

The Potential of Zakat in Poverty Alleviation to Achieve SDG 2: Zero Hunger

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Abstract: Zakat is part of the five pillars of Islam which is considered significant in poverty alleviation in addition to the promotion of social justice and economic redistribution. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of zakat in alleviating poverty in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger with a specific focus on food security. The trend is associated with the importance of a robust social safety net that meets the basic sustenance needs of all members of society. This shows the possibility of zakat serving as a continuous mechanism of wealth redistribution from an Islamic perspective. A literature review with a case study method was used to explore successful zakat practices in Muslim-majority countries to effectively alleviate hunger, support small-scale farmers, and enhance social welfare. It was concluded that zakat could be effectively integrated into contemporary economic and social policies to play a meaningful role in improving food security and promoting sustainable poverty alleviation. The process could further serve as a contribution to the achievement of SDG 2.

Keywords: food security; sustainable development; zakat; zero hunger.

1. Introduction

Zakat is a mandatory form of charity that ensures the circulation of wealth among the rich as well as the poor suffering from hunger and malnutrition in order to prevent money from stagnating in society. The concept is associated with the importance of social responsibility in the Islamic economic system. It is also a structured method to eradicate poverty, ensure food security, and promote sustainable development.¹ The relationship between Zakat and eradicating hunger is manifested in the primary goals of providing financial support or assistance to the poor, the needy, and other marginalised people. Zakat assists in eliminating economic inequalities and ensuring access to basic needs such as food by redistributing a portion of wealth from the wealthy

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¹ Laily Nur Asyifa et al., "Pursuing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Through Integrating the Role of Zakat and Its Contribution in Islamic Finance: Evidence From Indonesia," *Innovative Ventures and Strategies in Islamic Business*, December 18, 2024, 51–78, <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3980-0.ch003>.



to those who lack the access. Several examples from the history of Islamic governance showed where governments assisted in eliminating hunger and poverty through the effective distribution of Zakat funds. Moreover, progressive Islamic countries such as Malaysia, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia have incorporated Zakat in their social security and food security schemes to periodically care for the marginalised areas of society.²

The United Nations showed that there were more than 735 million people afflicted with chronic hunger worldwide due to economic inequality, climate change, political instability and inefficient food distribution systems. Therefore, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were formulated to eliminate hunger (SDG 2: Zero Hunger) and poverty (SDG 1: No Poverty) by empowering people with access to highly nutritious food and productive, sustainable livelihoods.³ The realisation of these objectives depends on an interdependent effort requiring the participation of a cross-section of the religious, social, and economic tapestry.⁴

The principles of Islam are focused on compassion, wealth redistribution, and social justice which are presented in structured systems such as Zakat (compulsory almsgiving) and *Sadaqah* (voluntary charity) designed to provide support to people in need. According to the Qur'an (2:267, 9:60) and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the wealthy are required to assist those who cannot afford anything in order to ensure no one in the community is hungry. The knowledge of utilising available tools is also in line with Islamic economics which prevents the concentration of wealth and income in a few people while promoting sustainable welfare models.

Islam has a long history of governance formulated to ensure the welfare of the citizenry through Zakat-funded social assistance programs in order to enable food security and societal stability. Zakat, *Waqf* (endowments), and other financial instruments are also being utilised currently by Muslim-majority countries and Islamic charities to combat hunger and poverty. The incorporation of these Islamic principles into contemporary development practices can lead to more sustainable and ethical poverty alleviation.⁵

² Fathoni Nur Alami and Wily Mohammad, "Applying the Principles of Maqasid Al-Shariah to Address Poverty and Hunger in Indonesia," *Cognitionis Civitatis et Politicae* 1, no. 2 (2024): 57–68, <https://doi.org/10.70177/politicae.v1i2.1115>.

³ Aqsa Tasgheer, Ehreem Fatima, and Syeda Aima Bokhari, "Global Hunger Crisis and Sustainable Development Goal: A Prophetic Approach of Food Security and Hunger Eradication," *Tanazur* 5, no. 4 (a) (2024): 17–38, <https://tanazur.com.pk/index.php/tanazur/article/view/439>.

⁴ Luthfi Nur Rosyidi, Puji Sucia Sukmaningrum, and Tika Widiastuti, "Bibliometric Analysis of Zakat Research for Supporting SDGs," *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Islam (Journal of Islamic Economics and Business)* 10, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 165–89, <https://doi.org/10.20473/jebis.v10i1.54251>.

⁵ Khadar Ahmed Dirie, Md Mahmudul Alam, and Selamah Maamor, "Islamic Social Finance for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda," *International Journal of Ethics and Systems* 40, no. 4 (December 2, 2024): 676–98, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOES-12-2022-0317>.

Moreover, the Islamic view of hunger and poverty is in line with global objectives set based on the urgency to provide a world free from hunger. The religion reminds its followers to focus on equality, economic justice, and the need to build the world with the main focus on people rather than market-led policies.⁶

Zakat can contribute to food security through several methods such as direct cash transfers to the needy, the provision of essential food supplies, and investment in sustainable agricultural projects.⁷ Islamic Foundations and governments also utilise Zakat to support farmers, rural communities, and small businesses in order to ensure long-term economic development. Furthermore, Zakat-based microfinance programs provide low-income people with the means to generate sustainable income independently in order to ensure a consistent food supply and reduce dependency.⁸ The empowerment-oriented principles of Zakat aptly complement SDG of eradicating hunger developed by the UN.⁹

The significant potential of Zakat in contributing to SDG 2 is limited by several challenges preventing the full realisation of its effectiveness. This is due to some specific pressing issues such as the lack of centralised Zakat management, a lack of transparency in distribution, and ineffective tracking mechanisms. However, the application of digital platforms for Zakat collection and disbursement as well as AI-powered poverty assessment tools and blockchain technology can ensure transparency and efficiency. The process is also capable of serving as viable solutions

⁶ Pg Mohd Faezul Fikri Ag Omar and Ashurov Sharofiddin, *Emergence of Zakat in Sustainability*, 1st Edition (London: Routledge, 2024). 74-84

⁷ Abdul Halim Abdul Majid et al., "The Ummah Economic Development Zone: An Innovative Community Development Initiative by Lembaga Zakat Negeri Kedah," *PaperASIA* 40, no. 6b (December 11, 2024): 331–39, <https://doi.org/10.59953/paperasia.v40i6b.293>. S Sumai et al., "Role of Zakat in Poverty Reduction and Food Security," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 343, no. 1 (October 1, 2019): 012254, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/343/1/012254>.

⁸ Ahmad Khoiri, "Management of Zakat, Infaq, and Shadaqah (ZIS) Funds in Driving Poverty Alleviation to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Case Study of BAZNAS Kediri City," *Journal of Development Research* 8, no. 2 (November 20, 2024): 82–90, <https://doi.org/10.28926/jdr.v8i2.395>. Ahmet Suayb Gundogdu, "Poverty, Hunger and Inequality in the Context of Zakat and Waqf," *Darulfunun Ilahiyat* 30, no. 1 (June 30, 2019): 49–64, <https://doi.org/10.26650/di.2019.30.1.0005>. Mazroatus Saadah and Uswatun Hasanah, "The Common Goals of BAZNAS' Zakat and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) According to Maqasid Al-Sharia Perspective," *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 2 (December 31, 2021): 302–26, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v16i2.4990>. Adel Sarea, ed., *Impact of Zakat on Sustainable Economic Development*, Advances in Electronic Government, Digital Divide, and Regional Development (IGI Global, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-3452-6>. Md. Mahmudul Alam et al., "Sustainable Development Status of Zakat Recipients: Empirical Investigation Based on Malaysia's Kedah State," *J. for Global Business Advancement* 14, no. 5 (2021): 612, <https://doi.org/10.1504/JGBA.2021.123544>.

⁹ Mazroatus Saadah and Uswatun Hasanah, "The Common Goals of BAZNAS' Zakat and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) According to Maqasid Al-Sharia Perspective."

to the challenges identified.¹⁰ The role of Zakat as a catalyst integrated into national and/or international food security policies can have a direct impact on eradicating hunger and reducing malnutrition which are necessary to build the economy in Muslim-majority nations.¹¹ Zakat also represents a faith-based and sustainable financial model that parallels international efforts to end hunger and empower the vulnerable when properly administered.

The existing evidence shows the need for more specific studies explicitly addressing the role of Zakat in reducing hunger and building resilient food systems. Therefore, this study explicitly considers Zakat as a tool for achieving SDG 2 through food system resilience and food and nutrition indicators. The intention is to contribute to the existing evidence through the unique perspective on Islamic finance, food security, and sustainable development.

This study examines the role of Zakat in alleviating poverty towards achieving SDG 2: Zero Hunger, specifically food security within sustainable development. The discussion scheme includes 1) Zakat as a wealth redistribution mechanism, 2) zero hunger and global food security with a focus on international issues and efforts, 3) causes of hunger and food insecurity, 4) Zakat as a tool to strengthen food security for poverty alleviation in the global context, 5) challenges of utilising Zakat to achieve zero hunger, and 6) digital-based Zakat distribution to realise SDG.

2. Methods

Doctrinal study was used to analyse the extent to which Zakat could contribute to achieving Zero Hunger from an Islamic perspective. This was primarily achieved through the qualitative analysis of texts within Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), verses from the Quran, Hadiths, and the opinions of Islamic scholars with a focus on the principles associated with Zakat, wealth redistribution, and poverty alleviation. Moreover, Islam and economic models as well as the connection to global initiatives for food security in the context of SDG 2 were examined.

The comparative method was further implemented through a literature review analysis of available knowledge resources, case studies, and reports documented by Islamic financial institutions, humanitarian organisations, and global development agencies. The purpose was to evaluate the effectiveness of Zakat-based poverty

¹⁰ Rosyidah Ainur et al., "The Role of Zakat and Waqf in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Global Perspective.," in *Proceeding of International Conference on Finance Business and Banking*, 2024.

¹¹ Arif Zunaidi, Fachrial Lailatul Maghfiroh, and Firman Setiawan, "Empowering Local Communities Through Zakat to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals," *IQTISHODUNA* 20, no. 1 (April 30, 2024): 52–73, <https://doi.org/10.18860/iq.v20i1.23771>.

alleviation models and the contribution to food security across different regions.¹² The analysis also examined the policy architecture for Zakat management, collection, and distribution to identify the challenges faced and opportunities available for its improved implementation through the adoption of modern data-driven methods, including AI, blockchain, and fintech-based solutions. Furthermore, the study explored potential avenues for enhancing the efficiency of Zakat. The process provided relevant perspectives on policy-making, institutional frameworks, and sustainable methods with institutionalised Zakat serving as an effective tool for eradicating hunger and promoting balanced economic development.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Concept of Zakat in Islam

Zakat is an Islamic obligatory charity which serves as an important and foundational component covering the principles of social justice, economic equality, and wealth redistribution. The concept is derived from the Arabic noun "z-k-a" which is interpreted as purification and growth. It is considered both a spiritual and an economic obligation for Muslims. Zakat also serves as a tool to cleanse wealth by allocating excess funds towards assisting society, particularly the impoverished and disadvantaged. Unlike *Shadaqah*, Zakat is an obligatory form of charity that constitutes one of the five pillars of Islam as presented in the Qur'an and Hadith. It is expected to be conducted by Muslims who own a certain amount of wealth (*Nisab*).¹³ The practice of Zakat serves as the premise of social welfare, lessens the financial gap in Islamic society, and provides economic resilience.

Quranic verses categorise Zakat based on eight different types of causes which include the poor (*Al-Fuqara*) and the needy (*Al-Masakin*) as well as people working for Zakat, who needs reconciliation in their hearts, in debt, participating in the cause of a war, ransoming or freeing up of captives or slaves, and the travellers (*Al-Riqab*). These categories show the inclusive essence of Zakat associated with the broad range of social and economic needs. The promotion of inclusive and systematic wealth distribution to ensure no person or family becomes overly powerful can be achieved through Zakat. Moreover, the Qur'an (2:267) specifically mentions giving from the best of wealth rather than the inferior assets to reflect the spirit of generosity as well as the qualitative and ethical aspects of the act.

¹² Putri Rahmadhani and Ade Nur Rohim, "Constructing Model of Integrated Zakat and Waqf Empowerment for Achieving Food Security and Poverty Alleviation," *Iqtishadia: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Perbankan Syariah* 11, no. 2 (2024): 192–211, <https://doi.org/10.19105/iqtishadia.v11i2.15574>.

¹³ Zainal Muttaqin and Mohammad Dendi Abdul Nasir, "Can Zakat Contribute to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals? A Case Study on Java Island, Indonesia.," *Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah Teori Dan Terapan* 11, no. 1 (February 29, 2024): 35–53, <https://doi.org/10.20473/vol11iss20241pp35-53>.

Part of the primary goal of Zakat is alleviating poverty. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) identify Zakat as a well-structured system of welfare that ensures all people in the Muslim community have sufficient food, clothing, and a roof over their heads. The concept has contributed to poverty eradication in historical Islamic governance, specifically during the caliphate of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz. The system was so perfectly functional during the regime that there were no poor people left to receive Zakat according to reports. This shows the potential when the process is conducted in the right way and with justice. Furthermore, Zakat extends beyond the boundaries of personal charity by serving as an economic stabiliser to mitigate income inequality and wealth disparity.¹⁴ Islamic economics identifies wealth as a trust from Allah and its circulation within society can be facilitated by Zakat. The trend is associated with the fact that modern economies are plagued by poverty due to the unequal distribution of wealth, inflation, and instability.¹⁵ Zakat serves as a system to address these disparities by redistributing wealth from the wealthy to the neediest. The value is set at an annual obligation of 2.5% on excess wealth.

The acknowledgement of the shared responsibility to the less fortunate allows Zakat to foster a sense of community and solidarity. For example, several modern Islamic charities and organisations allocate Zakat funds for education, healthcare, microfinance, and vocational training for marginalised people. The focus is to break the cycle of poverty rather than easing hardship and this is achieved through the engagement of people with projects that promote sustainable human development. Zakat is currently distributed through different mechanisms such as food banks, scholarships, medical assistance, housing projects, and financing for microenterprises to support long-term poverty reduction efforts.¹⁶

Zakat has profound spiritual significance in Islam in addition to the economic and social benefits. It cultivates a feeling of compassion, modesty, and gratitude to ensure Muslims understand their wealth is a gift from Allah and needs to be used wisely. According to the Qur'an (9:103), Zakat purifies the soul and wealth by eradicating greed and selfishness as well as fostering faith. Muslims are only obliged to donate based on the wealth owned in order to cultivate a sense of connection and

¹⁴ Tajudeen Olalekan Yusuf, Lukman Raimi, and Abdullahi Audu Shuaib, "The Power of Faith-Based Finance (How Islamic Finance Supports the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals)," in *Islamic Finance in the Modern Era* (Routledge, 2024), 300–325. 300-325.

¹⁵ Abd Rahman Ahmadi Mega Asri Lestari and Abdul Aziz, "Implementation of the Islamic Food Bank Concept in an Effort to Solve the Global Problem of Hunger and Food Insecurity," 2024, <https://www.ijassjournal.com/2024/V714/41466639121.pdf>.

¹⁶ Arif Maftuhin, "Islam, SDGs, and the Role of Islamic Philanthropy: A Literature Review and Critical Considerations," in *IDACON-International Da'wah Conference*, 2024, 1–10, <https://conference.uin-suka.ac.id/index.php/idacon/article/view/1467>.

responsibility to the community and ultimately towards Allah.¹⁷ It promotes a culture of generosity and compassion which ensures prosperity is distributed rather than hoarded.

The concept of Zakat is important to the Islamic welfare system but its effectiveness is questionable in the current period. The full potential is hindered by inefficient management, misallocation of funds, as well as lack of centralisation and transparency. Formal Zakat institutions also struggle to collect and disburse funds in an organised manner in several Muslim-majority countries.¹⁸ However, technological improvements in the form of digital solutions such as Zakat payment platforms, AI-powered poverty assessment tools, and blockchain-based Zakat tracking systems are being implemented to enhance effectiveness, accountability, and impact. It is also important to maintain traditional Islamic philanthropy by applying modern economic management to ensure the true purpose of Zakat is fulfilled in the present reality.¹⁹

The trend shows that Zakat is beyond charity by serving as a comprehensive economic system that advocates for social justice, economic equity, and poverty alleviation. The concept is founded on divine injunctions and focuses on promoting communities, reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, and motivating sustainable development. Proper administration of the process can be an effective instrument to achieve global poverty reduction goals in line with SDGs set by the United Nations with a specific focus on SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). Furthermore, the integration of Islamic financial practices into contemporary governance ensures economic uplift and fosters societal resilience. This shows that Zakat can be used to realise the philosophy of being a key component of social obligation within Islam.

3.2 Zakat as a Mechanism for Wealth Redistribution

Zakat is explained as a measure of economic equity that promotes fair opportunities for all socio-economic groups. The concept is a systematic economic model that guarantees the fair bounty of *taaf* within society is shared equally and not hoarded by those who already possess the most. The process requires mandating an annual contribution of 2.5% above and beyond what is needed to live on all surplus wealth

¹⁷ May Shinta Retnowati et al., "Accelerating SDGs to Alleviate Poverty: Synergy Between National Amil Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) and Islamic Financial Institutions (IFI)," *AL-IKTISAB: Journal of Islamic Economic Law* 8, no. 2 (November 16, 2024): 173–86, <https://doi.org/10.21111/aliktisab.v8i2.12889>.

¹⁸ Putri Wahyuni and Ries Wulandari, "Zakat and Poverty Alleviation in Muslim Countries: A Biblioshiny Application," *Journal of Islamic Economics Lariba* 10, no. 1 (March 16, 2024): 205–30, <https://doi.org/10.20885/jielariba.vol10.iss1.art12>.

¹⁹ Dede Al Mustaqim Mustaqim, "Development of Corporate-Based ZISWAF Fundraising Model in Realizing SDGs from Maqashid Syariah Perspective," *International Economic and Finance Review* 3, no. 1 (March 31, 2024): 31–50, <https://doi.org/10.56897/iefr.v3i1.46>.

for Muslims who meet the threshold. The condition allows the usage of Zakat to educate and motivate people to see financial resources redistributed from the wealthy to the less privileged. The action also promotes equitable economic development which is consistent with Islamic law. For example, the Qur'an (59:7) specifically cautions against wealth being a “commodity circulating only among the rich” and this shows the importance of equitable economic distribution.²⁰ Zakat is also a method to aid equality in society by ensuring the rich do not forget the poor. This is necessary to show that the basic needs of everybody are met. Furthermore, the Qur'an (9:60) mentions the eight recipients of Zakat to include the poor (*Fuqara*) followed by other beneficiaries (*Masakin*), debtors, and those in distress while travelling. Orderly redistribution of income ensures that money does not remain in a few pockets and financial wealth is transferred to the most vulnerable parts of society.²¹

The importance of Zakat in eradicating poverty was further emphasised in the Islamic context when it was institutionalised during the period of Caliph Umar ibn Abdul Aziz. Reports showed that the funds collected as Zakat were managed effectively to the level where everyone was satisfied and the process exemplified the power of the concept in alleviating poverty. This historical background shows the example of Zakat and how effective management can significantly accelerate socio-economic development.²² Moreover, the temporary benefits can be extended beyond financial aid to provision of support for longer-term economic sustainability. This is possible because Islamic organisations and charities utilise Zakat funds to foster education, healthcare, vocational training, microfinance, and entrepreneurship which further enable people to become self-reliant. The process subsequently ensures economic independence and breaks the cycle of poverty rather than perpetuating it.

Wealth inequality remains a significant challenge in developed economies. This is due to the fact that capitalism is a system of diverse inequalities benefiting a small group of wealthy elites. However, Zakat is a path towards a positive economic life which is capable of ensuring economic, social, and demographic justice. Digital Zakat channels, blockchain technology, and AI-supported banks are currently optimising and maximising the allocation process. Moreover, the provision of support for SDG Zakat is an Islamic Movement that has the potential to complement the efforts of traditional donors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to alleviate

²⁰ Nor Razinah Mohd Zain et al., “SDGs and VBI (A META Analysis from Islamic Finance Perspective),” in *Islamic Sustainable Finance* (London: Routledge, 2024), 41–50, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003395447-7>.

²¹ Abdul Halim Abdul Majid et al., “The Ummah Economic Development Zone: An Innovative Community Development Initiative by Lembaga Zakat Negeri Kedah,” *Paper ASIA* 40, no. 6b (December 11, 2024): 331–39, <https://doi.org/10.59953/paperasia.v40i6b.293>.

²² Edib Smolo et al., “Integrating Islamic Finance Into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” in *The Future of Islamic Finance* (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2024), 65–82, <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83549-906-120241005>.

poverty, hunger, and economic inequality (SDG No Poverty and Zero Hunger). This can be achieved through the integrated modern capital transfer systems designed to incorporate Islamic economic values.²³

3.3 Zero Hunger and Global Food Security: Issues and International Efforts

SDG 2: Zero Hunger aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. This is because hunger is part of the most significant global challenges with over 735 million people suffering from chronic undernourishment according to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).²⁴ This problem can be addressed through a multifaceted solution that provides adequate food access, affordability, and sustainable production methods. SDG 2 shows the importance of sustainable food supply systems and resilient agricultural practices. This leads to the need for the implementation of interventions at all levels toward ensuring the availability of and access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for all.

3.3.1 Reflections on Global Food Insecurity

Economic inequality, geopolitical conflicts, climate change, and inefficient food distribution systems all contribute to global food insecurity. This is because sufficient food is produced in the world to feed each person but millions live with malnutrition and lack balanced nutrition due to problems such as insufficient donor funding, starvation, food waste, and unequal distribution of resources. Food insecurity has worsened in low-income regions, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia because climate-driven disasters such as droughts, floods, and desertification are reducing agricultural yields and displacing people. Furthermore, wars and political unrest tear apart food supply lines and cause the susceptible to starve.²⁵

3.3.2 Sustainable Agriculture in Support of Zero Hunger

Increased production of food as well as sustainable and resilient agricultural practices are important to the achievement of Zero Hunger. This has led to the implementation of modern remedies such as horticulture, agroecology, and climate-savvy farming to increase food efficiency with negligible ecological wastefulness. Moreover,

²³ Kausar Yasmeen, Kashifa Yasmeen, and Salem Al Abri, "Islamic Framework for Sustainable Development," *International Journal of Islamic Finance and Sustainable Development* 16, no. 4 (December 28, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.55188/ijifsd.v16i4.978>.

²⁴ Nehaluddin AHMAD, Zheimie H. Zamri, and Abdul Hakim Iskandar, "Legal, Regulatory, and Economic Dimensions of Poverty Alleviation Strategies in Brunei Darussalam: An Examination towards Achieving the Global SDGs," *Communications of International Proceedings*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.5171/2024.4314524>.

²⁵ Reem A. Abdalla, Hassan Kamal Alaaraj, and Gulnar Sadat Mulla, "The Contribution of Islamic Banking and Finance to the Sustainable Development Goals of 2030," in *Sustainable Innovations in Management in the Digital Transformation Era* (London: Routledge, 2024), 249–61, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003450238-25>.

sustainable farming practices in the form of crop rotation, organic farming, and responsible water management enhance soil quality and secure long-term food access. The development of new biotechnology solutions such as drought-resistant plants and vertical farming also contributes to increasing agricultural productivity in climate change-sensitive areas.

3.3.3 Economic Development and Food Security

Economic stability is closely related to food security. Nutrition is a big business because access to nutritious food ensures the whole population are healthier and more productive. Moreover, healthier cognitive development leads to stronger economies. This shows the need for governments and international institutions to triple their efforts in financing agricultural subsidies, empowering smallholder farmers, and investing in rural infrastructure to increase food production and ensure fair access to markets.²⁶ Another observation is that women farmers, who comprise nearly half of the agricultural workforce in developing countries, struggle against gender-based discrimination in land ownership, funding, and access to technology. Interventions are necessary to ensure that gender plays a particularly critical role in achieving SDG 2.

3.3.4 Issues and International Efforts

Several countries are trying to achieve Zero Hunger but the efforts are limited by numerous obstacles. For example, the gains from trade wars, tariffs, and inflation are all contributing to the rising cost of food which further makes food staples unaffordable for several people. Food wastage is also a significant issue with nearly a third of all food produced globally getting wasted. The effort to tackle these obstacles requires international collaboration, policies that promote innovative food systems, and investment in sustainable practices.²⁷ The World Food Programme (WFP), FAO, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are collaborating to end hunger through emergency food assistance, nutrition programs, and sustainable agricultural production. Furthermore, delivering Zero Hunger requires a holistic method grounded in sustainable agriculture, economic development, and social policies. The trend shows that collaboration between governments, the private sector, NGOs, and local communities is essential to address global food security challenges and ensure everyone has access to what to eat.

²⁶ Randi Hadamean Batubara and Utary Evy Cahyani, "The Contribution of ZIS (Zakat, Infaq, & Sadaqah) to Poverty Alleviation in North Sumatra Province," *Islamic Economics Methodology* 3, no. 1 (September 18, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.58968/iem.v3i1.530>.

²⁷ Mamadou Salieu Jallow, "The Impact of Distributed Zakat on Sustainable Economic Development in Indonesia: A VECM Approach," *Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah, Akuntansi Dan Perbankan (JESKaPe)* 8, no. 1 (n.d.): 66–93.

3.4 Causes of Hunger and Food Insecurity

Millions of people across various parts of the world face the challenges of hunger and food insecurity. Despite the fact that sufficient food is produced to feed everyone on the planet, hunger persists as a complex issue due to its multifaceted economic, social, political, and environmental roots. Islam perceives poverty and hunger as economic and social questions to be resolved through a collective sense of responsibility and social justice.²⁸ The religion promotes a just distribution of wealth, the eradication of poverty, and the fulfilment of basic human needs. Hunger is often presented as a test of the ability of society to pursue justice, empathy, and responsibility toward people in need.

3.4.1 Hunger and Food Insecurity: The Basics

Poverty and economic inequality are the major causes of hunger which is a condition where people cannot afford to purchase adequate and nutritious food. Collective desperation leads to economic inequality because wealth is consolidated among a small percentage of people while others are unable to afford necessities. Islam emphasises the importance of wealth and recommends its distribution through Zakat (compulsory charity), *Sadaqah* (voluntary charity), and *Waqf* (endowments) to assist those experiencing poverty.²⁹

Conflict and Political Instability: War, civil unrest, and political instability disrupt food supply chains, destroy agricultural lands, and displace communities which further leads to food shortages. This shows that peace and justice are essential to Islam as a method of ensuring stability and access to sustenance.³⁰ Therefore, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasises that leaders are held accountable for their responsibility toward the people, including the effort to ensure food security.³¹

Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: This includes the influence of droughts, floods, desertification, and others on food sufficiency. Islamic teachings require that people act as caretakers (Khalifah) of the earth and are responsible for the

²⁸ Ariza Mohamed and Abdullah Abbas, "A Community Model and Role of Zakat in Reducing Stunting in Children," *AZKA International Journal of Zakat & Social Finance*, March 31, 2024, 123–34, <https://doi.org/10.51377/azjaf.vol5no1.158>.

²⁹ and Rizki Dian Nursita. "Shafia, Inas Ainun, Ulya Nuril Fajri, Syahirah Nazwa Putri, "Local Perspectives on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Pesantren in Social Empowerment and Alleviating Poverty in Sleman",," *Jisiera: The Journal of Islamic Studies and International Relations* 7, no. 1 (April 30) (2024): 97–120, <https://journal.insiera.org/index.php/jisiera/article/view/88>.

³⁰ Abdulkader Thomas, "Islamic Finance and Sustainable Development The Water, Food, Energy, and Climate Nexus," in *Routledge* (Taylor & Francis, 2025), 232.

³¹ Ariawan Ariawan et al., "The Role of Sharia Economics in Supporting the Realization of Sustainable Development Goals and Islamic Development," *ProBisnis : Jurnal Manajemen* 15, no. 1 (February 29, 2024): 87–91, <https://doi.org/10.62398/probis.v15i1.412>.

maintenance of ecological balance by preventing environmental exploitation leading to food crises.³² Moreover, ethical consumption in the form of *Israf* - avoidance of wastefulness focuses on the need to engage in sustainable agricultural practices and conservation.

Food Waste and Distribution: A significant portion of food produced globally is wasted and leads to millions of people suffering from hunger. Meanwhile, excessive consumption and waste are highly detested in Islam by Allah in the Qur'an "Neither waste, extravagantly. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devil" (Qur'an 17:26-27). This shows the need to minimise food waste, share excess food, or ensure efficient systems for distribution to guarantee access to meals.

Unfair Economic Systems and Exploitation, Globalisation: Global capitalist systems tend to ensure net positive for the rich and often lead to the plundering of natural resources in poorer countries. However, Islam promotes an equitable economy which advocates for fair trade, Shari'ah compliance, and inclusive financial services. The prohibition of selfish interest allows Islam to protect and prevent people with low incomes from falling into corrupt cycles. This is achieved by ensuring people work to earn a living without being enslaved by debt.

The combination of the interventions shows the urgency of addressing hunger as an opportunity to meet the basic needs of the people. Moreover, the embodiment of the principles allows societies to address hunger and ensure food security for more people in order to achieve Zero Hunger and uphold Islamic values at the same time.³³

3.5 Zakat as a Tool to Strengthen Food Security for Poverty Alleviation in the Global Context

Zakat is a compulsory form of charitable giving for Muslims which is achieved through the donation of a specific 2.5% of surplus wealth in a year to designated groups, including the poor, the needy, and those experiencing formal economic hardship. As an Islamic economic mechanism, Zakat addresses societal disparities, alleviates hunger, and promotes sustainable development in line with the targets outlined in SDG 2 and broader agendas aimed at mitigating global food insecurity.

³² Newton Kahumbi Maina, "Crop Diseases, Pests and Food Insecurity in Africa: An Islamic Perspective," in *Religion, Climate Change, and Food Security in Africa* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 167–179, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-50392-4_10.

³³ Tulus Suryanto, Pertiwi Utami, and Roslizawati Ahmad, "Aligning Sharia-Based Empowerment with SDGs: Addressing Poverty and Inequality in Coastal Regions," *Economica: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam* 15, no. 1 (2024): 53–71, <https://doi.org/10.21580/economica.2024.15.1.22935>.

3.5.1 Economic Equalizer: Zakat

The critical feature of Zakat is the promotion of wealth redistribution to avoid monopoly and ensure the less fortunate meet basic needs, specifically food. The transfer of wealth from the affluent to the less fortunate fosters economic equilibrium while uplifting marginalised communities.³⁴ The action is necessary because Islam does not support accumulating money in its most economical form but instead advises circulation within society to ensure stability. The tenet directly addresses chronic poverty which is a leading contributor to global food insecurity.³⁵

3.5.2 Direct Effects of Zakat on Hunger and Food Security

Zakat money can be used to purchase food, invest in agriculture, or be given directly to those who cannot afford food. Several Muslim-majority countries have institutionalised Zakat at the government and NGO level by funding food banks, feeding programs, and rehabilitating farms.³⁶ For example, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan set aside Zakat funds for the systematic distribution of food among marginalised communities, specifically during times of crisis such as natural disasters, economic downturns, and pandemics. The process assists in breaking the cycle of poverty by providing poor people with the capital needed to invest in sustainable income-generating activities such as farming, livestock rearing, and small businesses. The initiatives provide for long-term food security and assist in securing economic independence which further lifts countries out of the cycle of poverty.³⁷

3.5.3 Contemporary Challenges to Food Security and Its Relation to Zakat

Zakat can become a powerful antidote to global food insecurity driven by climate change, economic instability, and conflicts. Examples of contemporary applications include microfinance operations, food subsidy schemes, and sustainable agricultural investments implemented to ensure food is available and affordable.³⁸ Web platforms

³⁴ Najwatul Nadhirah Bohari et al., "Tabarru' Taste: A Centralized Hub for Unifying Shariah-Compliant Efforts to Alleviate Poverty Through Food Redistribution," *Journal of International Business, Economics and Entrepreneurship* 10, no. 1 (March 31, 2025): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.24191/jibe.v10i1.3564>.

³⁵ M. Fahmi Hidayat and Fauziyah Latiefa Salsabila, "Kontribusi Zakat Untuk Ketahanan Pangan Dan Pengentasan Stunting: Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis," *IHTIYATH: Jurnal Manajemen Keuangan Syariah* 8, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 46–66, <https://doi.org/10.32505/ihtiyath.v8i1.8536>.

³⁶ Khoutem Ben Jedidia and Mohamed Ghroubi, "Islamic Finance and SDGs: Bibliometric Review and Future Research Agenda," *Journal of Chinese Economic and Business Studies*, December 26, 2024, 1–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14765284.2024.2445959>.

³⁷ Prasojo, Lailatis Syarifah, and Muhfiatun, "Harmonizing Sustainable Development Goals and Maqasid Shariah: A Strategic Framework for Indonesian Islamic Banks (Case Study on Bank Syariah Indonesia)," *Journal of Islamic Finance (JIF)* 13, no. 2 (2024): 116–17, <https://journals.iium.edu.my/iiibf-journal/index.php/jif/article/view/928>.

³⁸ Yusuf Kaweesa and Romzie Rosman, "An Analysis of the Linkage between Islamic Economics, Sustainability, and Islamic Financial System," in *Islamic Finance and Sustainable Development* (London: Routledge, 2025), 78–90, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003505570-6>.

are also important in Zakat by ensuring an organised and systematic collection and distribution process for people in need regardless of the location, whether in remote desert lands or dense urban areas.³⁹

Muslims are religiously required to identify Zakat as a comprehensive and organic economic system that promotes social justice, reduces poverty, and deepens food security. The correct implementation of the concept in society can lead to the fulfilment of basic human needs for water, food, and shelter, reduce poverty, and alleviate hunger in sustainable living environments.⁴⁰ Food Banks already serve as a potent tool for these missions but in combination with the latest financial systems, social welfare programs, or international efforts for food security can increase the significance of the impact and ensure participation in the achievement of SDG offered by the UN.

3.6 Challenges in Utilising Zakat for Achieving Zero Hunger

Zakat is an important part of the five pillars of Islam and has significant potential in combating poverty and hunger which are closely associated with SDG 2. However, several challenges are hindering the effective utilisation of Zakat funds for investment in global food security despite its potential as a transformative vehicle. These vary from institutional inefficiency and a lack of standardisation to socio-political and economic hindrances that suppress the effectiveness of Zakat in alleviating hunger. The challenges limit the effective utilisation of Zakat in achieving SDG 2 despite the potential.⁴¹ Therefore, institutional reforms, increased transparency, integration into new development programs, and strategic long-term investment are required to provide food security solutions. The effort is necessary to activate the powerful force of Zakat in the fight against hunger to alleviate the suffering of people in extreme poverty and promote economic justice, thereby arguably establishing itself as a major contributor to sustainable food security worldwide.

3.6.1 Absence of Formal and Standardised Zakat System

An example of the challenges in utilising Zakat to achieve food security is the absence of a global system for collection and distribution. In most Muslim-dominated countries, Zakat remains unsupervised or channelled through decentralised bodies

³⁹ Mulyono Jamal, Agung Lia Handayani, and Ainun Amalia Zuhroh, "Revitalising The Regulation of Zakat Institutions in Indonesia to Achieve Economic Justice," *Al Iqtishadiyah Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah Dan Hukum Ekonomi Syariah* 9, no. 2 (February 29, 2024): 52, <https://doi.org/10.31602/iqt.v9i2.12848>.

⁴⁰ Anwar Allah Pitchay, Masyitah Abdul Rahman, and Zubir Azhar, "Alleviating Financial Education Debt through Zakah: Proposing HOPE Model to Public Higher Education Institution," *Qualitative Research in Financial Markets*, December 16, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRFM-01-2024-0021>.

⁴¹ Dedi Satriawan and . Rahmat, "The Role of Sharia Economy in Poverty Reduction in Indonesia," in *KnE Social Sciences*, 2024, 396–404, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v9i16.16259>.

and the process leads to fragmentation, inefficiencies, and non-uniform practices. The absence of a structured framework for delivery can restrict the funds from trickling down to the most vulnerable. Furthermore, the lack of global regulation and guidance prevents Zakat from being effectively utilised on a worldwide level to mitigate food insecurity.⁴²

3.6.2 Misallocation and Poor Transparency

Zakat is inefficient in combating hunger and poverty in some regions because the funds are often not allocated to the most destitute. The lack of correct and appropriate management can also slowly erode the effectiveness of the process due to a lack of accountability.⁴³ Moreover, larger and decentralised Zakat organisations often have minimal methods to track the distribution which makes it impossible to know when the funds truly alleviate food insecurity. This shows that the potential of the concept is underutilised due to a lack of governance and transparency mechanisms.

3.6.3 Lack of Integration with Modern Development Initiatives

Zakat is not integrated effectively into contemporary food security and poverty alleviation programs. This is because most reformists and reforms of international organisations and governments adopt a model of structured development strategies. However, Zakat distribution is not often included in mainstream economic policies and social welfare plans. This disconnect reduces opportunities for collaboration, sustainable development projects, and data-driven decision-making which subsequently limits the potential for Zakat in long-term efforts to eradicate hunger.

3.6.4 Socio-cultural and Political Barriers

Cultural values and political instability have led to the underutilisation of inputs and outputs of Zakat funds in several societies. For example, the bureaucratic restrictions imposed by some governments on Zakat collection and allocation demotivate NGOs from using the concept entirely for food security projects. Conflicts, wars and displacement crises in several Muslim-majority countries also make it logistically difficult to reach the hungry. The issues limit the opportunities of using Zakat for food security in such unpredictable settings.

⁴² Hani Atul Khoiriyah, "Revolutionizing Islamic Curriculum in Enabling Sustainable Futures through SDGs," *Journal of Educational Management Research* 3, no. 2 (August 26, 2024): 101–15, <https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v3i2.434>.

⁴³ Syed Musa Alhabshi and Isnani Hari Mardika, "Integrating Social Business for Sustainable Impact: A Systematic Literature Review in the Context of Waqf," *Journal of Islamic Finance* 13, no. 2 (2024): 149–159, <https://journals.iium.edu.my/iiibf-journal/index.php/jif/article/view/931>.

3.6.5 Outlook: Short-Term vs Long-Term

Several Zakat organisations overlook long-term solutions to promote food security by concentrating on the provision of immediate relief such as food packages, to the poor. This short-term relief is important but there is also an urgent need for Zakat funds to be invested in agricultural development, employment generation, and economic empowerment programmes to eliminate hunger at the source. Furthermore, Zakat is ineffective in endogenously eliminating hunger without long-term efforts with proper planning and sustainability.

3.7 Bridging the Gap between Zakat and SDGs

The status of Zakat as a system of Islamic financial and social welfare shows its excellent potential in contributing to the implementation of SDG 1 reduce poverty, SDG 2 achieve zero hunger, SDG 4 ensure quality education, and SDG 3 promote good health and well-being. However, the traditional practice of Zakat and contemporary development frameworks are often not in line despite a precise connection with global priorities. The effort to maximise the impact requires integrating Zakat into structured development policy frameworks, financial inclusion measures, and sustainable economic initiatives associated with the broader SDG agenda.⁴⁴

An important method to close the gap between Zakat and SDGs is the systematic collection and distribution of funds. In several countries, Zakat is implemented through decentralised religious and charitable organisations which leads to inconsistent implementation of the objectives. Structured institutions initiated by the government or in collaboration with international development agencies can provide a framework for accountability and efficiency for Zakat and other philanthropic funds.⁴⁵ This is the reason digital platforms, blockchain technology, and AI-powered financial tools are necessary to facilitate transparent collection and tracking.⁴⁶

SDGs are not achievable without integrating Zakat into national and international development policies. This shows the need for governments and organisations to collaborate with Islamic financial institutions with the aim of integrating Zakat into poverty alleviation programs, food security initiatives, and healthcare systems. The

⁴⁴ Umara Noreen, "Mapping of FinTech Ecosystem to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Saudi Arabia's Landscape," *Sustainability* 16, no. 21 (October 28, 2024): 9362, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16219362>.

⁴⁵ Adamu Abubakar Muhammad, Hamza Abubakar Hussaini, and Adam Muhammad Ardo, "Reviving Zakat and Waqf Institutions for Sustainable Community Development in Gombe State, Nigeria," *Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (July 31, 2024): 47–54, <https://doi.org/10.58723/ijfis.v2i2.230>.

⁴⁶ Erni Erni, Artis Artis, and Rahman Rahman, "Zakat Management Practices and Sustainable Development in Indonesia," *Sinergi International Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (February 29, 2024): 24–37, <https://doi.org/10.61194/ijis.v2i1.129>.

redirection of Zakat into measures that address agricultural sustainability, vocational training, and small-scale entrepreneurship while providing long-term solutions to economic challenges can improve sustained and inclusive economic growth (SDG 8).⁴⁷ However, the lack of transparency in management is part of the primary obstacles to the integration process. Some cases also show the limitation of using the real potential of Zakat in promoting sustainable development due to inefficient governance, misallocation of funds, and corruption. The implementation of data-driven methods and a focus on global cooperation can be used to strengthen the process. This is associated with the accountability and ability to ensure Zakat resources are allocated most effectively to address priority development challenges. Historically, Zakat has been used to provide interim support in the form of food, shelter, or cash, to beneficiaries. There is currently a growing demand for the allocation of Zakat to long-term development programs.⁴⁸ The focus is expected to be on education, skill development, healthcare infrastructure, and women empowerment programs capable of assisting in building self-sustaining communities to minimise dependence on continuous aid while providing a platform for resilience. This shift is in line with SDG 10 (Reducing Inequality) and SDG 4 (Quality Education) which subsequently positions Zakat as a long-term method to achieve social transformation.

The effort to integrate Zakat into SDGs requires addressing a variety of challenges in a multi-pronged manner through institutional reforms, technological innovation, and partnerships between the Islamic financial system and development actors. The modernisation, integration, and expansion of the applications can allow Zakat to serve as a clean catalyst for sustainable economic empowerment, social justice, and global well-being. The process also has the capacity to function as a glue to attain SDGs by eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms.

3.8 Enhancing Digital and AI-Based Zakat Distribution

Problems such as mismanagement, a lack of accountability, and ineffective targeting of beneficiaries often plague the traditional methods of collecting and distributing Zakat. Therefore, the adoption of AI, blockchain, and digital payment platforms can ensure Zakat institutions provide these services in an equitable, data-driven, and real-time manner to the most appropriate targets.

⁴⁷ Adam Muhammad Ardo et al., "The Legal Framework of Waqf and Its Role in Modern Economic Development in Nigeria," *Ahlika: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 1, no. 2 (2024): 162–178, <https://doi.org/10.70742/ahlika.v1i2.109>.

⁴⁸ Muhammad, Hussaini, and Ardo, "Reviving Zakat and Waqf Institutions for Sustainable Community Development in Gombe State, Nigeria."

Predictive analytics driven by AI can assist Zakat institutions in identifying regions affected by poverty, determining the level of food insecurity, and prioritising the most needy. This is based on the capability of artificial intelligence to analyse socioeconomic and demographic trends in spending patterns by extracting and processing user information to channel funds to the most appropriate targets. The technology eliminates inefficiencies in human assessments and subjective decision-making.⁴⁹ Artificial intelligence-powered facial recognition and biometric authentication can also assist in verifying the identities of those receiving assistance, thereby reducing fraud and duplication of aid.

3.8.1 Blockchain for Transparency and Trust

Lack of transparency and accountability are parts of the main challenges of Zakat distribution. This leads to the suggestion of blockchain technology to record and track Zakat on a decentralised ledger for the purpose of providing complete traceability and a very low risk of corruption for the funds collected, allocated, and disbursed. The implementation also enables donors to track their contributions in real-time which further enhances trust and confidence in Zakat institutions. Moreover, the establishment of a smart contract can lead to the automatic release of funds to verified beneficiaries or social welfare programs towards ensuring the aid reaches the intended recipients promptly without delays or mismanagement. Zakat can also be transferred instantly to recipients through mobile banking, digital wallets, and fintech solutions, particularly for those in remote or conflict-affected areas where conventional banking infrastructure is limited. The application of blockchain to correlate and validate donor details with recipient needs ensures Zakat funds are directly allocated to those in need without going through exploitative intermediaries. The process can lead to the avoidance of corruption while enhancing the efficiency of digital cash transfers.

3.8.2 AI-Powered Monitoring and Impact Assessment

Zakat is in the form of inward wealth and labour but the determination of the method to maximise impact can be challenging. AI-driven analytics is perceived as the method to track the effectiveness of personal Zakat programs in real time by capturing metrics such as an increase in nutrition, income, and employment among beneficiaries. This shows that AI-driven insights can enable organisations to refine their strategies toward ensuring Zakat is a solution for immediate needs and serve as the platform for

⁴⁹ Nur Fatwa and Miqdam Awwali Hashri, "Islamic Social Financing of The National Zakat Amil Agency Program for Support Ensure the Availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All (Case Study of Islamic Boarding Schools Riyadul Awamil Indonesia)," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 11 (June 27, 2024): 2096–2102, <https://doi.org/10.61707/1rxkhs42>.

fostering future economic empowerment. Therefore, implementing and enhancing digital & AI-based Zakat Distribution is a step towards transforming Islamic social finance.⁵⁰ The integration of AI, blockchain, and digital payment solutions can also enable Zakat institutions to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability. This is necessary to ensure Zakat functions as an effective tool for poverty alleviation and sustainable development in the digital era.⁵¹

3.9 Case Study

Cases have shown Zakat as a form of obligatory almsgiving in Islam that has proven effective in addressing food insecurity, supporting small-scale farmers, and enhancing overall social welfare in order to contribute significantly to Zero Hunger. The redistribution of wealth to the most vulnerable segments of society allows Zakat to function as a powerful tool for social justice and economic inclusion. In many Muslim-majority countries, zakat institutions have been successfully integrated into national development strategies.

The structured collection and distribution of Zakat in Malaysia have enabled targeted food assistance and agricultural support for low-income communities. The Lembaga Zakat Selangor (LZS) exemplifies good institutional practice to show Zakat can address SDG 2 Zero Hunger and promote social welfare. This is achieved through a systematised collection method regulated by transparency to enforce beneficial poverty-reducing programs that focus on both short-term and long-term food security.

The prominent project is the “Agro Zakat” which assists smallholder farmers and underprivileged communities by distributing agricultural inputs such as seeds, livestock, farming tools, and training. The project enables the beneficiaries to produce food in order to reduce dependency on aid and enhance sustainable income. Furthermore, LZS provides low-income families with monthly food supplies to combat hunger.

LZS spent more than RM 800 million (equivalent to USD 190 million) on Zakat within one year in 2020 to secure food, provide education, promote health, and empower livelihoods. The inclusion of IIT with digital technology also ensured funds were handled efficiently and that there was transparency at the implementation phase. This case is a vivid example of how an efficient Zakat system can be used to tactically address the fundamental drivers of hunger, support smallholder farmers, and enable inclusive economic engagement which are all essential targets of SDG 2.

⁵⁰ Sherin Kunhibava et al., *Islamic Social Finance* (Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-1410-0>.

⁵¹ Kardina Engelina Siregar, “Optimizing the Role of Waqf in Sustainable Development through an Islamic Education Perspective: A Comprehensive Literature Study,” *RISALAH IQTISADIAH: Journal of Sharia Economics* 3, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.59107/ri.v3i1.58>.

Zakat programs have similarly provided direct support to impoverished households which reduced their reliance on food aid. The case study reflected how zakat complemented state efforts in reducing hunger and promoting sustainable livelihoods when managed transparently and strategically. The combination of Zakat initiatives with SDG 2 objectives allowed the countries to show that faith-based financial systems could be important in achieving global food security and eradicating hunger, particularly when guided by principles of accountability, equity, and developmental impact.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the potential of Zakat to contribute to SDG 2 was dependent on its modernisation and connection to global development strategies. The implementation of digital transformation through AI-based analytical predictions, blockchain for transparent transactions, and digital payment platforms could completely revolutionise the collection and distribution of Zakat to the most needy. The issuance also aimed to catalyse policy reforms and international collaboration among Islamic financial institutions, governments, and humanitarian organisations to optimise the impact of Zakat on food security. Moreover, the pillars of wealth redistribution and social justice required the flow of money towards those in need through charity in order to ensure food security, economic stability, and social security. Appropriate management could supplement the efforts towards abolishing hunger worldwide by aiding sustainable agricultural mechanisms, empowering communities, and funding long-term poverty alleviation initiatives. However, the potential benefits were limited by problems such as a lack of institutional integration, a problematic distribution, and issues related to transparency. This showed the possibility of structured and technology-driven Zakat to become a scalable and sustainable solution to global hunger eradication. The utilisation of contemporary financial methods, data-driven strategies, and inclusive governance could allow Zakat to function as a powerful tool in the fight against economic deprivation, food insecurity, and underdevelopment, paving the way to an end to hunger and poverty.

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