqf fund listed below to each of the expense accounts:

- 20% to the Waqf Management Expense Account
- 50%... [\(Read More\)](#)

Each person was expected to enter their comments describing their understanding of the key issues. For every set of comments made, a recommended course of action was required. This condition helped participants to concentrate on working toward possible solutions and improving on other ideas already shared.

The engagement manager emphasized the need to discuss what objectives should be considered the best ones to strive to achieve that are consistent with a preferred course of action. She explained that having a small number of objectives helps everyone focus on the important actions.

Once the Discuss phase ended, the shura process moved on to the Deliver phase. All participants received a platform generated email notification to select their preferred course of action. After all selections were made, the ShuraForAll platform compiled the results and passed the most frequently selected course of action on to the Deliver phase.

In this phase objectives were set, teams were formed, and assignments and action steps were carried out. The engagement manager initiated the effort by creating a Coordination team. It was responsible for engaging with other teams as they performed their work to make their efforts reinforce each other. It promoted and facilitated the adoption of four key behaviors\*.



\*Adapted from Amy Edmondson's book *Teaming*, John Wiley & Sons, 2012.


This team was made up of a balanced mix of internal and external team members, and it brought in additional people with expertise and resources as needed. A member of the Coordination team was placed on each of the other teams.

Additional teams were formed that consisted of various stakeholders according to tasks that needed to be completed. The platform charted progress and displayed results in real-time as shown in a sample partial Deliver phase screenshot on the next slide.



**A** **Ahleyah Abdul-Rahman**  
Ramadan 17, 1443 at 12:47

**Develop the practice of giving full measure and weight with equity in dealings with others.**

Achieve Rate  67%

Team: **Microbusiness Development**

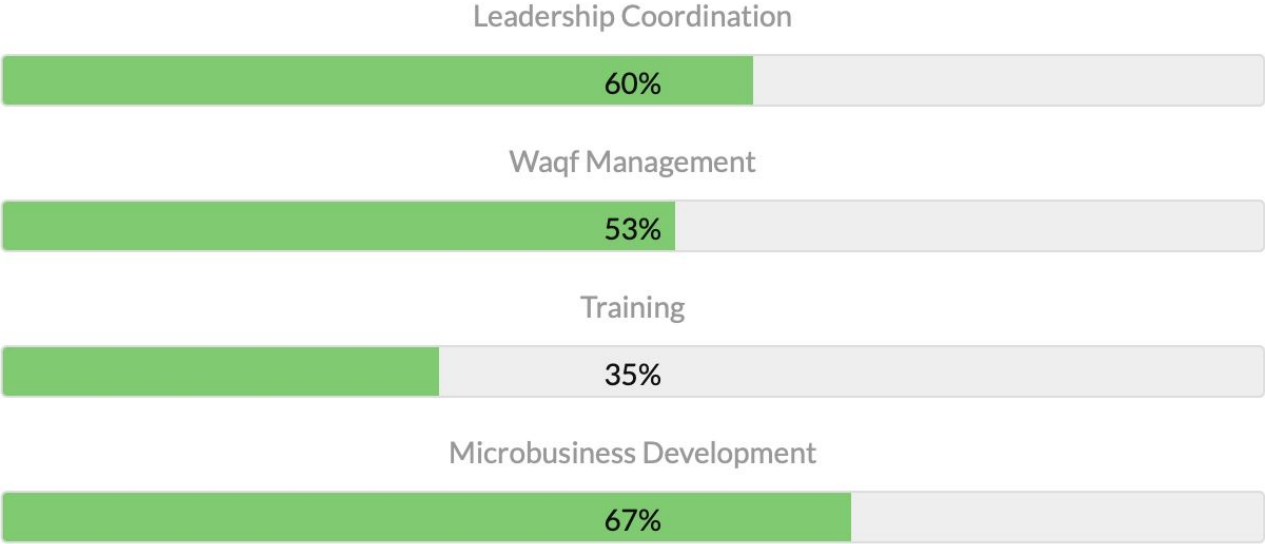
| Action step  |
|--|
| Weight : <b>9</b> Done : ✓<br>Construct a process to assess the microbusiness needs of our community.        |
| Weight : <b>8.5</b> Done : ✓<br>Construct a process for evaluating microbusinesses that merit qard al-hasan. |

Note the Achieve Rate metric. It provided a measure of completing the action steps that are given a higher weight or greater priority. Stakeholders used this statistic to help them understand the extent to which each person stayed focused on the most important parts of the work.

This metric was calculated both at the individual and team level. Team level performance is shown on the following slide.

### Teams' Achieve Rate

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In summary, this proposal describes a structured and sustainable way to increase the collective problem solving capabilities of people and their communities through consultation with each other. When a significant number of skilled problem solving people are linked with others in a way that neither can succeed without the other, worldwide positive change is possible.

Universities and innovation incubators can play a crucial role here. They usually structure their entrepreneurial development services by having participants work in teams. Using the ShuraForAll platform helps with this as it is designed specifically to support teamwork and performance evaluation.

This especially applies in the context of community engagement initiatives where universities and local communities and businesses collaborate to solve problems and pursue opportunities.