

Asnaf Fisabilillah in Meeting The Needs of The Ummah: Its Limitations and Flexibilities

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ABSTRACT

Asnaf fisabilillah has a very broad, universal scope and tends to be multi-interpretive. This general nature results in differences of opinion among scholars in interpreting it. Limiting the meaning of fisabilillah to only jihad or fighting to take up arms against the enemies of Islam is considered irrelevant in today's contemporary context. Therefore, this paper will discuss in detail the distribution of zakat funds for asnaf fisabilillah in its role to meet the needs of the people in the contemporary era by examining its implementation in Indonesia. This paper is expected to be a guide and inspiration for zakat managers, policy makers, and the general public in maximizing the potential of zakat funds, especially in the asnaf fi sabilillah category.

Keywords: *Asnaf Zakat, Fisabilillah, BAZNAS Programs*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic social finance, especially zakat, is a topic of great interest today due to its significant potential and its role in supporting government programs aimed at poverty alleviation. However, this potential will only be optimally realized if it is distributed accurately and effectively. Distribution is defined as marketing activities that facilitate and expedite the delivery of goods and services from producers to consumers (Tjiptono, 1997). In the context of zakat, distribution refers to the activity of allocating zakat funds collected from muzakki (donors) to asnaf (recipients) of zakat (Gunaepi et al., 2018).

According to Surah At-Tawbah (60) the asnaf (recipients) of zakat are divided into eight categories: the poor (*fakir*), the needy (*miskin*), zakat administrators (*amil*), those who have embraced to Islam (*muallaf*), those in bondage (*riqab*), those in debt (*gharimin*), those who strive in the cause of Allah (*fisabilillah*), and the wayfarer (*ibnu sabil*). Each asnaf is interpreted by both

classical and contemporary scholars, where there is a room for *ijtihad*. The interpretation of asnaf in a contemporary context is crucial because in the philosophy, sharia remains eternal, while *ijtihad* and fatwas will continuously experiencing an updated in line with the times (Al-Qardhawi, 1991). Therefore, studies related to zakat are essential to address the demands and needs of the times.

Fisabilillah is one of the asnaf with a multi-faceted concept and has the potential to generate diverse interpretations. Linguistically, fisabilillah means "in the path of Allah." In the context of zakat recipients, the interpretations among the Imams of the Madhhab differ. However, according to Qardhawi (2013), there is consensus among the Imams on three points: 1) Jihad definitely falls within the scope of fisabilillah, 2) It is prescribed to give zakat to individual mujtahids (independent jurists) as opposed to using it for the needs and preparations for jihad, and 3) Zakat funds should not be used for general public

interests such as building bridges, repairing roads, or managing the deceased, which should be covered by the Baitul Mal's other revenues like *fai'*, tribute, or taxes.

In the context of zakat management in Indonesia, the National Board of Zakat (BAZNAS) through Chairman's Decree (SK) No. 64 of 2019 defines sabilillah as those striving to uphold Islamic law, promote public welfare, and/or prevent harm to the Muslim community. Those included in the sabilillah category are: a) individuals or groups/institutions striving to uphold the word of Allah SWT, b) individuals who sincerely follow religious teachings, whether obligatory, recommended, or other virtuous acts to draw closer to Allah SWT, c) individuals or groups/institutions sincerely and earnestly seeking beneficial knowledge for the community, and/or d) individuals or groups/institutions working to improve the welfare of the nation and the Muslim community.

The zakat funds collected by BAZNAS are then distributed to the eight eligible asnaf through various distribution and utilization programs. In 2023, BAZNAS disbursed zakat funds amounting to IDR 587.1 billion, experiencing an increase of 14% from the previous year's IDR 514.8 billion (BAZNAS, 2023). According to BAZNAS's financial report, the highest distribution of zakat funds in 2023 was to the poor category, amounting to IDR 237 billion (40.52%). Meanwhile, asnaf fisabilillah is in second place with distribution of IDR 211 billion. Furthermore, In terms of growth, the fisabilillah category experienced the

highest distribution growth with an increase of 872.7%.

On one hand, the significant distribution of zakat funds to the fisabilillah category indicates its importance and the high level of public attention towards allocating zakat funds for fisabilillah purposes. On the other hand, the large number of zakat distribution for asnaf fisabilillah requires zakat managers to be more careful to ensure that these funds are not only managed well and transparently but also have a significant impact on the current development of da'wah.

The concept of mustahik and its current implementation need to be re-examined considering the evolution of time/ current development. Asnaf Fisabilillah, as one of the zakat recipients, requires contextualization to ensure that the main function of zakat as an instrument for the welfare of the ummah is fulfilled. The background to the meaning of fi sabilillah with war is that the life of Salaf scholars at that time was still faced with war with non-Muslims and various problems. However, this concept is not entirely relevant to the current situation where wars for the sake of faith are almost non-existent, except for the situation in Palestine.

The dynamic nature of the fisabilillah concept today requires contemporary scholars to find ways to ensure that this concept meets the needs of the ummah and does not experience stagnation in the midst of current developments. However, updating the concept must be done cautiously and should not deviate from the principles of maqasid shariah (objectives of sharia) to ensure public welfare. This is crucial

considering that zakat is one of the pillars of Islam and every act of worship in Islam aims to achieve maqasid syariah. This study limits its discussion to: a) examining the concept of *fi sabilillah* from the perspectives of classical and contemporary scholars, b) analyzing the application of the *fi sabilillah* concept in Indonesia, and c) analyzing the implementation of *fi sabilillah* programs by the National Board of Zakat (BAZNAS).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fisabilillah in The View of The Imams of The Mazhab

The Imams of the Mazhab have different views on the concept of *fi sabilillah* and who is entitled to fall into this category. The following is a detailed explanation of the views of the mazhab scholars on the concept of *fi sabilillah*:

1. Mazhab Hanafi

In the Hanafi school, there are two narrations attributed to Abu Hanifah. According to Imam Abu Hanifah's narration from Abu Yusuf, those who belong to the *ashnaf fi sabilillah* are war soldiers who are poor and out of provisions or poor people who participate in fighting in the way of Allah SWT. This opinion relies on the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW:

“Verily Allah gives alms (zakat) on their property, which is taken from their rich and divided among the poor among them.” (H.R. Bukhari).

Abu Yusuf limited zakat *fi sabilillah* to the poor, according to him zakat should not be given to the rich based on the hadeeth of

'Abdullah ibn 'Amar in Sunan at-Turmuzi hadith number 652.

Meanwhile, according to Imam Abu Hanifah's narration from Muhammad al-Shibani, what is included in *fi sabilillah* is a poor or needy person who performs Hajj and he will get a waiver of Hajj fees. This opinion is based on a Prophetic hadith narrated by Dawud. It is narrated that a man made his camel in the cause of Allah but his wife wanted to perform Hajj, so the Prophet said to his wife,

“Ride a camel to perform Hajj, because Hajj is part of sabilillah.” (H.R. Abu Dawud).

Then, Kasani interpreted *fi sabilillah* as all good deeds and obedience to Allah SWT by providing benefits to gain the pleasure of Allah SWT or in other words *fi sabilillah* is seen as a knowledge seeker. From these various opinions, Ibn Najim makes *fakir* status an absolute requirement for all the definitions mentioned earlier (soldiers, pilgrims, and knowledge claimants).

2. Mazhab Maliki

In this school of thought, those who are entitled to zakat in the *ashnaf fi sabilillah* are those who fight in the form of war. This mazhab views that *fi sabilillah* is entitled to be given not only to *mujahidin* who are poor or, but also to *mujahidin* who are wealthy. Imam Malik was of the opinion that *fi sabilillah* is the necessity of *jihad* and guarding the borders of the country. According to Malik, *fi sabilillah* has many meanings, but

in the context of zakat, its meaning can be expanded for purposes related to the needs of jihad. Malik did not agree if zakat was given not in the name of war. Other scholars added that zakat is given for war needs (such as clothes, weapons and others) and the person must be actively involved in the war by fulfilling the conditions of Islam, puberty, independence, male, physical strength and not a descendant of Hashim.

3. Mazhab Syafi'i

The scholars in this mazhab mention that at first *fi sabilillah* was interpreted as the path to Allah but over time, the word was used to mean jihad because jihad is the cause leading to Allah. Some Shafi'i scholars are of the opinion that *fi sabilillah* are people who fight as volunteers, the Zakat given to them is in the form of basic needs such as clothing, shopping while on the battlefield, and travel expenses. Other scholars argue that *fi sabilillah* can be given for the living expenses of the family of the person fighting. In general, this school views *fi sabilillah* as people who fight voluntarily without getting the right in the form of salaries or benefits from the government. *Fi sabilillah* is like *al-ghazi*, the warriors. Zakat is given to them regardless of their economic status and given tools that can help them in war. Thus, similarities can be drawn between the Shafi'i Mazhab and the Maliki Mazhab who view *fi sabilillah* in zakat only for people who fight or

jihad even though they are rich and allow zakat for the needs / equipment of war.

4. Mazhab Hambali

In this school, *fi sabilillah* in the context of zakat is given to people who fight in the cause of Allah voluntarily, without getting salaries and benefits from the government. Zakat may also be allocated for the purchase of war equipment or other jihad purposes even if the person fighting is the one who issued the zakat, but this must be done by the ruler, not by the owner of the property. In general, this school does not consider anything other than war as part of *fi sabilillah*, although there are some scholars who consider Hajj also part of *fi sabilillah* and attribute the narration to Ahmad, however, this opinion is rejected by other Hanbalis and the hadith used as evidence is considered *dha'if sanad* because there is a narrator who is *majhul*.

Fi Sabilillah in The View of Contemporary Fuqaha

Along with the times, contemporary scholars try to make *ijtihad* to dig deeper into the concept of *fi sabilillah* in order to embrace all Muslims who should be entitled to receive zakat through *asnaf fi sabilillah* in today's modern era. The new concept of *asnaf fi sabilillah* developed by contemporary scholars has certainly taken into account *maqāsid ash-sharī'ah* as well as considering the current conditions of the *ummah* and is done with the aim of maximizing the benefit of the *ummah*. The following is a detailed explanation of each opinion of contemporary scholars on the concept of *fi sabilillah*.

1. Sayyid Rasyid Rida dan Mahmud Syaltut

In his tafsir al-manār, Rashid Rida summarizes his own opinion regarding the differences of opinion among scholars in interpreting *fi sabilillah*. According to him, what is meant by *fi sabilillah* is the benefit of Muslims in general because with it (zakat) can strengthen religious and state affairs. As for its allocation for individual Hajj needs, it is not included in the affairs of religion and state because performing Hajj is an obligation for Muslims who are able. However, it is different if the funds are used for the Hajj rituals of the pilgrims (general) such as food supplies, drinks and medicines for the health of the pilgrims if there is no other source of funds in the budget.

Then, according to Sheikh Mahmud Syaltut's understanding of surah at-Taubah verse 60, this verse explains about the *mustahik* zakat which consists of two groups based on the status of its receipt. First is the individual group, Allah SWT. uses ta'bir "li" as individual ownership, namely the poor, *amil*, *muallaf*, *garim* and *ibnu sabil*. Meanwhile, the second group is general ownership, Allah SWT. uses ta'bir "fi" to indicate the purpose of distribution on general ownership, namely *riqab* and *sabilillah*.

According to Mahmud Syaltut, *fi sabilillah* is closer to the meaning of general *maslahat* which means not private property, ownership rights in the hands of

Allah SWT. and utilization rights in the hands of His servants. He gave several examples of the implementation of the meaning of *fi sabilillah*, such as education for preachers in order to show the beauty of Islam and have broad insight, educational facilities, and preservation of the Qur'an.

2. Yusuf Qarḍawi

In his book, Yusuf Qarḍawi does not side with the opinion of the *salaf* scholars who narrowed the meaning of *jihād*, nor does he side with contemporary scholars who expanded the meaning of *fi sabilillah* to the realm of general *maslahat*. However, he has his own views on the concept of *fi sabilillah*. According to him, every *jihād* that aims to defend and uphold the sentence of Allah SWT is classified as *fi sabilillah*, regardless of the circumstances and forms of *jihād* and weapons.

He argues that the context of helping the religion of Allah SWT can sometimes be by fighting *jihād* against the enemies of Allah SWT because in certain conditions and times this is the only way to defend the religion of Allah. However, in an era such as the present, war is no longer physical, but takes the form of a war of ideas whose harmful effects can be greater than physical war. Qarḍawi gives some examples of zakat recipients that are classified as activities to help the religion of Allah SWT, including 1) *Da'wah* center: a place for training and education of *da'i* before serving. 2)

Islamic center, a place for research and development of religious knowledge 3) Establishing Islamic information media 4) Establishing Islamic journalists.

3. Wahbah az-Zuhaily

Wahbah az-Zuhaily interpreted *fi sabilillah* as mujahid war soldiers who do not get benefits, because the word *sabilillah* absolutely means war in the way of Allah SWT. Thus, zakat can be given for their needs and assistance regardless of economic status, because the provision of zakat is aimed at public benefit. In addition, Wahbah az-Zuhaily also allows the provision of zakat funds for poor people who want to perform the Hajj.

METHODOLOGY

This paper was prepared using a descriptive method, which involves gathering research from various documents closely related to the objectives of this study. This research attempts to obtain a comprehensive overview by collecting data and events, then explaining, analyzing, and reviewing them based on existing theories to derive valid conclusions. The sources of data collection include books, official reports, scientific journals, and other sources based on the opinions of previous experts. This method involves reading various sources, connecting them to the topic discussed, and then presenting them in the form of descriptions.

DISCUSSION

The Development of Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) on Asnaf Fisabilillah

The Indonesian Ulema Council as the highest religious authority in Indonesia has an important role in providing fatwas and guidelines related to zakat management, including *asnaf fii sabilillah*. The fatwas issued by MUI aim to answer the growing needs of the people and ensure that zakat management is carried out in accordance with sharia principles.

Since its inception, MUI has issued various fatwas that expand the meaning of *fii sabilillah*, which was initially limited to jihad or war in the way of Allah. MUI then interpreted the meaning of *asnaf fi sabilillah* more broadly to include various forms of activities that support the general welfare of the Islamic ummah such as health, education, infrastructure development, humanitarian assistance, and economic empowerment.

The development of fatwa on *fii sabilillah* reflects MUI's response to the challenges and needs of the times. For example, MUI provides a fatwa that zakat funds can be used for programs that support poverty alleviation, educational scholarships, zakat promotion, and assistance in overcoming the Covid-19 outbreak. This illustrates the flexibility in the application of sharia that allows zakat to have a wider positive impact on society.

Table 2. Development of MUI Fatwa related to Fi Sabilillah

No	Number	Fatwa
1	MUI Fatwa No. 1 of 1982 concerning the Utilization of	Zakat funds for Fi sabilillah purposes may be utilized for public interest.

No	Number	Fatwa
	Zakat Funds for Productive Activities for the Common Good	
2	MUI Fatwa No. 8 of 2011 concerning Zakat Administrators (Amil)	Activities to raise awareness about zakat (such as advertisements) may be financed from zakat funds allocated to Zakat Administrators or <i>Fi sabilillah</i> within reasonable, proportional, and in accordance with Islamic Sharia principles.
3	MUI Fatwa No. 15 of 2011 concerning the Collection, Maintenance, and Distribution of Zakat Funds	Foundations or institutions serving the poor may receive zakat in the name of <i>Fi sabilillah</i> .
4	Decision of the Indonesian Fatwa Commission's 6th Ulama Ijma' Meeting in 2018 concerning Zakat Funds for Legal Assistance	The distribution of zakat for the purpose of building a fair legal system is permissible through the <i>Fi sabilillah</i> beneficiaries
5	Fatwa on the Utilization of Zakat, Infaq, and Sadaqah Funds for the Mitigation of	The utilization of zakat funds for the mitigation of COVID-19 and its impacts is permissible according to the following provisions:

No	Number	Fatwa
	Covid-19 and Its Impacts	<p>a. Distribution of zakat funds directly to beneficiaries with the following conditions: the recipient belongs to one of the categories (<i>asnaf</i>) of zakat, namely poor and needy Muslims, zakat collectors, new converts to Islam, those in debt, slaves, stranded travelers, and/or in the cause of Allah (<i>Fi sabilillah</i>).</p> <p>b. Distribution for the general welfare, with the following conditions: the beneficiary is classified as <i>Fi sabilillah</i>.</p>
6	MUI Fatwa on Providing Zakat for Scholarships	The distribution of zakat for education or scholarships is permissible. According to the MUI Fatwa, providing zakat money for educational purposes, especially in the form of scholarships, is valid, as it falls under the category of <i>Fi sabilillah</i> , which is assistance

No	Number	Fatwa
		disbursed from zakat funds based on Quranic verse At-Tawbah [9:60].

Source: Data Processed

The Implementation of Asnaf Fisabilillah

Zakat fund distribution is defined as the activity of allocating zakat funds collected from muzakki to mustahik (Gunaepi et al., 2018). In order to accomplish the goal of zakat management, which is to improve welfare, zakat is distributed according to priority scales while taking equality, justice, and regionality into consideration.

According to Fatwa MUI Number 23 of 2020, beneficiaries from the eight categories (asnaf) must be included in the distribution of zakat, infaq, and shadaqah (ZIS) for the benefit of the public (Sabiq et al., 2021). Asnaf fisabilillah are defined as individuals who strive in the path of Allah through activities such as da'wah, jihad, and other related endeavors. In practice, the definition of asnaf fisabilillah in the distribution and utilization of zakat funds has undergone dynamic changes over time. Consequently, strong legitimacy is required from both sharia and regulatory perspectives to ensure that the disbursement of zakat funds is precise and in accordance with sharia principles.

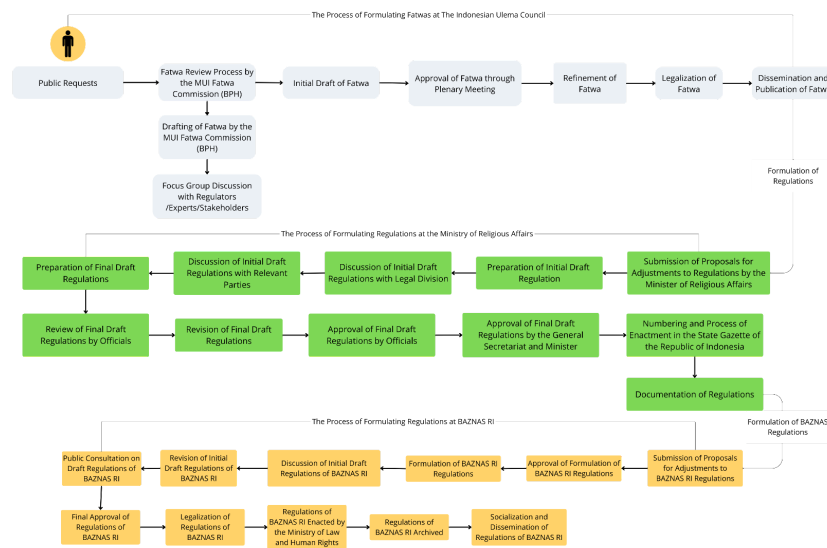


Figure 1. Model for Implementing Asnaf Fisabilillah Regulations

Source: The data was processed by the author

The dynamic definition of contemporary asnaf fisabilillah is thoroughly examined through the process of fatwa formulation. A fatwa is a response to a difficult question or an answer to an issue not explicitly addressed in the Quran and Hadith (Mubin & Saihu, 2021). The

Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) plays a crucial role in reviewing and issuing fatwas. Fatwas are formulated through a series of in-depth studies and public discussions before they are ultimately issued.

Fatwas issued by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) generally serve

as the foundation for subsequent regulations. This is because MUI fatwas provide theological and normative bases for drafting zakat management regulations in Indonesia. Consequently, the integration of MUI fatwas into formal regulations is carried out by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is responsible for translating MUI's normative guidelines into more operational regulations. In this process, the Ministry of Religious Affairs issues regulations that comprehensively govern the management and distribution of zakat, including allocations for asnaf *fisabilillah*. These regulations include technical guidelines on how zakat should be managed, collected, and distributed. By implementing these regulations, the Ministry of Religious Affairs ensures that all zakat management institutions adhere to clear operational standards consistent with established sharia principles.

The regulations issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs are subsequently implemented by the National Board of Zakat (BAZNAS), the official government body responsible for managing zakat in Indonesia. BAZNAS serves as the intermediary between the collection of zakat from the public and its distribution to zakat recipients. In the context of asnaf *fisabilillah*, BAZNAS implements the fatwas and formal regulations concerning asnaf *fisabilillah* as follows:

- a. Individuals or groups striving to uphold the word of Allah;
- b. Individuals sincerely performing religious duties, including obligatory, *sunnah*, and other recommended

practices, as a means of drawing closer to Allah;

- c. Individuals or groups earnestly and sincerely pursuing knowledge that is widely beneficial to the community; and
- d. Individuals or groups working to improve the welfare of the nation and the Muslim community.

Fisabilillah refers to individuals who are striving to uphold Islamic law, promote welfare, and protect the Muslim community from harm. Therefore, zakat funds can be utilized to build educational institutions for developing *da'wah* cadres. Based on this definition of asnaf *fisabilillah*, BAZNAS designs various programs that support *da'wah* activities, the construction of religious facilities, and Islamic education. These programs are designed to ensure that the collected zakat funds are optimally used to support the dissemination and strengthening of Islamic teachings throughout Indonesia.

BAZNAS Fi Sabilillah Program

Indonesia National Board of Zakat (BAZNAS), as a non-structural body responsible for managing national zakat as mandated by Law No. 23 of 2011, has formulated various programs for the distribution and utilization of zakat. Among BAZNAS's disbursement programs included under *fi sabilillah* are those in the fields of education and *da'wah*. Educational programs, particularly scholarships, have become one of the priority programs for BAZNAS for the period 2020-2025.

The distribution of zakat in the field of education is designed not only to include scholarship programs but also to provide assistance for the development of

educational facilities and infrastructure. These are used for integrated character and competency development programs, spanning from elementary education to higher education, thereby bringing significant benefits to the community and the nation. Additionally, educational financial assistance is provided to underserved populations, particularly orphans, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly, aiming to enhance their knowledge and skills. Overall, these educational programs are expected to contribute significantly and have a substantial impact on sustainable education in Indonesia.

The image below illustrates the distribution map of scholarships provided by BAZNAS throughout the year 2023. Based on the image, it can be observed that there were 14,512 beneficiaries of this program spread across 33 provinces in Indonesia. The santri scholarship program had the highest number of beneficiaries among other programs, totaling 7,191 beneficiaries, followed by the BAZNAS Domestic Scholars Program with 4,764 beneficiaries.

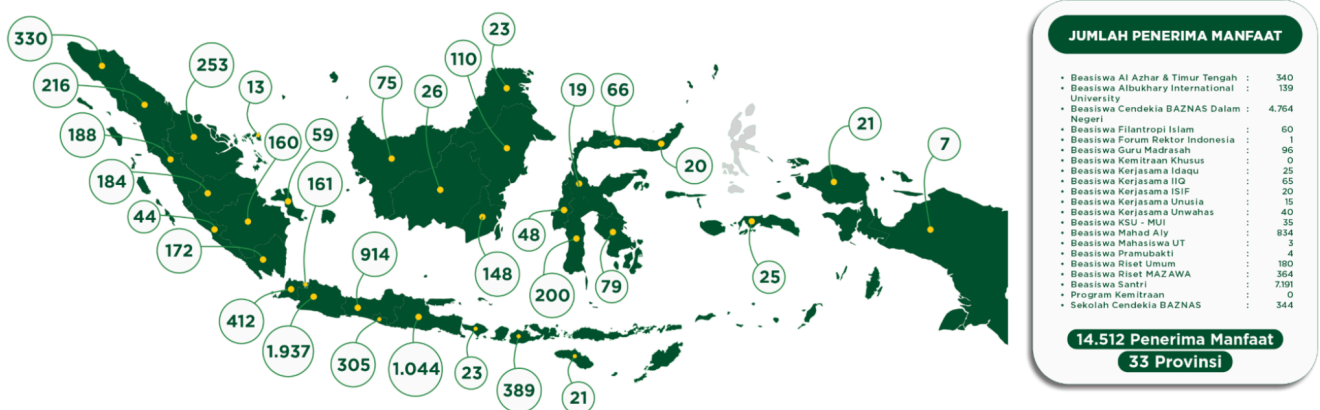


Figure 2. Distribution Map of Scholarship Disbursement

Source: Report on the Distribution of Education and Da'wah Programs in 2023

For detailed explanation regarding the distribution program in the field of education in 2023 by BAZNAS, please refer to the following table:

Table 3. Distribution of Education Programs in 2023

No.	Program	Program's Detail
1	Sekolah Cendekia BAZNAS	Sekolah Cendekia BAZNAS (SCB) is an excellent educational

No.	Program	Program's Detail
		institution that provides boarding and tuition-free programs under the supervision of the BAZNAS for underprivileged and high-achieving children. SCB aims to provide high-quality education to its students while fostering awareness

No.	Program	Program's Detail
		of the importance of zakat and social welfare within society. By integrating Islamic values and holistic education, SCB is committed to producing outstanding individuals who contribute positively to the progress of the nation and the Muslim community.
2	BAZNAS Domestic Scholars Program	The BAZNAS Domestic Scholars Program is intended for undergraduate students (D4/S1) and provides tuition fee subsidies for a duration of 4 semesters.
3	BAZNAS Overseas Scholars Program	The BAZNAS Overseas Scholars Program includes a four-year stipend, departure tickets, and guidance for students declared eligible by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.
4	Scholarship	educational scholarship aimed at institutions engaged in management activities in specific sectors such as the 3T regions (underdeveloped, remote, and frontier areas), regions with minority Muslim populations, and individuals with disabilities. This

No.	Program	Program's Detail
		scholarship program aims to reach high-achieving students from 3T regions, including those who demonstrate academic excellence but may have physical limitations.
5	Beasiswa Riset	Final Project Research Grant for students who are completing their thesis/dissertation with a theme related to zakat.
6	Beasiswa Riset Mazawa	In addition to research scholarships for the general category, BAZNAS also provides final project research assistance for students in the Bachelor's program in Zakat and Waqf Management.
7	Beasiswa Santri	The Santri Scholarship Program is an initiative aimed at supporting education for students in various levels, ranging from elementary to high school, for one semester. The program aims to provide financial assistance to santri to enable them to continue their education more effectively in the Islamic boarding school environment.
8	Beasiswa	Scholarship for

No.	Program	Program's Detail
	Dikdasmen	students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels for one semester.

Sumber: Report on the Distribution of Education and Da'wah Programs in 2023

Furthermore, disbursements for asnaf fisabilillah also extend to the field of da'wah. Da'wah and advocacy programs may include community development activities for Muslims, the development of public policies and strategic studies, as well as advocacy for the rights and welfare of mustahik. Disbursements in the field of da'wah focus on *mualaf*, marginalized

communities, 3T regions (Frontier, Outermost, and Underdeveloped), religious infrastructure and activities, as well as advocacy for those in servitude (*riqab*).

The image below illustrates the distribution map of da'wah assistance disbursed by BAZNAS throughout the year 2023. Based on the figure, it can be observed that BAZNAS's da'wah programs have reached 23,087 individuals spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia. Da'wah programs conducted include KSU MUI Scholarships, Mosque Renovation, Digital Da'wah, Sarong Distribution, 1444 H Expressions, Da'wah Partnerships, Partnerships with Islamic Organizations, and Quran Writing initiatives.

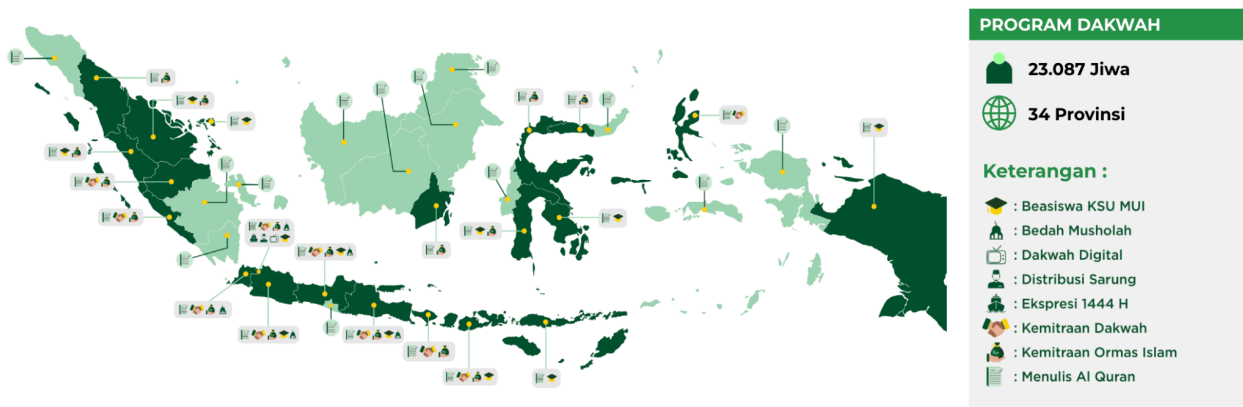


Figure 3. Distribution Map of Da'wah Disbursement

Source: Report on the Distribution of Education and Da'wah Programs in 2023

The detailed explanation regarding the distribution programs in the field of da'wah in 2023 by BAZNAS can be found in the Table below:

Tabel 4. Distribution of Da'wah Programs in 2023

No.	Program	Program's Detail
1	Program Dakwah Komunitas Khusus	This program aimed at 3T (frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped) regions, new Muslims, marginalized communities, and

No.	Program	Program's Detail
		Quran instructors. This program aims to enhance understanding and collaboration among institutions, community organizations, and communities in the realm of special da'wah, with the goal of improving the welfare of the community.
2	Bedah Mushola	The mosques renovated under this program are those that have experienced various damages. This program is part of the effort to improve the quality of worship and services to the community.
3	Pembinaan dan Advokasi Muallaf	This program is a strengthening program for faith and religious understanding by distributing books on worship procedures, Iqra' books, the Quran, and sponsoring preachers. It also involves strengthening protection and assurance by providing support, accompanying, and advocating, as well as providing new Muslim kits and assistance with accommodation rent

Source: Report on the Distribution of Education and Da'wah Programs in 2023

Synergy between Zakat Institutions and Islamic Organizations

National Board of Zakat (BAZNAS) holds a central role in managing zakat in Indonesia as mandated by Law No. 23 of 2011. As an institution mandated by the government, BAZNAS is responsible for collecting and distributing zakat, infaq, and sadaqah from the community. Its primary goal is to enhance the welfare of the ummah through targeted zakat distribution. BAZNAS supports public da'wah through various programs funded by zakat. These programs cover education, health, and economic empowerment. Generally, according to BAZNAS Chairman's Decree No. 64 of 2019 on the Guidelines for Distribution and Utilization of Zakat within BAZNAS, zakat distribution consists of distribution and utilization.

Perbazznas No. 3 of 2018 also explains that distribution refers to the allocation of zakat to mustahik in a consumptive form. Zakat distribution is carried out across four main programs: education, health, humanitarian aid, and dakwah and advocacy. Utilization, on the other hand, refers to the optimal use of zakat without reducing its value and benefits, in productive endeavors to achieve public welfare. Productive utilization of zakat aims to address poverty and improve the quality of the ummah. This utilization focuses on four areas: economy, education, health, and dakwah and advocacy (National Board of Zakat, 2018).

The strategic role of BAZNAS in managing and distributing zakat cannot be separated from the support of other religious institutions, particularly in

ensuring that zakat distribution aligns with Islamic teachings. This is where the significant role of The Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) becomes highly relevant, through its issuance of fatwas and its network consisting of many community organizations.

The Indonesian Council of Ulama/Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) acts as a fatwa institution providing religious guidance to Muslims in Indonesia. MUI is also responsible for overseeing and certifying halal products, which is crucial for ensuring compliance with Sharia law in the consumption and production of goods and services. Additionally, MUI has various duties, including maintaining the integrity of Islamic law, protecting the interests of Muslims, and bridging the gap between Muslim aspirations and government agendas. In this complex balance, MUI provides opinions and fatwas to respond to the dynamic and ever-changing modernization that affects Muslims in Indonesia (Fauzi, 2017, in Muslimin, 2023).

Throughout its 46-year history, MUI has been in existence since its establishment on July 26, 1975. According to its official website, MUI has carried out four roles. First, as a leader and guide for Muslims in realizing religious and social life in accordance with Sharia. Second, acting as a mufti (fatwa issuer) and advisor on religious and social issues. Third, functioning as a mediator between ulama and the government, facilitating reciprocal relations between the Muslim community and the government. Fourth, operating as a forum representing Muslims in cooperation and relations between organizations, Islamic institutions, and Muslim intellectuals, providing guidance

on religious life (Indonesian Council of Ulama, 2018).

MUI is active in organizing religious campaigns and programs, including religious outreach, seminars, and training for preachers and teachers, which is MUI's primary duty to provide understanding and safeguarding of religious values. By issuing fatwas, MUI strives to maintain the purity of Islamic teachings and prevent the spread of deviant ideologies. MUI's fatwas on various religious and social issues provide clear guidance for Muslims in their daily lives according to Sharia (National Coordination Meeting II KPPP MUI, 2023).

MUI's role in providing religious guidance is a key pillar in maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings in Indonesia. However, the implementation of these guidelines and fatwas requires support from community organizations with extensive grassroots networks. This is where organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, among others, play a crucial role.

In line with Indonesia's history, Islamic community organizations have made significant contributions to the nation's social life, as they played a part in movements and struggles against colonialism and imperialism in the past to unite the ummah. This religious motivation in the form of struggle and instilling.

Islamic community organizations (Ormas) such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah, Sarekat Islam, Persatuan Islam (Persis), Persatuan Umat Islam (PUI), Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah, Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Perti), Mathlaul Anwar, Al-Jam'iyatul Washliyah, Wanita

Islam, Darud Dakwah Wal Irsyad, DDII, Alkhairaat, Hidayatullah, and many others play a crucial role in Islamic propagation. These organizations have extensive networks and significant influence among the populace. The distribution of Islamic community organizations' networks among Muslims in Indonesia is divided, with 50.3% affiliating with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and 14.9% with Muhammadiyah, while the remainder is spread across other organizations (Ali, 2017). They are not only involved in religious activities but also in education, healthcare, and other social initiatives (Nasar, 2023).

In contemporary times, Islamic community organizations (Ormas) collaborate on various initiatives to support Islamic propagation. For instance, NU and Muhammadiyah often collaborate to organize religious education activities such as madrasahs or Islamic boarding schools, seminars, training sessions, and the development of preachers, aiming to create sustained benefits in the future

(Latief, 2016). Collaborations between Islamic community organizations and the government are also reflected in the National Medium-Term Development Plan/ Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJMN) 2020-2024, particularly in the religious moderation program (SETKAB, 2022).

Inter-organizational collaboration among Islamic organizations is crucial for effectively disseminating Islamic values and addressing societal challenges (Kagman, K., & Ghazali, M., 2023). The roles of each zakat institution and Islamic community organization are defined by prevailing laws and regulations. With the strategic role of BAZNAS in zakat distribution and MUI in providing religious guidance, along with support from Islamic community organizations, a strong synergy is created to support Islamic propagation efforts. This collaboration becomes more apparent when observing how these three elements work together to achieve common goals.

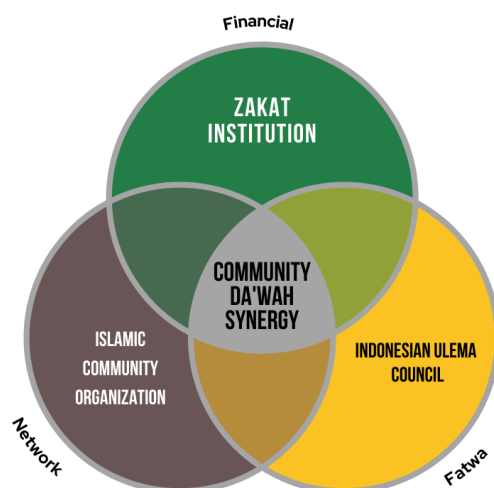


Figure 4. The Synergy of Da'wah Keumatan

Source: Author, 2024

The collaboration between BAZNAS, MUI, and Islamic mass organizations creates a strong synergy in supporting proselytization. The Qur'an encourages collaboration in human activities, emphasizing the importance of social relations and respect for mutual rights (Irajpour, A., Ghaljaei, F., & Alavi, M, 2015). BAZNAS provides financial support through the distribution of zakat, while MUI provides the religious guidance needed to maintain sharia compliance. Islamic organizations, with their extensive networks, are the on-the-ground implementers that ensure the da'wah message reaches the wider community.

For example, in the ummah economic empowerment program, BAZNAS can provide funds, MUI provides fatwa and religious guidance, while Islamic mass organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah implement the program at the community and network level. Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah play an important role in combating religious radicalism in Indonesia by promoting the face of peaceful Islam and fostering a generation of moderate Islam through their educational networks (Mukhlis, M., Mustofa, I., & Syarifudin, A, 2022). The main benefit of this synergy is the overall strengthening of proselytization. However, challenges also exist, such as coordination between institutions that is sometimes less than optimal and differences in views on some issues. Overcoming these challenges requires better communication, transparency, and commitment from all parties to work together for the benefit of the ummah.

The synergy between BAZNAS, MUI, and Islamic organizations is very

important in maintaining and strengthening proselytization in Indonesia. The role of each institution is complementary, with BAZNAS as a provider of funds, MUI as a provider of religious guidance, and Islamic organizations as implementers of programs in the field. By continuing to strengthen collaboration and overcoming existing challenges, these three triangles of people power can make a significant contribution to improving the welfare and religious awareness of Muslims in Indonesia. Successful collaboration requires joint efforts, building trust and overcoming strategic challenges. Increased mutual understanding and cooperation can significantly strengthen the global Islamic community (Kagman, K., & Ghazali, M, 2023).

Contemporary Fisabilillah Issues

Fisabilillah Funds for Digital Da'wah

In today's digital era, social media and other digital platforms have become the main means of seeking knowledge, including religious issues. Digital da'wah allows da'wah content to be disseminated quickly and efficiently and can reach a very wide audience. Digital da'wah is becoming increasingly important and relevant given the rise of negative content and misinformation related to religious issues. Therefore, it is important for Muslims to produce and disseminate accurate and positive da'wah content through social media and other digital platforms.

The utilization of zakat funds asnaf fisabilillah for digital da'wah can provide various benefits for Muslims and the wider community in general. Among the forms of utilization of asnaf fisabilillah funds is

through funding the production of quality da'wah content on social media and training influencers in increasing their capacity to produce quality content. In addition, fisabilillah funds can also be optimized to develop Islamic applications such as Al-Qur'an learning, prayer schedules, Qibla compasses, and interactive platforms for religious questions and answers so that they can help Muslims in carrying out worship and deepening their religious understanding.

The utilization of zakat funds in the asnaf fi sabilillah category for digital da'wah is based on the opinion of Shaykh Mahmud Syaltut who states that fi sabilillah includes all maslahah which is the foundation of religion and state, which is also included in this understanding is the preparation of da'wah cadres who will convey the glory and beauty of Islam. In addition, Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi also expanded the definition of fi sabilillah to include all things that are good and beneficial for the benefit of da'wah and the benefit of the people.

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Utilizing zakat funds in the asnaf fisabilillah category for digital da'wah not only meets the needs of da'wah in the modern era, but also brings various

benefits to the Muslim community and society at large. By supporting the production of quality da'wah content, training for Muslim influencers, and development of Islamic applications, zakat funds can be used more effectively to spread Islamic teachings, strengthen Islamic identity, and counter misinformation in this digital era. This implementation shows the flexibility and versatility of the use of zakat funds in meeting the needs of the ummah that continue to grow in accordance with the dynamics of the times.

Fisabilillah Funds for Da'wah Facilities in the Form of Managed Assets

The utilization of zakat funds in the asnaf fi sabilillah category for da'wah facilities in the form of managed assets, such as mosques, schools, student dormitories, and zakat management institution buildings, is one of the strategic efforts in meeting the needs of the ummah in the contemporary era. These da'wah facilities play an important role in fostering and educating Muslims and spreading Islamic values in society.

Scholars differ in their views regarding the use of fi sabilillah funds for the construction of da'wah facilities. Among the scholars who allow it is Yusuf Al Qardhawi. He stated that the meaning of the word "sabilillah" is "sabilil Khoir" (the path of goodness), meaning that all kinds of things related to religion fall into the category of "sabilillah". Therefore, zakat funds for the construction of da'wah facilities such as mosques, Islamic boarding schools, and others are allowed. Furthermore, Rasyid Ridha in "tafsir almanar" states that the meaning of fi sabilillah in the Quran means "Masalih

al-Muslimin al-Ammah” or the Muslims in general who are the pillars of the establishment of religious and state affairs.

Expansion of the meaning of *fi sabilillah* for the construction of facilities that support religious affairs has been done in other countries, including Malaysia. Malaysia applies Al-Qaradhawi's opinion which expands the meaning of *Fi Sabilillah* to *Fi Sabilil Khoir*, where part of the distribution of *Fi-Sabilillah* of zakat institutions in Malaysia is allocated for the provision of buildings such as for the building of Malaysian students in Egypt.

The utilization of *asnaf fi sabilillah* zakat funds for da'wah facilities shows the flexibility of the use of zakat funds in meeting the growing needs of the ummah. Through supporting the construction and management of mosques, schools, student dormitories, and other da'wah facilities, zakat funds can have a significant impact in strengthening and advancing the Muslim community. These facilities not only fulfill physical needs, but also play a role in the spiritual and intellectual development of Muslims, so that they can become individuals who contribute positively to society.

Fisabilillah Funds for Halal Tourism Development

The utilization of zakat funds in the *asnaf fi sabilillah* category for the development of halal tourism is one of the innovative steps that can have a positive impact on the Muslim community and society at large. With the increasing interest in halal tourism worldwide, the development of tourism facilities that adhere to Islamic principles is becoming increasingly important and relevant. These facilities not only provide services that suit the needs of

Muslims, but also help promote Islamic values to the global community. The utilization of *fi sabilillah* funds for the development of halal tourism can be compared to the construction of facilities that support religious affairs and the spread of Islamic values and da'wah as Yusuf Al Qardhawi argues.

The utilization of zakat funds in the *asnaf fi sabilillah* category for the development of halal tourism can be optimized through the establishment of hotels, restaurants, and other tourism facilities with certification and compliance with halal principles. The utilization of zakat funds for the development of halal tourism can also include training and certification for tourism industry players. This training program can help the staff of hotels, restaurants, and other tourism facilities to understand and apply halal principles in their services. In addition, halal certification provided by zakat institutions or relevant authorities can increase Muslim travelers' confidence in the services they receive.

The development of halal tourism with the support of zakat funds *asnaf fi sabilillah* shows the flexibility of using zakat funds in meeting the growing needs of the ummah. Halal tourism not only provides economic benefits, but also helps strengthen Islamic identity and values in a globalized world. By providing tourism facilities that comply with Islamic principles, zakat funds can contribute to creating a Muslim-friendly environment and support the spread of Islamic values through tourism. This implementation is one example of how zakat funds can be used effectively and innovatively to meet the contemporary needs of Muslims.

Fisabilillah Funds for Madrasahs and Teachers

The use of fisabilillah funds to support madrasah teachers is a strategic step that can improve the quality of Islamic education. The Fatwa Commission of the Indonesian Ulema Council in its Fatwa on Mentasharufkan Zakat Funds for Productive Activities and Public Welfare on February 2, 1982 stipulated that:

1. Zakat given to the poor can be productive;
2. Zakat funds on behalf of sabilillah may be utilized (managed) for the purposes of masalah'ammah (public interest).

The MUI fatwa mentions one of the considerations from the book of Fiqh as-Sunnah, volume 1 p. 394, namely 394, namely

"Included in the category of sabilillah is funding madrasahs for the study of shari'ah and other sciences that are necessary for the public good. In the current situation, it is permissible for madrasah teachers to be given zakaah so long as they fulfill their prescribed teaching duties, in which case they will not be able to work otherwise."

Based on Fiqh as-Sunnah, it is permissible to give zakaah from the sabilillah section for all public causes that have to do with matters of religion and state, such as:

1. Paying for madrasahs (Islamic schools) that are necessary for the public good; and
2. Paying for madrasah teachers while they carry out their teaching duties.

Madrasah teachers are educators who teach religious knowledge and Islamic values to the younger generation. Their role is very important in the spread and maintenance of Islamic teachings. Therefore, they can be considered as a class of asnaf fisabilillah. The use of these funds to support madrasah teachers covers several important aspects that contribute directly to improving the quality of education. Apart from teachers, the use of fisabilillah funds also includes the provision of adequate educational facilities and infrastructure. Facilities such as proper classrooms, libraries, and adequate teaching aids will create a conducive learning environment.

CONCLUSION

Asnaf fisabilillah has a very broad, universal scope and tends to be multi-interpretive. This general nature results in differences of opinion among scholars in interpreting it. Limiting the meaning of fisabilillah to only jihad or fighting to take up arms against the enemies of Islam is considered irrelevant in the current context. Therefore, the interpretation of asnaf fisabilillah in the contemporary context is very important.

This paper discusses in detail the distribution of zakat funds for asnaf fisabilillah in its role to meet the needs of the people today by examining more deeply its implementation in Indonesia. Although in reality fi sabilillah is a group that is still developing, BAZNAS has provided criteria for what is included fi sabilillah. This is stated in the Decree of the Chairperson of BAZNAS Number (SK) of the Chairperson of BAZNAS no 64 of 2019 defining sabilillah as a person who is struggling to uphold Islamic law,

strive for benefits, and / or keep Muslims from fading.

BAZNAS has several distribution programs that belong to asnaf fi sabilillah, including programs in the fields of education and da'wah. Programs in the field of education include Sekolah Cendekia BAZNAS, Beasiswa Cendekia BAZNAS, Beasiswa khusus, Beasiswa Riset, Beasiswa Riset Mazawa, Beasiswa Santri, and Beasiswa Dikdasmen. Meanwhile, programs in the field of da'wah include Program Dakwah Komunitas Khusus, Bedah Mushola, serta Pembinaan and Advokasi Muallaf.

Finally, this paper discusses some contemporary issues and their possibilities to get the distribution of zakat funds for the asnaf fisabilillah category, so that it remains relevant and able to answer the needs of the times. Some contemporary issues are the distribution of fisabilillah funds for digital da'wah, distribution of fisabilillah funds for da'wah facilities in the form of managed assets, distribution of fisabilillah funds for the development of halal tourism, and distribution of fisabilillah funds for madrasas and teachers.

This paper is expected to be a guide and inspiration for zakat managers, policy makers, and the general public in maximizing the potential of zakat funds, especially in the asnaf fi sabilillah category. Through a deep understanding of the limitations and flexibility of the implementation of fisabilillah in the management of zakat funds, effective and innovative strategies can be created to meet the needs of the people today and in the future.

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