



The Journey for 2022

Challenges Facing Qatar Hosting FIFA World Cup

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Abstract

Hosting a mega event like World Cup requires a great investment and excellent project management skills from any hosting government. Large and complex projects, especially highways and bridges, are unique in that their construction ventures of many other utilities and disciplines, and they tend to affect large residential, industrial or commercial areas. As such, they influence, and get influenced by project management. Project Managers who do not interact attentively with the environment of their projects are likely to face difficulties during planning and execution of their projects. This is further emphasized when projects are large and complex by nature. Qatar's hosting 2022 World Cup is in no exception. Social and environmental impact to the host country of mega events like the World Cup has been studied extensively. Our research concluded in this paper is to analyze that a large percentage of the delays, difficulties and cost overruns are attributed to risks and the absence of poor project management strategies. For the success of projects, a structured project management methodology needs to be followed by project managers.

Introduction

In December of 2010 FIFA selected Qatar to host the 2022 World Cup. Qatar, a small country the size of Portland and Beaverton combined with a population less than 1.7 million will need to invest extensively in their infrastructure to support the estimated 4Million fans that will attend. Qatar will be the first Arab country to ever hold such an event representing the entire Middle East. This is an opportunity to bridge the gap between the Arab world and the West. Qatar gave a feel of what the World Cup would be like by holding a friendly match between Brazil and Argentina. Furthermore, people coming from different nations visited Qatar for this match and strengthened the image Qatar would paint of their interest in the World Cup 2022.

Contenders to host 22nd world Cup were Qatar, Australia, Japan, South Korea and USA. Qatar won the bid to host the 2022 World Cup to the surprise of everybody. The controversy erupted. Some accused Qatar bribed FIFA officials. It is an interesting case for a project management viability study of big events like the World Cup hosted by tiny nations like Qatar. Qatar will have to spend more money than Germany 2006, South Africa 2010, and Brazil 2014 to host World Cup mainly because they have fewer sporting facilities and infrastructure. They have to build 9 new stadiums [1]. They have to invest on infrastructure roads, railways, and airport. Hotels have to be built for the spectators coming to the World Cup. A road improvement and expansion program which includes the \$687 million Lusail Expressway, Doha Expressway, Dukhan Freeway, and the Doha Bay Crossing will cost Qatar \$20 billion [2]. There will also be a construction of rail network which will cost additional \$25 billion [2]. The rail network includes a construction of a metropolitan railway in Doha, a high-speed rail link between New Doha International airport, Doha city center and across the proposed Qatar-Bahrain causeway into Bahrain, in addition to a freight line that will link up with the wider GCC rail network [3].

Methodology

In this paper, we will examine the challenges facing Qatar hosting the FIFA World Cup from project management perspective. An extensive research has been conducted to understand challenges that will face Qatar from the viewpoint of fans, government, project managers and sponsors. Since this is a new project and experience for Qatar to host this mega event, finding resources and valid data to support this research was difficult. Thorough research and analysis on past mega events hosted by other countries was done in order to establish and support our findings. We started with the World Cup in South Africa 2010, which is a similar event to Qatar's. For this event, data was gathered for the same four major areas of interest which are fans, government, project managers and sponsors perspectives. The same was done for two other past mega events Athens, Greece Olympics in 2004 and Olympics in Montreal Canada in 1996. After we gathered the data we needed, we pointed out the key challenges in these projects and how it affected the host country and the event itself. The results of this research were used as a tool to define what major challenges Qatar will face during the execution of this mega project. Despite all the advancements in project management tools and techniques, we still witness numerous projects experiencing performance and execution difficulties. Hosting the world cup is not an average project; it is a challenging task for project management in all areas of this event, especially the construction management sector. This can significantly increase project costs, complexity, and impose delays.

Review of Past Mega Sport Events

South Africa FIFA World Cup 2010

People from all over the world, including celebrities, politicians, and royalties came to watch the best players in the world perform their magic to help their national teams win this soccer event. The games themselves are targeted at the average fans, who come to watch their country play well. As the tournament advances and their native countries get eliminated from play, they often times, adopt a new country and cheer and chant along those fans.

Television has allowed fans from across the globe watch their favorite teams or players instantly. Internet has allowed fans and news media alike dissect and analyze all angles in the team's outcomes. It helps fans celebrate or anguish as their teams wins or loses. Television besides being a great source of joy for the fans has become an excellent source of revenue to the hosting country; it helps recruit world sponsors of the tournament.

From a Project Management perspective, there are many activities which must be performed and planned well ahead of the tournament in order to have a successful event. In the next few sections we will attempt to cover the most important activities in order to create a successful and memorable World Cup. Keep in mind that above all, the hosting country is in the focus of the

soccer world; the main outcome of a FIFA World Cup is an event where the games are played fairly and the best team wins.

From the fans perspective South Africa World Cup was a success. The African continent was able to display the beautiful stadiums and the modern infrastructure including buses and rail lines to allow the fans to go from one stadium to the next. It was estimated that 330,000 fans visited South Africa and their average stay was 10 days. [4]

Most games ran without major incidents and Africa was able to have a representative from the continent advancing to the semi-finals, feat it had never achieved before. It allowed most African countries to unite and cheer for Ghana. It was great to see all the fans from South Africa unite, host nation, and cheer for their African champion. [5]

From a program management point of view many steps had to take place before, during, and after each game. To start with, a great deal of time and planning needed to be taken to allow the media to get access to the individual players and teams. Fans wanted to follow every detail of their favorite stars. Public transportation needed to be scheduled for fans, especially foreign fans, in order to allow them to travel from stadium to stadium. Teams needed to be housed properly and security needed to be offered as well. During the games, especially when rival teams played, a buffer space was needed to divide and separate opposing fans avoiding conflicts. A program manager needs to ensure proper care for the health and well-being of each team, including diet, medical services, sports complexes for game/physical preparations, R&R locations, and overall tourist attractions in order to occupy the visiting fans and keep them entertained while their teams were not playing.

From a government point of view, many activities had to be completed before, during, and after the world cup event. First, the government had to assure, it could properly build the entire infrastructure needed in order to host a world cup. The infrastructure includes Stadiums, hotels, roads, mass transit, communication links, tourist spots, and offer safety for all its citizens and visitors alike.

It was estimated that the South Africa world cup cost \$5.9 billion dollars. Government improved airports, roads, built over 128 km of fiber in order to connect the country, and build a rapid rail transit named Gautrain. These infrastructure expenditures will be utilized well past the world cup and will serve the country and its citizens to improve their daily lives. [6]

From a Program Management point of view, the government must be convinced these expenditures are worth the price. Because South Africa, like most African nations, its economic resources are limited; resources must be wisely spent. Feasibility studies must be performed in order to convince the government and politicians to approve and support such infrastructure build up. One of the most compelling arguments is that fact that most of the infrastructure will benefit the country in the long term. "Improvements such as these offer huge benefits to people and they give great support infrastructure to underpin economic and tourism growth," said Gillian Saunders, head of advisory services at Grant Thornton. [7]

At this time marketing figures must be found in order to become spokesperson of the cause. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela was convinced this was a great event; therefore he supported its efforts publically becoming a great spokesperson for the world cup. He was also used to pitch the need for South Africa to host such a distinguished event to the public, because he is a well respected and admired citizen.

The firm Grant Thornton when issued its assessment of the world cup it listed multiple “Intangible Internal Legacy” which included National Pride, Integration and social cohesion, ability to deliver, soccer development, integrating tourism and south Africa culture.

Finally to realize the lasting effect of South Africa world cup, the word vuvuzela became part of the Oxford English dictionary in 2010. But one of the biggest benefits from 2010 FIFA World Cup, was the togetherness and national pride the event generated. [8]

From an investor point a view, the program manager needs to show the event is in financial strong footing. The people in charge have a detailed credible path to success and the event itself it’s recognized as an image enhancing endeavor. Sponsors or investors do not want to associate their image with a questionable product; they want to be perceived as purveyor of goods and services which are good for the consumer, the environment, and the citizens at large. The PM must have a detailed time line of events needing to be completed and the order and importance of each of those events. The PM needs to show investors or sponsors contingency plans and additional financing backed by well know individuals or enterprises. Very few sponsors will be willing to be the first one to sign into large contracts, unless big ROI is expected.

From a program Manager’s point of view, as can be seen from the previous sections, it needs to work with multiple customers which include FIFA, Local Governments, politicians, Investors and sponsors, tourism industry, fans, and the skeptic public which does not agree with the event.

The program manager needs to consider the marketing pitch needed in order to attract and convince FIFA is capable of hosting and delivering a world cup event, the PM needs to convince FIFA it is the best candidate for host nation able to deliver the tournament. The PM needs to have a detailed plan showing FIFA the types of venues it has or plans to build in order to host the 32 national teams taking part in the tournament. The PM needs to show it can construct and finance the needed infrastructure in order to safely and successfully host each game, such as public transportation, airports, communication networks, security, and quality of each stadium.

The PM also needs to work with government officials, in order to understand and comply with all local and national Laws. It needs to convince politicians of the benefits of the event in order to gain and maintain their support. It needs to convince the public its use of human, monetary, and social resources will be well spent and enhance the credibility or image of the host country.

When additional financing its necessary, the PM may need to work with non-government entities and convince them to support the event monetarily. Or perhaps convince government to issue BONDS in order to borrow money from the private sector.

The PM needs to work closely with the tourism industry in order to guarantee proper housing and secure and safe areas for all the players as well as all the following supporters. The PM needs to guarantee enough resources spent in promoting the games internationally in order for fans to know about the hosting nation and its many tourist attractions. The PM needs to provide enough entertainment or attractions for the players and fans after or before the games [9].

Athens Greece Olympics 2004

Greece hosted the 2004 summer Olympics in Athens. Athens won the elections of hosting this event during the 106th International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session, on 5 September 1997 in Lausanne beating Rome, Cape Town, Buenos Aires and Stockholm. This announcement made Greece to be the smallest country to host the Olympics and started the tireless effort to kick off and manage the huge project of hosting such a mega event. As with the FIFA World Cup, hosting the Olympics has multifaceted political, social, cultural, environmental and technological impacts on the organizing nation. The project of hosting this kind of event has significant economical implications and requires well prepared planning and synchronized execution. The start of projects execution was delayed until late 90s due to conflict between Athens Olympics Organizing Committee (ATHOC), the government, and some opposing political parties. [10]

Due to political and financial issues, ATHOC kept missing major projects milestones which made the world and IOC suspicious about the capability of Greece being ready on time. The political and social issues between the government and the organizing committee didn't end and caused additional delays that were beyond the project managers' control. Due to these delays, ATHOC had to expedite the execution of many project by hiring more workers allowing extended working hours with overtime payments. This major project crisis led to changing the ATHOC management to a new one that worked on enhancing the relationship with key people (such as the government) and implemented major corrective actions.

The initial estimate for hosting this mega event at Athens was estimated to be 4.5 billion Euros. According to the USA Today.com and many other sources, the total cost of the project was around the 10 billion Euros figure which is more than 2 times the initial estimate and more than 5% of the country's annual GDP.

Another factor that added complexity and instability to the project execution was the risk. In Athens 2004 Olympics, concerns about terrorism elevated following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Greece increased the budget for security at the Olympics to 1 billion. This was required to hire additional security personnel and deploy security equipment. Some security support was provided by other Euro nations and by the NATO. [11]

The above demonstration about the obstacles faced during the Athens 2004 project execution points at several key areas to take lesson from 1) project cost and budget 2) project risks 3) project management leadership 4) communication among project stakeholders.

The government of Greece was aiming to achieve several goals by hosting this mega event in Athens. They were seeking to improve the main city's infrastructure, particularly its transport systems. In addition, they were seeking to increase the availability of industrial and commercial

space which eventually will lead to creating significant numbers of new permanent and temporary jobs. In addition, Greece sought to enhance its share of tourism business and achieve its re-branding as a European city of commerce and tourism.

From the government's point of view, these were the most driving factors hosting the event. Its ultimate goal was to achieve these goals at the lowest cost knowing that 95% of the infrastructure was funded by public sources. On the other hand, ATHOC's main goal was to ensure that the project will be completed on time while making sure that all commitments made to the IOC and sponsors were met. Even though cost was on ATHOC's priority list, it still wasn't the top one as it was sought by the government. The infrastructure costs rose by approximately 30 percent over original cost estimates. [12]

Many goals sought by the government hosting the 2004 summer Olympics were eventually achieved. Athens did witness developments in the infrastructure such as airport, metro system, the metropolitan tram (light rail) system, and a new toll motorway encircling the city. In addition, predictions estimate that Athens could receive an additional 450,000 tourists annually on average until 2011, giving a total boost to the Greek economy averaging 1% of GDP each year for the entire period 1998-2011 [13].

On the other hand, it was reported that almost all of the Olympic venues had fallen into varying states of disrepair and that the annual cost to maintain the sites was estimated at 500 million Euros [14]. Furthermore, the Greek economic activity slowed significantly in 2005 and after, especially as the government will have to deal with the significant deterioration of the budget deficit which is causing a major crisis in the country's political, financial, and social system.

From the sponsors' point of view, the value associated with the Olympic, both at the national and global level, comes from a number of factors. The most notable factors are the event's broad appeal and widespread media coverage and participation; notions of exclusivity; prestige and national importance and last but not least, strengthening the value of its brand. Sponsors were reluctant from pursuing this event fearing from the Greek government and ATHOC being incapable of delivering a successful event preparation on time. They were also concerned about the outdoor advertising industry, dominated by illegal billboards due to the government's total lack of willingness to control them. Another concern was the lack of the government effort to adhere to the licensing industry. In addition, many doubts around ATHOC's ability to deliver a successful and exciting event that would convince millions around the globe to watch the event and gain confidence in the brands.

The fans and audience satisfaction is another important element for the success of any mega event, if not the most important. ATHOC had also to take into consideration the fans and audience various needs, concerns, safety, and ensure that this event left a perfect impression and was money well spent from audience point of view. In addition to building the adequate infrastructure ranging from hotels, transit systems, airport, security systems, etc, the ATHOC had many other more specific needs such as 1) the opening ceremony which is considered the greatest global TV event of the year in terms of TV audience viewing it 2) event broadcasting rights and accessibility worldwide 3) advertising and documentaries prior to the event 4) ticketing 5) entertainment activities.

Finally, it's worth mentioning that Athens 2004 Olympics set new records at various areas of the Games at that time: most countries participating (201), most events in the scheduled program (301) and highest television coverage of 3.9 billion viewers (olympic.org).

Montreal Canada Olympics 1976

According to Dr. Havelange, president of FIFA, the 1976 Montreal Olympics is considered to be "the reference in terms of the quality of the organization" [15]. For that, studying the Montreal Olympics would be a good reference of a mega sport event.

The effects, and equally important, the organization of the Olympic games, started long before hosting the event, with the effects lasted much longer after the event was over, for it as a mega event, it leaves everlasting marks on the places where it was hosted.

In 1971, the Canadian Olympic Association (COA) was formed to be the formal organizing committee of the 1976 Montreal Olympics. The COA had a board of directors to ultimately authorize the various activities involved or linked to the Olympics. Then the COA created several sub-committees and sub-organizations, with a master plan. Each assignment in the master plan was described in detail. The projects in the master plan involved three major sectors: facilities, major services, and administrative methods. The idea was to self-finance this master plan using several methods. The initial funding came from Olympic lottery, coin, and stamp programs. This brought revenue of \$292 million, with \$58 million more after the event was done. This revenue was much less than what was anticipated from those programs, in spite of the tremendous marketing effort [16].

To prepare for the big event, the COA sent in 1971 a delegate to Munich to learn on how Munich was preparing for the 1972 Olympics. The delegation took notes and made 210 recommendations. Later, during the Munich Games, the COA sent an observer team to gain a better understanding of the scope the mega event. [16]

Several Canadian companies were involved in the preparation and set up of the Olympics. Ex: Lavalin Group: construction of the Olympic Park Complex, DMR: setting up SIJO system (a computerized sport result system), and Teleglobe Canada: transmission of multiple simultaneous video signals across the globe. These companies got global reputation and became internationally recognized corporations since then; and their services continued to be used on other mega events and large constructions. Such events are the 1988 Seoul Games, and 1984 LA Games [15]. This international growth of Canadian companies brings with it expansion of local branches, employment of more Canadians, and foreign income to the Canada.

Some studies estimate the overall costs of the Montreal Olympic Games to be around \$4 billion US [17], with a surplus of \$278 million [15]. According to the study done by Michel Guay [15], "Montreal Games of 1976 was not a financial disaster; it is what was done with it that made it so... The 1976 Olympic Games became an occasion for [the local] governments to appropriate revenues and to borrow money, and to attribute the inherent cost to the Games". According to this study, this is what has led to what is now known as "The Big O", and the Olympic dept. In

another study report [16], some of the big debt came from delays in the building of the Olympic venues. In some cases, the buildings were not completed till after the Olympics games were done. These delays were caused by the several strikes of construction workers.

The 1976 Montreal Olympics coincided to come after the New Zealand's rugby team toured South Africa; with South Africa back then was practicing racial segregation. Many African nations threatened the Olympic organizers to ban New Zealand from the Olympics, or they themselves would boycott the games. The Olympic organizers refused to ban New Zealand. As a result, 25 African countries withdrew from the games. In addition, Taiwan withdrew from the games due to conflict on the name it decided to attend the games with [18]. This boycott had led to less number of athletes and fewer number fans attending the Games.

In spite of this boycott, Canada in general, and Montreal in particular, gained lots of popularity in the tourism industry. The tourism started long before the actual games had took place, and lasted years after the Games were over. One study [16] estimates "the effect of the Games upon tourist spending throughout Canada to be in the range of \$77 million and \$135 million on 1976 dollars... despite the unfavorable weather, the bicentennial celebrations in the United States, an airline strike, and uncertainty surrounding the actual staging of the Games."

Different levels of the Canadian government were heavily involved in the setup for the Olympics. At one level, Quebec Province established new sport federations, such as: Le Haut Commissariat aux Sports (the first Quebec government department for sports), les Jeux du Québec, and Canadian Olympic Association. These organizations were established not only to run Olympic events, but to 1) assist the Olympic event to better prepare for future mega sport events that would be held in Canada 2) prepare younger Canadian generation for this major sport event and beyond 3) train minor officials to be officially and internationally recognized judges referees and administrators.

As a result of hosting the Olympics, the number of sports events hosted in Montreal went from 2 world events, prior to the Olympics, to 9 world-class events, in the 20th century [15]. With those government bodies in action, the country had to prepare facilities to service the games such as sport venues, accommodate the participants, facilitate the work of the press, improve the infrastructure (such as roads and transportation, medical service centers, firefighting and prevention services, security and law enforcement), and establish extra new facilities because what was there was not enough to accommodate the number of expected coming people. As a result, several sports installations were improved in Montreal and the surrounding area, while several other installations were built specifically for the games (ex. Olympic Complex, le Bassin Olympique). Some of those facilities were a standalone, while others were located in educational institutions (ex. McGill University and Université de Montreal) that continued to benefit from those sport facilities [15].

The sponsors of the events were corporate in nature, and their basic orientation was toward the involvement in the staging of the Games. Those investors provided the organizing committee with goods and services, mostly, at no charge, leading to a substantial reduction in the final cost of the Games. In addition, those sponsors were also a good source of revenue through their participation in the Official Licensing Program that the Organizing Committees for the Olympic

Games (COJO) authorized, which generated revenue of \$2.8 million [16]. The Canadian Olympic Games Organizing Committee (COJO 76) reported a surplus after calculating cost and revenue that resulted from hosting the games. “This surplus derived from very successful programs such as: Coins and stamps, Lottery, TV rights, Ticket sales, Sponsorships, and merchandizing “[15].

Looking at this from a different perspective, the benefits were not just financial. The Official Licensing Program had a “very positive effects in building market awareness, and in the creation of public and business awareness of the Games.” [16]

Challenges Facing Qatar Hosting the World Cup

Qatar government plans to stage a huge World Cup event that is proportional to the wealth of the country. It is becoming clear that Qatar is using this opportunity to send important signals to the world about the country economic power and its capability to host mega sport events. Qatar’s area is about 11,500 km² with population of a little less than 1.7 million, only 15% of which are Qatari nationals. Qatar is an oil and natural gas producing country and they both represent the main income to a nation with small population and poor natural resources. A significant part of Qatar’s surpluses have been invested abroad through the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) whose aim is to strengthen the country’s economy by diversifying into new areas and reducing Qatar’s reliance on oil and natural gas revenue.

On December 2, 2010, Russia and Qatar were selected as the locations for the 2018 and 2022 International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cups respectively. The bidding process for both events began officially in March 2009; eleven bids from thirteen countries were received, including one which was withdrawn and one that was rejected before FIFA's executive committee voted in November 2010. By the time of the decision, bids for the 2022 World Cup consisted of a joint bid from Australia, Japan, Qatar, South Korea, and the United States. Indonesia's bid was disqualified for lack of governmental support. Mexico withdrew its bid due to financial reasons. Qatar won the World Cup bid against long odds and was appointed as the host for the World Cup 2022 beating some strong candidates such as the United States and Australia. FIFA's choice to award the 2022 World Cup to Qatar has been widely criticized by media and many nations. Soon after Qatar won this bid, various rumors and allegation floated accusing Qatar of paying \$1.5 million to two FIFA executive committee members to vote for its 2022 World Cup bid. Qatar denied these accusations and FIFA president has refused to rule out the possibility of reviewing the decision to award Qatar the 2022 World Cup but nothing has happened. These accusations put Qatar’s celebrations for this win to an end and added a lot of pressure to its campaign.

The nature and capabilities of Qatar as a nation as well as its controversial selection as host country for 2022 FIFA World Cup will pose massive challenge for Qatar during the journey of preparing and hosting this mega event. In the following sections, we will discuss some of these challenges from different point of views: project management, government, fans, and sponsors. This analysis will take into the account the challenges faced by previous hosts of mega sport events as well as the political, cultural and economic aspects of Qatar.

From Project Management Point of View

Hosting a mega event like the world cup requires a lot of experience not only in the construction area, but in marketing, advertising and finance. In Qatar, a small country with a lot of money, and no local experienced workforce, it's going to be a big challenge to bring all these expertise to be able to host this event. Qatar has to bring the best project managers from all over the world in order to develop, plan and construct the infrastructure for its country. According to several sources, Qatar is set to appoint a world class international consultancy to help organize the 2022 World Cup. The company will serve as a program management office which will assist in developing a master schedule encompassing stadiums, infrastructure and all 2022-related projects.

One of the major challenges the project managers faced in some past mega events was to facilitate the communication among the stakeholders analyzing their clashing views. In this type of projects, there will be an enormous amount of project stakeholders that vary in terms of importance. Using the stakeholder matrix early on the project's life-cycle proved to be effective. This technique emphasizes on "cross-functional interfaces and relationship building and helps in identifying the project stakeholders and their influence on the various project parameters" [19] Project management can use the matrix shown in figure 1 which maps stakeholder relationships based on their power/interest.

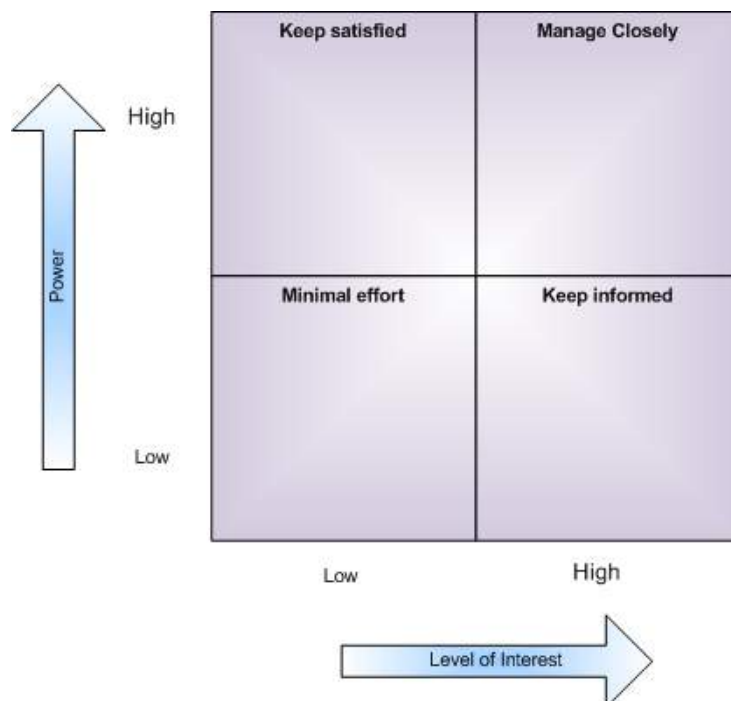


Figure 1: Stakeholder mapping, power/interest matrix [20]

Another critical challenge that awaits project management during organizing and executing this mega event is the enormous amount of risks associated with it. Mega events have quite an exceptional risk profile because of their iconic nature and global brand, attracting a worldwide television audience of billions, millions of spectators, and wide-ranging public and media interest.

The risk can be external or internal and isn't limited by time, place, or source. For example, the risk can be as simple as not having adequate construction material supplies to fulfill the needs of the construction projects, technological and organizational failures, or disasters. A bigger risk can be related to internal or regional political turbulences and terrorist threats. Thus, management of these risks is tackled with the choice of which risks to discount, which risks to monitor, and which risks to mitigate and protect against. Those decisions occur within a state of uncertainty as to the likelihood of occurrence of a particular incident [21].

Having a well-structured governance model is another challenge during the implementation of mega events like the World Cup. This model is required to ensure that decisions are made quickly and at the appropriate level. During the execution of this mega project, project management has to deal with different organizations that work toward a common goal. Having this model enforces accountability by indicating overall decision making control and responsibility. A clear hierarchy for escalating issues and risks during project execution should be defined with sufficient flexibility.

From Government Point of View

Unforeseen political instability in the Middle East will always remain to be a risk to the success of this event. But the fear of the capacity of this event on the government is a challenge that they must manage well in order to have a successful experience. The government has to assure and secure a safe, peaceful environment for contractors and construction companies in order to feel comfortable to do their work. The question raised is whether Qatar government is going to allow a European/American atmosphere for the contractors/fans or they will stick to their strong Islamic cultures regardless of the event? This is not a challenge for the government only, but for everyone who is involved in this event, fans, locals, and the FIFA committee. The decision to hold an event, especially a large scale event such as the world cup, is essentially a political decision.

A big challenge for the Project Management from a government point of view will be to adhere to local laws while trying to satisfy and serve an international community used to little to no religious interference. The Qatari government is controlled by very strong religious beliefs, when it comes to the FIFA world cup event, it hosts many countries from different religious backgrounds and it allows those countries to follow their religious beliefs. Will Qatar open its policies to accept and allow multiple differing religious to publically profess and express their beliefs in public? Will Qatar prohibit all non-Muslim religions? How will the world react, will fans and governments boycott the games?

Some consider Qatar to be too small to host a world class event such as the FIFA. Others doubt that Qatar could put together a quality event on time, due to the lack of experience in hosting such a mega event, and current weak infrastructure. While these thoughts hold some truth, there are some other facts that would make the whole argument null. Qatar's small size could be considered a virtue because all events could be held in small proximity of each other, and the government would not need to build a massive transportation system that span long distances, as in what happened with Canada during the 1976 Olympics. The small size of Qatar might make it crowded, but that problem can be solved by making arrangements with neighboring countries.

Examples of such arrangements would ease of visa processing and border crossing, and ease of transportation to other surrounding countries. Both of those arrangements would be part of Qatar preparation for the mega event but falls outside Qatar government limits.

Qatar government main challenge is to come out with a modern scalable infrastructure that would serve the country's needs for the rest of century. The infrastructure should include transportation and port system, urban planning, industrial and commercial spaces to create competitive advantage. Even though Qatar will rely mainly on expat workforce, it should take this opportunity to involve its native young generation in the planning and implementation of this mega event in order to create a pool of native leadership that will carry/lead the nation beyond this event.

Qatar is natural gas rich country with estimated 14% of the total worldwide reserves. The mega construction project will be funded from this only source of revenue. Since Qatar is a developing country, the cost for hosting such an event will be much higher compared to other industrial modern countries. This is due to the fact Qatar doesn't have the local workforce and resources. The government of Qatar will rely on external workforce and resources to execute this project with which will make the cost of hosting this event much higher on the government. In spite of the fact that Qatar is a rich country, its government will be challenged to keep the cost of hosting this event at reasonable level. Hosting this even shouldn't exhaust the country's financial resources and impact other important areas such as education, health, social services.

To better prepare for the 2020 FIFA event, Qatar government could learn from the preparation of Canadian government of the 1976 Olympics held in Canada. The preparation included: having a government body to be the ultimate program manager of the event and the decision maker of matters. Also, putting together a team to be sent to the FIFA 2014 and FIFA 2018 events, to learn and take notes. This is not to say that Qatar had never had world class event. In the contrary, Qatar had had several world class events; it is just that those events had never been as massive as the FIFA.

From Fans Point of View

Besides building the infrastructure ranging from hotels, transit systems, airport, and security systems to accommodate the fans and tourists who visit this mega event, Qatar needs to addresses several other challenges in order to positively impact the fan and audience attendance and satisfaction as well as building the nation's image in front of the world:

- 1) FIFA world cup event takes place in the summer (June-July). Qatar has a desert climate with temperatures surpassing 105 degrees in the summer. Many organizations and nations are still against allowing Qatar to host this event due to this issue. One of the solutions that Qatar said it will implement is building state of the art stadiums with in-stadium cooling system to keep players and spectators from overheating and keep the temperature at around 80 degrees. This will present many technical challenges to Qatar, and much more financial strains to build and run those stadiums.

- 2) Lots of people around the world view Qatar as another Saudi Arabia, with no night life, no alcohol and no place for entertainment. Although this view is not completely true, Qatar is faced with two challenges here:
 - a. How to change this environment and make it suitable for tourism?
 - b. How to convince tourists that Qatar is as good as any developed country when it comes to tourism?
- 3) Qatar has comparatively liberal laws compared to some of its neighboring states, but majority of the population is known to be conservative where drinking is forbidden according to the religion. World Cup in an Arab conservative country will still be a very new experience for fans and locals. The few bars and nightclubs in Qatar operate only in expensive hotels and clubs. Alcohol will be restricted to designated areas, with Qatar's Sharia (Islamic law) making it illegal to show alcohol or be drunk in public. The question becomes: how will Qatar address this issue internally?
- 4) The opening ceremony which is considered the greatest global TV event of the year in terms of TV audience viewing it. The fans and audience who will be watching this event on TV will measure the success of the event based on the creativity of this ceremony. With this opening ceremony, will Qatar be able to bring something new to the world and convince more audience and tourists to come?
- 5) Developed and modern nations tend to be able to attract larger numbers of fans to mega-events than developing nations. Taking into consideration the rough climate, the conservative local culture, and under-developed infrastructure, how will Qatar be able to convince millions of fans to spend money and visit Qatar in 2022? One of the suggestions is to build tourist attractions that might be environmentally closed, connected, above the ground, or below the sea. Will Qatar really be able to build such facilities on large scale? And if so, how would this impact Qatar financially?

One of the suggestions that was presented to Qatar was to arrange with neighboring countries to provide fans with ease of access to go to those neighboring countries. This would provide the fans with more variety of activities, a chance to taste close but different cultures, besides easing the congestion that would result from jamming millions of fans, tourists and reporters coming for the FIFA games.

The government needs to insure that no country or team would boycott or withdraw from the games on bases of political, safety, or weather reasons. Qatar would know that it had addressed those issues when tourists, fans and reports start coming to Qatar at least a year before the big event, judging from past world sports events. Also, Qatar should not stop the publicizing campaign even when the games are over; it can still continue to use the (hopefully) successful games as bases for future tourism.

From Sponsors Point of View

In the past world cup events the largest sponsors of the game have been beverages, sporting and food businesses. According to a study done after South Africa World Cup, the biggest sponsors include the following: Coca-Cola, Nike, McDonald's, Barclays, Anheuser-Bush InBev, Adidas,

PUMA, Aon, VISA, Bwin, Pepsi, Samsung, Carlsberg, Red Bull, Volkswagen, MasterCard, and Emirates.[22]

From the list we can see many of these sponsors sell products which may have a difficult time being sold or advertised in Qatar. For example, the major sporting businesses in the world are Nike, Adidas, and Puma each of these businesses sponsor many national teams and some of the best athletes of the world. Sponsors often times show their athletes in skimpy clothes in order to sell their products. This type of advertisement may not be allowed in Qatar's stadiums, which could create a large void in advertisement revenue and a negative media backlash for the country.

The second types of businesses sponsoring sporting events are the major alcoholics' corporations. Often times the ads show young people in suggestive or social scenarios to encourage the viewer to consume their product and participate and be part of the experience. The Government of Qatar may not allow any of these ads in their stadiums as well. The lack of alcoholic beverages may be fine with local populations, but will western fans attend any of the games if those beverages are outlawed?

The Program manager in charge of bringing sponsors and good will to the games may face those challenges and more. Additional challenges facing Qatar may be its relatively small size, lack of experience, and small population of consumers. Will Qatar hand pick the type of businesses and advertisement is willing to show during games? Will Qatar allow the alcoholic giants and sporting businesses to show and sell their products? Will the big corporations change their advertisement content to satisfy the requests of the host nation? If the western fans are not satisfied will the major sponsors stop sponsoring the games? These are the biggest challenges and major tasks that need to be resolved by the PM, the government, and the sponsors.

The biggest attraction to the FIFA world cup from a sponsor's point of view is its world reach. The tournament allows fans and markets from all over the world to follow the games, which gives sponsors a ripe market. Qatar needs to carefully choose the type of response it gives its sponsors. The western media and FIFA in general have never had to deal with a religious controlled country. Sponsors have had the liberty of packaging and advertising their products anyway they wanted as long as their customers approved and continued to buy the product. In Qatar 2022 the sponsor may face more restrictions and less wiggle room to advertise and sell their products. The risks are high and the challenges are endless. This is just the beginning of a long journey for the sponsors and for Qatar and a fertile ground for future PM studies.

Conclusion

Although Qatar is investing a large amount of money estimated about \$50 billion Dollars to host the FIFA Worlds Cup in 2022, this is a challenging project to such a small country with a population of only 1.7 million to manage. Whether it is the extreme hot weather conditions, the huge infrastructure challenges or concerns over fan experience, the 2022 World Cup in Qatar is facing a number of potential problems areas. Each specific area of this mega event could potentially impose big challenges on project managers from different aspects such as from Fans, government, project managers and sponsors point of view.

Qatar has about 12 years to prepare for this mega event, but FIFA is still taking a huge risk in terms of the scale of the new construction that is necessary. Of the 12 stadiums that Qatar is planning to allocate for this event, nine do not exist and two need major renovation. Qatar has comparatively liberal laws compared to some of its neighboring states, but a first World Cup in an Arab country will still be a very new experience for fans. The potential challenges for project managers is going to be extremely tough since most of these construction companies and managers going to be coming from a foreign countries like Europe and the United States. To manager such a project without being familiar with the Middle East background, this will be the biggest challenge of all.

There is significant doubt over whether a country with a population of 1.7 million will have any future use for a World Cup infrastructure that will cost an estimated \$4 billion to put in place. Qatar plan to erect some modular stadiums that can be transported after the World Cup to poorer countries. The question that can be raised is why Qatar is investing so much in a project that wouldn't benefit their country on the long run?

We all have witnessed the transformation of another small city in the Middle East which is neighboring Qatar. This small city has become so famous that foreigners such as Americans and Europeans refer to it as Paris of the Middle East. This city is Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. We believe that Qatar is seeking the legacy that Dubai was able to achieve and to be a known city to the whole world and gain that reputation as a small nation. This country has the tools and money to spend in order to make that dream come true.

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