

Institutional and Empowerment Models of Integrated *Zakāh* Village in Jember

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Abstract. *Indonesia has a significant zakāh potential. However, the challenges faced by zakāh management are related to the collection and distribution. This research aims to analyze the institutional patterns and empowerment models of the Integrated Zakāh Village in Jember using the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) theory. Using observations, a document study, Focused-Group Discussions (FGD), and in-depth interviews with the zakāh stakeholders, this research assesses the compatibility of the PRA theory in the development of Kampung Zakāh. This study finds that the obstacles in the Zakāh Village program are related to mustahiq's work ethics and enthusiasm. Among the aspects that need to be improved is the promotion of the program through social media to make it a massive community movement. Furthermore, this program empowers marginalized groups, including women, and encourages them to be independent.*

Keywords: *Empowerment; Jember Integrated Zakāh Village; Zakāh Management*

Abstrak. *Indonesia memiliki potensi zakat yang signifikan. Namun, tantangan yang dihadapi oleh pengelola zakat di antaranya terkait dengan pengumpulan dan distribusi dana zakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pola kelembagaan dan model pemberdayaan Kampung Zakat Terpadu Jember menggunakan teori Participatory Rural Appraisal. Dengan data observasi, studi dokumen, diskusi kelompok terfokus, dan wawancara mendalam dengan pemangku kepentingan zakat, penelitian ini menganalisis kesesuaian teori PRA dalam pengembangan Kampung Zakat. Studi ini menemukan bahwa hambatan dalam program Kampung Zakāh terkait dengan etos dan semangat kerja mustahiq. Di antara aspek yang perlu ditingkatkan adalah promosi program melalui media sosial untuk membuatnya menjadi gerakan masyarakat yang masif. Selanjutnya, program ini memberdayakan kelompok marjinal, termasuk perempuan, untuk menjadi mandiri.*

Kata kunci: *Pemberdayaan; Kampung Zakat Terpadu Jember; Manajemen Zakat*

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Introduction

Zakāh is an Islamic instrument of poverty alleviation (Ayuniyyah & Hafidhuddin, 2020; Beik & Arsyianti, 2016; Murniati & Beik, 2014; Roziq et al., 2021; Syaqui Beik, 2009). The significant aim of *zakāh* is to redistribute assets to reduce social gaps. *Zakāh* is compulsory for Muslims whose assets have reached *niṣāb* (the minimum amount that someone possesses before the obligation of *zakāh*) and *haul* (one year of possession). The obligation of *zakāh* is in QS al-Baqarah-43, stating, "perform salah, pay *zakāh*, and bow in worship with those who bow" (Kemenag, 2010).

Zakāh becomes an instrument to be improvised in terms of distribution and utilization. *Zakāh* is not only distributed in the form of consumable goods but also productive goods. The utilization of *zakāh* through productive empowerment is considered ideal for reducing poverty (Furqani et al., 2018). Various *zakāh* institutions, such as BAZ (Badan Amil Zakat/National *Zakāh* Council) and LAZ (Lembaga Amil Zakat/Private *Zakāh* Institution), have initiated productive *zakāh* programs in Indonesia, including innovative ones.

Zakāh's potential in Indonesia is relatively promising, as it has the highest number of Muslim populations. The potential has reached 286 trillion annually (Mohd Nasir et al., 2016). However, this number does not equal the collection of *zakāh* made by *zakāh* institutions. Nationally, the *zakāh* collection was only 8,1 trillion in 2018 (BAZNAS, 2019).

Several reasons lead to the limited amount of *zakāh* collection. One of the reasons is that some people give the *zakāh* directly to the recipients who are close to them, such as their relatives, neighbors, and people from their village (Canggih et al., 2017; Ayuniyyah & Hafidhuddin, 2020).

In some cases, *zakāh* fund is often distributed for social empowerment. The definition of empowerment is continuously expanding, and various empowerment strategies exist. Nowadays, empowerment aims to stimulate people to become subjects, not merely objects (Chambers, 1994). This means that the people are motivated to empower themselves collectively (Ismawati, 2020; Nadzir, 2015; Widjajanti, 2011; Hamzah, 2018).

Zakāh-based empowerment strategies should continuously be developed. Among the strategy is the establishment of Kampung *Zakāh* (*Zakāh* Kampong). This pilot project is a new model initiated in East Java, particularly in Jember, to empower young people and enhance their educational opportunities.

Kampung *Zakāh* is a relatively new project in Jember and East Java. The

program was established in March 2018. It is expected that the Kampung *Zakāh* project can maintain synergy with *zakāh* institutions (BAZ and LAZ) in Jember Regency. This, in turn, will lead to effectiveness and efficiency in *zakāh* management and empowerment.

Kampung *Zakāh* continuously improves the programs, with full support from *zakāh* institutions in Jember. All programs are directed to ensure that they are right on target. Among the programs are the charity for orphans, cheap groceries for the elders, *bisharoh* (payment) for Quranic teachers, and educational aids for students in Kampung *Zakāh*. In those programs, the recipients are differentiated according to children's education level and family burden. All recipients (*mustahiq*) are expected to be free from poverty, and the gaps between the recipients and *zakāh* payers can be alleviated. This is because all programs targeting human right development can be maximized to expand and improve the existing empowerment programs, as *zakāh* can increase the human development index (Murniati & Beik, 2014).

The program developer maintains rationale in developing the variety and number of programs. There are always reasons for economic, religious, and educational development. In Kampung *Zakāh*, there are indications of religious degradation among Muslims caused by routine and massive donations to the community with a specific purpose, such as apostasy. The fact shows that 80% out of 436 families in Kampung *Zakāh* are low-income and very poor. Consequently, strengthening religiosity is needed along with economic improvement, as religiosity is better with a stable livelihood.

Economic empowerment also targets women. There has been a belief that women should not leave their hometowns even for good purposes, such as education and work. Women are given training on happy-prosperous families and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship training, especially those sourced from local raw materials, to be processed and marketed outside, such as herbal medicine and snacks. Education is also given to high school graduates to continue on higher education to improve their skills and knowledge. This effort is also expected to minimize public perception of women as second-class citizens. Although not without challenges and rejection from the community. Women empowerment is intended to enhance their roles in the family and society. The more active women are in economic development, the more they can have equal roles as men in decision-making in the family and society (Bocci & Mishra, 2021).

In Jember Regency, two villages are chosen and will continuously be developed as Kampung *Zakāh*: Jambearum village of Sumberjambe district and

Sumbersalak village of Kalisat district. They are commonly called Kampung *Zakāh* 1 and Kampung *Zakāh* 2. The development of these two Kampung *Zakāhs* uses a specific institutional management system and empowerment model. With these, it is important to formalize an effective model in Kampung *Zakāh*. Therefore, this study aims at mapping the institutional and empowerment model of the Integrated Kampung *Zakāh* as a pilot project to improve and complement the *zakāh* distribution. This paper reveals that in *zakāh* management, it is important to maintain collaboration in empowering impoverished societies with online and offline methods.

Literature Review

Zakāh is an instrument of poverty reduction (Anis & Kassim, 2016; Hadi Ryandono & Surya Nanda, 2020; Mannan, 2000; Yulinartati et al., 2013; Hamzah, 2018) that its distribution and utilization need to be enhanced. *Zakāh* is not only distributed in the form of consumable goods but also productive stimuli for the people. Productive *zakāh* is ideal for alleviating poverty (Furqani et al., 2018). Several programs are initiated by the government and *zakāh* institutions to enhance productive *zakāh* by creating various innovations.

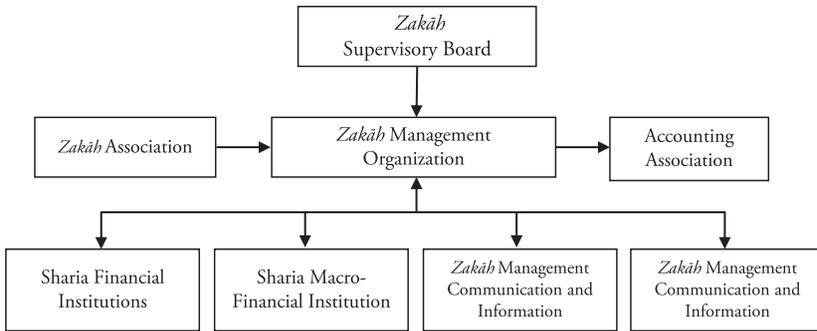
Empowerment is a process to increase the participation and achievement of every recipient in targeting organizational objectives. At the community level, empowerment means increasing collective livelihood. This empowerment stimulates the people to have equal access to resources, including political and social participation (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment means having freedom of choice and expression. Furthermore, empowerment is an effort to strengthen poor people with what they have by providing access to resources, education, rights and obligations (Hayati, 2012; Kholis et al., 2014). However, the results of these empowerment efforts remain limited. *Zakāh* yang diberikan kepada *mustahiq* harus dioptimalkan agar mampu memberikan pengaruh signifikan. Maka, sangat diperlukan entitas pengelola zakat dapat mengambil kebijakan yang mampu meningkatkan kontribusi dana zakat dalam pengentasan kemiskinan melalui program wirausaha *aṣnāf* (Bahri et al., 2022).

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is an empowerment approach initiated by Robert Chamber (1994). This approach needs to be participative, human-centered, empowering, and sustainable. The process is maintained by emphasizing that people are not only the objects in an empowerment program but the subjects or actors. There are five basic empowerment processes, such as 1) needs recognition;

2) needs planning; 3) program execution; 4) monitoring; 5) evaluation (Chambers, 1994; Hamid, 2018). According to Bank Indonesia (2016: 151), the ideal *zakāh* management system should consist of the following: 1) a monitoring body to protect recipients' rights from moral hazards posed by *zakāh* managers; 2) *Zakāh* management organization to collect *zakāh* from *zakāh* payers (*muzakki*) and distribute the *zakāh* to the recipients (*mustahiq*) and not reduce the rights of *zakāh* recipients. All should be sharia-compliant; 3) Sharia financial institutions and sharia micro-financial institutions are providers of information, education, and research about *zakāh*. These institutions are important to ensure effective and efficient information flows and *zakāh* collection and distribution; 4) *zakāh* association and *zakāh* accounting association. These two institutions are important to facilitate experience sharing among *zakāh* institutions. Meanwhile, the importance of *Zakāh* Accounting Association involvement is because *zakāh* management is not only ensuring *zakāh* distribution but also ensuring the compliance of *zakāh* management with sharia and accounting principles.

Figure 1 on the Bank Indonesia Version of the *Zakāh* Institutional System illustrates the interrelationship between one institution and others.

Figure 1. *Zakāh* Institutional System



Source: Bank Indonesia (2016: 151).

Figure 1 above illustrates the complex interactions of *zakāh* management. In the empirical world, there are variations in the institutional system implemented in different places. This is due to the different contexts of each area, the BAZ and LAZs' capacities, and the involvement of the local governments. The ideal *zakāh* institution should be able to create an environment where the national-based system can be implemented at the local level.

Methods

This is qualitative research, employing the exploratory approach to show clear pictures of the empowerment model of Kampung *Zakāh* in Jember. This approach is chosen due to the limited information and research on Kampung *Zakāh*, particularly in Jember (Burns, 2005). Qualitative research enables this research to present deeper and more detailed explanations about the research object (Denzin, 2011).

This research considers the primary and secondary data. The primary data is obtained from interviews with the people from Kampung *Zakāh* and village figures involved in the empowerment projects. Meanwhile, other interviews were conducted with the representatives of *zakāh* institutions and stakeholders, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jember. This research took place in two villages: Paceh, Jambearum village, Sumberjambe District, Jember Regency (Jambuarum village/Kampung *Zakāh* 1) and Palu Ombo, Sumber Salak Village, Ledokombo District, Jember Regency (Sumber Salak village/Kampung *Zakāh* 2).

This research considers Miles and Huberman's model of data analysis. The steps include data processing, reduction, and repetitive conclusion drawing to the saturated points (Miles et al., 2009). The triangulation was conducted to confirm the findings to the Executive Director of Kampung *Zakāh* Jember, the official of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Jember, the Director of LAZ AZKA Al Baitul Amin Jember, and the recipients of *zakāh* from Kampung *Zakāhs*.

Results and Discussion

Jember is one of the regencies in East Java province. It has two villages chosen to be kampung *zakāh*. The first is Dusun Paceh, Jambe Arum Village of Sumber Jambe District, located northeast of Jember city. Its northern part is bordering with Pujer District of Bondowoso Regency. Most of the roads at Jambuarum are unpaved dirt roads. The path to Dusun Paceh is relatively narrow and can only be accessible by one car. The village is under the slope of Mount Raung. Around 500 meters from Kampung *Zakāh* is a production forest; the rest is Mount Raung forest. The distance between Kampung *Zakāh* and the district office is around 7 Km. This is the farthest compared to other villages in the district, and it takes 1.5 hours of a road trip from Jember city to the village. It has an altitude of 450 Mdpl (BPS Jember, 2021).

Economically, the condition of Kampung *Zakāh* 1 is relatively challenging. Most of the houses are far from the healthy house criteria. Two thousand six

hundred-three families use wood for cooking (BPS Jember, 2019). Some of them use bamboo-woven walls or a hut with no flooring. Furthermore, most people work as casual farm and factory workers, with a salary of around IDR40,000/day or USD2.57 (exchange rate on 19 December 2022). Usually, they work only half a day. For consumption, people rely on natural protein resources, such as river fish, eels, and others.

"Here in the village, we rarely find a job. Among the available job is lumberjacks and casual farm workers. The payment is only IDR20,000 or USD1.28 (exchange rate on 19 December 2022) for half day" (Amiruddin, personal communication, 26 November 2020).

"Usually, people take vegetables from the fields and fish from the river. Vegetable seller or *mlijo* rarely comes to the village (Amiruddin, personal communication, 26 November 2020)."

Economic activities include production, consumption, and distribution. However, the observation reveals that people do not have many production activities. This is because the majority of their farmlands are rainfed rice fields. Consequently, the rice grows at certain times during the rainy season. Moreover, the distribution system is still insufficient. Most people rely on local agricultural products. Only some of them have vehicles. Consequently, the predicate of consumption society is suitable for them, as production and distribution activities are still very limited.

The second Kampung *Zakāh* is Dusun Palu Ombo, Sumbersalak Village of Ledokombo district. It is located in the southern part of the Sumber Jambe district and borders Banyuwangi Regency in the east. It is strategic that this village is passed by an inter-district road connecting Kalisat district and Sukowono district. Besides, Kampung *Zakāh* 2 is located nearer the city center than Kampung *Zakāh* 1. The trip to Kampung *Zakāh* 2 normally takes around 45 minutes from Kampung *Zakāh* 1 and 48 minutes from Jember.

Kampung *Zakāh* 2 inhabitants have lived in a relatively different situation than Kampung *Zakāh* 1. People in Kampung *Zakāh* 2 mostly have more livable houses. However, the majority of the people have chosen to be migrant workers. Among the problems in Kampung *Zakāh* 2 is the high divorce rate, reaching 1136 cases in Ledokombo (BPS Jember, 2021; Pengadilan Agama Jember, 2021), and a high number of orphan school children. Moreover, it is believed by the people that children, especially girls, should be accompanied by their guardian when they leave the village, even for educational purposes. Consequently, some

choose to cancel their education even though they have donors or scholarships for higher education.

"Many orphans and migrant workers' families face broken home issues. In the past, a migrant worker in Malaysia passed away and was helped by a friend of Mbak Cicik" (Kamza, personal communication, 13 January 2021 & 21 January 2021).

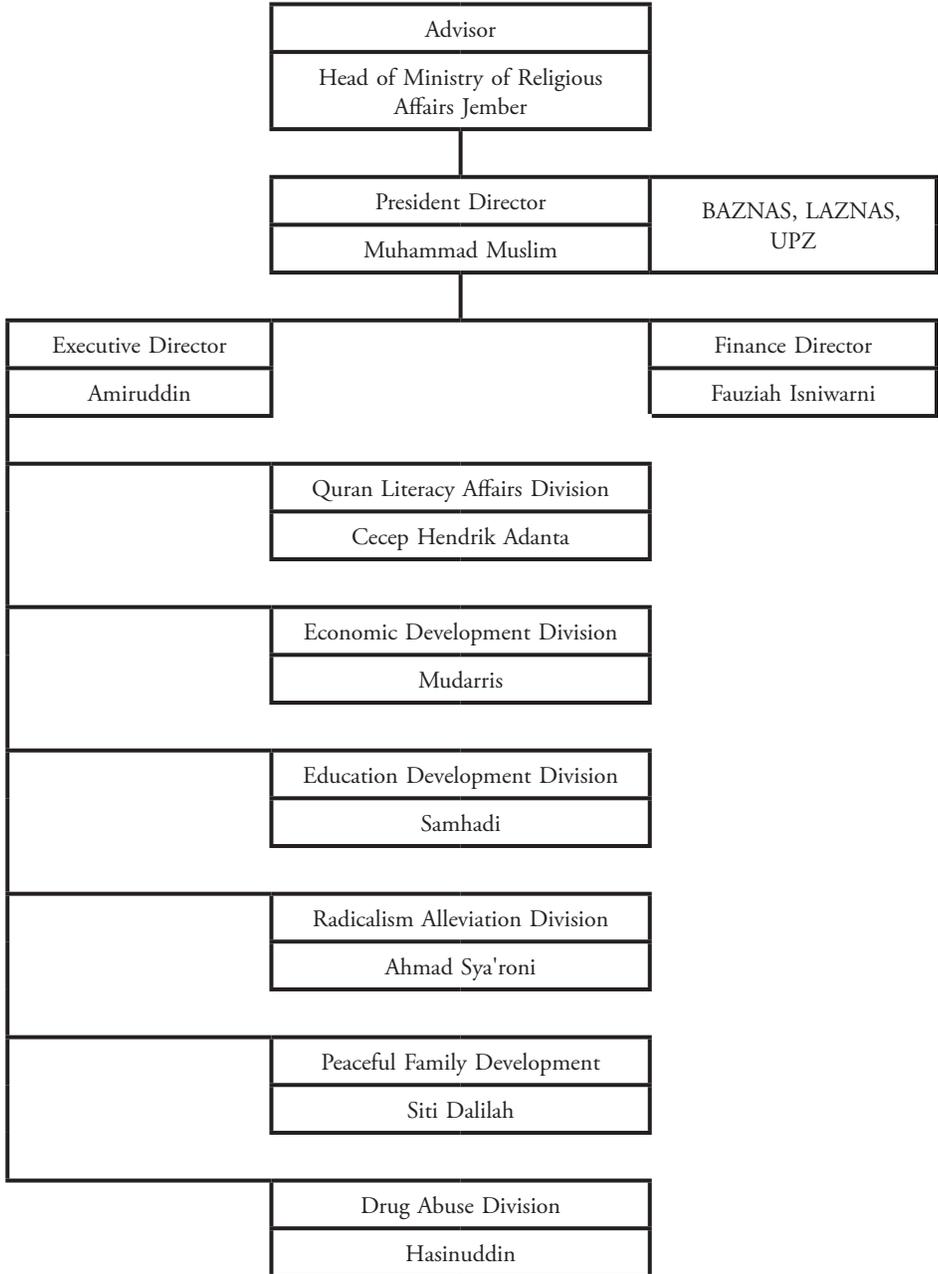
Regarding economic activities, such as production, distribution, and consumption, various activities are maintained by the people. Therefore, in the context of *zakāh*, the people can be categorized into two: *muzakki* and *mustahiq*. The *muzakki* are those who, according to sharia, are considered capable. Meanwhile, the *zakāh* recipients or *mustahiq* live in poverty lines.

The idea of establishing kampung *zakāh* is due to the consideration that most of the people in this village are *mustahiq*. Of the 436 Kampung *Zakāh* population, 80% are impoverished. Apart from poverty, the villagers face religious issues. This is why many *zakāh* institutions are involved in empowerment efforts. One is to avoid *riddah* or apostasy (Puskas BAZNAS, 2022).

Institutionally, Kampung *Zakāh* is under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jember. The Ministry of Religious Affairs established Kampung *Zakāh* as poverty alleviation and *riddah* prevention efforts. Every Kampung *Zakāh* has a coordinator, also an inhabitant named Amiruddin. He acts as the Director Executive. Other positions are President Director, Financial Director, and heads of divisions. These divisions are Quran illiteracy alleviation, economic and educational development, radicalism prevention, *sakīnah* (peaceful) family development, and drug abuse prevention. The following is the organizational structure of Kampung *Zakāh*:

Several institutions have been involved in this empowerment program. In its development, some private *zakāh* institutions, BAZ and even individuals distribute their *zakāh* independently. Structurally, several private *zakāh* institutions develop a synergy with Kampung *Zakāh*, as it needs access to the *zakāh* fund, and the private *zakāh* institutions need *mustahiq* to enable them to distribute the collected *zakāh* fund. These institutions have a periodic schedule for *zakāh* distribution under the coordination of Amiruddin as the executive director. This coordination is to avoid time clashes in the *zakāh* distribution. The private *zakāh* institutions in Jember are incorporated into one forum for coordination and information exchange.

Figure 2. Organizational Structure of Kampung *Zakāh*



Source: Primary Data Processed (2020)

Ideal Institution for *Zakāh* Management

Ideally, the *zakāh* institution should consist of a supervisory board; *zakāh* management organization; financial institution and sharia micro financial institution; information, education and research organizations; and other supporting institutions, such as *Zakāh* Association and *Zakāh* Accounting Association. According to Bank Indonesia, these organizations are crucial in maintaining the continuity of *zakāh* collection and distribution and protecting the *zakāh* recipients' rights (Bank Indonesia, 2016: 151).

Zakāh distribution in Kampung *Zakāh* Jember can be categorized into four: *first*, traditional consumptive distribution means that *zakāh* is directly distributed for consumption needs. The targets are *mustahiq*, who suffer from disasters or live under the poverty line. The *zakāh* is taken from *zakāh al-ḥiṭr* (obligatory *zakāh* paid by able Muslims at the end of Ramadan month) and *zakāh al-māl* (*zakāh* paid by Muslims with a certain amount of wealth kept in a year). This category is a simple short-term solution to address problems faced by the *mustahiqs*. *Second*, creative consumptive distribution means that *zakāh* is used for consumption but to help *mustahiq* escape socio-economic issues. The *zakāh* can be in the form of scholarships, school equipment, worship equipment, and farming equipment.

Third, traditional productive distribution means that *zakāh* is given to *mustahiq* as productive goods, such as livestock (chicken or goats). *Mustahiq* in Kampung *Zakāh* has been given three goats (one male goat and two female goats). As for the chicken, they are given five hens and two roosters. With this, the *mustahiq* will have savings for their future. *Fourth*, creative, productive distribution means that *zakāh* is distributed to *mustahiq* as initial or additional capital to develop their businesses. *Fifth*, asset distribution means the *zakāh* is given as house construction or renovation for uninhabitable houses.

Seventh, the social and spiritual development program means that the *zakāh* institutions assist the *mustahiq's* family (father, mother, and children). This assistance is in the form of the establishment of several institutions, such as *Father Schools* to provide understanding about family, social and spiritual lives for fathers. The next is the *Mother School* to provide knowledge about family life, gender equity, family financial planning, and business training. The last is the Quranic school for children, providing Quranic teaching with the *Dirāsati* method under the supervision of Quran teachers (*ustād*) from Al Baitul Amin Mosque, Alun-Alun Jember.

These empowerment models are the form of synergy between *muzakki* (*zakāh* payers), *āmil* (*zakāh* manager), and *mustahiq* (*zakāh* recipients). This synergy is in fundraising. The National *Zakāh* Council and private *zakāh* institutions distribute funds, but in other cases, some *muzakkis* prefer to give the fund to the recipients or Kampung *Zakāh* directly.

The theory of *Participatory Rural Appraisal* (PRA) becomes the guidance in complementing the empowerment program. Some of them have been fully implemented, while others have not.

The first is the *Needs assessment*. It is an initial process to identify the primary and urgent necessities of Kampung *Zakāh*. The needs assessment relied on surveys and data collection from agencies, such as the Central Bureau of Statistics (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS) and information from local people to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jember. With this, the management knew which locations were most suitable to be designated as Kampung *Zakāh*, including which initial program was chosen to meet the basic and urgent needs of the *mustahiq*.

One that is considered an urgent need of the *mustahiq* is protection from *riddah* or apostasy. The program's implementation was firstly maintained through consumptive programs while also introducing the initiation of Kampung *Zakāh* and approaching the people. After that, the management organized needs planning, along with the executive director candidate, Amiruddin.

"At the beginning, it is only rice and sugar (that we provided). The important thing is that the people acknowledge and are happy with the program". (Amiruddin, personal communication, 5 September 2022).

The second is *needs planning*. As time went by, the urgent needs of the *mustahiq* became clearer. In this situation, the role of an executive director became important. The executive director provided a list of the needs to the National *Zakāh* Council, private *zakāh* institutions, and other donors. The executive director also attempted to make a schedule with considerable communication with those institutions and individuals within the following 3-6 months regarding the time and types of aids to be distributed. As the native inhabitant of Kampung *Zakāh*, he understood the real situation of Kampung *Zakāh* and the *mustahiqs*. The planning made by the executive director involved the *mustahiqs*. With frequent interaction through regular village meetings and *pengajian* (religious gathering), the real problems in the village were identified.

The third is *program implementation*. Generally, the program implementation has involved all donors (LAZ, BAZ, and individuals) with their presence in

Kampung *Zakāh*. Even though the location is relatively remote and hard to reach, the donors managed to be present. The program implementation had been prepared with the coordination between the executive director and donors. This coordination is to ensure that time, place, type of program and the number of *mustahiq* are as expected by the donors.

The fourth is *program supervision*. The program supervisions consist of direct and indirect supervision. Direct supervision is the direct visit of the donors to the location. The chosen activities were one-offs, such as bamboo weaving and brick-making training. The supervision was maintained directly by the donors. The indirect supervision was by providing a periodical report collected by the executive director in the location. The supervision was conducted in coordination with the executive director for the periodical activities, such as productive cattle distribution. This is because the locations are relatively distant, and supervision cannot be maintained daily.

The fifth is *evaluation*. Evaluation is a joint activity between the executive director, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, donors, and the *mustahiq*. The evaluation is conducted thoroughly, which includes the evaluation of the empowerment program, location selection and local customs and cultures. The evaluation ensures that the programs run as expected by the donors. The periodical evaluations are maintained through weekly meetings, monthly meetings, and existing forums, such as Father/Mother School forums. The evaluation involves *mustahiq* to acknowledge issues that arise during the programs. The *mustahiqs* are encouraged to improve themselves and the programs to ensure the target achievement (Amiruddin, personal communication, 26 November 2020).

Kampung *Zakāh* also maintains social media communication. There are several digital channels to interact with donors. Among them is Facebook FanPage, initiated by Amiruddin. Based on the authors' observation, the last post was dated 1 July 2020. This FanPage aims to communicate with external parties to inform them of the activities in Kampung *Zakāh*. Every activity of Kampung *Zakāh* is broadcasted through this media.

Even though Kampung *Zakāh* is under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jember and has a coordinator (Amiruddin), some donors have chosen to distribute their *zakāh* directly to the recipients. This can be seen in the Facebook posts, documenting several activities at the coordinator's house and Kampung *Zakāh*'s activities within the last two years. During those periods, the donors visited Kampung *Zakāh* in the Sumberjambe district.

There are two types of donors at Kampung *Zakāh*: the National *Zakāh Council*, private *zakāh* institutions, and individual donors. Several national and regional private *zakāh* institutions have organized their activities at Kampung *Zakāh*, as described in the following table:

Table 1. The List of Donors at Kampung *Zakāh*

No.	Private-Based <i>Zakāh</i> Institution
1	AZKA Al Baitul Amin
2	BAZNAS Jember
3	LAZISNU
4	LAZISMU
5	Gerebek Sedekah
6	YDSF
7	Rumah <i>Zakāh</i>
8	Perorangan
9	Nurul Hayat

Source: Processed Fieldwork Data (2020)

The above table shows that almost all LAZ and BAZ in Jember have their empowerment program at Kampung *Zakāh*. This is in line with the statement of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jember, stating that the objective of Kampung *Zakāh* establishment is to facilitate the donor institutions to find *mustahiq*, which in turn, will make the aids right on target, focused, and accelerate the program objective (Adistna, the Representative of The Ministry of Religious Affairs, Jember, personal communication, 2020). This ultimate objective is to transform *mustahiq* into *muzakki* (Ryandono & Nanda, 2020).

The next is the interaction between *āmil* (*zakāh* distributors) and *mustahiq*. In this context, the *āmil* manages several empowerment programs during the Kampung *Zakāh* program. Among the programs are the productive and consumptive programs. One of the reasons behind the consumptive program is that some *mustahiqs* are older people, including elderly widows. In this case, a productive program becomes impossible.

However, some programs seemed not optimal, as expected by *muzakki*. This is because of some constraints faced. The halted program includes bamboo

weaving, goat fattening, and brick production. The bamboo weaving ran only a few moments, with some *mustahiqs* involved. Nevertheless, this program needs tenacity and skills. The challenge was often related to the limited working ethic. This is because society's advancement is only feasible when people persistently improve their higher norms for better capabilities (Casson, 1993). Also, intention among these people is important (Bahri et al., 2022). With the passing of the coordinator of this program, the participants started to leave the program.

The improvement of the Kampung *Zakāh* human resources is continuously managed. This is not without obstacles. The National *Zakāh* Council, private *zakāh* institutions and individual donors continuously manage the efforts. Human resources are considered the primary factor in encouraging economic development success. The preparedness of human capital to face challenges, especially economic problems, becomes the precondition of development success (Asadullah & Mansor, 2021).

Considering the empowerment stage theory, Kampung *Zakāh* needs to improve wider public communication through social media channels, especially during the extraordinary situation such as the Covid-19 pandemic (Hudaefi & Beik, 2021; Mahardiyanto & Sutikno, 2022). Social media communication needs to be massively maintained to make it a public movement. Furthermore, an intensive synergy with universities can also be developed. Another matter is that there is a need for a periodical audit of Kampung *Zakāh*. Currently, the audit is still merely for the National *Zakāh* Council and private *zakāh* institutions. The accountability of Kampung *Zakāh*, as the recipient, needs to be maintained by the audit process (Alhubbuffillah et al., 2019).

Conclusion

Kampung *Zakāh* is a region where most inhabitants are *mustahiq* or *zakāh* recipients. Referring to the *Participatory Rural Appraisal* (PRA), the empowerment process in Kampung *Zakāh* needs more improvement in the planning and evaluation stages. This is important to maximize the outcomes and minimize the failures. Furthermore, there is a need to promote the program to the public through social media to enhance wider public engagement in the program.

The empowerment in Kampung *Zakāh* targets various parties, including women. This is important as the locals still consider women dependent on their guardians. They cannot travel without their guardians' companionship, even for educational and professional purposes. Therefore, empowerment and awareness

enhancement in the psychological aspects needs to be continuously maintained. The challenges faced by the *zakāh* management in Kampung *Zakāh* are the low working ethic and spirit among the *mustahiq* and the awareness to independently become entrepreneurs. This makes the empowerment program seems to work only for limited periods.

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