



Community Response to BAZNAS (Alms Collection Agency) as an Islamic Philanthropic Institution in Indonesia

Imron Rosidi; Rahman; Darusman; Ginda; Arwan; Titi Antin

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Indonesia

E-mail: imronrosidi@gmail.com; rahman@uin-suska.ac.id; darusman@uin-suska.ac.id; ginda@uin-suska.ac.id; arwan@uin-suska.ac.id; titiantin@uin-suska.ac.id

<http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v6i4.981>

Abstract

The concept of philanthropy is one of the concepts that has been established in Islam, the purpose of which is to realize goodness (al-birr), al-'ata' al-ijtima'i (giving social security), al-takaful al-insani (solidarity), humanity) or 'ata' al-khairy (gift for good). Baznas Riau Province, as one of the Islamic philanthropic institutions, is responsible for realizing social justice so that social inequality does not occur in society by implementing economic empowerment for people who are unable so that social justice can be appropriately recognized. This article uses interview to know the community's response to BAZNAS Riau. This article finds that the society's trust that has not grown strong in BAZNAS as a professional zakat manager in Indonesia, which has an impact on the tendency for many Muslims to distribute their zakat independently by giving zakat directly to those who are entitled to receive it. In addition, there is a fragmentation of zakat management in Indonesia which is reflected in the emergence of several philanthropic institutions that also manage zakat funds from Muslim communities other than BAZNAS.

Keywords: *Response; Philanthropy; Muslim Community*

Introduction

From the beginning, Islam has presented itself as a religion with philanthropic nuances. The embodiment of philanthropy is found in its doctrines and teachings, which are sourced from the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet and are modified utilizing the ijtihad result mechanism so that zakat, infaq, and alms (ZIS) institutions and institutions can be used as part of the Islamic philanthropy. The goal is that the wealth is not only circulated among the rich. Therefore, Islamic philanthropy can also be interpreted as giving charity (Kim Kein, 2001) based on the perception of realizing social justice and benefit for the general public (Anang Wahyu, 2017). So philanthropy in Islamic law aims to spread goodness (al-birr). In that case, the concept and idea of Islamic philanthropy is an alternative for a community group to eliminate inequality in the midst of society (Abdiansyah Linge, 2017).

As the largest Muslim country, Indonesia already has many philanthropic institutions based on social, religious, and community activities under the auspices of the government, such as BAZNAS

(National Collection Zakat Agency) and BAZDA (Regional Collection Zakat Agency) and UPZ (Zakat Collection Unit) as well as philanthropic institutions established by social organizations such as LAZIS (Institution of Zakat Infaq Sedekah Collection) (Hilman Latif, 2013). The development of Islamic philanthropic institutions that are currently growing shows that there is a relatively significant and productive economic potential in Indonesia which will become a magnet in exploring philanthropic programs; this is also because Indonesia is a country with a population of approximately 275 million, and there are still many Indonesians who live under conditions of lack of luck (poor) (Mangku Bahjatulloh, 2016).

The government has made various efforts to anticipate the poverty rate, which continues to rise yearly, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though the number of poor people is constantly increasing due to the influence of population growth factors, the percentage continues to decline yearly. For example, the national poverty rate in 2022 will reach 26.16 million people or 9.54 percent in March 2022, then decreases by 0.17 percent in September 2021. Especially in Riau Province, it is slightly below the national average of 6.78 percent in March 2022, decreased by 0.34 percentage points compared to March 2021. The number of poor people in Riau in March 2022 is about 485.03 thousand people. However, in September 2020 the number of poor people experienced an increase, one of which was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic so that efforts to continuously overcome socio-economic disparities through community economic empowerment activities as an Islamic philanthropic movement need to be constantly encouraged.

Based on the report on the results of research conducted by Amelia Fauziah that there are 99.3% of Muslims in Indonesia have practiced social generosity by giving donations in the form of money and goods as well as donations of time and energy. Alms donations in the form of money are given by 93.60% of Muslims, and in the form of zakat fitrah (personal zakat) are paid by 98.50% (Muslims are included in the weak economic category), zakat Mal (property zakat) is 34.70%, and waqf is 22.80%. This shows that the potential of Islamic philanthropy is very prospective and has played an active role in helping the poor and financing most socio-religious activities (Amelia Fauzia, 2010).

Meanwhile, the potential for zakat nationally in Indonesia, which began in 2011, is estimated to reach 3.4 percent of the total GDP or around Rp. 217 trillion. The potential for zakat receipts comes from various sectors, such as private companies, households, and state-owned enterprises, as well as savings and deposits. However, the potential for zakat described above is not supported by achievements in collecting zakat in the field. This can be seen from the results of zakat collection data by the Zakat Management Organization (OPZ) in 2016; zakat, infaq, and alms (ZIS) which have been collected, only reached around 5 trillion rupiahs. This shows that there is still a reasonably high gap between the potential and realization of the zakat collection. Although there is a high gap between potential and realization, public awareness of paying zakat through UPZ continues to increase. The average growth of ZIS collection nationally is around 20.06% per year. The increase and growth of the ZIS collection show the importance of public trust in zakat institutions. The results from the 2018 BAZNAS Strategic Study Center stated that the distribution of ZIS nationally in 2016 reached 2.931 trillion rupiahs. In other words, the absorption rate reached 58.42 percent. So this can be interpreted that the absorption of zakat funds by the Zakat Management Organization (OPZ) is considered quite effective (Ilyasa Aulia Nur Cahaya, 2020). Therefore, through the system of rules and laws in Indonesia, philanthropic institutions are currently regulated and have formal legality. Zakat, for example, is regulated under Law no. 23 of 2011 concerning Zakat Management through the National Collection Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) as a non-structural government institution that is independent and responsible directly to the President of the Republic of Indonesia through the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. It is domiciled in the center of the National Capital City, whose main task is to manage and develop zakat management in Indonesia (Siti Nurhayati & Nurjamil, 2019). So that if the practice of philanthropy is carried out

thoughtfully and professionally, which is more directed to empowerment, then the benefits of Islamic charity can be maximized to realize social welfare so that it will encourage the realization of social justice. In addition, the functions and benefits of this Islamic philanthropic institution are to answer various people's problems by implementing sustainable programs that move in the macro realm, solving problems at the structural level, and changing the system (Zaenal Abidin, 2012). Thus, based on this, it is necessary to know the response of community in Riau regarding the BAZNAS Riau. It aims to provide the description about the possibility for the BAZNAS Riau to expand and improve its performance based on the community's response.

Literature Review

There are several research results in the form of articles, theses, dissertations, and relevant writings. Kasdi (2016) stated that the management and empowerment of ZISWAF carried out by BMT managers throughout Demak Regency are very good and systematically arranged. The indicators are a one-way management system, a feedback management system, and a pilot project system. While the indicators of ZISWAF empowerment carried out by BMT managers are the existence of empowerment for human resource development, with a model of economic empowerment, and social empowerment by distributing funds for the poor directly in the form of compensation, distribution for educational facilities, allocation of funds for orphans, distribution for worship facilities, and other social activities.

Saripudin (2016) states that zakat, infaq, and alms are instruments of distribution justice in Islamic economics. If managed properly and professionally, this enormous potential of zakat funds will significantly impact the Indonesian economy, especially in poverty alleviation efforts in Indonesia. A good distribution of zakat will increase people's purchasing power and cause income distribution to minimize the gaps that occur in society. Zakat and alms are involved in poverty alleviation through income distribution and wealth transfer. Zakat can also be used for long-term investment to increase the non-income aspects of the poor such as health, education, physical resources, and employment.

Furthermore, Linge (2017) indicates that philanthropy's effectiveness in reducing social inequality is inseparable from the role of philanthropic institutions that manage these activities. The potential that comes from philanthropy is very large by implementing capital distribution to the poor to play a role in economic activities as producers increase income.

Method

This exploratory, descriptive study uses a phenomenological approach which is considered more appropriate and follows the research objectives to reveal the essence of social phenomena (Nur Indrianto & Bambang Supomo, 2010). And it is based on what goals to achieve, namely to obtain information about implementing Islamic philanthropy-based economic management through ZIS activities at the Riau Province Baznas institution. This research is qualitative, in which samples and data sources can be selected purposively, and snowball sampling. Determination of the sample data source in this paper is still temporary and will develop after research in the field. The types of data used are subject data and physical data. Subject data is taken directly from research subjects, while physical information is obtained in the area. To carry out this qualitative data analysis, it is necessary to carry out several stages and steps, including data reduction, which can be interpreted as the process of selecting data, focusing attention on simplification, abstracting, and transforming data that emerges from written notes in the field (Miles Matthew B & Michael Hubberman, 2007). Interviews are used to collect data. Twenty informants are selected based on a purposive sampling technique.

Results and Discussion

1) Islamic Philanthropy

The term philanthropy is Greek from the words *philos* (meaning love) and *anthropos* (meaning human), so etymologically philanthropy is a conceptualization of the practice of giving, services, and association voluntarily to help others. Others need it as a form of expression of love (Abdurrahman Kasdi, 2016). This referred to the experience of the West in the eighteenth century when states and individuals began to feel responsible for caring for the weak. However, different in concept and practice, the tradition of philanthropy has been known in every human culture throughout history (Helmut K. Anheier & Regina, 2005). The word philanthropy was an unknown term in early Islam, although some Arabic terms have recently been used as equivalents. Philanthropy is sometimes called *al-'ata' al-ijtima'i* (social giving) and sometimes called *al-takaafu al-insani* (human solidarity) or *'ata' al-khairi* (gift for good). However, *al-birr* (good deeds) or *shadaqah* (alms) are also used. The latter is, of course, already known in Islam, but the term philanthropy is an adoption in modern times (Udin Saripudin, 2016; Husnatul Maheasy, 2019).

In its implementation, the practice of Islamic philanthropy takes two forms, namely traditional philanthropy, and social justice philanthropy. Traditional philanthropy is a form of philanthropic practice that is applied in charitable activities in the form of direct services that are short-term and more consumptive, such as providing food, clothing, housing, health services, and so on, intending to meet the immediate needs and basic needs of the recipients. Individuals usually carry out this form of philanthropy. Meanwhile, social justice philanthropy aims to improve the quality of life of the recipients or the community, especially the poor, through sustainable empowerment programs. In other words, this form of philanthropy is more productive and long-term, with the ultimate goal of creating social equality and social welfare. This philanthropic practice is usually collective or initiated by certain institutions and communities. This social justice philanthropy is also known as the practice of modern philanthropy. Thus, it can be understood that traditional philanthropy is realized through services. In contrast, social or modern philanthropy is practiced as advocacy, namely in the form of community empowerment in a better direction (Muhammad Irham, 2019).

Philanthropy can also be broadly narrated as the actualization of human nature as social beings. Philanthropy calls on everyone to be part of the philanthropist. Dominant philanthropy begins with self-motivation and social awareness to obey religious orders, then gradually becomes a culture of wisdom and has been proven to have contributed a lot to improving welfare and reducing social inequality in people's lives (Unun Roudlotul Jannah, 2020).

In Islam, the concept of philanthropy is not new. Dawam Raharjo, as quoted by Udin Saripudin, said that philanthropy is inherent teaching in Islamic doctrine (Udin Saripudin, 2016). Islam has its basis that generosity is a spirit and value upheld in Islam. The form of this philanthropy is excavated from religious doctrines sourced from the Qur'an and hadith, which are modified by means of the *ijtihad* (innovation) mechanism so that the institutions of *zakat*, *infaq*, *alms*, and *waqf* appear.

2) The History and Existence of Islamic Philanthropy in Indonesia

The philanthropic movement in Indonesia started with the emergence and development of popular community organizations called Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the 1970s. These community organizations emerged as a response to the current modernization. Social problems due to the recent modernization require another approach from the traditional philanthropic approach. So to overcome various social issues such as poverty, labor, environment, gender, human rights, democratization, social disability, drugs, and HIV/AIDS, the organization offers not only the provision of services but also advocacy (Chusnan Jusuf, 2007).

Furthermore, the dynamics of Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia can be described from several historical periods. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Islamic organizations have emerged in modernist and traditionalist circles colored by various social activities and activities. The establishment of social, educational, and health institutions by socio-religious organizations such as NU (Nahdlatul Ulama), Muhammadiyah, and PERSIS (Islamic Association), cannot be separated from the material and non-material contributions of Muslims, including through the collection of zakat and alms. For several decades, Islamic social and philanthropic movements/activities have continued to develop and experience changes, both at the level of the philosophical discourse aspect and the organizational structure (Mintarti Ariani, 2015).

Philanthropy activities and practices in Indonesia cannot be separated from the role of religion because religion has become part of the most crucial factor as a motivator for everyone to carry out various social activities to ease the burden on the poor (dhu'afa) and the needy. If one traces the history of the birth of philanthropy in Indonesia, it starts with traditional philanthropic elements originating from Christianity and Islam. Religious philanthropy in Indonesia is related to missionary and da'wah activities. Religious propagation activities provide various social services, especially education, health, and social welfare (Chusnan Jusuf, 2007).

For Muslims in Indonesia, philanthropic activities have become increasingly widespread in the past two decades, especially after the monetary crisis in the late 1990s. Increasing Islamization activities in various sectors, both in the political bureaucracy and positive law as well as in social and cultural institutions of society, have contributed to the increase in Islamic philanthropic activities. This can be observed from the increasing efforts to raise public funds from zakat and alms. The economic crisis marked by the weakening of the rupiah against the dollar, the collapse of the banking world, the collapse of export-import companies as well as rising unemployment and poverty has prompted some to look at philanthropic activities that civil society organizations will sponsor as one an alternative solution to maintaining social stability. Various groups established Islamic philanthropic institutions in Indonesia from social activist backgrounds, political parties, and bureaucrats (Hilman Latif, 2013).

Thus, Islamic philanthropy has developed in Indonesia. In line with the entry of Islam and the development of Islam in the archipelago, Islamic philanthropy has transformed from traditional to modern. The process of developing Islamic philanthropy occurred gradually and gradually. That is a historical journey of Indonesian philanthropy, which has a reasonably long development that began with the arrival of Islam in the archipelago. The New Order period was a relatively good socio-political condition so that several private Amil Zakat Institutions (LAZ) were established as foundations, one of which was Dompot Dhuafa Republika which later developed into a national Zakat collection Institution (LAZ), the driving force of Islamic philanthropy during the Reformation period. The development of good philanthropic institutions will automatically support the realization of a strong, independent, and prosperous civil society. Meanwhile, the achievement itself will give meaning and fulfill a very important need for a change in Indonesia's era of Reformation, democratization, and social transformation (Ali Nurdin, 2013).

3) Society's Response to the BAZNAS Riau

BAZNAS Riau has several excellent programs: the Riau Makmur, Smart Riau, Healthy Riau, Riau Dakwah, and Riau Peduli. The five programs reflect economy (entrepreneurship), education (scholarships), and health, religious and humanitarian fields. In the context of social justice, these five areas represent a severe effort from BAZNAS to realize the noble ideals of the fifth precept of the nation's ideology.

The mention of the five flagship programs in the mass media (<https://infopublik.id/categories/nusantara/606469/ini-5-program-unggulan-baznas-riau-bantu-Masyarakat-kurang-capable>) shows that BAZNAS encourages Muslim communities to give trust to the institution. This is done by creating unique programs that favor their interests. High trust in BAZNAS is expected to contribute to increasing the collected philanthropic funds to create an increase in the realization of the programs that have been launched.

This aspect of trust is essential to build. According to some informants, BAZNAS has not optimally developed this aspect, so many Muslims in Riau believe they are more confident paying their zakat individually. This is what Kamal said:

“I pay zakat because it is a religious obligation. However, I always pay zakat by giving it directly to people who are entitled...who are close to me...” (personal communication, June 2, 2022).

From the aspect of religious beliefs, they generally have strong religious beliefs. Islam teaches that zakat is an obligation for every Muslim to be paid. This firm religious belief makes some Muslims in Riau pay zakat personally. BAZNAS, as a semi-government institution, is considered not yet a reliable place to distribute zakat. This is as conveyed by Ridho:

“If I pay zakat to BAZNAS, do some of my neighbors and relatives who are less well off get help from BAZNAS? I think about it every time I want to pay zakat to BAZNAS” (Personal communication, June 4, 2022).

This inadequate trust has led to the reluctance of some Muslim communities to pay zakat to BAZNAS. Even though the flagship programs from BAZNAS are excellent and relevant to the needs of the Riau Muslim community today, this was also acknowledged by the informant, who stated that BAZNAS' special programs were relevant to the needs of the Muslim community in Riau. However, the problem, according to Aldi, is:

"We know that BAZNAS' superior programs are outstanding, and God willing, they will be useful for Muslims in Riau. However, is there any guarantee that these programs reach our area?" (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

The main issue raised by the informants was inadequate trust in the realization of these special programs. As a country with a majority Muslim population, Indonesia also has many poor Muslims. This affects how Muslims respond when asked to pay zakat to BAZNAS. They are generally more concerned with Muslims who are close to their homes or relatives who do have the right to receive zakat. This is related to how often they witness the distress of these people and, on the other hand, want to build a close relationship with them. For them, it is essential to look and pay attention to their surroundings rather than giving to BAZNAS, while those close to them are not distributed zakat by BAZNAS.

BAZNAS, an institution with authority to manage zakat funds in Indonesia, has branches in each province. With many Muslims in Indonesia, the zakat funds collected should also be significant. However, the inhibiting factors for implementing optimal zakat management at the BAZNAS institution emerged and surfaced in the Muslim community, as some of the informants stated above. In addition, there is a fragmentation of zakat management in Indonesia which is reflected in the emergence of several philanthropic institutions that also manage zakat funds from the Muslim community.

Although this fragmentation does not significantly affect the effectiveness of zakat management in BAZNAS, the emergence of these philanthropic institutions can lead to a lack of trust in the Muslim community towards philanthropic institutions when one philanthropic institution has problems managing

funds. This is reflected in the case of ACT (Aksi Cepat Tanggap) which collected funds from the public but was later misused (<https://national.tempo.co/read/1615828/ini-fact-perjalanan-case-act-to-petinggi-jadi-suspect>). Problems that arise in the ACT can have an impact on decreasing public confidence in other philanthropic institutions, including BAZNAS.

On the other hand, the fragmentation of zakat management is also supported by the emergence of Muslim individuals who directly distribute zakat to people who are considered entitled to receive zakat. This adds to the problem of the effectiveness of zakat management in BAZNAS. Every Muslim with zakat obligations tends to prioritize the distribution of zakat directly, which is consumptive. Although in the context of social relations, this is beneficial for strengthening the relationship between those who give and receive zakat, the broader aspect of the benefit is still being questioned. Consumptive zakat, according to Ali, Amalia, and Ayyubi (2016), is intended to meet the basic needs of mustahik. Furthermore, according to them, productive zakat is more beneficial for mustahik to improve their welfare than consumptive zakat.

Meanwhile, if one looks at the special programs of BAZNAS Riau, the direction of these special programs is mostly productive zakat. These programs will have an impact on improving the welfare of the Muslim community in Riau if they can be appropriately realized. According to Jaya (2020), BAZNAS Riau succeeded in increasing zakat funds in 2020 even though, at that time, the community was experiencing economic difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This shows that the main trigger is the desire to help others who are experiencing financial problems due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The success of BAZNAS in increasing the trust of the Muslim community, especially Muzakki, is also influenced by the effectiveness of BAZNAS's socialization of its programs. Rosidi and Amin (2019) explained that the weakness of the socialization of BAZNAS in the Meranti Islands was the use of modern management and instruments in socializing zakat in farming communities in the Meranti Islands, Riau. BAZNAS Riau needs to use modern media to disseminate special programs that can reach the wider community, such as social media. BAZNAS also needs to consider using modern information technology systems to collect zakat funds so that muzakki are more practical in distributing their zakat. The use of modern information technology can also contribute to preserving muzakki data that is useful for the progress of BAZNAS in the future.

Conclusion

Today's Islamic philanthropic institutions have a role in helping the government improve the welfare of the Muslim community. One of Indonesia's well-known Islamic philanthropic institutions is BAZNAS (National Zakat Collection Agency). The BAZNAS institution has branches up to the district capital. This article shows that BAZNAS Riau has several excellent programs, namely the Riau Makmur, Smart Riau, Healthy Riau, Riau Dakwah, and Riau Peduli programs. However, the inhibiting factors for implementing maximum zakat management at the BAZNAS institution emerged. Some of them are the trust that has not grown strong in BAZNAS Riau as a professional zakat manager in Indonesia, which has an impact on the tendency for many Muslims to distribute their zakat independently by giving zakat directly to those who are entitled to receive it.

In addition, there is a fragmentation of zakat management in Indonesia which is reflected in the emergence of several philanthropic institutions that also manage zakat funds from Muslim communities other than BAZNAS. Although this fragmentation does not significantly affect the effectiveness of zakat management in BAZNAS, the emergence of these philanthropic institutions can lead to a lack of trust in the Muslim community towards philanthropic institutions when one philanthropic institution has problems managing funds. This is reflected in the case of ACT (Aksi Cepat Tanggap) which collected funds from the public but were later misappropriated.

Acknowledgment

We would like to thank to anonymous reviewers of this article.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that this article has no conflict of interest.

References

- Ali, K.H, Amalia, N.N, and Ayyubi, S.E. (2016). Perbandingan Zakat Produktif dan Konsumtif dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Mustahik. *Jurnal Al-Muzara'ah*, 4(1), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jam.4.1.19-32>.
- Nurdin, A, (2013), Transformasi Dompot Dhuafa dari Lembaga Amil Zakat (LAZ) Menjadi Lembaga Sosial Kemanusiaan, *Jurnal Al-Turas*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 345-368, DOI: 10.15408/bat.v19i2.3725.
- Anheier, Helmut K. & Regina A, (2005), *List, A Dictionary of Sivil Society: Philantropy and the Non-Profit Sector*, London: Routledge.
- Ariani, M, (2015), Potensi Filantropi Islam Dalam Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Indonesia, *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 103-109, DOI <https://doi.org/10.24123/jeb.v19i2.1590>.
- Abidin, Z, (2012), Manifestasi dan Latensi Lembaga Filantropi Islam dalam Praktik Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Suatu Studi di Rumah Zakat Kota Malang, *SALAM: Jurnal Studi Masyarakat Islam*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 197-214, <https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/salam/issue/view/205>.
- Bahjatulloh, M, (2016) Pengembangan Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Masyarakat Melalui Kegiatan Filantropi (Studi Kasus Lembaga Tazakka DIII Perbankan Syariah IAIN Salatiga), *Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 475-494 <https://inferensi.iainsalatiga.ac.id/index.php/inferensi/issue/view/105>.
- Cahaya, I. A. N. (2020), Peran Pendayagunaan Zakat Produktif Terhadap Kesejahteraan Mustahik, *Sultan Agung Fundamental Research Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1-11 <http://jurnal.unissula.ac.id/index.php/safrij/issue/view/408>.
- Fauziah, A, (2010), Religious Giving di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Filantropi Islam, *Jurnal Dialog, Jurnal Kajian dan Keagamaan*, No. 69, 5 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47655/dialog.v32i1> <https://www.google.com/search?q=Religious+Giving+di+Indonesia>.
- <https://infopublik.id/kategori/nusantara/606469/ini-5-program-unggulan-baznas-riau-bantu-masyarakat-kurang-mampu>.
- <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1615828/ini-fakta-perjalanan-kasus-act-hingga-petinggi-jadi-tersangka>.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).