

# VALIDATING THE PEACE FRAMEWORK INDICATORS IN MADANI URBAN PLANNING: THE ROLE OF MOSQUE AND WAQF LAND DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** *In the evolving landscape of urban development, religious assets such as mosques and waqf land remain underutilized despite their potential to contribute to inclusive and sustainable communities. This study aims to validate the PEACE framework, which comprises Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community, and Environmental elements, within the context of Madani urban planning. A qualitative approach was employed through expert interviews and focus group discussions involving stakeholders from town planning, Islamic councils, waqf institutions, local authorities, and community representatives. Thematic analysis using Atlas Ti software was conducted to identify and code key indicators across the PEACE dimensions. The findings reveal that mosque and waqf land can function as multifunctional hubs that support urban inclusivity, economic revitalisation, effective governance, community empowerment, and environmental sustainability. The validated indicators were synthesized into a final conceptual framework that offers a holistic model for integrating religious assets into urban planning. This framework supports sustainable development and enhances the socio-economic role of mosques and waqf land in revitalising local towns. The study contributes to future research by providing a structured foundation for policy formulation, strategic planning, and collaborative development aligned with the Madani city concept.*

**Keywords:** *PEACE framework, madani urban planning, mosque development, waqf land utilization, qualitative thematic analysis*

## Introduction

Urban development increasingly emphasises sustainability, inclusivity, and community engagement. Religious assets such as mosques and waqf (Islamic endowment) land possess significant potential to contribute to these goals yet remain underutilised. Historically, mosques have served not only as places of worship but also as centres for education, welfare, and social cohesion, while waqf institutions have supported community development and public infrastructure (Mohamed & Akande, 2025; Ishak, Kamaruzaman & Ismail, 2023).

The Madani City Concept seeks to integrate spiritual, social, economic, and environmental values into urban planning. Within this framework, mosques and waqf (Islamic endowment) land can serve as multifunctional hubs for economic revitalisation, community empowerment, governance improvement, and sustainable development (Ministry of Economy Malaysia, 2023).

This study validates the PEACE framework, which encompasses Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community, and Environmental elements, through expert interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis conducted using Atlas.Ti software enabled the identification of recurring themes and opportunities. These include the establishment of waqf bazaars, mosque-based activity hubs, transparent administrative practices, and green initiatives such as solar-powered mosques and urban gardens (Md Zabri, 2023). The resulting framework strengthens the socio-economic role of religious assets and offers practical pathways toward sustainable urban revitalisation. It aligns with national planning legislation and collaborative governance mechanisms outlined by PLANMalaysia, which advocate for inclusive and data-driven urban development (Rameli, 2022).

## Problem Statement

Traditionally, mosques and waqf (Islamic endowment) land are perceived as assets reserved solely for religious purposes, such as suraus, madrasahs, mosques, or cemeteries. This narrow interpretation has contributed to the underutilisation of waqf land, which is often seen as unproductive unless developed in ways that support the local economy (Mohammad & Mar Iman, 2006; Ishak, Kamaruzaman & Ismail, 2023). However, Islamic jurisprudence allows for broader applications of waqf, including socio-economic development initiatives that benefit the community at large.

In Malaysia, there is growing recognition that waqf assets can be transformed into productive ventures, such as commercial buildings, hotels, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities. For example, Yayasan Waqaf Malaysia has successfully developed waqf hotel projects that generate income, create employment, and contribute to local economic revitalisation. These initiatives demonstrate that waqf land, when managed strategically and in accordance with Shariah principles, can serve both religious and socio-economic functions (Suhaimi & Suhaimi, 2020; Mahmud & Noordin, 2024).

The misconception that waqf land must be confined to religious use stems partly from limited public awareness and fragmented legal frameworks. Harmonisation of waqf laws and improved governance are essential to unlock the full potential of these assets (Md Zabri, 2023).

## Research Objective

The objectives of this study are to validate the PEACE framework indicators, which encompass Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental dimensions, through

expert interviews and focus group discussions. This validation process aims to ensure the framework's relevance and applicability to the Malaysian urban context.

The study further seeks to explore expert perspectives on the evolving role of mosques and waqf land in promoting sustainable urban revitalisation, particularly within the scope of the Madani City Concept. This concept, introduced by the Malaysian government, emphasises inclusive development, environmental stewardship and community empowerment (Ministry of Economy Malaysia, 2023).

Mosques and waqf assets, traditionally viewed as religious institutions and endowments, are increasingly recognised as potential catalysts for socio-economic development and urban regeneration (Mohammad & Mar Iman, 2006; Ishak, Kamaruzaman & Ismail, 2023). Their integration into urban planning frameworks can contribute to more resilient, equitable and culturally grounded cities.

Finally, the study aims to refine a comprehensive framework that integrates mosque and waqf development into Madani urban planning, thereby supporting Malaysia's broader goals for sustainable and inclusive urban transformation.

### Literature Review

Urban development increasingly emphasises sustainable and inclusive approaches that integrate social, economic and environmental dimensions. Within this discourse, religious assets such as mosques and waqf (Islamic endowment) land have been recognised as potential contributors to community revitalisation. Historically, mosques have extended beyond their religious functions to serve as centres of education, social interaction and community welfare (Jaffar, Harun & Abdullah, 2020; Haider, 2021). Waqf institutions, similarly, have played vital roles in financing public services, supporting the poor and sustaining educational and health facilities.

Despite this legacy, research indicates that these assets are often underutilised in contemporary urban planning, leaving their potential contributions largely untapped (Mat Hassan, Alias, Mahamood & De Costa, 2021). The development of waqf land in Malaysia has traditionally been limited to religious purposes such as mosques, cemeteries and religious schools, which restricts its capacity to generate broader socio-economic benefits.

The Madani City Concept represents a holistic model of urban planning rooted in Islamic principles. It promotes the integration of spiritual, social and economic values into development strategies, highlighting the capacity of mosques and waqf land to act as multifunctional hubs (Mat Hassan, Hamid, Yahaya, Abdullah & Fazial, 2021). Studies have shown that such integration can enhance community empowerment, generate local economic opportunities and strengthen governance structures (Zaidi, 2024). For example, the concept of the mosque as a "third place" has been explored in traditional Malay settlements, where mosques serve as vital public spaces that foster social sustainability (Jaffar, Harun & Abdullah, 2020).

However, systematic frameworks to guide the effective mobilisation of these resources remain limited. To address this gap, the PEACE framework, comprising Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental dimensions, has been introduced as a tool for assessing urban development initiatives. Previous applications of the PEACE framework suggest that incorporating its five elements, namely Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental, can foster inclusivity, resilience and sustainability in urban

development initiatives. These dimensions reflect a holistic approach to planning that aligns with global best practices in sustainable urbanism. For instance, the Physical dimension ensures adequate infrastructure and spatial design, while the Economic dimension promotes equitable access to resources and opportunities. The Administrative dimension supports transparent governance, the Community dimension encourages civic engagement, and the Environmental dimension safeguards ecological integrity.

Although the framework has been conceptually applied in various planning contexts, empirical studies validating its indicators in relation to mosque and waqf development are limited. This gap is significant because religious assets such as mosques and waqf land have historically contributed to urban vitality, social cohesion and public welfare (Jaffar, Harun & Abdullah, 2020). However, their integration into contemporary planning frameworks is often overlooked due to fragmented governance, lack of data and underutilisation of waqf assets (Mat Hassan et al., 2021).

Therefore, further research is needed to test the applicability of the PEACE framework in localised settings, especially within the context of Islamic urbanism and Madani city planning. Such validation would not only strengthen the framework's relevance but also unlock the potential of religious assets as drivers of sustainable and inclusive urban transformation.

This highlights the need for research that not only examines the potential of religious assets in urban planning but also tests the applicability of the PEACE framework to ensure its relevance for local contexts. Building on this foundation, the present study seeks to validate PEACE framework indicators through expert interviews and focus group discussions. By synthesising diverse perspectives, the study contributes to the refinement of a comprehensive framework for Madani urban planning. In doing so, it extends the literature on mosque and waqf development while positioning religious assets as integral components of sustainable and inclusive city models.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative research design to validate the indicators of the PEACE framework, which comprises Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental elements, within the context of Madani urban planning. The qualitative approach was selected to capture in-depth perspectives from experts and community representatives, enabling a holistic understanding of the potential roles of mosques and waqf land in sustainable town revitalisation.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including town planning experts, officers from State Islamic Religious Councils, waqf institution representatives, local authority officials and mosque chairpersons from the study area. This purposive sampling ensured that the insights gathered were grounded in practical experience and institutional knowledge.

**Table 1: Panel Experts Involved Through Expert Interviews Conducted Using a Qualitative Method**

No	Key Informant (Panel Expert)	Designation	Type of Institution
1	E1	Senior Executive Officer	Yayasan Wakaf Malaysia
2	E2	Project Manager J48 (Unit Rancangan Pemajuan 5)	Pejabat Projek Zon Tengah PLAN Malaysia (Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa)
3	E3	Principal of Planning Consultant	Planning Consultant
4	E4	Deputy Mufti of Perak	Jabatan Mufti Perak State
5	E5	General Manager, Mal & Waqf Management and Development Division	Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Melayu Perak
6	E6	Town and Regional Planning Officer Tapah Local Authority (Department of Planning Development and Landscape)	Tapah Local Authority

Source: This Study (2025)

The table presents the institutional affiliations of panel experts who contributed to this study through expert interviews. Each expert was assigned a unique identifier (E1 to E6) to facilitate thematic coding and analysis using Atlas.ti software. These experts represent a diverse range of organisations that are directly relevant to mosque and waqf land development within the context of the Madani City Concept. The affiliations include national-level waqf management, urban planning authorities, private sector planning consultants, religious institutions, state-level waqf administration and local government planning departments. This multidisciplinary representation ensured a comprehensive understanding of the PEACE framework, encompassing the physical, economic, administrative, community and environmental dimensions of mosque and waqf land development.

Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the qualitative data, supported using Atlas.ti software. This approach facilitated the systematic coding of textual data, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and sub-themes across expert responses. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a widely used method for analysing qualitative data, particularly in exploring patterns and meanings within textual content.

In this study, the analysis focused specifically on indicators related to the PEACE framework. Codes with similar meanings were clustered into themes and sub-themes, forming the foundation for validating the framework. This process enabled comparative analysis across different stakeholder groups and contributed to the refinement of a comprehensive framework for Madani urban planning.

### Methodology by Phase

In this study, the process of coding and analysis using Atlas.ti was carried out in five systematic phases to ensure rigorous validation of the PEACE framework indicators. The qualitative data were derived from interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders including town

planning experts, officers from State Islamic Religious Councils, waqf institution representatives, local authority officials and mosque chairpersons.

The first phase involved familiarisation with the data. All interview transcripts were carefully transcribed, uploaded and reviewed within Atlas.ti. This stage enabled the researcher to gain an overall understanding of the content, identify significant points and prepare the dataset for in-depth analysis.

The second phase focused on generating initial codes. Meaningful segments of text were highlighted and assigned descriptive codes that captured repeated keywords, phrases or concepts related to the PEACE framework. In some cases, multiple codes were applied to the same segment to reflect overlapping ideas and perspectives.

The third phase involved searching for themes. The generated codes were organised and clustered into broader categories, allowing the grouping of similar codes under preliminary themes corresponding to the five PEACE elements: Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental. This step facilitated the identification of patterns that reflected the collective insights of the respondents.

The fourth phase was reviewing themes. Initial themes were revisited, refined and consolidated to ensure consistency and accuracy. Redundant or overlapping codes were merged, while themes lacking sufficient supporting data were reconsidered or redefined. This phase ensured that the emerging themes were coherent, well-supported and aligned with the research objectives.

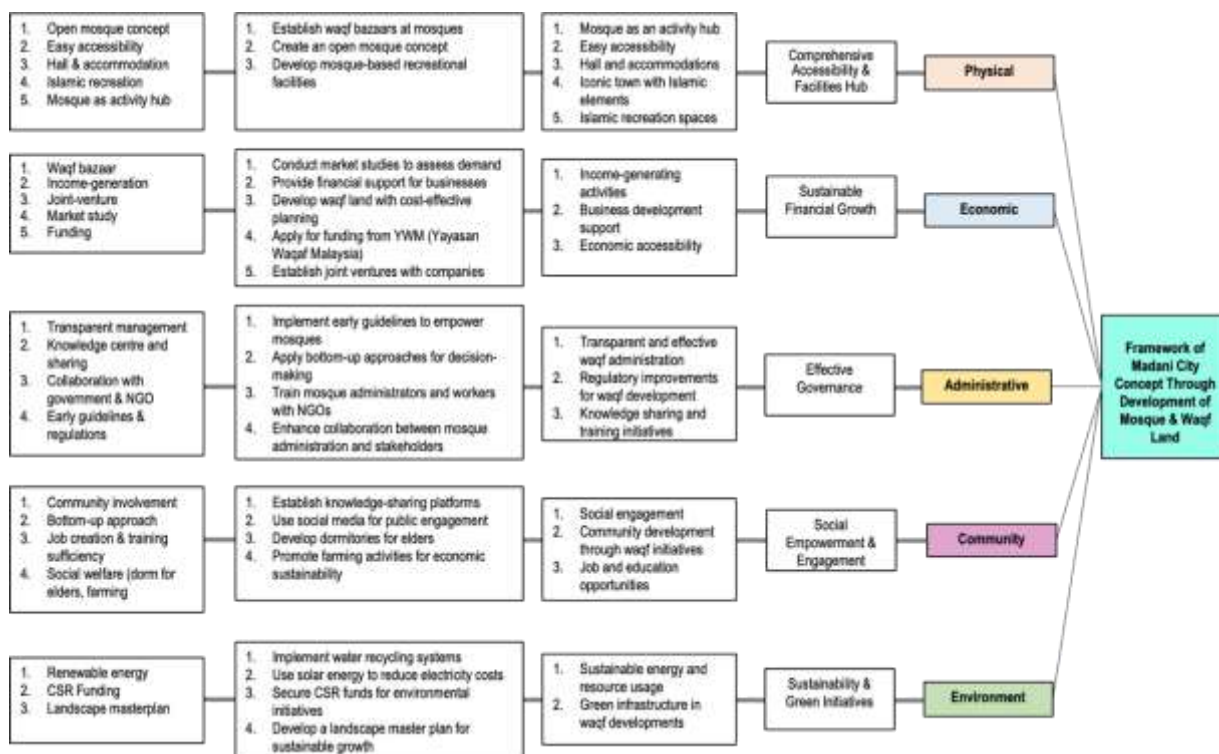
The final phase involved forming the framework. Validated themes and sub-themes were synthesised into a structured conceptual model. At this stage, the analysis moved beyond categorisation to interpretation, with the themes positioned under the PEACE framework dimensions. The result was a comprehensive framework illustrating how mosque and waqf land development can contribute to sustainable urban revitalisation under the Madani City Concept. This systematic coding process ensured that the framework was grounded in empirical evidence drawn from both expert knowledge and community perspectives.

**Figure 1: Thematic Coding of Expert Interview Data Using Atlas.Ti Categorised According to the PEACE Framework Elements**

(RO1) Theme: Physical Factors	(RO1) Theme: Economy Factors	(RO1) Theme: Administrative Factors	(RO1) Theme: Community Factors	(RO1) Theme: Environmental Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating waqf bazar at mosque</li> <li>• Characteristics of strategies</li> <li>• Concept of open mosque</li> <li>• Easy accessibility</li> <li>• Hall and accomodatities</li> <li>• Iconic town featuring Islamic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cater economy to all community</li> <li>• Cost to develop waqf land</li> <li>• Easy accessibility</li> <li>• Fund to develop waqf land</li> <li>• Giving fund to start business</li> <li>• Income generating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative management</li> <li>• Administrative transparency</li> <li>• Apply funding for Yayasan Wakaf Malaysia (YWM)</li> <li>• Creativity of administration</li> <li>• Early guidelines to empower mosque</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly stating benefits</li> <li>• Bottom-up approach</li> <li>• Dormitory for elders farming activity</li> <li>• Farming activity</li> <li>• Job opportunity</li> <li>• Knowledge centre</li> <li>• Knowledge sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling water usage</li> <li>• Reduce electrical usage using solar</li> <li>• CSR fund</li> <li>• Landscape masterplan</li> </ul>

<p>architecture and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic recreation</li> <li>• Mosque and waqf land as tools</li> <li>• Mosque as activity hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market study to see demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join-venture with company</li> <li>• Knowledge centre</li> <li>• Knowledge sharing</li> <li>• Making collaboration</li> <li>• Mosque admin for knowledge context</li> <li>• Regulation change for waqf development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public engagement</li> <li>• Social media platform</li> <li>• Target management to administer</li> <li>• Training workers with NGO</li> <li>• Waqf function to generate benefits</li> </ul>	
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Source: This Study (2025)



**Figure 2: Conceptual framework for mosque and waqf land development within the Madani City Concept, structured according to the PEACE elements and derived from expert interview data using Atlas.ti**

Source: This Study (2025)

## Results and Discussion

This study presents the findings derived from qualitative data collection and analysis, focusing on the role of mosques and waqf land in revitalising local towns within the framework of the Madani City Concept. The study employed expert interviews as the primary method to gather in-depth insights from professionals across various fields, including urban planning, religious administration, waqf management and local governance. Thematic analysis was conducted using Atlas.ti software to identify key patterns and perspectives aligned with the PEACE framework, which encompasses Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental dimensions.

### Expert Interview Analysis

The expert interviews provided valuable insights into the applicability of the PEACE framework covering Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental elements in revitalising local towns through mosque and waqf land development. Experts from diverse professional backgrounds, including town planning, Islamic religious councils, waqf management, and local governance, shared perspectives grounded in real-world practices. The diversity of responses highlighted both opportunities and challenges in aligning religious assets with urban planning goals under the Madani City Concept.

#### Physical Aspects

Experts emphasised the potential of mosques and waqf land to serve as multifunctional physical hubs. Suggestions included open mosque concepts, recreational spaces and traveller-friendly facilities to enhance accessibility and inclusivity. The idea of mosque-centred Islamic townships was proposed to reinforce the town's identity and serve as community activity centres. However, legal classifications of waqf land, such as *waqf am* and *waqf khas*, were noted as critical constraints that must be addressed during planning.

#### Economic Aspects

From an economic perspective, the interviews underscored the need for feasibility studies and market assessments before embarking on development projects. Experts agreed that mosques could serve as centres for economic activity, hosting bazaars, food stalls and other commercial initiatives that benefit both locals and travellers. Waqf land located near strategic areas, such as highways, was considered particularly promising for generating sustainable income.

#### Administrative Aspects

Governance and administrative transparency emerged as critical themes. Experts from waqf institutions emphasised the importance of proper documentation, committee approval processes and regulatory compliance before any project could proceed. Funding mechanisms, including cash waqf, CSR contributions and investment-based benefit funds, were identified as essential for sustaining long-term projects. The role of mosque committees was highlighted as decisive; active and knowledgeable committees were seen as key drivers of successful implementation. Conversely, weak administrative capacity was identified as a major obstacle.

#### Community Aspects

The community element was strongly emphasised in the interviews. Experts agreed that bottom-up approaches, training programmes and inclusive decision-making are crucial for sustaining mosque and waqf-based initiatives. Community involvement was not only viewed as a source of ideas but also as a mechanism for ensuring ownership and long-term sustainability. Suggestions included skill development workshops, religious education and cooperative-based management systems to strengthen local participation in development projects.

#### Environment Aspects

Although less frequently discussed, the environmental dimension was acknowledged as an emerging priority. Experts pointed to examples of “green mosque” initiatives, including solar energy systems, water recycling for ablution areas and small-scale community farming projects. These initiatives align with broader sustainability goals while reducing operational costs for mosques (PLANMalaysia, 2021; Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia, 2006; Government of Malaysia, 2021). However, experts noted that waqf



funds often face restrictions in financing softscape or landscape projects, requiring creative solutions such as CSR funding or partnerships with external agencies.

This observation is supported by Expert 1, who noted that waqf funds are generally restricted from being used for softscape developments due to maintenance uncertainties. As a solution, alternative funding sources such as CSR contributions and non-Shariah-compliant funds have been utilised to support landscape and environmental initiatives. Examples include green mosque projects involving solar energy systems and water recycling, which contribute to sustainability while reducing operational costs.

### Summary

The expert interviews collectively demonstrate that the PEACE framework provides a comprehensive lens for integrating mosque and waqf development into the Madani City Concept. While opportunities exist across all five dimensions, the success of such initiatives depends on balancing regulatory requirements, financial sustainability and community engagement. The findings underscore the need for collaborative governance involving religious councils, local authorities, mosque committees and the community at large.

### Conclusion

This study explored the role of mosques and waqf land in revitalising local towns through the Madani City Concept, using the PEACE framework as a guiding lens. Through a qualitative methodology involving expert interviews, the research validated key indicators across the Physical, Economic, Administrative, Community and Environmental dimensions.

The findings demonstrate that mosques and waqf land have the potential to function as multifunctional hubs, supporting not only religious practices but also contributing to economic development, effective governance, community empowerment and environmental sustainability.

The study concludes that the PEACE framework offers a comprehensive and practical model for integrating religious assets into urban planning. However, its successful implementation depends on the presence of clear regulatory frameworks, robust governance structures, sufficient funding and active community participation. By refining these indicators, the study contributes to policy and planning efforts aligned with the Madani City Concept, offering pathways towards inclusive, resilient and sustainable urban development.

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