

# Applying the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Zakah Management at Kelantan

Siti Maziah Binti AB Rahman<sup>1\*</sup>, Yusrina Hayati Nik Muhammad Naziman<sup>2</sup>, Nor Haryanti<sup>3</sup>, Nadia Farleena Mohd Aznan<sup>4</sup> and Nur Hazelen Mat Rusok<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,4,5</sup>Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kelantan, Kota Bharu City Campus, Lembah Sireh, 15050 Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Malaysia

<sup>2,3,5</sup>Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia (UiTM) Cawangan Kelantan, Malaysia

## \*Corresponding Author

Siti Maziah Binti AB Rahman, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kelantan, Kota Bharu City Campus, Lembah Sireh, 15050 Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Malaysia.

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## Abstract

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as successor to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) represent a broader intergovernmental agreement to foster action on broad-based development encompassing economic development, human development, and environmental sustainability. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a program based on human rights that includes three dimensions, namely social, environmental and economic. All available resources need to be fully utilized to achieve the SDGs in 2030. In general, this goal asserts that "no one left behind" is in line with the 11th Malaysia Plan. The objective of this study is to identify the extent to which the Council of Islamic Religion and Malay Customs of Kelantan (MAIK) can adapt zakah management based on the goals of the SDGs. This paper uses the conceptual study method as a guide to applying the SDGs in zakah management at MAIK. This study chose a qualitative method by interviewing several people from the top management in this organization. The results of the study found that as many as seven goals can be adopted in zakah management, namely no poverty, zero hunger, health and well-being for all, quality education, career development, and economic development, making cities and asnaf settlements safe and resilient in addition to strengthening implementation methods by building a network with external agencies. The SDGs are aligned with MAIK's direction to become a leading world-class zakah management agency. This paper does not only touch on the issue of development to produce asnaf, but also refines the holistic issue resulting from the application of the SDGs. The contribution and implications of the study are discussed at the end of this paper.

**Keywords:** SDGs, 11th Malaysia Plan, MAIK, Poverty, Asnaf.

## 1. Introduction

Zakah is a "maliyah" act of worship that is obligatory on a Muslim - giving out his wealth with certain rates and conditions to be distributed to the groups determined by religion. This worship was prescribed before fasting was obligatory, which was in the second year after the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, migrated to Medina. The practice of giving zakah is one of the responsibilities of every Muslim who is obligated and able to fulfill it. This duty of zakah coincides with the words of Allah SWT. and among them in Surah An-Nur in the 56th verse:

"And establish yourselves in prayer and give zakah; and obey the Messenger of God; so that you may receive mercy."

Zakah is the economy of Muslims that acts as a mechanism of socio-economic justice because it is one of the property

and economic systems of Muslims in developing human life (Patmawati, 2008). Payment of zakah to needy asnaf aims to train a person to obey the command of Allah SWT. As a result, if the zakah institution is completely used as a place for excellent zakah collection, then the zakah funds obtained are able to overcome the problem of poverty. For example, zakah can provide capital for the asnaf group to start a small business. Indirectly, zakah can help in opening business and job opportunities for those in need to be independent, and contribute back to society. Zakah is obligatory for Muslims in order to provide protection to the needy, as an exercise for the rich to share, and as a guarantee for the development of the community. Therefore, the zakah system and zakah institution become a mechanism that can work on the whole life system of the community and the country. Nowadays, research on zakah has received an encouraging response among researchers. However, most studies on zakah are more directed

towards several aspects, namely the behavior of obedience, efficiency performance, trust, and the effect of zakah on the quality of life of the asnaf. In Malaysia, studies on SDGs on zakah management are very difficult to find. Therefore, this paper is an initial attempt to identify the extent to which the Islamic Religious Council of Kelantan (MAIK) can adapt zakah management based on whether the goals of the SDGs have been achieved. Therefore, this study is an important contribution to knowledge in the field of zakah regarding the implementation of the SDGs model in zakah management in Kelantan. Therefore, this study is qualitative in nature by interviewing several zakah officials from MAIK and analyzing the findings by applying Nvivo 9 software.

## 2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

'Sustainable' according to the Fourth Edition Hall Dictionary (2017) means 'unchangeable, permanent, fixed; preserve set, maintain. Conceptually, the comprehensive idea of sustainability covers social, environmental, and economic sustainability. The concept of sustainability according to Hasna (2007) is an ongoing process; described as a very important journey, but only as a target to reach a desired future destination. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a global agenda that includes

three main dimensions, namely social (56%), economic (20%), and environmental (24%) that Malaysia wants to achieve in 2030 in line with the goals of the United Nations (UN) (Department of Statistics, 2018). The goals of the SDGs were agreed upon by 193 UN members on September 25, 2015, which have 17 goals with 169 targets to be achieved based on the SDGs global model. The SDGs model is an extension of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) model. Initially, the MDGs that ended in 2015 could not fully achieve 100% of the recommended goals, so the SDGs model was formed. This program is based on the principle of "No One Left Behind" with the aim of ensuring that everyone can benefit from sustainable development based on human rights that leads to social, economic, and environmental development. In addition, the SDGs also focus on ending the issue of poverty which is a problem for developing countries. Furthermore, the SDGs program aims to ensure that future generations are able to get all the basic needs they need. This program covers people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership (strategic partner), which is expected to end the problems currently being experienced by developing countries. Table 1 below shows the goals, targets, and indicators in the SDGs program which includes 17 goals to be achieved in 2030.

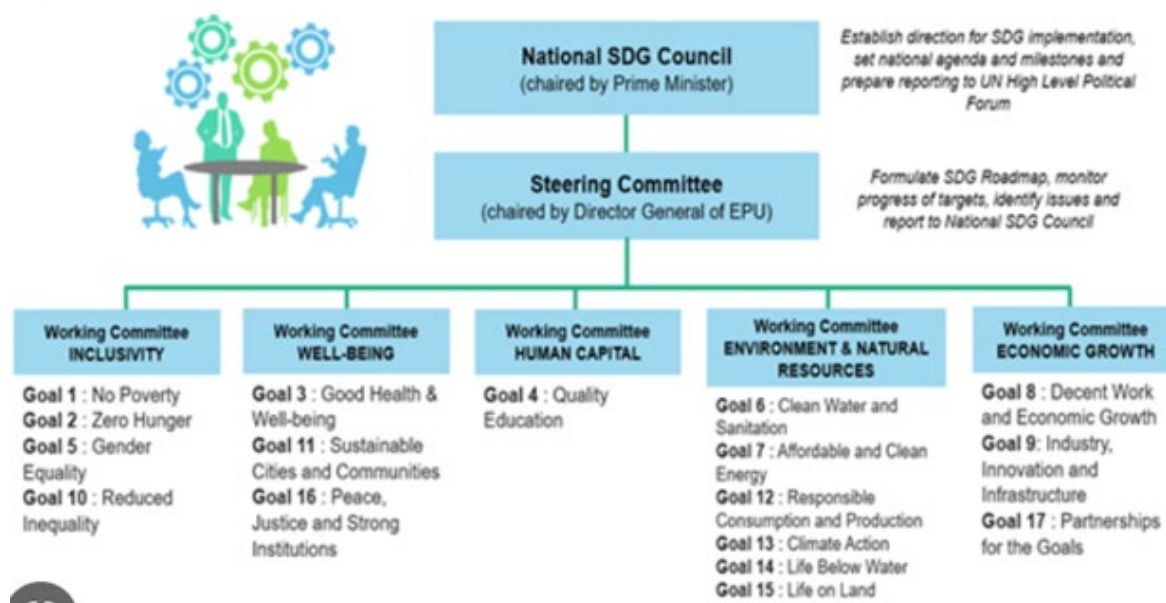


Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goals Objective

## 3. Zakah and Sdgs

Zakah and SDGs have some fundamental differences. The principle of zakah is originally from the Islamic religion, which is the Quran, while the SDGs are formed from the agreement of the members of the united nations that are not guided by religion (Asmalia et. al, 2018). However, there are many goals of the SDGs that refer to the foundation of Islamic values, which is to combat the problems of poverty and hunger [1]. ,The normative concept of values towards the realization of governance behavior and methods used by a group of social factors that interact according to a specific social context' (PIDM, 2018). A social organization can usually be understood as a combination

between the government, the executive and the community. All organizations or human groups in fact need to be sheltered under efficient and systematic governance in achieving their mission or targeted goals. In addition, this goal is also in line with Islamic principles in Zakah. Among the principles of Islam that must be fulfilled is Maqasid Shariah which includes protection from religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property.

The management of zakah institutions nowadays is growing from every angle whether in terms of governance, empowerment of amil, or management of collection and distribution (Yudha et. al, 2021). Efforts and measures to empower zakah institutions

need to be in line with the requirements of syariah and current requirements. Sharia objectives need to be used as a strong basis in planning and determining the direction of zakah institutions in order to achieve the objectives of zakah sharia in Islam. The reality of the world today is that there are many universal phenomena and issues that require a global and wise solution. The issues of poverty, education and the well-being of human life are always in focus both in Malaysia and the world. Various initiatives are carried out by the authorities and NGOs to help reduce national and global issues. Therefore, if more zakah fund collection is collected, then more powerful zakah is able to play its role in social life, welfare, and economic development to replace the role of the government through the set budget [1]. In other words, by increasing the collection of zakah funds, it is possible to increase the distribution of zakah as well as the income of asnaf.

#### 4. Methodology

The study aimed to get the participants whether they know or not about the implementation of SDGs in MAIK. Meanwhile, the sample is defined as the group of people selected to represent the population. Therefore, in this study, the researcher selected respondents are staff from MAIK that were asked by using an in-depth interview technique. This technique helps researchers in digging the knowledge and perception of the respondents deeper. Based on Ghauri & Gronhaug (2005,40) defined that research methodology refers to the collection of data and their analysis. Basically, research method is of two types, qualitative and quantitative method. For the purposes of this study, researchers have decided to make in depth interviews as a method of collecting data which is qualitative method. The researches conduct interview technique with the staff of MAIK who are known and handle about the zakat management and to get detail information about MAIK distribution programmes as well as future strategy and plans. Moreover, qualitative method is used to know the steps that the organization took to make the SDGs was applied in MAIK. NVIVO 9 was used as a methods to run the data.

#### 5. Findings

##### 5.1. Application of Sdgs in the Management of Maik

Based on the SDGs program, there are 17 goals that the world wants to achieve by 2030, which are no poverty, zero hunger, health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, the availability of sustainable water management and sanitation, ensuring access to affordable, sustainable and modernity, career development and economic development, building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive, sustainable industry and innovation, reducing regional inequality, urban and community sustainability, ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, addressing climate change and its impacts, ocean ecosystems, terrestrial ecosystems, a peaceful, just, and strong institution, a strategic partner to achieve goals. Various zakah

distribution schemes are allocated by MAIN and the Zakah Center to help the poor. This scheme covers aspects of the welfare and development of asnaf such as assistance with basic needs, educational needs, religion, medicine, housing, business capital, and so on. All the schemes provided should be reviewed and re-evaluated to ensure that they coincide with maqasid sharia and in line with the SDGs. In general, based on the observation and research of this study, the aid scheme provided by MAIK for example has covered the SDG concept. MAIK's contribution in helping to achieve the SDGs in Malaysia consists of seven development goals. MAIK has applied eDistribution covering 18 types of aid. Applicants can make an application by selecting the aid to be processed by MAIK. This MAIK assistance is from a source of zakah money provided only to the asnaf group who are in dire need of assistance.

First, end poverty in all its forms. To overcome this problem, increasing household income and assistance is a solution to the problem of poverty. There is an existing MAIK distribution program that parallels this agenda. Among them, the Monthly Poor Financial Assistance known as Bantuan Am which is a "one-off" assistance for self-sufficiency, emergencies and other needs on a monthly basis amounting to RM500. Applicants must meet conditions such as Islam, citizens of the state of Kelantan who reside in the state of Kelantan and if not citizens of the state of Kelantan and the applicant is required to reside in the state of Kelantan for no less than one year and not receive assistance from the zakah center of the state of birth / origin who is still productive to do daily work but still belong to the poor and poor asnaf and do not meet the conditions to be given monthly assistance. In addition, financial assistance on an annual basis, poor orphanage assistance, Aidilfitri assistance, arriqab assistance, calamity, funeral management and others. Aid in terms of education is also given to children of asnaf. Only with education can remove them from the asnaf class. Among them, assistance for Continuing Education to IPT, which is a "one-off" assistance to continue studying at a local IPT at the Foundation, Diploma and Degree level for students in the first semester only, and assistance to the poor, poor and fisabilillah asnaf groups who earn Head Household does not exceed RM3,500.00.

In addition to that, MAIK also provides Contributions for Further Education to IPT- Fisabilillah, which is a "one-off" aid to continue studies at local IPT at the Diploma and Degree level for students in the first semester only and assistance to the asnaf fisabilillah group who earn Head Household between RM3,501.00 to RM10,000.00. The assistance given is according to the set rate which is for Diploma students of RM 1500 and First Degree students of RM2,500 and others of RM500. This shows that MAIK applies the SDGs that achieve the objective of ending poverty in all its forms. This is proven that MAIK in 2022 zakah collection money has spent more than RM95 million in Kelantan to lighten the burden of asnaf.

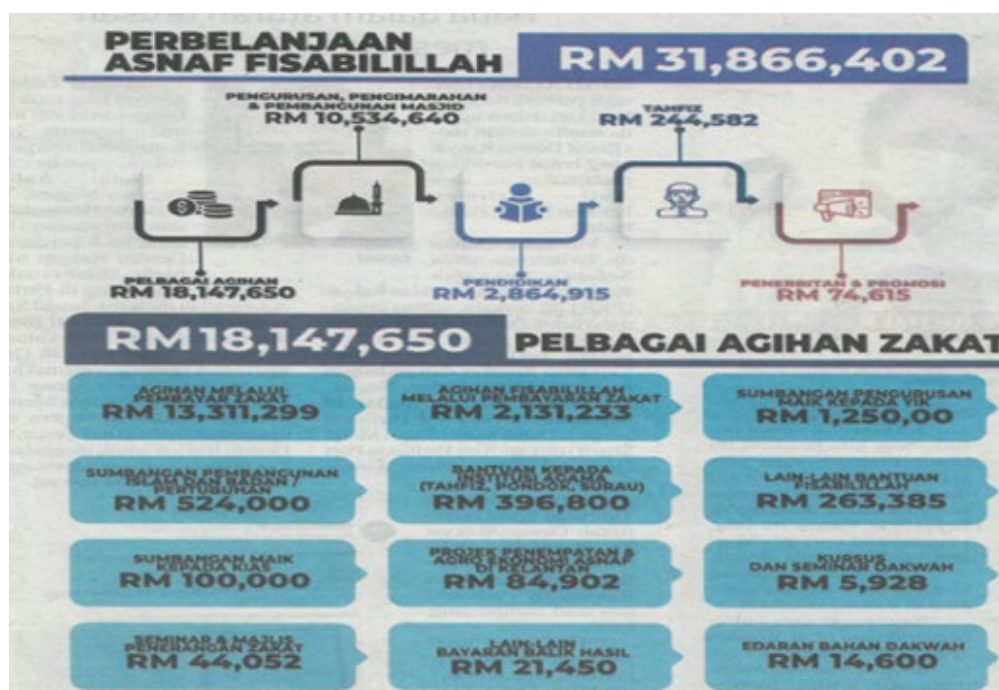




**Figure 2:** Program - Poor & Needy “Asnaf” Program and MAIK Zakah Expenditure in 2021.

Second, zero hunger by meeting nutritional sufficiency to asnaf who are stuck in terms of income to get basic food. To overcome this problem, MAIK has established "It'am" in every mosque throughout the state of Kelantan. A total of 9 districts and colonies throughout the state of Kelantan represented by mosques have given a good commitment to ensure that every asnaf whose food supply is cut off gets supplies promptly. "It'am" is a food preparation program that includes basic items provided by MAIK. The initiative to distribute food supplies in

mosques also aims to bring the asnaf group closer to the mosque and then become mosque partners in their place. MAIK does not only give food to the body of asnaf but also gives them spiritual food so that they are closer to Allah SWT. In addition, MAIK also provided food assistance to the elderly settlement center as well as the management of the remains that were given to the home of Seri Kenanga elderly people in Pengkalan Chepa, Kota Bharu, Kelantan.



**Figure 3:** Program - Asnaf Fisabilillah Program and MAIK Zakah Expenditure in 2021

Third, ensure a healthy and prosperous life. Among the initiatives carried out by MAIK is to ensure that the asnaf group can live in a healthy and prosperous condition. There are several assistance schemes given for that purpose. In order to guarantee the health of asnaf, MAIK has provided treatment assistance at once. In

addition, the Zakah Haemodialysis Center was also established to help asnaf undergo kidney washing treatment Periodically, for example, at the Ismaili Mosque, Pasir Pekan, Kelantan. In the near future, a "Mobile Clinic" or zakah mobile clinic in collaboration with KPJ will be opened to make it easier for the

public to get treatment for illnesses experienced especially in the innermost areas of the village.

Fourth, access to quality education. Among the initiatives carried out is the MAIK establishing a special zakah school for the children of asnaf by giving fees and free accommodation to students who are from asnaf families. Among the schools created is a study program with the recognition of Darul Quran JAKIM which is MAAHAD TAHFIZ AL-QURAN MAIK and this name has been used until today. MAIK's Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Study System is completely based on JAKIM's Darul Quran Curriculum. This Maahad Tahfiz was formerly known as TAFACQUH STUDY CLASS. It was established by the Kelantan State Government in the mid-80s where MUHAMMADI MASJID, KOTA BHARU was the first center to be used as a place for Tafacquh Class Studies. The Mufti of the Kelantan State Government at that time, namely Sahibul Samahah Dato' Hj Mohd Noor bin Ibrahim was entrusted to oversee the journey of the Tafacquh Class. In order to produce Islamic scholars in the future, MAIK has established this Maahad which combines tahfiz learning, academics as well as study of the book of turath. In addition, MAIK also gives scholarships to the children of asnaf who continue their studies abroad and in the country to ensure that they do not drop out in continuing their studies at all levels of study. In addition, help with clothes and school bags is also provided to asnaf's children.

In order to improve the quality of religious teachers, MAIK has also given allowances to religious teachers such as the allowances of Imams and mosque supervisors in the State of Kelantan. In addition, the religious guidance center for new brothers is also given assistance under the muallaf distribution scheme to ensure that they get the best religious knowledge about Islam. For example, this program is held through serial and continuous studies delivered by religious teachers specially appointed by MAIK to teach religion in designated mosques. Each Religious Teacher, MAIK can teach a maximum of four (4) mukim mosques with a frequency of four times a month for one mosque or 16 times for four mosques. MAIK religious teachers are paid an allowance of RM100.00 for one lecture and not more than 16 times a month.

Fifth, career development and economic development. To ensure that the asnaf group and their children have the opportunity to get the best jobs, MAIK always opens opportunities and space for asnaf to increase their income. In addition to providing "one off" assistance, MAIK also provides self-help assistance through business capital and job opportunities to asnaf. Self-help is a training course given to asnaf for them to create job opportunities. The Council of Islamic Religion and Malay Customs of Kelantan (MAIK) has established a collaboration with TWI Technology (S.E. Asia) in Shah Alam Selangor to give a second chance to asnaf children from the state of Kelantan who are not fortunate in education to change their future by exploring international standard knowledge for free.. This project is seen to have succeeded in producing more than 80% of the participants involved in getting a job after following the course. MAIK sees this as the best opportunity to help the children of

asnaf from Kelantan to serve their families despite having gone through episodes of failure before. This is because their future is guaranteed with the guarantee of job placement with a good salary after four months of studying thanks to the guidance of teaching staff from home and abroad. For example, MAIK has established a Sewing Center under the supervision of MAIK to provide job opportunities to asnaf. The impact of this project is also felt by the asnaf children because this project has succeeded in producing more than 44 thousand units of uniforms for all the asnaf children in the state of Kelantan without buying school clothes from outside companies to distribute. With the income, they are able to support their families while being able to improve their lives. This is no exception to the muallaf group. They are also provided with various training and courses to develop muallaf through the medium of the new brother guidance and training center that has been established by MAIK.

Sixth, the sustainability of the city and community by ensuring that asnaf have a safe house to live in and obtain basic infrastructure facilities. Therefore, MAIK provides assistance in repairing individual houses as well as building houses for them. There are approximately 197 new houses built and 500 houses repaired. In addition, construction and repair assistance for mosques and suraus is also provided. This is intended to provide comfort to the community to perform worship. In addition, welfare assistance to converts such as help with house rent, basic household appliances as well given to them in order to guarantee the comfort of life for our new brothers.

Seventh, a strategic partner for the achievement of development goals. In order to ensure that the programs run by MAIK run smoothly, MAIK has built a network with various external agencies, namely higher education institutions to conduct research on zakah. In addition, MAIK also established relationships with the manufacturing industry, banking, health, NGOs and the local community consisting of government and corporate agencies. Among them, MAIK has appointed Amil Assistants in all mosques in the state of Kelantan as representatives of MAIK to track and deliver information related to asnaf faster and faster. This effort has an impact on the increase in the number of recipients of monthly financial assistance which increases from year to year, for example to 17,846 people in 2022. This strategic partnership is very important for MAIK to achieve the goals of the SDGs because with help from external agencies, the SDGs agenda can be achieved easily.

## 6. Conclusion

The SDGs are very important to achieve because this is a world agenda. So, MAIK continues to open up new opportunities to innovate the existing distribution in line with the SDGs. This model is designed to give MAIK the opportunity to continue to focus on development in improving the living standards of the poor and the poor as well as other asnaf. The seven core or goals of the SDGs that will be applied in MAIK are the drivers of change to break the existing prevalence of distribution which is able to boost economic growth especially asnaf. In addition, with the achievement of the goals of the SDGs, the RMK11 will also be achieved. With this achievement, MAIK is able to

move forward and become a reference center for other zakah institutions. This model is also able to guarantee that each asnaf is not marginalized to obtain the basic needs required in addition to acquiring skills as a result of the training given to them. Through this effort, MAIK was able to produce zakah payers among the asnaf itself. Finally, all government and private agencies should join hands to develop asnaf in the state of Kelantan jointly and indirectly so the goals of the SDGs and RMK11 can be achieved [2-6].

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