FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGIES TO DELIVER SOCIOECONOMIC OUTCOMES USING AI

AN INDUSTRY WORKING PAPER ON KEY STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING STABILITY AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN DIGITAL FINANCE IN QATAR.

VERSION 1.0

NINTH DOHA ISLAMIC FINANCE CONFERENCE (DIFC-IX)ISLAMIC FINANCE AND CHALLENGES OF WEB 3.0

14 MARCH 2023

PAPER PRESENTED BY:

M NAZRI MUHD
ADJUNCT PRACTICE PROFESSOR (APPLIED AI)
CENTRE FOR AI INNOVATION @MYFINB
SUNWAY UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL
SUNWAY UNIVERSITY

CE.A.I. Centre for AI Innovation

Top 10 Thought Leader OVERALL thinkers360

Top 10 Thought Leader thinkers360

#1 : DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
#1: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
#1: PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS

SUPPORTED BY THE CEAI RESEARCH TEAM: PATRIZIA DE SOUSA BONANDINI (SOUTH AFRICA), SHANKER DAMODARAN (INDIA), AND ADDIENNUR HAMIZAH (SINGAPORE)
ADVISOR: TAN SRI DR MOHD DAUD BAKAR (MALAYSIA)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

As the financial industry continues to evolve, digital finance is increasingly becoming an essential component of financial services in many countries around the world. Qatar is no exception to this trend, and the Centre for AI Innovation is pleased to present this working paper on "Digital Finance in Qatar: Current Status and Future Potential," which examines the current state of digital finance in Qatar and outlines the opportunities for further development in the future.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to **Patrizia Bonandini De Sousa (South Africa), Shanker Damodaran (India), and Addiennur Hamizah Abu Bakar (Singapore)** for their hard work, dedication, and contribution to this paper. Their efforts have been instrumental in producing a report that provides valuable insights and recommendations to stakeholders in Qatar's financial industry. I would also like to thank **Tan Sri Dr Mohd Daud Bakar (Malaysia)** for his continued support, dedication and guidance in Islamic Banking and Finance for our Group in the last 10 years and more.

The research team has provided insightful recommendations to address the challenges and leverage the opportunities in Qatar's digital finance landscape. These recommendations include enhancing the regulatory framework to foster innovation while ensuring consumer protection, improving financial literacy to increase adoption of digital financial services, and investing in the financial infrastructure to support the growth of digital finance.

The team's expertise in the field of digital finance and their in-depth knowledge of the global financial industry are reflected in the quality of the report. Their recommendations are practical and actionable, and they have provided a roadmap for policymakers, regulators, and financial institutions to take advantage of the opportunities presented by digital finance in Qatar.

In conclusion, I am confident that this report will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, regulators, financial institutions, and other stakeholders in the Qatar financial industry. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of digital finance in Qatar, identifies challenges and opportunities, and provides practical recommendations for further development. Once again, I would like to express my gratitude to the research team for their exceptional work on this paper.

Kind regards
Muhammad Nazri Muhd
Adj Practice Professor (AI)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Financial inclusivity is crucial for economic growth and development in Qatar, and access to finance is vital for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to thrive. Without access to credit, SMEs may struggle to fund their operations, pay employees, or purchase inventory. This can lead to missed opportunities, lower productivity, and ultimately, business failure. Additionally, limited access to credit facilities can stifle innovation and limit the development of new products and services. Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact employment rates, supply chains, and the ability of small businesses to provide essential goods and services, which can have cascading effects on the broader economy.

The inability to secure financings from banks can force SMEs to turn to alternative financiers, or lenders, such as high-interest financings or credit cards, which can create a cycle of debt that further limits their ability to grow and succeed. Without access to credit facilities, small businesses may also be unable to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing. Limited financial inclusivity can contribute to income inequality and social disparities, as those with access to funding are better positioned to succeed and grow their businesses. Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact the ability of SMEs to contribute to the broader economy through taxes and other revenue streams. The lack of financial inclusivity can also lead to a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation, as aspiring entrepreneurs may be discouraged by the challenges of securing funding and support for their business ideas.

To address these issues, banks and government agencies in Qatar need to play the role of trusted advisors to SMEs. This involves providing SMEs with access to financial resources, as well as providing guidance and support to help them make informed decisions about their finances. The use of AI can help facilitate this process by providing data-driven insights that can be used to make informed decisions about financing and business operations. Through the use of AI-powered tools and platforms, banks and government agencies can also provide personalized guidance and support to SMEs, based on their unique financial needs and goals.

In addition to the role of banks, government agencies also have a crucial role to play in promoting financial inclusivity in Qatar. Government agencies can design and implement programmes aimed at providing financial literacy and education to SMEs, as well as facilitating access to credit and other financial services. These programmes can also focus on supporting innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in sectors with high growth potential.

Financial inclusivity is critical for the growth and development of SMEs in Qatar, and banks and government agencies have an important role to play in promoting access to credit and other financial services. By leveraging AI and other technologies, banks and government agencies can also provide SMEs with the support and advice they need to succeed in today's rapidly changing business environment. Using AI, banks and government agencies can provide personalized guidance and support to SMEs, based on their unique financial needs and goals. This can help SMEs make informed decisions about their finances and position them for long-term success.

INTRODUCTION

Financial inclusion is a crucial factor for economic growth and development in any country or region. It is defined as access to affordable financial services that are provided by formal financial institutions. The Middle East region has made significant progress in promoting financial inclusion over the past few years. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in terms of bankability and creditworthiness. In this paper, we will discuss the financial inclusivity in the Middle East as a region as well as Qatar, and how AI is the primary catalyst that can address issues related to bankability and creditworthiness.

According to a report by the World Bank, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has the lowest levels of financial inclusion in the world, with only 14% of adults having access to a bank account. However, there have been significant efforts to promote financial inclusion in the region. For example, the Central Bank of Egypt has launched a financial inclusion initiative that aims to increase the number of adults with bank accounts from 14% to 50% by 2020. Similarly, in the UAE, the government has launched the Financial Inclusion Task Force, which aims to promote financial inclusion among low-income workers and small business owners.

Qatar, in particular, has made significant progress in promoting financial inclusion. According to a report by Qatar Central Bank, the country has achieved a financial inclusion rate of 84.8% in 2020. This is a significant improvement from the financial inclusion rate of 69% in 2017. The increase in financial inclusion in Qatar can be attributed to the government's efforts to promote financial inclusion, including the establishment of a national financial inclusion strategy.

Despite the progress made in promoting financial inclusion in the region, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. One of the key challenges is bankability and creditworthiness. Many individuals and small businesses in the region lack the necessary credit history or collateral to access financing from formal financial institutions. This has resulted in a large informal economy, where individuals and businesses resort to informal lenders who charge exorbitant interest rates.

This is where AI can play a crucial role in addressing the challenges of bankability and creditworthiness. AI can be used to analyze vast amounts of data to assess creditworthiness and predict credit risk. This can help formal financial institutions to extend credit to individuals and businesses that would have been considered too risky in the past. AI can also be used to analyze alternative data sources, such as social media activity and mobile phone usage, to assess creditworthiness for individuals who lack a formal credit history.

Financial inclusivity is a crucial factor for economic growth and development in the Middle East region. While progress has been made in promoting financial inclusion, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, particularly in terms of bankability and creditworthiness.

"FINANCIAL INCLUSIVITY AND STABILITY OF DIGITAL FINANCE LEAD TO MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND IMPROVING OVERALL FINANCIAL LITERACY AND MANAGEMENT."

DRIVERS FOR FINANCIAL INCLUSIVITY

AI in the Financial Sector

AI has already made significant inroads in the financial sector, from improving risk management and fraud detection to automating customer service and underwriting. For example, banks in Qatar and the wider Middle East region are using AI-powered chatbots to handle routine customer inquiries and free up human resources for more complex tasks. Similarly, AI algorithms are used to analyze large datasets and identify patterns that can inform credit decisions and pricing.

Alternative Credit Scoring Models

One way AI can enhance financial inclusivity is by providing alternative credit scoring models that go beyond traditional metrics, such as credit history and income. For instance, AI algorithms can analyze non-traditional data sources, such as social media activity, mobile phone usage, and online behavior, to assess an applicant's creditworthiness.

"SMES OFTEN FACE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING FINANCING, PARTICULARLY IN EMERGING MARKETS. TRADITIONAL FINANCING MODELS RELY ON COLLATERAL AND A MUDHARIB'S FINANCIAL HISTORY, WHICH CAN BE A BARRIER FOR MANY SMES. "

Such data can help identify patterns that traditional scoring models overlook, such as regular bill payments or a history of online shopping. By leveraging AI, lenders can develop more accurate and inclusive credit scoring models that consider a wider range of factors, reducing the reliance on collateral and formal documentation.

Real-time Analysis of Financial Performance

Furthermore, AI can help SMEs and start-ups overcome the challenges of limited financial history by providing real-time analysis of their financial performance. AI-powered platforms can aggregate financial data from various sources, including bank statements, invoices, and receipts, and provide insights into cash flow, expenses, and revenue. This information can help businesses understand their financial standing and identify areas for improvement, such as reducing costs or increasing sales. By having access to these insights, SMEs and start-ups can make informed decisions and demonstrate financial stability to lenders.

Faster and More Efficient Financing Approvals

Another way AI can enhance financial inclusivity is by enabling faster and more efficient financing approvals. Traditionally, the financing application process can take weeks or even months, as lenders assess various documents and verify information. However, AI-powered platforms can automate much of the process, from data collection and analysis to risk assessment and decision-making.

CASE STUDIES

The Centre for AI Innovation (CEAI) and its partners have piloted several financing programmes in collaboration with financial institutions and regulators globally to leverage on AI for financial risk assessment, AI Leadership, Internal Audit and Financial Sector Supervision. Regulators and financial institutions are actively learning more about the use of AI in the finance industry. To ensure that the use of AI is safe and ethical, we help regulators who are working closely with financial institutions to develop guidelines and standards for AI in finance. They are also monitoring the use of AI to ensure that it is being used responsibly and fairly, and that it does not lead to any unintended consequences or discrimination.

FIs & NON-FIs (GLOBAL)

Subscription models via channels such as credit bureaus, country partners and GLCs dealing with information business

China Construction Bank

SME financing and Policy System is designed by VSC / MyFinB for China Construction Bank (CCB) to **assist bank managers to improve risk evaluation techniques** based on global best practices.

AFFIN BANK

The programme provided Affin Bank's Board a thorough understand of AI as a disruptor and confidently embrace it for successful future of its banking business. with real case demonstration on its clients using AI

CEDAR / SME BANK

CEDAR / SMEBANK portal developed by MyFinB is an integrated platform for the business coaching arm of the bank to **assess SMEs and provide interventions pre/post financing**.

BBVA

AI-based, cognitive analytics engine that addresses problems of origination, financing review, intervention and financing workout. System can instantly identify strengths, weaknesses and action steps for the SMEs and provide roadmap at portfolio level.

BANK INDONESIA / BI INSTITUTE

AI LEADERSHIP FOR FI/BANKS

Becoming AI-Ready Financial Institutions

Participant Profiling:

Managers and senior executives who are being groomed to be future leaders for the regulator in Indonesia.

FOCUS

Learning Management System | Case Studies & AI Tech Showcases | Roadmap for AI Adoption & Deployment

CONTENTS

1. **AI CONCEPT** What Leaders Must Know
2. **WHY ORGANISATIONS & LEADERS SHOULD BE AI-READY?**
3. **FUTURE OF AI AND KEY CHALLENGES FOR LEADERS**
4. **APPLICATIONS OF AI** in Banking & Finance
5. **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS**

AGH

Development of long-term strategic areas of the economy to create value for customers, shareholders and the public via credit underwriting solutions for banks and credit bureaus

List of Targeted Commercial Banks in Georgia

1. TBC Bank
2. Bank of Georgia
3. Liberty Bank
4. Basisbank
5. VTB Bank – (Georgia)
6. Cartu Bank
7. ProCredit Bank
8. Silk Road Bank
9. Ziraat Bank Georgia
10. Isbank Georgia
11. TeraBank
12. Halyk Bank Georgia
13. PASHA Bank Georgia
14. Finca Bank Georgia
15. Credo Bank

List of Targeted Markets for Credit Bureau Expansion Plan

1. Georgia
2. Kazakhstan
3. Uzbekistan
4. Turkmenistan
5. Kirgizstan
6. Tajikistan
7. Azerbaijan
8. Armenia
9. Pakistan
10. Afghanistan
11. Turkey
12. Ukraine
13. Belarus
14. Russia

TABF

AI IN AUDIT

Becoming AI-Ready Financial Institutions

Participant Profiling:

Financial Supervisors and Examiners, Chief Auditors, Vice Chief Auditors, Members of the Board and Supervisors etc., who are being developed to be future-ready Auditors/Bank Examiners.

FOCUS

Foundation in Applied AI | Blueprint | Illustrations

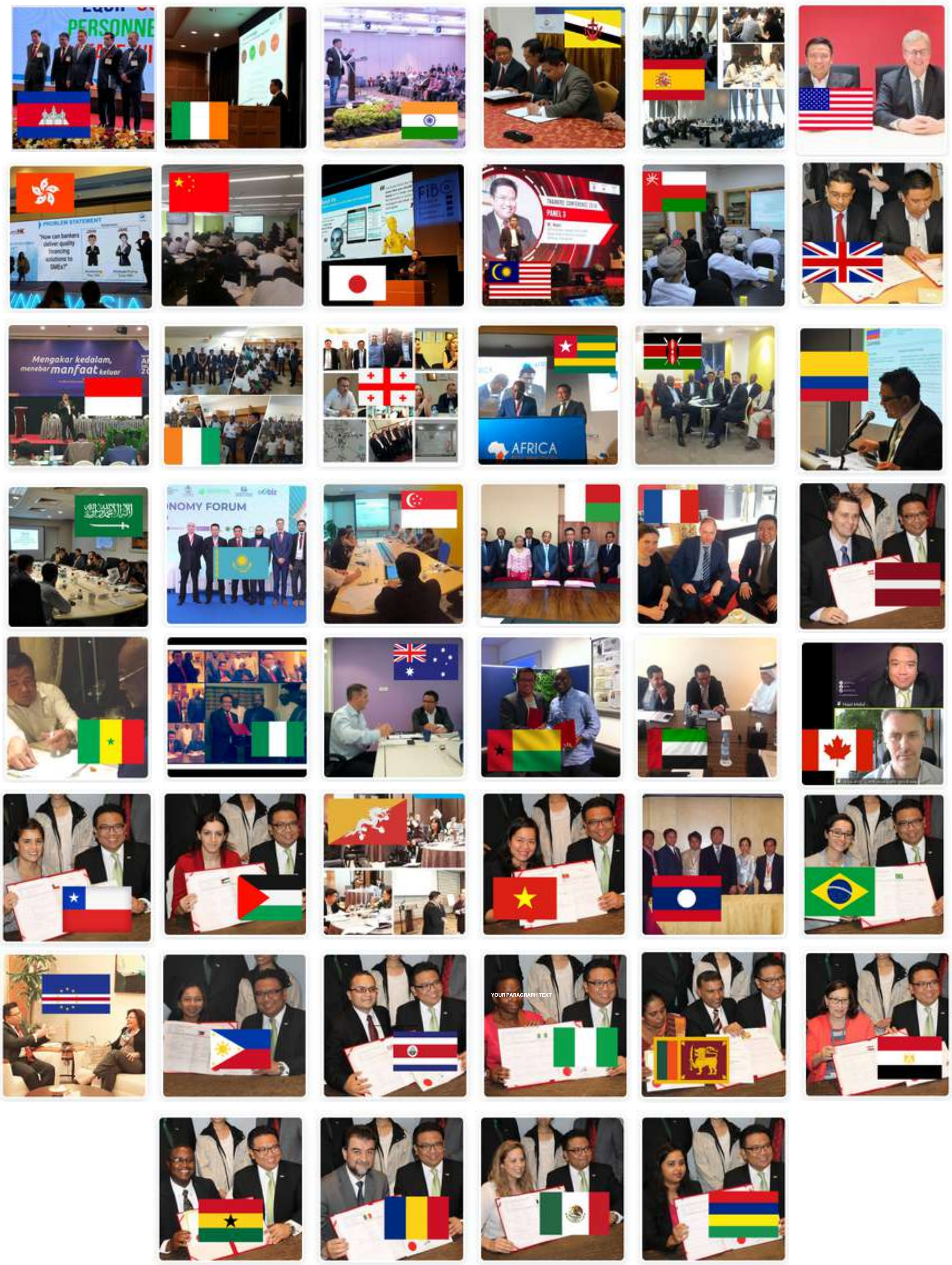
CONTENTS

1. **PART 1: WHY AI?** Why is this relevant for audit and risk professionals?
2. **PART 2: KEY EVENTS IMPACTING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**
3. **PART 3: HOW AI TRANSFORMS AUDIT WORK** Human versus Artificial Intelligence: How do they work together?
4. **PART 4: APPLIED AI IN PRACTICE**
5. **PART 5: FRAMEWORK FOR IA USING AI** AI Roadmap GRC & Internal Audit Functions

CONT'D

The Centre for AI Innovation (CEAI) has collaborated with corporations, trade associations and chamnbers, financial institutions and regulators globally to pilot financing programs utilizing AI for financial risk assessment, AI leadership, and financial sector supervision. Over the last 17 years, CEAI and its partners have engaged with public, private, and nonprofit sectors to assess readiness and deployment at early stages. This has resulted in increasing awareness and understanding of AI's potential benefits and limitations among regulators and financial institutions.

International dialogues, engagements and projects on AI for Positive Impact



THE IMPACT OF AI ON INCLUSIVITY AND STABILITY

AI has the potential to revolutionize digital finance by increasing financial stability and inclusivity. By leveraging AI technologies, financial institutions can better analyze and understand customer behavior, reduce fraud and risk, and develop innovative financial products and services that meet the needs of underserved populations.

One way AI can achieve stability in digital finance is by enhancing risk management. For example, machine learning algorithms can be used to analyze large datasets and identify patterns of fraud and other risks. This can help financial institutions detect and prevent fraudulent activities, reducing the risk of financial losses and reputational damage. According to a report by Accenture, AI technologies can reduce financial fraud by up to 40% and reduce false positives by up to 70%.

In addition to risk management, AI can also help achieve financial inclusivity by expanding access to financial services. For example, AI-powered chatbots and voice assistants can provide financial advice and guidance to underserved populations that may not have access to traditional financial advisors. This can help promote financial literacy and encourage savings and investment among underserved communities.

Another way AI can enhance financial inclusivity is by improving credit scoring for individuals and small businesses. AI technologies such as machine learning algorithms can analyze a variety of data sources, including transaction history, social media activity, and other non-traditional data points, to generate more accurate credit scores. This can help financial institutions provide financings and other financial products to individuals and small businesses that may have been excluded from traditional credit scoring models.

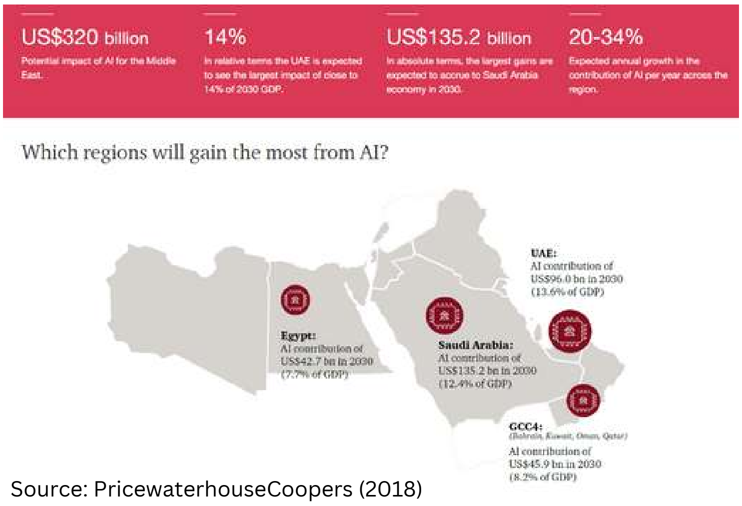
In fact, a report by the World Economic Forum found that AI-powered credit scoring can increase the number of individuals and small businesses that have access to credit by up to 20%.

Furthermore, AI can also help achieve stability and financial inclusivity in digital finance by reducing bias and discrimination in financing practices. By leveraging AI-powered algorithms, financial institutions can reduce human biases and create more objective and fair financing practices. For example, an AI-powered financing platform in the United States called Upstart found that their algorithm was able to approve 27% more financings than traditional lenders while maintaining the same default rate.

"BY LEVERAGING AI TECHNOLOGIES, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS CAN BETTER MANAGE RISK, EXPAND ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES, AND REDUCE BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION IN FINANCING PRACTICES."

CURRENT AI ADOPTION

CURRENT STATE OF PLAY: MIDDLE EAST ADOPTION



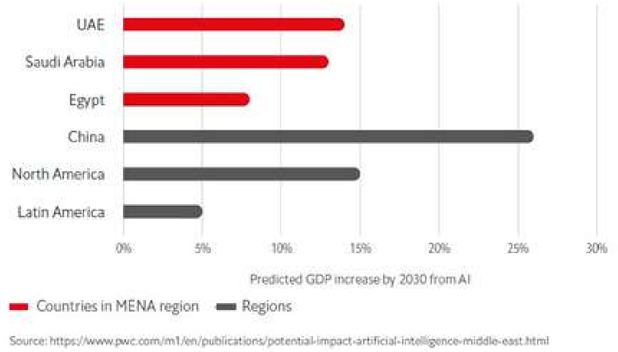
Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers (2018)

The current state of artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the Middle East is rapidly evolving, with governments and businesses recognizing the significance of embracing this technology in order to remain competitive in the global landscape. The annual growth in the contribution of AI is expected to range between 20-34% per year across the region, with the fastest growth in the UAE followed by Saudi Arabia.

The fourth industrial revolution has already begun, and the Middle East is facing the challenge of keeping up with the rapid pace of technological change and advancements, particularly in the area of AI.

The consequences of being left behind are substantial, with the potential loss of economic opportunities and competitiveness in the global market. The potential benefits of AI adoption are enormous, with estimates projecting that the Middle East will accrue 2% of the total global benefits of AI by 2030, equating to US$320 billion. This highlights the importance of investing in AI and advanced technologies for the economic prosperity and development of the region.

When we look at the individual countries in the Middle Eastern region, we can see a variety of approaches to AI adoption. Saudi Arabia is positioning itself as a leader in the race for AI domination, with the largest estimate of AI's contribution to the economy, reaching over US$135.2 billion by 2030, equivalent to 12.4% of GDP. The UAE is also positioning itself as a leader, with the largest impact of AI relative to its GDP, with a contribution of close to 14% in 2030. The Predicted GDP increase by 2030 from AI can



Source: (the future of AI in the Middle East and North Africa Pushing forward: Pushing forward: the future of AI in the Middle East and North Africa, n.d.)

"THE REGION IS EXPECTED TO REALIZE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC GAINS FROM AI.MHOWEVER, NOT ALL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION ARE TAKING A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO AI ADOPTION, AND THOSE THAT ARE LAGGING BEHIND NEED TO CATCH UP IN ORDER TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE GLOBAL MARKET."

RESOLVING CREDITWORTHINESS ISSUES USING AI

In recent years, AI has emerged as a powerful tool for addressing some of the key issues faced by SMEs and start-ups, especially in the area of creditworthiness.

One of the main challenges faced by banks in financing money to SMEs and start-ups is the lack of credit history and financial information. Traditional credit scoring models rely on historical data to assess the creditworthiness of a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding). However, many SMEs and start-ups do not have a long credit history, making it difficult for banks to evaluate their creditworthiness. This is where AI can play a critical role in providing an accurate assessment of creditworthiness.

AI-powered credit scoring models can analyze a vast amount of data to assess the creditworthiness of a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding). These models can use a range of data sources, including financial data, social media activity, and other digital footprints, to evaluate the creditworthiness of a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding). By analyzing this data, AI-powered credit scoring models can provide a more accurate assessment of creditworthiness, even for SMEs and start-ups with limited credit history.

Moreover, AI can help banks to identify and mitigate the risks associated with financing to SMEs and start-ups. Banks face a higher risk when financing to SMEs and start-ups due to their smaller size and lack of financial history. AI-powered risk assessment models can help banks to identify potential risks associated with financing to a particular mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding).

- These models can also help banks to monitor the creditworthiness of a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding) in real-time, providing early warning signals if a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding)'s creditworthiness deteriorates.

- Another benefit of AI in creditworthiness assessment is its ability to reduce bias in financing decisions. Traditional credit scoring models can be biased against certain groups, such as women or minorities, leading to discrimination in financing. AI-powered credit scoring models are less likely to be biased, as they do not rely on subjective factors such as race or gender. AI-powered financial advisory services can help SMEs and start-ups to identify the best financing options for their specific needs. These services can also provide recommendations on how to optimize cash flow, manage debt, and improve profitability.

- Furthermore, AI-powered fraud detection can help banks to mitigate the risks associated with financing to SMEs and start-ups. SMEs and start-ups are more vulnerable to fraud due to their limited resources and lack of internal controls. AI-powered fraud detection can analyze transaction data in real-time to identify potential fraud, allowing banks to take immediate action to mitigate the risks.

TOP 10 AI USE CASES: FINANCIAL INCLUSION & STABILITY

- **Credit Scoring:** AI-powered credit scoring systems use machine learning algorithms to analyze a mudharib (or entrepreneur who seeks funding)'s creditworthiness, based on a wide range of data points beyond traditional credit history. This can help financial institutions make more informed financing decisions and promote financial inclusion for individuals or businesses with limited credit history.

- **Fraud Detection:** AI-powered fraud detection systems can analyze transactions in real-time and identify patterns that may indicate fraudulent activity. This can help financial institutions detect and prevent fraudulent activities, which can promote stability in the financial system.

- **Personalized Financial Advice:** AI can be used to analyze customers' financial data and provide personalized financial advice. This can help individuals better manage their finances and increase their financial inclusion.

- **Robo-advisory:** Robo-advisory is an AI-powered investment management system that can provide customized investment advice to customers based on their financial goals and risk tolerance. This can help individuals who may not have access to traditional financial advisors to invest their money and promote financial inclusion.

- **Chatbots:** AI-powered chatbots can provide quick and efficient customer service to individuals who may not have access to traditional banking services. This can help promote financial inclusion by making banking services more accessible to a wider range of people.

- **Predictive Analytics:** Predictive analytics can help financial institutions forecast future trends in the financial industry and make more informed decisions about investment and financing. This can promote stability in the financial system by helping institutions make more informed decisions.

- **Anti-Money Laundering (AML):** AI-powered AML systems can analyze large amounts of data to identify suspicious transactions that may be linked to money laundering or other illegal activities. This can help financial institutions prevent illegal activities and promote stability in the financial system.

- **Risk Management:** AI-powered risk management systems can analyze various types of data to identify potential risks to the financial system. This can help financial institutions make more informed decisions about risk and promote stability in the financial system.

- **Digital Identity Verification:** AI-powered digital identity verification systems can help individuals verify their identity quickly and easily, which can promote financial inclusion by making it easier for individuals to access banking services.

- **Smart Contract Management:** AI-powered smart contract management systems can automate contract management and enforce compliance, which can help financial institutions reduce risk and promote stability in the financial system.

GRANULARITY OF FINANCING

Accessing funding for SMEs and startups in the Middle East can be a significant challenge due to the lack of a well-developed ecosystem for alternative financing options, leading to traditional banks and financial institutions being the primary source of financing. However, these entities often have strict financing criteria and require collateral, making it difficult for early-stage companies to secure funding.

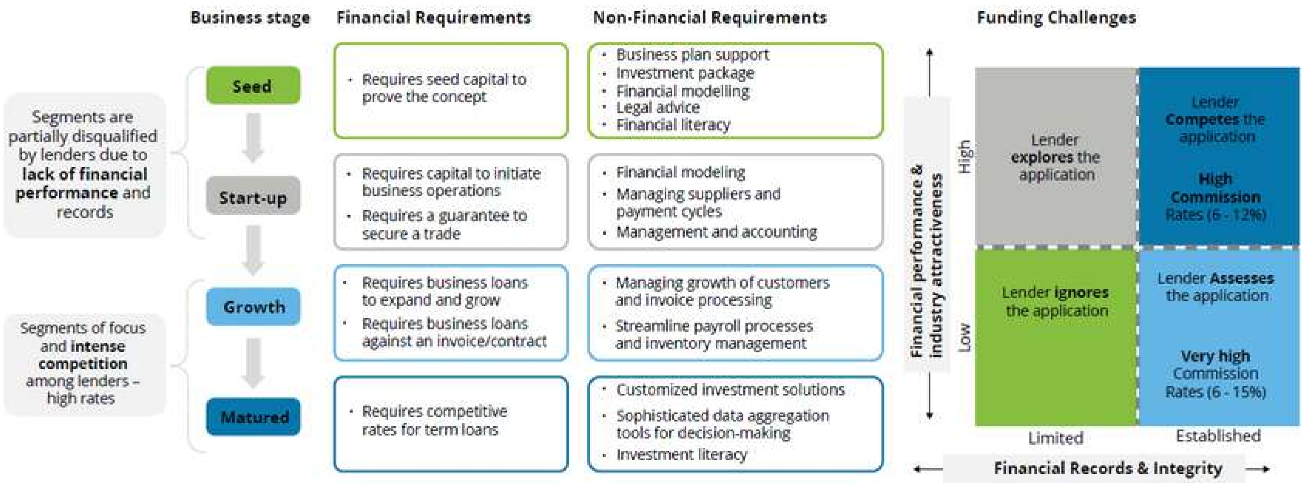
Therefore, it is crucial to understand the unique requirements of SMEs as they seek different types of funding options across different stages of their business life cycle. Financing entities must recognize that a broad range of non-financial needs must be coupled with SME funding at each stage to promote their growth and sustainability.

A one size fits all financing model cannot meet the diverse needs of SMEs and startups in the Middle East. SMEs and startups in the region operate in different industries and sectors, each with unique financial needs and risks. Therefore, a tailored approach to financing that considers the unique needs and risks of SMEs and startups operating in the region is necessary. According to Deloitte's findings, seed and early-stage equity finance is garnered towards start-up and innovative companies. On the other hand, growth SMEs seek venture capital funds or take the listing route.

Furthermore, financing entities must recognize that a broad range of non-financial needs must be coupled with SME funding at each stage to promote their growth and sustainability. SME funding requirements and typical challenges faced by SMEs can be observed in the diagram above. (Deloitte - Bridging the SME finance gap in the GCC, 2022).

In addition, risk-based pricing needs to be considered in a more granular manner. Debt has traditionally been the preferred mode of financing for low or medium risk SMEs with stable cash flows, feasible business models, and availability of collateral. However, equity finance options are preferred by financing entities with a greater risk appetite. SMEs in the seed and start-up phases often face either disqualification of applications or approvals with high rates from financing entities given their level of riskiness.

Risk-based pricing for SME financing is key, and AI can help achieve this goal. AI can assist in predicting the risk level of SMEs and startups based on various parameters, such as the industry, credit history, cash flows, and other metrics.



RELEVANCE OF AI AND SME FINANCING

AI can help financial institutions provide financings with appropriate financing rates and repayment periods, making SME financing more accessible and affordable.

Financing for SMEs and startups in the Middle East requires a granular approach that considers the unique needs and risks of each business operating in the region. A tailored approach that accounts for the diverse industries and sectors, along with risk-based pricing using AI, can lead to a more accessible and robust financing ecosystem that promotes entrepreneurship and innovation in the region.

Here are the top 8 considerations for risk-based financing for Qatari banks:

Regulatory Compliance: Qatari banks must comply with local regulatory requirements, including Central Bank of Qatar regulations and guidelines, to ensure that their financing activities are conducted within a regulatory framework that promotes financial stability and consumer protection.

Credit Risk Management: Banks need to adopt a robust credit risk management framework to ensure that they can effectively assess, mitigate, and monitor credit risks associated with financing activities. This includes developing credit scoring models, establishing credit limits, and ensuring proper documentation and collateral management.

Risk Appetite Framework: Banks must develop a risk appetite framework that outlines the types and levels of risks they are willing to accept and how they will manage these risks. This framework should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant and aligned with the bank's strategy.

Portfolio Management: Banks need to develop portfolio management strategies to ensure that their financing portfolio is diversified, balanced, and aligned with their risk appetite. This includes monitoring portfolio concentrations, exposures, and asset quality.

Risk-Based Pricing: Banks must adopt risk-based pricing models that align the pricing of financing solutions with the underlying risks. This ensures that the pricing is commensurate with the risks involved, and the bank is compensated for the risks it is taking.

Basel III Compliance: Qatari banks must comply with Basel III regulations, which require banks to maintain adequate capital, liquidity, and leverage ratios to ensure that they are resilient to economic shocks and market volatility.

Stress Testing: Banks should conduct regular stress testing exercises to evaluate the impact of adverse scenarios on their financing portfolio and ensure that they have adequate capital and liquidity buffers to withstand such scenarios.

Collaboration with Other Stakeholders: Qatari banks should collaborate with other stakeholders, including regulatory bodies, industry associations, and other banks, to share best practices and insights on risk management and financing activities.

"RISK-BASED FINANCING REQUIRES QATARI BANKS TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK THAT ADDRESSES CREDIT, MARKET, LIQUIDITY, AND OPERATIONAL RISKS.

BY ADOPTING THESE CONSIDERATIONS, BANKS CAN DEVELOP FINANCING SOLUTIONS THAT ARE ALIGNED WITH THEIR RISK APPETITE, PROMOTE FINANCIAL STABILITY, AND SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH IN QATAR."

WHY BANKS SHOULD BECOME TRUSTED ADVISORS TO THE ENTERPRISES

Traditionally, banks have primarily focused on providing financial services such as financing and financing to their customers. However, in recent times, the role of banks has evolved, and there is an increasing need for banks to become trusted advisors to the enterprises they serve, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Becoming a trusted advisor means that the bank plays a much more active role in the success of the enterprise. Rather than just being a provider of financial services, the bank takes a more holistic approach to the relationship with the enterprise, providing advice and support in areas such as financial planning, risk management, and business strategy.

One of the main reasons why banks should become trusted advisors to SMEs is that these businesses are the backbone of the economy. SMEs create jobs, drive innovation, and contribute significantly to economic growth. By becoming trusted advisors, banks can help SMEs to succeed and grow, thereby contributing to the overall development of the economy.

Another reason why banks should become trusted advisors is that SMEs often lack the knowledge and expertise needed to navigate the complex financial landscape. By providing advice and support, banks can help these businesses to make informed decisions and avoid costly mistakes.

Moreover, becoming a trusted advisor can help banks to build stronger relationships with their clients. By providing added value beyond just financial services, banks can increase customer loyalty and trust, which can lead to long-term relationships and increased revenue.

> **"BECOMING A TRUSTED ADVISOR CAN HELP BANKS TO BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR CLIENTS. BY PROVIDING ADDED VALUE BEYOND JUST FINANCIAL SERVICES, BANKS CAN INCREASE CUSTOMER LOYALTY AND TRUST, WHICH CAN LEAD TO LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS AND INCREASED REVENUE."**

BANKS AS TRUSTED ADVISORS

Banks can become trusted advisors to SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and start-ups by providing them with a range of financial services and advice that supports their growth and helps them navigate challenges. By doing so, banks can build long-term relationships with their clients and become a trusted partner in their success.

To become a trusted advisor to SMEs and start-ups, banks should consider the following factors:

- **Understand the needs of SMEs and start-ups**: Banks should have a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities that SMEs and start-ups face. They should be able to provide customized solutions that address their specific needs and help them achieve their business goals.

- **Provide a range of financial services:** Banks should offer a range of financial services that meet the needs of SMEs and start-ups, such as business financings, lines of credit, cash management services, and merchant services.

- **Provide advisory services:** Banks should provide advisory services that help SMEs and start-ups with financial planning, budgeting, and cash flow management. They should also provide guidance on business growth strategies and risk management.

- **Offer digital tools and resources:** Banks should provide digital tools and resources that make it easy for SMEs and start-ups to manage their finances and access their banking services. These tools should be user-friendly and accessible on mobile devices.

- **Build trust**: Banks should build trust with SMEs and start-ups by providing transparent information about their fees, rates, and terms. They should also provide excellent customer service and be responsive to their clients' needs.

- **Build long-term relationships:** Banks should focus on building long-term relationships with SMEs and start-ups. They should provide ongoing support and be proactive in identifying opportunities to help their clients grow and succeed.

It is important for Qatari banks to provide the above services to SMEs and start-ups for several reasons:

- **Support economic growth:** SMEs and start-ups are key drivers of economic growth in Qatar. By providing financial services and advice, Qatari banks can help these businesses grow, create jobs, and contribute to the overall development of the economy.

- **Improve financial inclusion:** By providing financial services to SMEs and start-ups, Qatari banks can improve financial inclusion in the country. This can help to reduce poverty and inequality, and promote economic development.

- **Build long-term relationships:** By becoming trusted advisors to SMEs and start-ups, Qatari banks can build long-term relationships with their clients. This can help to create a stable and sustainable banking sector in Qatar.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

To become trusted advisors to SMEs and start-ups, Qatari banks must adopt a customer-centric approach, provide financial education and literacy programs, leverage digital technologies, offer customized financing options, provide business advisory services, partner with government agencies, provide networking opportunities, and engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives. By focusing on these key areas, Qatari banks can build strong relationships with SMEs and start-ups and become their trusted advisors.

Qatari banks could focus on the following eight key areas:

- **Customer-centric Approach**: Qatari banks need to adopt a customer-centric approach by understanding the needs of SMEs and start-ups. Banks need to provide customized services to meet the specific requirements of each client. By offering personalized services, Qatari banks can build strong relationships with SMEs and start-ups and become their trusted advisors.

- **Financial Education and Literacy**: Qatari banks can provide financial education and literacy programs to SMEs and start-ups to help them understand financial management, accounting, and taxation. By providing these services, Qatari banks can help SMEs and start-ups to make informed financial decisions and improve their financial management skills.

- **Digital Transformation:** Qatari banks can leverage digital technologies to offer convenient and accessible banking services to SMEs and start-ups. By adopting digital platforms, Qatari banks can provide online banking, mobile banking, and other digital services to their clients. This can help SMEs and start-ups to access banking services quickly and efficiently.

- **Access to Finance**: Qatari banks can offer customized financing options to SMEs and start-ups to meet their specific needs. Banks can use AI-powered credit scoring models to identify creditworthy SMEs and reduce the risk of default. By offering tailored financing options, Qatari banks can help SMEs and start-ups to access capital and grow their businesses.

- **Business Advisory Services:** Qatari banks can offer business advisory services to SMEs and start-ups, including legal advice, marketing and branding, talent management, and other areas. By providing these services, Qatari banks can help SMEs and start-ups to overcome common business challenges and improve their overall performance.

- **Partnerships with Government Agencies**: Qatari banks can partner with government agencies to provide support and resources to SMEs and start-ups. By collaborating with government agencies, Qatari banks can help SMEs and start-ups to navigate complex regulations, access funding, and benefit from other government programs.

- **Networking Opportunities:** Qatari banks can provide networking opportunities to SMEs and start-ups to connect with other businesses, potential partners, and investors. By hosting networking events, Qatari banks can help SMEs and start-ups to build relationships and expand their networks.

- **Corporate Social Responsibility:** Qatari banks can engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that support SMEs and start-ups. By supporting local businesses, Qatari banks can demonstrate their commitment to the community and build goodwill among their clients.

PROPOSED FUNCTIONS AND ROLES

- **Building long-term relationships:** This involves creating a relationship that extends beyond providing financial services to SMEs. The bank needs to be invested in the growth and success of the SME and provide ongoing support and guidance. To successfully implement this, the bank needs to have dedicated relationship managers who understand the needs of SMEs and can provide tailored solutions. Steps required include training relationship managers on SMEs needs, identifying key SMEs to focus on, and developing strategies for ongoing support.

- **Understanding the unique needs of SMEs:** SMEs have unique needs and challenges that differ from larger corporations. To be a trusted advisor, banks need to understand these needs and offer tailored solutions. This can be achieved through market research, engaging with SMEs, and providing specialized training to bank employees. Steps required include conducting market research, engaging with SMEs to understand their needs, and providing specialized training to bank employees.

- **Providing financial education:** Many SMEs lack the financial knowledge needed to make informed decisions about their businesses. Banks can provide financial education to SMEs to help them make better decisions and increase their chances of success. This can be done through seminars, workshops, and online resources. Steps required include developing educational resources, identifying SMEs to target, and hosting seminars and workshops.

- **Offering mentorship:** Mentorship can be a powerful tool for SMEs, providing them with guidance and support as they grow their businesses. Banks can offer mentorship programs, connecting SMEs with experienced mentors who can offer advice and support. Steps required include identifying mentors, developing mentorship programs, and matching mentors with SMEs.

- **Providing networking opportunities:** Networking can be crucial for SMEs, providing them with access to potential partners, customers, and investors. Banks can provide networking opportunities for SMEs, hosting events and facilitating introductions. Steps required include identifying potential partners, customers, and investors, developing networking events, and facilitating introductions.

- **Offering industry-specific advice:** Different industries have unique needs and challenges. Banks can offer industry-specific advice to SMEs, helping them navigate their specific industry landscape. To successfully implement this, banks need to have experts in different industries who can provide tailored advice. Steps required include identifying SMEs in specific industries, hiring industry experts, and providing industry-specific advice.

- **Supporting innovation:** Innovation can be a key driver of success for SMEs. Banks can support innovation by providing funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities for SMEs working on innovative projects. Steps required include identifying innovative SMEs, developing funding programs, and connecting SMEs with mentors and potential partners.

PROS AND CONS: TRUSTED ADVISOR

As a Trusted Advisor, banks play an essential role in helping SMEs achieve their financial goals. By providing expert financial advice, identifying financial needs, offering customized solutions, building long-term relationships, and providing timely assistance, banks can help SMEs navigate the complex financial landscape and succeed in their businesses.

The key benefits for banks include increased customer loyalty, enhanced reputation, and a stronger position in the market. However, the role of Trusted Advisor also comes with some risks, including the potential for conflicts of interest and the responsibility to provide objective advice. Ultimately, it is the banks' responsibility to manage these risks and ensure that they maintain the trust of their SME clients.

Pros:

- **Build long-term relationships:** By becoming a trusted advisor to SMEs, banks can build long-term relationships with their clients, leading to increased loyalty and trust.
- **Diversify revenue streams:** By offering advisory services, banks can diversify their revenue streams beyond traditional financing and financing activities.
- **Enhance reputation:** By providing high-quality advisory services, banks can enhance their reputation as a trusted and valuable partner for SMEs.
- **Create a competitive advantage:** Offering advisory services can give banks a competitive advantage over other financial institutions that do not offer such service

.

- **Support economic growth:** By helping SMEs to grow and succeed, banks can contribute to overall economic growth and development.

Cons

- **Requires additional resources:** Offering advisory services requires banks to invest in additional resources such as skilled personnel, training, and technology.
- **Risk management:** Providing advisory services can increase the risk exposure of banks, as they may be held liable for any advice given that leads to financial loss.
- **Conflicts of interest:** There may be conflicts of interest between the advisory and financing activities of banks, which can lead to ethical concerns.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Banks must comply with regulatory requirements for advisory services, which can be complex and time-consuming.
- **Limited revenue potential:** Advisory services may have limited revenue potential compared to traditional financing and financing activities, which may discourage banks from investing in these services.

While there are potential challenges and risks, the benefits of becoming a trusted advisor to SMEs can outweigh the cons for banks that are willing to invest in these services. By building long-term relationships, diversifying revenue streams, and supporting economic growth, banks can position themselves as valuable partners to SMEs, contributing to their own success as well as that of the broader economy.

10 POTENTIAL SCENARIOS & IMPLICATIONS

This section aims to explore the importance of financial inclusivity for SMEs and start-ups in Qatar. We present 10 scenarios that demonstrate the potential impacts of limited access to credit facilities, and the far-reaching consequences that can result from financial exclusion. These scenarios include the stifling of innovation, reduced employment rates, and even a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation.

The research methods used to generate the ten scenarios include surveys, dialogues, polls, and management questionnaires conducted across more than 400 webinars with participants and speakers. These methods are all designed to collect data and insights from different perspectives to inform decision-making.

The combination of these research methods allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing SMEs globally and the importance of financial inclusion in supporting their growth and success. By gathering data and insights from a variety of sources, the research team was able to identify the key scenarios and make informed recommendations for improving financial inclusivity in the country.

Scenario 1: Without access to credit, SMEs and start-ups may struggle to fund their operations, pay employees, or purchase inventory. This can lead to missed opportunities, lower productivity, and ultimately, business failure.

Scenario 2: Limited access to credit facilities can also stifle innovation and limit the development of new products and services. Without the necessary funding, these companies may be unable to invest in research and development or to scale their operations to meet the demands of their customers.

Scenario 3: The inability to secure financings from banks can also force SMEs and start-ups to turn to alternative lenders, such as high-interest financings or credit cards. This can create a cycle of debt that further limits their ability to grow and succeed.

Scenario 4: Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact employment rates. SMEs and start-ups are significant contributors to job creation in Qatar, and limited funding can result in reduced hiring or even layoffs.

Scenario 5: Without access to credit facilities, small businesses may also be unable to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing.

Scenario 6: The inability to access credit can also impact supply chains and the ability of small businesses to provide essential goods and services. This can have cascading effects on the broader economy, leading to reduced consumer spending and lower economic growth.

Scenario 7: Limited financial inclusivity can also contribute to income inequality and social disparities, as those with access to funding are better positioned to succeed and grow their businesses.

Scenario 8: Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact the ability of SMEs and start-ups to contribute to the broader economy through taxes and other revenue streams.

Scenario 9: The inability to access credit facilities may also limit the ability of SMEs and start-ups to participate in international trade or to expand their operations beyond Qatar.

Scenario 10: The lack of financial inclusivity can also lead to a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation, as aspiring entrepreneurs may be discouraged by the challenges of securing funding and support for their business ideas.

SCENARIO #1

Scenario 1: Without access to credit, SMEs and start-ups may struggle to fund their operations, pay employees, or purchase inventory. This can lead to missed opportunities, lower productivity, and ultimately, business failure.

Access to credit is critical for the survival and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups. Without it, they may struggle to fund their operations, pay employees, or purchase inventory, which can lead to missed opportunities, lower productivity, and ultimately, business failure.

SMEs and start-ups often have limited financial resources, making it difficult for them to access the capital they need to grow and expand their operations. A report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that SMEs face significant challenges in accessing finance, particularly in developing countries. These challenges also include a lack of collateral, high perceived risk, and limited access to financial services (OECD, 2020).

In addition, many SMEs and start-ups may not have a proven track record or a steady stream of revenue, making them risky investments for traditional lenders. This can make it even more challenging for them to access credit and finance their operations. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) estimates that there is a global credit gap of $5.2 trillion for SMEs, meaning that these businesses are unable to access the financing they need to grow and succeed (IFC, 2021).

Without access to credit, SMEs and start-ups may struggle to pay their employees, which can lead to low morale and decreased productivity. In turn, this can result in missed opportunities and lower revenues. The inability to purchase inventory can also lead to missed opportunities, as businesses may be unable to meet demand or take advantage of new market trends. Furthermore, they may not be able to recover from unexpected expenses or market downturns.

A study by the European Central Bank found that SMEs with limited access to finance tend to invest less, grow more slowly, and have lower productivity than those with adequate financing (European Central Bank, 2019). These findings highlight the importance of addressing the financing needs of SMEs and the potential negative impacts of limited access to finance on these businesses.

"THE LACK OF ACCESS TO CREDIT CAN ULTIMATELY LEAD TO BUSINESS FAILURE. MANY SMES AND START-UPS OPERATE ON THIN MARGINS, AND EVEN A SMALL SETBACK CAN HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THEIR FINANCIAL HEALTH."

SCENARIO #2

Scenario 2: Limited access to credit facilities can also stifle innovation and limit the development of new products and services. Without the necessary funding, these companies may be unable to invest in research and development or to scale their operations to meet the demands of their customers.

Limited access to credit facilities can restrict the growth potential of SMEs and start-ups. Without adequate funds, businesses may be unable to expand their operations or invest in research and development, ultimately limiting their ability to innovate.

This lack of innovation can lead to companies failing to adapt to market changes, leading to a decline in their competitiveness. For example, an SME in the technology industry may be unable to invest in the latest hardware and software technologies required to remain competitive, leading to a decline in their products' quality and the loss of customers to their competitors.

Additionally, limited access to credit facilities can limit the ability of businesses to meet the demands of their customers. For example, if an SME in the retail industry is unable to secure credit to purchase inventory, they may struggle to keep up with their customers' demand. This can result in missed opportunities and ultimately, a decline in customer satisfaction, leading to a loss of sales and revenue. This can eventually lead to the failure of the business.

Moreover, a lack of access to credit facilities can also limit the ability of SMEs and start-ups to expand their operations, which can have a direct impact on their productivity. For example, if an SME in the manufacturing industry is unable to purchase new machinery or hire more employees due to a lack of credit facilities, their production levels may remain stagnant, or even decline, which can lead to lower revenue and ultimately, business failure.

Furthermore, limited access to credit facilities can also stifle innovation and limit the development of new products and services. For instance, an SME in the food industry may be unable to invest in research and development for new products that cater to the changing dietary needs of consumers. As a result, their competitors may gain an edge by offering innovative products that meet these changing demands, leading to a decline in market share and ultimately, the failure of the business.

"WITHOUT THE NECESSARY FUNDING, THESE COMPANIES MAY BE UNABLE TO INVEST IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OR TO SCALE THEIR OPERATIONS TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THEIR CUSTOMERS."

SCENARIO #3

Scenario 3: The inability to secure financings from banks can also force SMEs and start-ups to turn to alternative lenders, such as high-interest financings or credit cards. This can create a cycle of debt that further limits their ability to grow and succeed.

When banks and traditional financial institutions do not provide sufficient credit facilities, these companies may be forced to turn to alternative lenders. Unfortunately, this can create a cycle of debt that further limits their ability to grow and succeed.

According to the World Bank Enterprise Survey, a comparatively high percentage of firms in the MENAP region (about 32 percent) report access to credit as a major constraint (compared with the world average of 26 percent). The percentage is lower in the CCA region (18 percent). SMEs in the Middle East have the largest gap in financial inclusion in the world. (International Monetary Fund, 2019).

One of the most common alternative sources of funding for SMEs and start-ups is high-interest financings. These financings may be offered by alternative lenders, such as peer-to-peer financing platforms or online lenders, and often come with significantly higher interest rates than traditional bank financings. The high interest rates can make it challenging for these companies to repay the financings, which can result in a cycle of debt.

Credit cards are another form of alternative financing that SMEs and start-ups may turn to. While credit cards can provide quick and easy access to funds, they often come with high-interest rates and fees. Additionally, using credit cards for business expenses can make it difficult to keep track of spending and manage cash flow effectively. The reliance on alternative lenders can limit the ability of SMEs and start-ups to grow and expand their operations.

The high cost of credit can make it challenging for these companies to invest in research and development or to scale their operations to meet the demands of their customers. Instead of focusing on innovation and growth, these companies may be forced to prioritize debt repayment.

Furthermore, a cycle of debt can have long-lasting effects on the financial health of SMEs and start-ups. High-interest rates and fees can make it difficult for these companies to generate profits and reinvest in their businesses. Additionally, missed payments or defaults on financings can damage their credit scores, making it even more challenging to secure financing in the future.

"TURNING TO ALTERNATIVE LENDERS CAN CREATE A CYCLE OF DEBT THAT FURTHER LIMITS THEIR ABILITY TO GROW AND SUCCEED."

SCENARIO #4

Scenario 4: Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact employment rates. SMEs and start-ups are significant contributors to job creation in Qatar, and limited funding can result in reduced hiring or even layoffs.

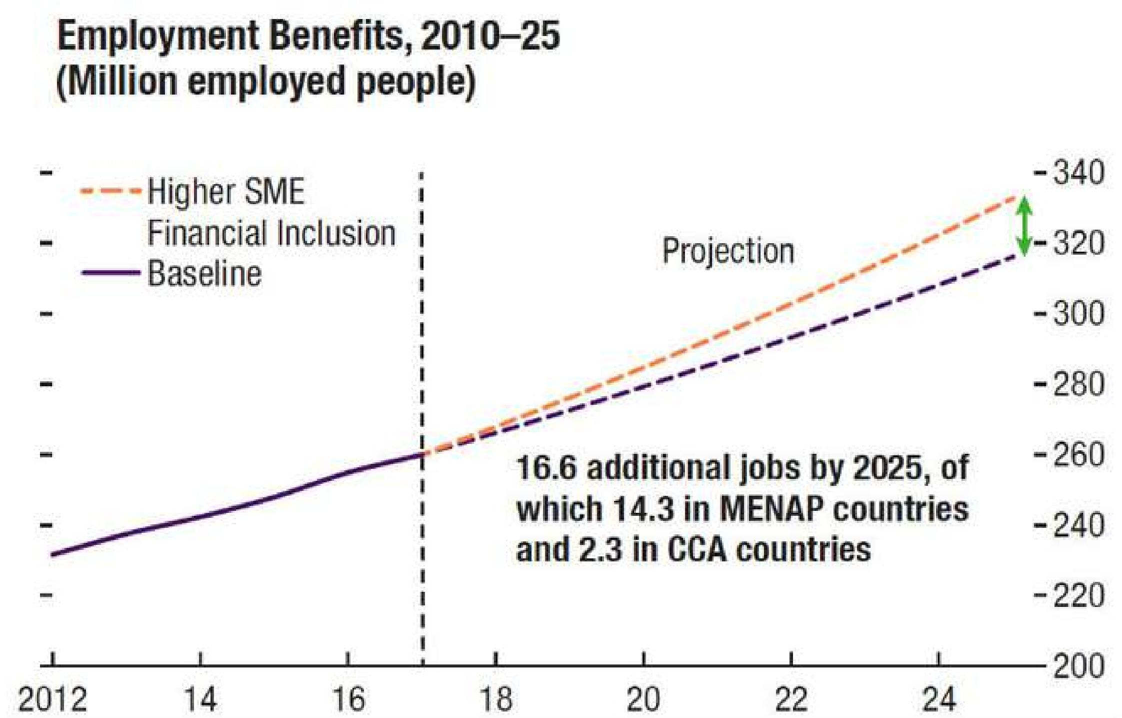
In the MENAP and CCA regions, greater SME financial inclusion could help raise the employment rate, potentially creating about 16 million jobs by 2025. These estimated gains are much larger for SMEs (1.3 percentage points and 2.3 percentage points, respectively) than for large firms (0.8 percentage point and 1.8 percentage points). (International Monetary Fund, 2019).

While SMEs in the MENA represent about 96% of registered companies and about half of employment, they account for only 7% of total bank financing - the lowest level in the world. For comparison, financing to SMEs represents 16% of all bank financings in Asia Pacific.

When SMEs and start-ups are unable to access credit facilities, they may be forced to cut back on hiring or even lay off employees. This can have a ripple effect on the economy, as reduced employment rates can lead to decreased consumer spending and further impacts on the business community.

In Qatar, SMEs and start-ups are significant contributors to job creation, and their success is essential for the overall health of the economy. Limited access to credit facilities can also stifle innovation and limit the development of new products and services.

Without the necessary funding, these companies may be unable to invest in research and development or to scale their operations to meet the demands of their customers. This can lead to a decline in competitiveness and ultimately impact employment rates.



Source: (World Economic Forum, n.d.)

SCENARIO #5

Scenario 5: Without access to credit facilities, small businesses may also be unable to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing.

A major challenge that small businesses face is competing with larger, established companies that have greater access to funding and resources. Without access to credit facilities, SMEs and start-ups may struggle to compete in the marketplace and enter new markets. This can limit their ability to expand their operations and grow their customer base.

Furthermore, without access to credit facilities, small businesses may be unable to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing.

This can prevent SMEs from competing for larger projects or contracts, further limiting their growth potential. The lack of access to credit facilities can also impact employment rates in Qatar. SMEs and start-ups are significant contributors to job creation in the country, and limited funding can result in reduced hiring or even layoffs.

This can have a ripple effect on the economy, as job losses can lead to decreased consumer spending and ultimately, lower economic growth.

For SMEs, the inability to compete for larger contracts can prevent them from scaling their operations. This can hinder their ability to make a meaningful contribution to the economy and may ultimately result in a decline in employment rates.

Without adequate funding, small businesses may also be unable to invest in research and development, which is essential for innovation and developing new products or services. This can lead to a decline in competitiveness and a loss of market share, which further limits their growth potential.

In order to overcome these challenges, it is essential for banks and policymakers to work together to create an ecosystem that supports SMEs and start-ups. This can involve providing more flexible and accessible credit facilities, as well as offering incentives for banks to lend to these businesses. Governments can also play a role in reducing regulatory burdens that can make it difficult for small businesses to access credit.

Overall, the inability to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing can have significant implications for small businesses in Qatar. Without access to credit facilities, these businesses may struggle to compete in the marketplace, limit their growth potential, and ultimately have a negative impact on the economy and employment rates.

"WHEN SMALL BUSINESSES LACK ACCESS TO CREDIT FACILITIES, IT MEANS THAT THEY MAY MISS OUT ON OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND THEIR CUSTOMER BASE, ENTER NEW MARKETS OR EVEN SECURE CONTRACTS WITH LARGER COMPANIES OR GOVERNMENT ENTITIES THAT REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL BACKING."

SCENARIO #6

Scenario 6: The inability to access credit can also impact supply chains and the ability of small businesses to provide essential goods and services. This can have cascading effects on the broader economy, leading to reduced consumer spending and lower economic growth.

The impact of reduced access to credit facilities also extends to supply chains and the ability of small businesses to provide essential goods and services. SMEs and start-ups are essential players in supply chains, providing critical goods and services to larger businesses and government entities.

Without access to credit, these small businesses may be unable to secure contracts with larger companies or government entities that require substantial financial backing. This can have cascading effects on the broader economy, leading to reduced consumer spending and lower economic growth.

This is because small businesses often serve as a source of employment and income for local communities. When small businesses are unable to access credit and are forced to close their doors, this can lead to job losses and reduced income for local residents. As a result, consumers may have less disposable income to spend, leading to reduced spending in the broader economy.

One example of how the inability to access credit can impact small businesses is the case of a small manufacturing company that is unable to secure a contract with a larger company due to their inability to access credit.

The small manufacturing company is responsible for producing a key component of the larger company's product, and without access to credit, they are unable to purchase the necessary materials to fulfill the contract. As a result, the larger company is forced to look elsewhere for a supplier, disrupting the entire supply chain and leading to potential delays in the production of the final product.

Another example is the case of a small business that provides essential services to a local community. Without access to credit, the small business may be forced to close its doors, leaving residents without access to those services. This can have a ripple effect on the local economy, as residents may be forced to travel further to access those services, leading to increased transportation costs and reduced disposable income.

"THE INABILITY TO ACCESS CREDIT CAN LEAD TO LOWER ECONOMIC GROWTH BECAUSE SMALL BUSINESSES ARE OFTEN A SOURCE OF INNOVATION AND COMPETITION, DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

SCENARIO #7

Scenario 7: Limited financial inclusivity can also contribute to income inequality and social disparities, as those with access to funding are better positioned to succeed and grow their businesses.

Access to credit facilities is crucial for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups to succeed and grow their businesses. However, limited financial inclusivity can lead to reduced access to credit facilities, contributing to income inequality and social disparities. *"Access to credit is an important element of financial inclusivity, as it can help to promote entrepreneurship, job creation, and economic growth. Without access to credit, individuals and businesses may struggle to invest in their future, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty and inequality." (Journal of African Business, 2020)*

The limited access to credit facilities can contribute to income inequality and social disparities in several ways. For instance, small businesses that do not have access to credit facilities may not be able to expand their operations or enter new markets, which can limit their revenue and profitability. As a result, they may not be able to compete effectively with larger businesses, which can lead to reduced economic growth.

Moreover, limited access to credit facilities can also result in reduced employment opportunities, particularly in SMEs and start-ups. This can lead to social disparities as individuals in lower-income brackets may not have access to the job opportunities provided by small businesses. As a result, income inequality can increase, which can exacerbate social disparities.

Additionally, limited financial inclusivity can lead to a concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few individuals or businesses that have access to funding.

This can create a monopoly or oligopoly in certain markets, reducing competition and innovation. This, in turn, can lead to higher prices and reduced quality of goods and services, negatively impacting consumers. Furthermore, limited access to credit facilities can result in a lack of investment in certain sectors or regions, perpetuating economic disparities.

Small businesses and entrepreneurs in less-developed regions or industries may face more difficulty in accessing credit facilities, leading to limited growth and development. This can widen the gap between developed and developing regions and industries, leading to social and economic disparities.

"LIMITED FINANCIAL INCLUSIVITY CAN HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES BEYOND JUST THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, INCOME INEQUALITY, SOCIAL DISPARITIES, BUT ALSO REDUCED COMPETITION AND INNOVATION, AND SLOWER ECONOMIC GROWTH, AMONG OTHER ISSUES."

SCENARIO #8

Scenario 8: Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact the ability of SMEs and start-ups to contribute to the broader economy through taxes and other revenue streams.

Access to credit facilities is crucial for the growth and success of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups. Reduced access to credit facilities can also impact the ability of SMEs and start-ups to contribute to the broader economy through taxes and other revenue streams.

According to the Journal of Public Economics, findings suggest that limited credit access can lead to increased tax evasion by small businesses, resulting in significant revenue losses for the government" (Bellemare et al., 2018).

Small businesses are significant contributors to the economy, both in terms of job creation and revenue generation. According to the International Finance Corporation, SMEs account for 90% of all businesses worldwide and employ approximately two-thirds of the global workforce.

In many countries, including Qatar, SMEs are also a significant source of tax revenue. However, when SMEs and start-ups struggle to access credit facilities, they may find it challenging to grow and expand their operations, limiting their ability to contribute to the broader economy through taxes and other revenue streams.

Limited access to credit facilities can lead to missed opportunities, lower productivity, and ultimately, business failure. This can have a cascading effect on the broader economy, particularly if the affected businesses are significant contributors to tax revenues. For example, if a small business is unable to secure funding to purchase inventory, it may be unable to fulfil orders from customers, leading to lost sales and revenue.

This, in turn, can impact the company's ability to pay taxes and contribute to the broader economy. Furthermore, limited access to credit facilities can also lead to increased reliance on informal financing sources, such as personal savings or external investors.

While these sources may be helpful in the short term, they may not be sustainable or sufficient to support long-term growth and development. In some cases, they may also be subject to legal or regulatory restrictions, limiting the ability of SMEs and start-ups to access the necessary funding to grow and contribute to the broader economy.

"WITHOUT ACCESS TO CREDIT FACILITIES, SMALL BUSINESSES MAY STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR OPERATIONS OR MEET THE DEMANDS OF THEIR CUSTOMERS."

SCENARIO #9

Scenario 9: The inability to access credit facilities may also limit the ability of SMEs and start-ups to participate in international trade or to expand their operations beyond Qatar.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups play a critical role in the economic development of Qatar, contributing to job creation, innovation, and economic growth. However, limited access to credit facilities can significantly impact their ability to succeed and *"prevent them from expanding their operations and participating in international trade, which is critical for economic growth and development" (International Chamber of Commerce Qatar report, 2021).*

The inability to access credit facilities may limit the ability of SMEs and start-ups to participate in international trade. Without the necessary funding, these companies may not be able to invest in the necessary infrastructure or technology to compete with established international businesses. This can lead to a missed opportunity for these companies to expand their operations beyond Qatar and enter new markets.

The limited access to credit facilities can impact the ability of SMEs and start-ups to expand their operations beyond Qatar.

This can result in a lack of competitiveness in the global market and a missed opportunity to generate revenue through innovation. Moreover, limited access to credit facilities can impact the ability of SMEs and start-ups to participate in government contracts or projects.

The government of Qatar regularly issues contracts for a variety of goods and services, and SMEs and start-ups can play a critical role in meeting the demands of these contracts.

However, without access to credit facilities, these companies may not be able to meet the financial requirements necessary to secure these contracts. This can limit the growth potential of these companies and hinder their ability to contribute to the broader economy.

"WITHOUT ACCESS TO FUNDING, THESE COMPANIES MAY NOT BE ABLE TO INVEST IN THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, SUCH AS EQUIPMENT, PERSONNEL, AND TECHNOLOGY, TO SCALE UP THEIR OPERATIONS.

SCENARIO #10

Scenario 10: The lack of financial inclusivity can also lead to a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation, as aspiring entrepreneurs may be discouraged by the challenges of securing funding and support for their business ideas.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups play a critical role in driving innovation, economic growth, and job creation in many countries, including Qatar. However, limited access to credit facilities can stifle their ability to succeed and contribute to the broader economy.

One of the consequences of the lack of financial inclusivity is a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation, leading to a reduction in the number of new businesses created.

Innovation is also essential for economic growth and competitiveness. SMEs and start-ups are often at the forefront of innovation, introducing new products, services, and business models to the market.

The lack of financial inclusivity can also discourage potential entrepreneurs from pursuing business opportunities. For many aspiring entrepreneurs, the idea of starting a business is a daunting one, and the prospect of securing funding can be overwhelming.

When access to credit facilities is limited, it can make entrepreneurship seem like an insurmountable challenge, leading many to abandon their business ideas before they even get off the ground.

Moreover, limited access to credit facilities can also contribute to a lack of diversity in the small business ecosystem.

When only established companies or those with significant financial backing can succeed, it can make it challenging for new and innovative ideas to gain traction. This can limit the types of businesses that emerge and the diversity of products and services available to consumers.

"WITHOUT ACCESS TO FUNDING, THESE COMPANIES LIMIT THEIR ABILITY TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF CUSTOMERS IN OTHER MARKETS AND TO COMPETE WITH INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES."

RECOMMENDED STEPS

To integrate AI strategies into Qatar's digital transformation and link it to stability and financial inclusivity in digital finance, policy makers should consider the following steps:

- **Develop a national AI strategy:** Qatar's policy makers should develop a national AI strategy that sets out the government's vision, goals, and priorities for AI adoption. The strategy should include policies to promote innovation, build technical capacity, and ensure ethical and responsible use of AI technologies.

- **Build a supportive regulatory environment:** Qatar's policy makers should create a supportive regulatory environment that encourages innovation and investment in AI technologies while protecting consumers' interests. This can be achieved through regulatory sandboxes, clear and transparent regulations, and regular reviews of policies to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

- **Foster partnerships between government, academia, and industry:** Policy makers should foster partnerships between government, academia, and industry to promote knowledge sharing and collaboration. This can help to build technical capacity, accelerate innovation, and promote responsible and ethical use of AI technologies.

- **Focus on promoting financial inclusion:** Policy makers should prioritize policies that promote financial inclusion, such as developing alternative credit scoring models, expanding access to financial services, and supporting the growth of fintech companies that serve underserved populations. This can help to reduce the gap in financial inclusion and promote economic growth and stability.

- **Invest in research and development**: Qatar's policy makers should invest in research and development to support the development and adoption of AI technologies. This can help to drive innovation and enhance the competitiveness of Qatar's financial industry.

- **Promote awareness and education:** Policy makers should promote awareness and education among the public and private sector about the potential benefits and risks of AI technologies. This can help to build trust in AI and promote responsible and ethical use of these technologies.

"BY PRIORITIZING AI STRATEGIES AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, QATAR CAN POSITION ITSELF AS A LEADER IN THE REGION AND BEYOND."

PROGRAMMES TO FOCUS ON

To achieve financial inclusivity and stability in digital finance, the Qatari government can implement the following actions:

- **Encourage financial institutions to adopt AI technologies:** The government can provide incentives and support to financial institutions to adopt AI technologies for digital finance. This can be done through tax incentives, grants, and regulatory measures to encourage the implementation of AI-based solutions.

- **Establish regulatory frameworks for AI-based digital finance:** The government can establish regulatory frameworks that enable AI-based digital finance while ensuring consumer protection. Such frameworks should balance innovation with consumer protection and privacy.

- **Facilitate data sharing and management:** The government can facilitate the sharing of data between financial institutions and other stakeholders such as credit bureaus and government agencies. This will enable financial institutions to have access to more data and make better-informed decisions.

- **Enhance financial literacy:** The government can promote financial literacy among the population to enable them to understand and use digital financial services. This can be done through public awareness campaigns, workshops, and training programs.

- **Provide funding for fintech start-ups:** The government can provide funding and support for fintech start-ups that are developing AI-based solutions for digital finance. This can be done through grants, venture capital, and incubation programs.

- **Foster partnerships between financial institutions and fintech start-ups:** The government can facilitate partnerships between financial institutions and fintech start-ups. This will enable financial institutions to leverage the expertise of fintech start-ups in developing and implementing AI-based solutions for digital finance.

- **Provide access to digital infrastructure:** The government can provide access to digital infrastructure such as broadband internet and mobile networks to promote the adoption of digital financial services.

- **Encourage collaboration between financial institutions:** The government can encourage collaboration between financial institutions to promote financial inclusivity and stability in digital finance. Collaboration can lead to the sharing of best practices and the development of innovative solutions.

- **Promote cross-border digital finance:** The government can promote cross-border digital finance to enable Qatari businesses to access international markets. This can be done through regulatory frameworks that enable cross-border transactions and partnerships with foreign financial institutions.

- **Provide support for vulnerable populations:** The government can provide support for vulnerable populations such as low-income households, refugees, and small businesses. This can be done through targeted financial assistance programs and other social safety nets.

COLLABORATIVE MODELS REQUIRED

Achieving financial inclusivity and stability in the digital finance world requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders, including government, banks, enterprises, trade associations and business chambers (TACs), and universities. A strong collaboration among these parties is necessary to create an ecosystem that supports the development and adoption of AI technologies for digital finance.

The government plays a vital role in setting policies and regulations that encourage the use of AI in digital finance while ensuring consumer protection. The government can collaborate with banks and other financial institutions to create a conducive environment that supports innovation and experimentation in digital finance. One of the ways the government can achieve this is by providing tax incentives or grants to banks and fintech companies that invest in AI technologies for digital finance.

Additionally, the government can create an AI Center of Excellence to drive research and development in AI for digital finance and provide a platform for collaboration among stakeholders.

Banks and other financial institutions are key players in the digital finance ecosystem, and their collaboration with other stakeholders is crucial to promoting financial inclusivity and stability. Banks can collaborate with enterprises to develop AI-powered solutions that increase access to credit for SMEs and startups. For instance, banks can use AI algorithms to analyze alternative data sources such as social media activity and transaction data to assess the creditworthiness of SMEs and startups that lack traditional collateral.

Banks can also collaborate with TACs to provide financial education to SMEs and startups on the use of digital finance tools and how to access credit facilities.

Enterprises are also essential players in the digital finance ecosystem. Enterprises can collaborate with banks to develop AI-powered solutions that improve financial inclusion for their employees and customers. For instance, enterprises can partner with banks to provide digital payment platforms that enable their employees and customers to make transactions easily and securely. Enterprises can also collaborate with universities to develop innovative AI-powered solutions that solve financial inclusion challenges.

TACs play a crucial role in facilitating collaboration among stakeholders in the digital finance ecosystem. TACs can collaborate with government and banks to create awareness among SMEs and startups about the benefits of AI technologies in digital finance. TACs can also provide networking opportunities for banks and enterprises to foster collaboration and create partnerships that promote financial inclusivity and stability.

Finally, universities are essential in driving research and development in AI for digital finance. Universities can collaborate with government, banks, and enterprises to create an AI Center of Excellence that drives innovation in AI for digital finance. Universities can also provide training and education to students and professionals on AI technologies and their application in digital finance.

In conclusion, promoting financial inclusivity and stability in the digital finance world requires a strong collaboration among government, banks, enterprises, TACs, and universities. By working together, these stakeholders can create an ecosystem that supports innovation and experimentation in AI technologies for digital finance, ultimately leading to increased financial inclusion and stability.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, financial inclusion is a critical component of economic growth and development, and it plays a vital role in empowering SMEs and start-ups in Qatar. Access to credit facilities is essential for small businesses to fund their operations, pay employees, purchase inventory, and secure contracts with larger companies or government entities. Without it, SMEs may miss out on opportunities, have lower productivity, and ultimately face business failure. Limited financial inclusivity can also lead to a decline in entrepreneurship and innovation, as aspiring entrepreneurs may be discouraged by the challenges of securing funding and support for their business ideas.

Given these challenges, it is important for banks and government agencies to play the role of trusted advisors for SMEs, providing guidance and support on accessing credit facilities, financial management, and strategic planning. By doing so, they can help small businesses overcome these challenges and contribute to the growth and development of the economy.

AI can help stakeholders to play the role of trusted advisors to SMEs by providing them with access to better financial services, making the financing application process faster, more efficient, and less cumbersome. AI can be used to analyze data from a variety of sources, such as financial statements, credit histories, and other financial data, to determine the creditworthiness of an SME. This can help financial institutions make more informed decisions about lending, and help SMEs access the funding they need to grow and expand their businesses.

In addition, AI can help banks and government agencies to identify SMEs that are at risk of defaulting on their financings or running into financial difficulties. This can allow them to intervene early and provide support and advice to help SMEs overcome these challenges. AI can also be used to provide personalized financial advice to SMEs, helping them to make informed decisions about their finances and plan for the future.

Overall, AI can help banks and government agencies to better serve SMEs by providing them with access to better financial services, making the financing application process faster and more efficient, and helping them to identify and address financial risks and challenges. By leveraging the power of AI, stakeholders can play a more proactive role in supporting SMEs, promoting their growth and development, and contributing to overall economic growth and prosperity.

We maintain the strong view that financial inclusion is an essential component of economic development in Qatar, and it is critical for SMEs and start-ups to have access to credit facilities to thrive and succeed. The government and financial institutions must work together to ensure that financial inclusivity is a top priority and that small businesses have the support and resources they need to succeed.

REFERENCES

Al-Emadi, D. (2020). Financial Inclusion and SME Growth in Qatar. Qatar Foundation Annual Research Conference Proceedings, 2020(1), EEPF2201. doi: 10.5339/qfarf.2020.EEPF2201

Bassetti, T. (2021). Small business financing in the era of digital transformation. Journal of Innovation Management, 9(1), 47-58.

Bellemare, C., Bissonnette, L., & Kröger, S. (2018). Limited Credit Access and Small Business Tax Evasion. Journal of Public Economics, 168, 81-97. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0047272718300514.

Bridging the SME finance gap in the GCC: Deloitte Middle East, Get in touch Franceso Sarti Partner | FSI Strategy and M&A

Centre for AI Innovation (CEAI), Digital Library of AI:10 Research Publications 2019 - present

https://www2.deloitte.com/xe/en/pages/strategy-operations/articles/bridging-sme-gcc-finance-gap.html

El-Hawary, D. (2017). Financial Inclusion and SME Development in Qatar: Challenges and Opportunities. Qatar Foundation Annual Research Conference Proceedings, 2017(1), SSESPP1344. doi: 10.5339/qfarc.2017.SSESPP1344

European Investment Bank. (2021). Financing for small businesses. Retrieved from https://www.eib.org/en/products/all/financing-for-small-businesses

Janković, I. (2016). The effect of access to finance on investment: An analysis of firms in Southeast Europe. Journal of Business Research, 69(2), 639-684.

Odunsi, J. W. (2020). Financial Inclusion, Access to Credit, and Income Inequality. Journal of African Business, 21(1), 36-48. doi: 10.1080/15228916.2019.1632226

OECD. (2006). The financing gap for SMEs. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/cfe/smes/2090740.pdf

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2020). Financing SMEs and entrepreneurs 2020: An OECD scoreboard. Retrieved from https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/finance-and-investment/financing-smes-and-entrepreneurs-2020_9bf4b3c3-en

PricewaterhouseCoopers (2018). The potential impact of Artificial Intelligence in the Middle East - PwC Middle East. [online] PwC. Available at: https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/publications/potential-impact-artificial-intelligence-middle-east.html.

Spender, J. A., & Carpenter, A. E. (2018). The impact of credit access on small business exporting. Journal of Small Business Management, 56(1), 78-95.

The future of AI in the Middle East and North Africa Pushing forward: Pushing forward: the future of AI in the Middle East and North Africa. (n.d.). Available at: https://impact.economist.com/perspectives/sites/default/files/google_ai_mena_report.pdf [Accessed 6 Mar. 2023].

World Economic Forum. (n.d.). Poor access to finance is holding back businesses in MENA. This is how we can help them. [online] Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/scaling-up-sme-access-finance-mena-region [Accessed 6 Mar. 2023].

"Why limited access to finance hampers Qatar's SME sector," Gulf Times, July 19, 2021. https://www.gulf-times.com/story/695766/Why-limited-access-to-finance-hampers-Qatar-s-SME-sector

. (n.d.). Financial Inclusion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Middle East and Central Asia. [online] Available at: https://www..org/en/Publications/Departmental-Papers-Policy-Papers/Issues/2019/02/11/Financial-Inclusion-of-Small-and-Medium-Sized-Enterprises-in-the-Middle-East-and-Central-Asia-46335.

PROFILE OF AUTHOR

Muhammad Nazri Muhd

Adj Practice Professor (AI)
Founder / Chairman
Centre for AI Innovation | MyFinB | AIV50

- **Analytics experience**: since 1999 in top US and European financial institutions and an international rating agency before heading an award-winning AI Group represented in 20+ countries. Currently the lead advisor to more than 500 digital transformation projects as part of the University-Industry Partnership and the Digital AI Labs (DIAL) programmes for public, private and non-profit organisations globally.

- In addition, Nazri is a subject matter expert in impact measurement analytics which is gained through experience of working with global institutions that include banks, corporations and public agencies in more than 50 countries. He has also successfully trained and advised more than 5,000 SMEs (via agencies and trade associations and business chambers) in various parts of the world, in nine key areas such as: Business Valuation., Financial Healthcheck, Business Partnering, Fund Raising, Business Remodelling, Bankability & Leverage, Mergers & Acquisitions, Budget & Resourcing and Succession Planning

- **Awards and Recognition**: Ranked #1 as a Global Thought Leader in three categories: AI, Predictive Analytics and Digital Transformation by independent US-based research group, Thinkers360. Won the Global Excellence Award 2020 by US-based group, Global Chamber.Org. Awarded the prestigious Suryadatta National Award 2023 for Excellence in Digital Transformation using AI on 7 Feb 2023 from Suryadatta Group of Institutes. Awarded the Asia-Pacific Young Business Leader Award (AI/Innovation) in 2010 by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Malaysia). In 2019, he was awarded with IFN's Global Winner for Best Data and Analytics Platform. Also listed by one of the world's top 500 prominent and influential personalities in the OIC economy (A.I/Fintech category) by Islamica500.

- **Education Community:** Current member, Board of Governor for Republic Polytechnic (Singapore) and Advisor to its School of Infocomm; and sits on the advisory board of several public and private universities in the region.

- **Bilateral role:** Presently the Honorary Consul for The Republic of Cabo Verde (West Africa), appointed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Singapore) for the Government of Cabo Verde.

RESEARCH TEAM

Strategic Advisor

Tan Sri Dr Mohd Daud Bakar
Chairman
Centre for AI Innovation (Malaysia) | MyFinB (M) | Amanie Advisors

- Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Daud Bakar is the Founder and Executive Chairman of Amanie Group. One of its flagship companies namely Amanie Advisors, is operating in a few cities globally. He serves as the Chairman of the Shariah Advisory Council (SAC) at the Securities Commission of Malaysia, the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC), Kazakhstan, the First Abu Dhabi Bank (UAE), and Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB). He was the former Chairman of the Shariah Advisory Council (SAC) at the Central Bank of Malaysia.

- Tan Sri Dr Daud is also a Shariah board member of various global financial institutions, including the National Bank of Oman (Oman), AmundiAsset Management (France), Bank of Londonand Middle East (London), BNP Paribas Najma (Bahrain), Natixis Bank (Dubai), Morgan Stanley (Dubai), Sedco Capital (Saudi and Luxembourg) and Dow Jones Islamic Market Index (New York) amongst many others.

- Recently, Tan Sri Dr Daud has received the “Royal Award for Islamic Finance 2022” by His Majesty, the King of Malaysia. While in 2014, he received the “Most Outstanding Individual” award by His Majesty, the King of Malaysia and the “Islamic Economy Knowledge Infrastructure Award” at the Global Islamic Economy Summit in 2015.

Member

Patrizia De Sousa
Managing Partner
Centre for AI Innovation (South Africa)

- Patrizia is a Director at Bonandini Consulting. Prior to being a Consultant, she was part of a team at Howard Stevens Investments Pty Ltd (H.S.I.) for more than 7 years. She was the Managing Director of the holding company (H.S.I.) and a Trustee of The RHJS Trust, as well as a Director, Public Officer, Company Secretary for each of the 13 subsidiary companies within H.S.I group. She took care of an RSA book valued at +R190 million, as well as 2 overseas based companies registered in Mauritius and Mozambique and looked after the financial management of 2 family Trusts.

- She has more than 20 year's financial management, banking/investment experience, system roll outs/integrations and related experience, working with big corporates and banks. Her experience includes full financial management function, business intelligence, system integrations and project managing system roll outs, compliance & regulatory, banking, I.T./telecommunications, grant funding, hospitality, internal audits& IDC audits, payroll and human resources, statutory.

- She has extensive experience in various industries including Financial Services, Banking, Hospitality, Business Developments, Grant Funding, I.T/Telecommunications.

RESEARCH TEAM

Member

Shanker Damodaran
Managing Partner
Centre for AI Innovation (India)

- Currently serves as the Executive Director Global Chamber, Ahmedabad, which services more than 5000+ CEOs, Founders and executive leaders across 525 independent regions around the world. Shanker Damodaran is also the Ambassador for The Global Chamber to The US Presidential Service Center (USPSC)

- Founded India Venture Broadcast in 2020, a partnership with a US media broadcasting firm to generate enterprise and technological growth for Indian companies

- Shanker Damodaran helps business owners and decision makers to increase their profits by expanding their business operations in 2 complementary ways: Licensing and Outsourcing: partner search, joint venturing and technology plug-ins-also by-passing entry barriers such as: culture, language and state specific requirements in India

- Helps professionals and business owners to maximize their reach to an international level by converting their expertise and technologies for growth through systems such as Franchising, Licensing, media, publications, and marketing formats. These outreach and licensing solutions cover the expansion and growth structuring for companies. Mr. Damodaran specializes in cross-cultural communication and trans-cultural risk mitigation.

Member

Addiennur Hamizah Abu Bakar
Head of Partnerships
Centre for AI Innovation, Global

- Addiennur Hamizah (Mizah) plays a critical role in managing the Group's various market segments including Banks/ Financial Institutions, Government Agencies, Accounting / Auditing Firms, Corporates / Enterprises, Stock Exchanges, etc., that use AI and relevant use cases. She also helps to research and design the applications of AI across sectors and client types, researching and applying the 5 levels of analytics for projects and cases. Mizah's portfolio of experiences grew and expanded across the Group's 3 key verticals; Technology, Catalyst and Ventures.

- Mizah has also been involved in various social innovation projects involving governmental and welfare agencies. She is part of the team that designs and develops the AI technology to review the socio-economic conditions of the minority community in Singapore. She has also trained personnel in social impact projects relating to the use of AI for TVET students, employee career development project and property management analytics project on behalf of a government agency.

- She first started her career with MyFinB Group as a Trainee Analyst after graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematical Sciences (specializing in Applied Mathematics) from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. She also has a Diploma in Accountancy from Singapore Polytechnic.

CONTACT US

CEO@MYFINB.COM
+65 9841 9412 (WHATSAPP)

MYFINB

MyFinB is an award-winning tech company that specializes in artificial intelligence. The company developed its own natural language platform with predictive and prescriptive narrative capabilities - a niche area that differentiates itself from any others. MyFinB helps people understand and communicate what is most important in their data.

Website: www.myfinb.com

CENTRE FOR AI INNOVATION (CEAI)

The Centre for AI Innovation (CEAI) forms part of MyFinB Venture's portfolio of innovative, disruptive projects to guide and support the digital transformation initiatives by organizations and business innovators.

Website: www.ceaiglobal.com

AIV50

AIV50 is a tech venture company with a portfolio of 50 AI assets in 10 key verticals. The special purpose company forms part of a joint incubation and venture building project by MyFinB Group (MFB) and VSC Portfolio Investments (VSCPI).

Website: www.aiv50.com

MALAYSIA

CEAI c/o **MyFinB (M) Sdn. Bhd.**

Level 13A, Menara Tokio Marine
189 Jalan Tun Razak,
Hampshire Park,
50450 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.

SINGAPORE

CEAI c/o **MyFinB Holdings Pte. Ltd.**

One Marina Boulevard,
Level 20,
Singapore 018989

GLOBAL COUNTRY NETWORK

USA
MyFinB.com Inc.
149 New Montgomery St, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105

MEXICO
Antuñano Niño Mojica y Aguilar SC
Lafayette 14, Anzures, 11590 Ciudad de México, CDMX, Mexico

UNITED KINGDOM
Takemp Services Ltd
158 Buckler Court, London N7 8OQ, United Kingdom

SPAIN
Smartbrain Tech SL
Infanta Maria Teresa Street, 14, Madrid, 28016, Madrid

NEW ZEALAND
CreditWorks Group
1 Ngaire Ave, Epsom, Auckland 1051
Centrix Group
PO Box 62-512, Greenlane, Auckland 1546

KAZAKHSTAN
Amanie Advisors CIS LLC
1701, 29/1, Konayev Str. Z05H9D8 Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan

GEORGIA
Alliance Group Holding
47/57 Merab Kostava St, Tbilisi 0179, Georgia

JAPAN
Amusetic Co, Ltd
8-28-5-2901 Ojima, Koto-ku, Tokyo, Japan 136-0072

SAUDI ARABIA / SOUTH KOREA
VSAPAC Capital Management LLP
6 Raffles Boulevard, Marina Square #03-308, Singapore 039594

SINGAPORE
Vector Scorecard (Asia-Pac) Pte Ld / MyFinB (S) Pte. Ltd.
One Marina Boulevard, Level 20, Singapore 018989

MALAYSIA
Expert Analytic Centre (M) Sdn Bhd. / MyFinB (M) Sdn. Bhd.
Level 13A, Menara TokioMarine 189 Jalan Tun Razak, Hampshire Park, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

INDONESIA
MyFinB (ID) Pte. Ltd.
AIA Central, Level 31, Jl. Jend. Sudirman Kav 48A, Jakarta 12930

INDIA
TeamWork Info Solutions Pvt. Ltd
Software Technology Parks of India, Allahabad, MNNIT Campus, Lucknow Road, Allahabad 211004 Uttar Pradesh

PAKISTAN
Eigix IT Solutions
H.No 19 Street 5 Zakariya Town Bosan Road, Multan, Pakistan

PHILIPPINES, THAILAND, MYANMAR, SRI LANKA, BANGLADESH & EGYPT
Maverick Global Ventures Pte. Ltd.
68 Circular Road, #02-01, Singapore 049422

SOUTH AFRICA
GMT Investcorp Pty Ltd
U11A Sandton City Shopping, Centre, Corner of Rivonia and Fifth Streets, Sandton 2196, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa
RSS Trade & Investment
Hydepark, Johannesburg, 2196, South Africa

IVORY COAST, ANGOLA, SENEGAL, ETHIOPIA & GHANA
Paulo Gomes & Partners Pte. Ltd.
531A Upper Cross Street, #04-95, Hong Lim Complex, Singapore 051531
Strategic Hr Africsearch CI
45 Avenue Delafosse Prolongée Imm. PeleuPlateau, Abidjan 0101-BP 13243, Côte d'Ivoire

MADAGASCAR
Evolutis Projects Development SARL
Près Lot II Y 53 FK, propriété Mahasoa CXL, Andobolobe Ampahibe, Antananarivo 101, Madagascar.
RCS Antananarivo 2014 B 00155

MyFinB
myfinb-group
MyFinB Group