

**LEGACY: AN EXPLORATION OF THE DIMENSIONS OF
LEGACY WITHIN THE MENA REGION**

James Stibbs

Toby Hanscomb

Abstract

This case study examines definitions of legacy derived from sporting events, unpacking hard and soft, planned and unplanned and negative and positive as possible categorisations. It looks at the risks to creating and sustaining legacies as well as the different ways legacies have been measured – and the weaknesses attached to previous methodologies. Finally, it looks at the ways that major events in the Middle East, including the FIFA World Cup, have begun to deliver legacies for the region.

Keywords – Legacy, Olympics, FIFA, World Cup, IOC, Mega-events, Hard legacy, Soft legacy

Summary

The notion of legacy as related to sporting events is a relatively new one, and one which has only been popularised in the last twenty years or so. It emerged partially as a response to the rising costs of event-hosting, particularly of mega-events, in order to convince stakeholders that there can be a broader value to hosting.

Today, though, ‘legacy’ is a common requirement of bid documents and dimensions can range from skills and education, through greater participation, to the environment. A good legacy programme can be the difference between victory and defeat in a bidding process and this case study is designed to reveal how it can be leveraged for success.

Introduction

It is no coincidence that legacy emerged as a concept in bidding for major sports events in the 1990s, when the process for events like the Olympics and FIFA World Cup was first becoming more fiercely contested by cities.

Increasingly elaborate events saw costs being driven up and both bidders and rightsholders came in for criticism for the perceived lack of value in hosting an event. As the chart below (Figure 1) shows, the overall trend in hosting the Summer Olympic Games has been upwards since 1998, a trend reflected in hosting winter versions of the event over the same time period.

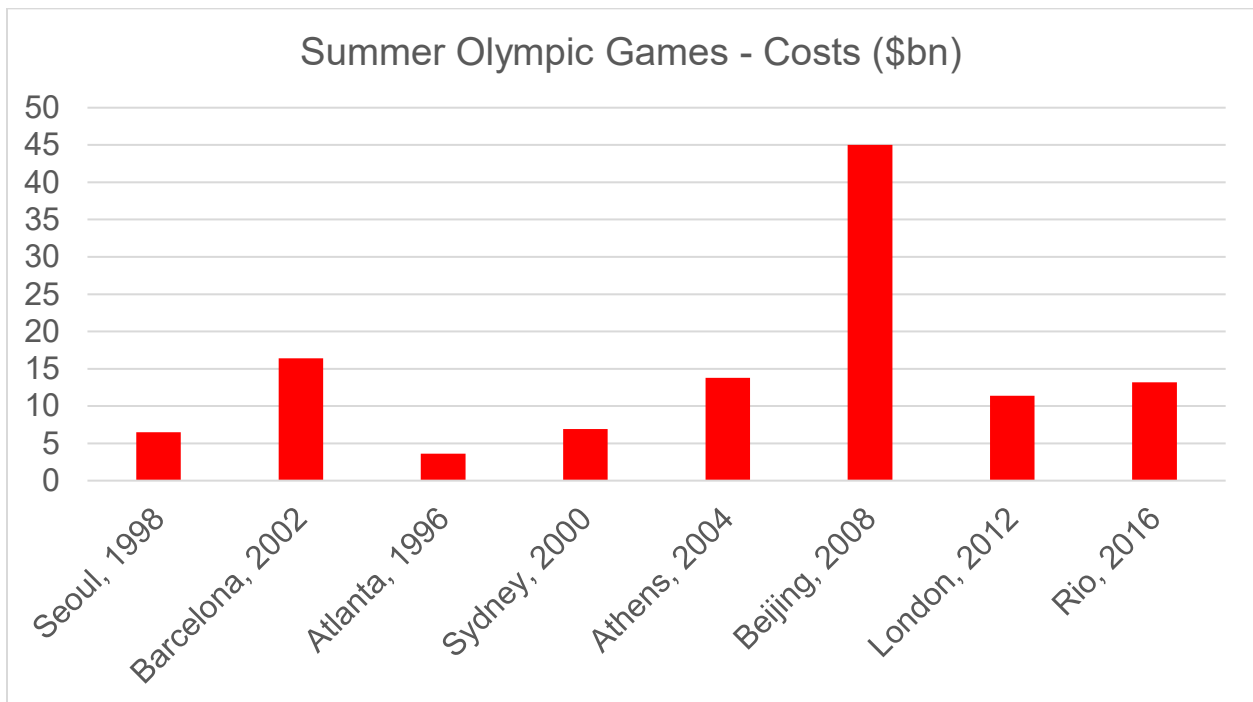


Figure 1 – Summer Olympic Game costs

Source: Baade and Matheson¹

When Barcelona won the right to host the games in 1986, protestors from the bidding cities of Amsterdam and Berchtesgaden had already gathered to protest their countries' bids. As a measure of the extravagant lengths to which some bidding cities

were prepared to go, representatives of the latter hired an entire 2,000-seat circus for a performance for IOC voters.² The debate around cost grew from this point but was not restricted to financial dimensions – those critical of the process also identified other mega-event downsides, like environmental and social costs too.

Although the IOC only formally began to assess 'legacy' from 2003 after it added to its charter a 14th mission ("To promote a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities and host countries"), host cities began talking about delivering legacies as early as 1991.³

What is legacy?

Legacy – a word which this case study will regrettably use repetitiously – can be defined in a number of ways and there is no real consensus on which definition sports should use. By and large, bidders and rights-holders use the term in its positive sense – ie that something with merit has been left behind - but, of course, it is perfectly legitimate to take a more neutral view of any legacy and include in it any harm created by an event too, too.

For many hosts, the primary aim of providing a home to a major sports event is to increase the cache of that city or country. Sujit Jasani, CEO of Vero Communications which, amongst the many strings to its bow, is regarded as the world's leading bid strategy agency, was interviewed for this case study and says:

“The hosting of mega-events events is a great exercise in brand-building for a country and it's a great way to attract events in the future too. All hosts have challenges

and reputational issues but there is no better platform to announce yourself as a nation or a city and hosts reap many brand, economic and political benefits.”

Thomson et al’s definition legacy is as comprehensive as any - “planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself”.⁴ And while the IOC uses its own types of legacy - Sporting; Social, cultural and political; Environmental; Economic; Urban – perhaps a more granular one is identified by Leopkey, Becca, and Milena M. Parent, in Figure 2 below.^{5 6}

Cultural	Cultural programming and opportunities
Environmental	Environmentally friendly architecture and engineering designs policies and education
Educational and informational	Associate with increasing personal development, experience and knowledge, research
Financial and economic	Increased employment, tourism, hosting and marketing opportunities, regional funding
Image	Increased national, international awareness, enhanced host destination image
Nostalgia	Personal experiences, memories of the event

Olympic Movement	Legacies associated with the Olympic values – e.g youth and global harmony, Political Policies and policy development
Psychological	Personal emotions, community-wide emotions, feelings of national pride, enthusiasm
Social	Issues related to health, social progress, homelessness, civic engagement
Sport	Sport facilities, sport development, sport participation
Sustainability	Long-term planning impact, e.g. environmentally friendly
Urban	Facilities, rejuvenation of an area, improved infrastructure

Figure 2 - Elements of legacy

Source: Leopkey et al⁷

It is also worth exploring the terms ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ (or tangible and non-tangible) to properly understand discussions around legacy.

Soft (Intangible) Legacy

Soft or intangible legacies often relate to dimensions which are difficult to measure but are highly prized by organisers. These can include the development of social capital, improved business networking and opportunities, an empowerment of citizens created by the ‘feel-good’ factor of hosting a successful event, enhanced international reputations or perceptions of a place or country, strengthened diplomatic relations, improved community spirit or cohesion, better inter-community and inter-

regional cooperation, increased creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, the creation of popular memory, formation of communal emotional experience, production of shared cultural values and norms and increased knowledge development.^{8 9}

Event-hosting can also create pressure for legal or social reforms by increasing scrutiny on a country's processes and systems. This phenomenon is something which can pay dividends for those who have previously been treated inequitably by these structures but which may also be unpopular with those who have previously benefited from it.

Another hallmark of soft legacies is that, unlike hard legacies, they may fade over time.

Hard (Tangible) Legacy:

Hard or tangible legacies are typically altogether easier to identify and measure, which makes them a popular feature of bids.

The most common and high-profile type of hard legacy is related to infrastructure and facilities. This can be sporting (a stadium, for example) or non-sporting (a transport link, for example) and in turn they can create permanent jobs which themselves contribute to the economy which supports them.

An increase in tourism is another tangible legacy which can be derived from hosting a sporting event (as opposed to an improvement in perception of a destination,

which may be intangible). Broadly speaking, if you can feel, touch or measure it easily, the legacy is a hard one.

Other examples of hard legacy include: sports facilities, like stadia or tracks, training sites, athlete villages, technical offices, power plants, telecoms networks, cultural attractions, roads or other transport infrastructure (like trains and tracks), parks and, arguably, increased economic activity.¹⁰

Other categorisations of legacy

Ultimately, it is possible to present categories of legacy in a wide variety of ways but a few of the most broadly used are worth noting here too.

Planned Legacy

As Chappelet noted, hosts can be increasingly sophisticated about creating a strategy that immediately begins to deliver a sense of legacy:

“As soon as it was awarded the Games, the city of Vancouver and the Organising Committee for the 2010 Winter Games created an entity named ‘Legacies Now!’ which was responsible for ensuring that during the six years of preparations, the population would already benefit from the positive impact. The idea was adopted by the British Government who entitled its Legacy Action Plan: *Before, During and After: Making the Most of the London 2012 Games.*”¹¹

Planning like this often allows local policy-makers to ‘piggy-back’ on events, using them, to leverage extra investment from other sources or to persuade budget-holders to make funding available for allied improvements – for example, in housing or transport.

Even planned legacy can take unexpected turns. Take the case of the London 2012 Olympic Games, for example. It initiated a programme of cultural and arts events to celebrate the Games that have now become a norm for Games organisers

Craig Beaumont, Head of Government Affairs for the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games, describes it for this case study:

“For sports festivals, it used to be a mix between sport and culture. But for London, we did this big cultural programme, big set-piece art events, big performance events and they were all done at the same time as the sport. We had a big screen in every city across the country, and we had cultural performances going on the year before the Games. So now, having a Cultural Olympiad as we called it, is now an accepted part of the Games, it’s not just about sport. You’re also focussed on people that aren’t that bothered about sport. You’re trying to make it broader for the country.”

Unplanned Legacy

Chappelet makes the counterpoint too, arguing that some legacies are unplanned:

“For example, tourism decreased in Athens during the two years prior to the Games. Whilst, tourism increased in Beijing before and after the 2008 Olympic Games without the organising committee or the Chinese tourism state agencies planning for it.”¹²

Negative Legacies

There are a host of possibilities when it comes to negative legacies and more perspicacious event-planners consider these in their planning so that they can support contingencies or ameliorate their worst effects.

Negative legacies can include redundant or under-used facilities, facilities which cost more to maintain than planned or which stay on the public's books for longer than planned.

As Alm et al notes, “Hosts of sport's mega-events have found it difficult to fill up stadiums following the events. One such example is the 2004 Olympics in Athens, most of the venues have not been used after the games. Also, the football stadium in Cape Town, which was built for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. After the World Cup, the local football club, Ajax Cape Town FC, has on average filled less than 10% of its stadium's capacity” (Note here, though, that Western Province Rugby are now close to a deal to become the stadium's anchor tenant).¹³

FIFA requires that World Cup hosts operate a stadium for the final and opening games that has a net capacity of at least 80,000, while 60,000 is necessary for the semi-finals and 40,000 for the other matches. But building (or extending) stadia of these

sizes and distributing them around a host country can create so-called ‘white elephant’ facilities (named after the pale pachyderms given as gifts and considered sacred in Siam. Their resulting upkeep could prove ruinous for recipients).

Other negative legacies include “debts from construction, high opportunity costs, unneeded infrastructure, temporary crowding out, loss of permanently returning tourists, increases of property rental, socially unjust displacement and re-distributions”.¹⁴

Legacy planning

It may be useful to consider the following phases in legacy planning

Legacy Phase	Purpose	Timeline
Legacy Conceptualization	Develop the legacy vision for the event	Begins before the bidding of the major sports event
Legacy Planning and implementation	Outline and exercise the legacy vision	Occurs during the planning and implementation modes of the Organizing Committee
Legacy Transfer	Distribute and transfer assets	Occurs during the wrap-up mode of the Organizing

		Committee
Post-Games legacy governance	Monitor and manage Games legacy over the long-term	Occurs after the Organizing Committee has ceased to exist

Figure 3 – Legacy planning phases

Source: Parent and Smith Swan¹⁵

Risks to legacy planning

A number of risks related to legacy should be considered by planners.

- Media scrutiny of legacy promises and/or their absence
- The difficulty of coordinating and delivering legacy when multiple stakeholders are involved
- The threats posed to a legacy by changing economic conditions – eg world recession, pandemic
- Related to this, threats to long-term planned revenues – or revenues which fail to make balanced budgeting possible
- The tendency to take a top-down approach to legacy. The absence of community consultation creates tension between locals and organisers
- Mega-events often require an army of volunteers to work. Acquiring and training this workforce can be challenging, particularly in smaller countries.

Sujit Jasani, CEO of Vero Communications, an agency which has advised several successful mega-event bids, says that the key to delivering a legacy is planning.

“Think about the legacy from the very beginning. Retrofitted legacy rarely works – you only have to look at the complexity of finding a tenant for London’s Olympic stadium and the way that deal unfolded to see that. Before you start building anything, think about what you will do with it afterwards – but also what can you do to instill a positive message of inspiration and human benefits.”

He adds that the mega-budgets involved in delivering events like the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup sometimes dazzle stakeholders but that bidders still need to be realistic about what can be achieved.

“Even though these budgets are often enormous, they can still be tight budgets and unless you plan it in, the risk is that after construction and delivery, there can be little left for human legacy, inspiration, transfer of skills etc. The organising committee’s absolute priority has to be delivering an event on time and on budget and the other stuff around an event – like legacy – can often end up as someone else’s problem if the first part runs into issues. So it’s vital to get the delivery part right first.”

Craig Beaumont, Head of Government Relations for the London 2012 Olympic Games, interviewed for this case study, stresses the importance of creating support across the political spectrum – binding the different voices within a political system to a common cause:

“A bid book has letters from all the party leaders, and cross-party support is really the only way you can guarantee the Games. The bid process takes two or three years

up to that point and then you have seven years until the Games. Which means in most democracies you have a change of Government during that time, so you need to show cross-party support. We had cross-party support from Day 1 for these Games, for every aspect of the programme, the construction but even for the communications campaigns.”

Beaumont also highlights the importance of good communication, especially during periods of transition in national leadership.

“There’s that strange time after when a new person takes over and no matter how much preparation you do, that can be a problem. So that was a lesson for us, that when the new Prime Minister took over, not only had we done our bit to brief the incoming team, but we had them inside the tent; they were on the Olympic board, they were engaged thoroughly, they felt we listened, so there were no surprises at national level. But that did mean that on policy around us, we then were quite confident.”

He goes on to make the important point that an event can also be judged by the actions of an event’s partners and that close attention should be paid to the way they use their association with any intellectual property. He cites the example of how London 2012 harnessed its sponsors.

“You inherit McDonalds, and you go and tell them what your Games means. So, you go to them and say, you are the global sponsor, you are royalty, you have paid hundreds of millions of pounds for this. But you can also go to them and say right, we do have issues, this is what the risks are, this is what we are doing. And you need to

ask – what is your activation plan for your sponsorship, and how does that fit in with our vision ‘to inspire a generation’, to inspire people to do sport. What we didn’t want was a specific Olympic-based especially sugary drink from Coca-Cola, we don’t want a hamburger marketed in a certain way. But as long as that money went to fund the Games, which it did, and as long as we didn’t push their products that was fine, and we were happy with that – and everyone can then be happy with the outcome.”

2. Measuring legacy

Measuring a legacy can clearly be a challenging endeavour, especially when you consider the intangible nature of many ‘soft’ elements. When you factor in the slow-burn return of some events (for example, Barcelona’s 1992 seafront regeneration), it can also be a long-term activity.

However, doing so can be an important exercise for many event stakeholders – helping to prove (or sometimes disprove) that the resources that have gone into an event offer a return on investment.

As a result, legacy quantification has become increasingly more sophisticated over recent years and now takes in many dimensions.

The most common starting place (and sometimes endpoint) for calculating legacy is assessing its economic impact on the city, area or country. It is worth noting here that some researchers, including Preuss, argue that “The meaning of the word ‘impact’ has to be distinguished from the meaning of ‘legacy’. The impact is caused by a short-term impulse, for example, an exogenous shock to the economy directly through the event.

Although economic mega-event impacts are strong, they are short-term and therefore not a legacy".¹⁶ In this sense, Preuss is suggesting that an economic impact is like a small earthquake. It hits a city during an event, creates a wave that pushes through it but which quickly dissipates, and leaves no sign that it was ever there. His position is that: "The economic legacy... is all additional economic activity based on greater productivity due to changes in the host cities' location factors (e.g. post-event tourism due to increased interest in the event city)."¹⁷

Others would take issue with this perspective for the reason that even a quick uptick in economic activity can have lasting effects on an economy or an area.

Top-Down Economic Approach

One way to measure an event's economic legacy is the 'top down approach'. It provides for a comparison between the economic indicators of a host city and indicators generated by a model which predicts what would have happened had the event not taken place (the so-called 'without case').

Comparison city data is achieved by creating a reference case based on data collected from comparable cities in similar economic cycles. The average change in reference cities is used as a comparison to the change in the host city and the tool is known as the 'difference in differences'. In this way, significant changes in employment, prices or growth can be attributed to hosting the event.

Benchmarking

A deeper understanding of legacy than pure economics necessitates a broader set of indicators.

The IOC offers to “assist bidding cities and future Olympic Games Organisers, through the transfer of strategic direction obtained from past and present Olympic Games, to identify potential legacies and thereby maximise the benefits of their Olympic Games; and to create a comparable benchmark across all future Olympic Games.”

But it too has acknowledged shortcomings in the way it has previously tackled this issue. In a joint study with Mainz University, it found that the options for consolidated overviews were ‘limited’.¹⁸

The Tokyo organising committee will be the first to adopt a new approach which uses an IOC legacy reporting framework. It applies a flexible structure ‘to identify, describe, analyse and measure legacy,’ in the hope that organisers can learn from one another and that the body of legacy understanding can be built up over time. It will also ensure that a common methodology will be applied to analyse and measure legacy and is based on the work of Preuss.¹⁹

Analytical tool for the evaluation of Olympic Games legacy, developed by Prof. Holger Preuss

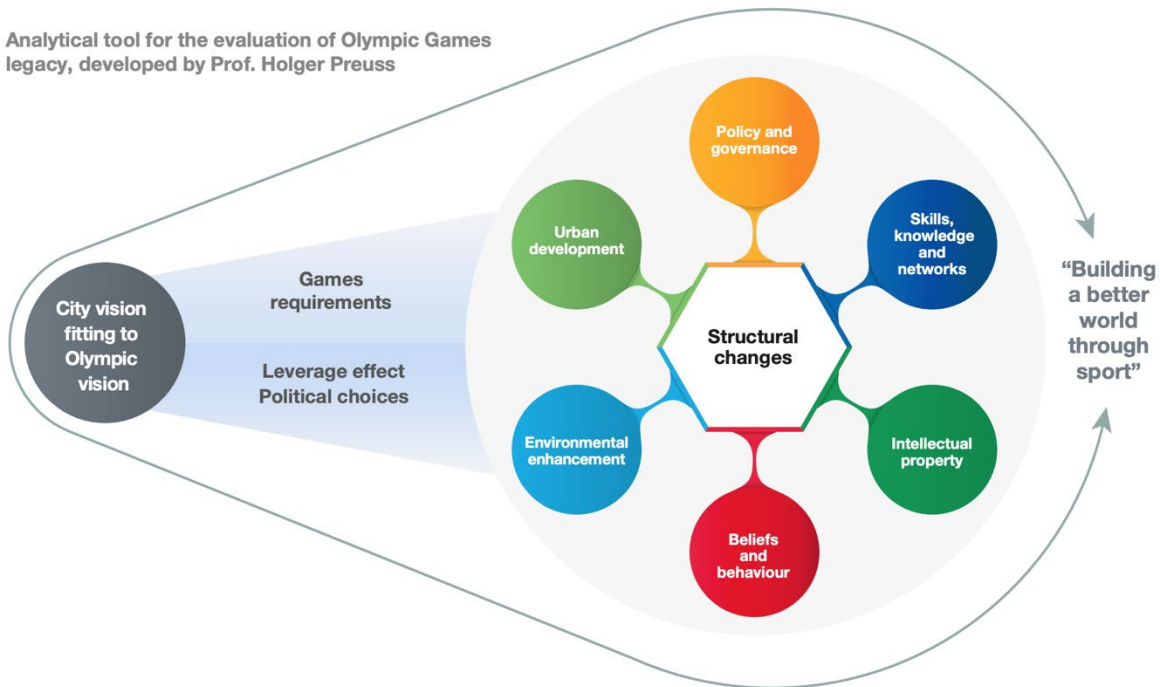


Figure 4 – The structure of the IOC's new legacy evaluation framework

Source: *International Olympic Committee*²⁰

The areas it includes are:

1. **Urban development** – The changes in the urban landscape (good and bad) which have an effect on the experience of both visitors and citizens. This can include sports facilities (and their cost) or transport and mobility.
2. **Environmental enhancement** – The encompasses any change to air and water quality and their effect on the environment. It can take into account cleaner buildings, energy efficiency and waste treatment, for example.
3. **Policies and governance** – All changes of law, any new regulation, company governance and organisational structures, including human rights. This might include pushing sport higher up school curriculums, new anti-doping structures, or food sustainability policies.
4. **Human development** – Three areas where a human can change:

- a. Learning new skills – for example, cooking or driving commercial vehicles
 - b. Attaining new knowledge – for example recipes from a different culture, increasing vocabulary in a foreign language
 - c. Creating a new network or extending an existing one
5. **Intellectual property** – Ideas and innovation which are created as a result of an event
6. **Social development** – Changes in people’s minds, including across racism, peace, females participating in sport, foreigners, environment, public transportation, national identity. The ‘feel-good’ factor is also included.

3. Legacy and the Middle East

Analysis of the available evidence suggests a number of legacy themes common to successful Middle Eastern bids and hosting.

- A changed perception of the region
- Diversifying from an oil-dependent economy
- Growth of tourism industry
- Engage a growing young population
- National unity
- Promoting participation and health
- Sharing Arab customs and traditions with the world
- Promoting the region as a transport hub

Qatar 2022

The most notable event the region has won the rights to has yet to be held but planning for legacy from the Qatar FIFA World Cup 2022 is well underway – and in some cases already delivering. In fact, the event’s organising cadre, has adopted the word into its name - The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy.

“The SC is responsible for working with national stakeholders to deliver essential tournament infrastructure and services and to ensure the first FIFA World Cup™ to be held in the Arab world leaves a meaningful legacy in Qatar and the wider region, using the power of football to promote sustainable economic, education and social development.”²¹

Business

Kaplanidou et al make the case that business is one of the areas where a legacy can already be felt in the Middle East.

“Qatar has adapted its business culture to be more in line with the west as a result of increasing engagement with a multitude of World Cup stakeholders and the inclusivity and transparency which comes with it. The enduring effects included shifts in culture of doing business with Western influential parties, innovation that permeates certain fields such as venue construction ... and changes in perception about the region globally through the creation of business relationships.”²²

Infrastructure

Sujit Jasani argues that the infrastructure legacy from Qatar 2020 will be significant and indeed, the sums support this case. The country has continually invested in its sporting infrastructure to the point where, despite its size, it can be compared to some of the world's leading sporting nations. In the build-up to the FIFA World Cup, it is anticipated that the government will spend \$140bn in upgrades to transport infrastructure.²³

“Hosting major events has significantly accelerated the provision of hard infrastructure in the country and in that sense the World Cup has been an enabler for this part of a legacy.”

Sports

Qatar now boasts the world's largest indoor sports complex.²⁴ The country's Aspire facility claims to assess the skills of 400,000 boys each year from across Asia, Africa, Central and South America, providing it with invaluable soft power across its network.²⁵

Jasani comments:

“You've also seen sporting success - for example winning the Asian Cup – which may never have happened without investment in Aspire, facilities and recruitment programmes. It's all propelled the reputation of the nation forward in ways that were planned but were never certain.”

Political

It's possible to argue that winning the rights to host the FIFA World Cup has already delivered for Qatar's leaders – by opening doors which may otherwise have remained shut and by positioning the country as a leader in the region as far as football goes. As Jasani again states:

“There is already a much greater awareness of the nation – for inward investment, tourism, great political interaction.

“Hosting the first Middle Eastern World Cup also sends a powerful message to the region – that we are part of this global game – and that will inspire a lot of participation as well.

“The hosting of events like this is a great exercise in brand-building for the country and it's a great way to attract events in the future too. Which in turn will attract the world's leaders to the country.”

National identity

Ahmed Kellil Abbassi, Executive Director of Competitions and Football Development at the country's elite football competition, the Qatar Stars League (QSL), argues that hosting the event has redefined ambition in the country.

“In 2010, to have the vision to host the World Cup proves we should always have the vision to be the best and that nothing is impossible. In our society, everyone has this belief now.

“If we all believe in the same vision, we can build enough strength to make incredible things happen.

“It will be a catalyst to push us forward. 2022 is not the end but we will strive to always make a positive impact on the world. It puts pressure on us but it also gives us the certitude to aim for a very high benchmark, whatever we do.”

IAAF 2019 World Championships

The 2019 IAAF World Championships in Doha secured a range of ‘firsts’ for the athletics world and although it is too early to tell which may last, it is worth summarising a number of potential legacy aspects:

- Midnight marathon – The first time this has been attempted at a major championships, the route was artfully illuminated and featured activations intended to make spectating a more family-friendly event.
- Stadium technology – Doha’s Khalifa International Stadium was brought up to Global Sustainability Assessment System-certified standards, with LED lighting, digital floodlights and air-conditioning technology.
- In-stadium scheduling – organisers removed all morning sessions from the schedule and experimented with a split evening session, with sessions sandwiched around one-hour entertainment slots – designed to increase appeal to families.

Notes

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¹⁵ Parent and Smith-Swan, 2013: 292 (Source from *Managing major sports events: Theory and practice* book, but obtained from Birkbeck lecture slides)

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²⁵ Salma Thani & Tom Heenan (2017) The ball may be round but football is becoming increasingly Arabic: oil money and the rise of the new football order, Soccer & Society, 18:7, 1012-1026, DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2015.1133416

Teaching Asset

Exercise 1 – Given what you know about the region, describe the areas in which three MENA countries of your choice are best placed to deliver a type of legacy for a medium-sized multi-sports event.

Exercise 2 – Thinking about the socio-political situation in each of these places, what are the biggest threats to delivery of a legacy and how might those threats be mitigated or reduced?

Exercise 3 – In what areas do you expect legacy will be more important for mega-event organisers in the next ten years and why? How well equipped are MENA-region countries to deliver this kind of legacy?