

# Implementation of the Islamic Food Bank Concept in an Effort to Solve the Global Problem of Hunger and Food Insecurity

Ahmadi<sup>1</sup>, Mega Asri Lestari<sup>2</sup>, Abd. Rahman<sup>3</sup>, Abdul Azis<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>(State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya)

Author: ahmadi@iain.palangkaraya.ac.id

**ABSTRACT:** Hunger is a global problem facing many countries. Although the problem of hunger usually affects developing countries and countries experiencing conflict and crisis, developed countries are also not immune to this problem. In dealing with this problem, of course you need the right strategy so that the problem of hunger does not increase. This research tries to offer a strategy in solving the problem of global hunger and food insecurity by applying the Islamic Food Bank concept. The issue in this article is very important to discuss because zero hunger is one of the main points in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Apart from that, this issue is important, considering that there are 43 countries that are categorized as serious or worrying about the problem of hunger. Of course, the Islamic Food Bank concept can be an innovation and answer to the humanitarian crisis of hunger and food insecurity. Islamic Food Bank uses charitable donations to fund the Food Bank to achieve the goals of reducing poverty, reducing hunger, reducing food waste, distributing wealth fairly, and reducing food waste. The Islamic Food Bank concept is an integration of the Food Bank concept with the ZIS concept which is supported by mutual synergy between the Food Bank and BAZNAS. In carrying out its programs, the Islamic Food Bank certainly requires regular funding to carry out its activities. Thanks to the great potential of ZIS, food banks can operate with funding sources from ZIS.

**KEYWORDS:** Islamic Food Bank; Hunger; Food Insecurity; Global; Humanitarian Crisis

## I. INTRODUCTION

One aspect of poverty is hunger or food insecurity. These two issues remain important topics that need to be discussed in the development process in all countries. Food insecurity is the opposite of food security (Naipunu & Kadir, 2023). Food or sustenance is the most basic human right that must be fulfilled in order to survive (Farida, 2015). In this context, the inability of society to develop the capacity to adapt to existing vulnerabilities causes worsening food security. There are two types of food insecurity temporary and chronic (Shaw, 2007). Temporary food insecurity refers to communities where food supplies are limited due to natural disasters or crop failure, while chronic food insecurity refers to communities where food supplies are limited due to declining purchasing power or human resources.

According to National Food Agency Regulation Number 16 of 2022, food insecurity is a condition of inability from areas to individuals which is reflected in the unavailability of sufficient food, both in quantity and quality, safe, diverse, nutritious, equitable and affordable and does not conflict with religion, beliefs and culture of society, to be able to live healthy, active and productive lives in a sustainable manner (JDIH Badan Pangan Nasional, 2022). Food insecurity is closely related to sustainable development goals, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 2, namely Zero Hunger. SDGs is a new global development platform which is the result of an agreement between the 193 member countries of the United Nations (UN) (Natalia & Maulidya, 2023). Because vulnerability is included in the 17 important points of the SDGs, the issue of food security and ending hunger is very relevant to study.

However, one of the biggest challenges to achieving this goal is food accessibility, because people have low purchasing power and cannot access enough food to meet their needs. Poverty is a major factor contributing to a lack of food security, as lack of access to food leads to hunger. In the Global Hunger Index Report, 43 countries are classified as worrying or serious levels of hunger, 18 countries with moderate hunger, and 58

countries will fail to reach low levels of hunger by 2030 (Index, 2023) This data shows that hunger is still a serious or worrying problem in 43 countries.

On the other hand, food insecurity arises due to inefficient food consumption and production patterns, resulting in a buildup of wasted food or what is called food waste. This causes waste of resources and environmental pollution. In fact, it is estimated that each Indonesian resident produces 300 kilograms of food waste every year (Unit, 2016). *abdzir* behavior and the act of wasting wealth are equated with the actions of Satan, and just like the act of wasting food, it is an act of *tabdzir* (Rarawahyuni, 2022). *Tabdzir* has been banned during the season, while Indonesia's ever-increasing food waste practices do not meet the needs of the country's large Muslim population. Apart from that, *tabdzir's* actions show a lack of compassion for those who are less fortunate. Currently, there are many phenomena in society that have become a negative culture, such as a feeling of pride when having to share food in public places such as restaurants and cafes. In fact, in Islam there is a concept called *Zakat*, *Infaq* and Alms (ZIS). ZIS is a religious activity that aims to solve problems that arise in human life, for example alleviating poverty and all social inequalities caused by the ownership of different wealth such as hunger. ZIS is not only beneficial for social life, but ZIS in Islam is very concerned about the condition of society, such as the fate of the weak (Permana, 2014).

When dealing with poverty, for example Damanhuri explained that several poverty prevention measures had been introduced and had even proven successful in history (Damanhuri, 1999). Umar bin Khattab's success in mobilizing ZIS and building Bait al-Maal is clear evidence in a macrostructural framework that this had a positive impact on the country's economic development at that time. One factor in strengthening the economy of the people and society is through equal distribution of ZIS. From the statements above, it means that hunger is an urgent problem and continues to require solutions to overcome it. One of the solutions offered is the existence of an Islamic Food Bank.

Food Bank is a non-profit social organization with an international network called the Global Foodbanking Network (GFN) whose mission is to collect and distribute excess food. This is considered an important and viable solution that can help the world overcome hunger, reduce food waste, and overcome the problem of poverty (Network, 2023). One of the objectives of the Food Bank's activities and the management of the ZIS Fund are basically the same, namely to contribute to overcoming the problem of poverty. In a country where the majority of the population is Muslim, it is not surprising that there are institutions such as the Food Bank that apply the ZIS concept. Thus, the application of the Food Bank and ZIS concepts to implement the role of Islam in overcoming poverty is increasingly recognized.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

The main focus of this research is specifically to offer the Islamic Food Bank concept which is integrated with the ZIS concept. So, this innovation can be a concept development in using the ZIS budget. Indonesia already has a Food Bank community, such as Food Bank of Indonesia, FoodCycle Indonesia and Garda Pangan Surabaya. There are several countries that have implemented the Islamic Food Bank or Muslim Food Bank concept, including Kenya, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Fiji.

This is based on the existence of various causal factors related to hunger. So researchers are interested in reviewing effective strategies for overcoming the problem of hunger. Researchers focus on analyzing the Islamic Food Bank concept which aims to solve the problem of hunger. As the aim of this research is that the researcher wants to offer an Islamic Food Bank concept that is integrated with ZIS to be implemented by Muslims from various countries in the world.

The method used in this research is a qualitative method. The data collection technique in this research is through literature study by searching for topics through books, scientific articles, official websites, etc. to obtain materials and data related to research. The data that has been obtained is then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques.

### III. RESEARCH RESULT

The data from this research comes from books, scientific articles, official websites and other supporting data sources. The following is a diagram showing the level of hunger in countries in the world that has been researched by GHI as of 2023.

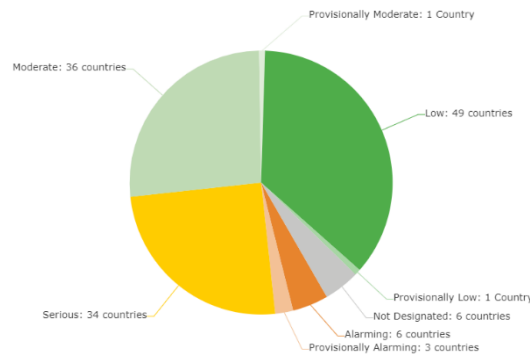


Diagram 1. 2023 GHI Countries by Hunger Severity Designation

Based on these data, researchers consider strategies to resolve the problem of hunger necessary implemented, one of which is implementing the Islamic Food Bank concept. The following is a chart related to the application of the Islamic Food Bank concept.

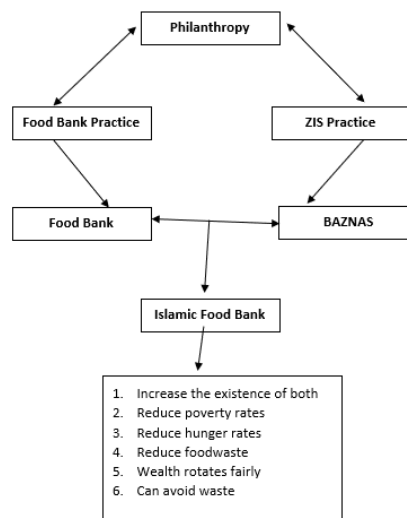


Chart 1. Islamic Food Bank Concept

### IV. DISCUSSION

#### Food Bank Concept in General

Food banks are defined as volunteer-based non-profit organizations that aim to collect excess food in communities or industries and redistribute it to those in need, to avoid food waste and abuse (Starkey et al., 1999). The Food Bank takes excess food and distributes it for free to charities and communities in need. The Food Bank is a social actor that helps hungry people by collecting, storing and distributing excess food for free. The Food Bank focuses on saving excess food so that it can be put to good use and distributing it with dignity. The food distributed must of course be hygienic and suitable for consumption. Typically, incentives for companies to donate food include cost savings through company pride, increased customer loyalty, product exposure, and reduced waste disposal costs.

Food Banks help disadvantaged groups, of course playing an important role in overcoming hunger in Western countries, for example, the United States and Canada. The Food Bank helps meet the food needs of people who don't have the ability to buy food (Adrienne & Tarasuk, 1999). According to Riches, the Food Bank is more effective than other food assistance programs (Riches, 2002). According to a study conducted by Tarasuk and Eakin, the Food Bank concept carried out by volunteers in this system provides benefits for various stakeholders because it can reduce food waste and eliminate food insecurity in the community (Tarasuk & Eakin, 2005). The Food Bank's mission is to balance food surpluses and provide food to communities in need. Beneficiaries include the elderly, low-income individuals, and other welfare recipients (Starkey et al., 1999).

Kirkpatrick and Tarasuk found that the majority of Food Bank recipients were from food insecure families (Kirkpatrick et al., 2009). Because they cannot afford to buy food due to economic factors so they depend on the Food Bank. In the Food Bank there is a term called Food rescue. Food rescue is an effort to collect edible food that would otherwise be waste from restaurants, wholesalers and other food companies and distribute it to Food Banks (Reynolds et al., 2015). Food rescue is the main activity of food bank organizations and is the collection of edible food that would otherwise be thrown away but is still suitable for consumption. Food Bank operations generally depend on voluntary community funding, food donations, and additional equipment (Reynolds et al., 2015). Most food comes from food producers who overproduce, farmers who overproduce food, and food processors, traders and retailers who overorder. Surplus is donated to the Food Bank to avoid waste.

Apart from that, excess food given to the Food Bank is because it cannot be sold on the market due to production errors, damage during delivery, management, storage, or because the product is easily damaged or is approaching its expiry date. Apart from basic food donations, the Food Bank also receives funds donated by the public. These funds will be used to buy food to cover food shortages for those in need. This happens because some Food Banks buy food when food supplies are limited, temporarily. In other words, Food Banks obtain their food supplies from products not sold in supermarkets, as well as donations from food businesses and local communities, and distribute them to people in need through operations called "food rescue."

### **Integration of ZIS and Food Bank Concepts**

Generally, Food Banks adopt sharia principles. This is based on the financing and management system in the establishment of the Food Bank which aims to solve the problem of hunger and protect the environment (Hasan, 2012). Food is a *daruriyyah* item so it needs to be given priority to preserve *maqasid* sharia in terms of maintaining life. Apart from solving the problem of hunger, the Food Bank also aims to protect the environment by saving food that would otherwise be wasted and preventing waste. Islam prohibits anything excessive because these actions are *israf* and *tabdzir*. *Israf* means excessive spending on halal matters. *Tabdzir* is something that is given for assets that do not bring benefits or are wasted.

Through incentives organized in Islam to provide aid, especially food aid, to those in need, this shows that Islam also views the issue of hunger seriously. The situation of people suffering from hunger shows weak food security. The Food Bank is considered as an alternative for providing food, namely *daruriyyah* goods to achieve *maqasid* sharia in order to safeguard the interests of the community. The alms mechanism is the mechanism considered most suitable for obtaining Food Bank funding. This is because alms are not tied to certain conditions such as the type of product, the amount donated, or the time it is carried out. This makes it easier for the public and industry to donate, whatever the form or size of the donation. The mechanism that applies to operational funds is the support mechanism for assets or *infaq*.

Indonesia's zakat potential is extraordinary. If it can be managed professionally, it will have an impact on the welfare of society. Through the *wakalah* agreement, the Food Bank acts as a donor agent to manage funds and donations, *infaq* and other donations and distribute them to the beneficiaries. Handling these funds includes managing funds, paying operational costs, purchasing food, and distributing food. The halal aspect is an important factor in food consumption, especially for Muslims. Apart from being halal, the quality of the food must also be maintained so that it is safe for consumption by the beneficiaries. On the other hand, food distribution must be distributed fairly and evenly so that aid can reach the right people and not leave gaps.

A study of the management of the Islamic Food Bank by Dianto and Purnomo, regarding the Islamic Food Bank concept, found that there were similarities between the objectives of the Food Bank and ZIS (Dianto & Purnomo, 2020). It has been proven that the Food Bank is able to help overcome the problem of poverty. Islamic Food Bank is a food bank concept that utilizes ZIS funds as loans to achieve synergistic goals. In carrying out its programs, the Islamic Food Bank certainly requires regular funding to carry out its activities. Thanks to the great potential of ZIS, food banks can operate with funding sources from ZIS. ZIS funds can be used to reduce poverty rates, reduce hunger rates, reduce food waste, distribute assets evenly, and reduce waste. The forms of distribution applied in the Islamic Food Bank initiative are in the fields of education, health, humanity and da'wah (Hidayati et al., 2019).

### **Implementation of Islamic Food Bank Practices at BAZNAS Institutions**

The practice of Food Banks and the practice of Zakat, *Infaq* and *Sedekah* (ZIS) in this system is a form of philanthropy. ZIS and poverty have a mutually influencing relationship in Islam because ZIS is an alternative in overcoming inequality and poverty (Tamimi et al., 2023). The organization of Food Bank activities as part of a social movement is managed by the Food Bank, which is a social organization that operates specifically in the food sector and utilizes food surpluses with clear objectives. To minimize poverty in society and improve the economy, there is the BAZNAS institution. Islam teaches people to share in order to achieve prosperity (Haryanti et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the ZIS practice is managed by the National Zakat Amil Agency (BAZNAS), an institution formed by the government to receive zakat and can also receive information and alms. In collecting, distributing and utilizing ZIS, BAZNAS is supported by the Amil Zakat Institution (LAZ), which is a zakat management institution founded by the private sector. The Food Bank and BAZNAS will mutually demonstrate a synergistic effect so that the Food Bank can manage ZIS legally and utilize ZIS funds more optimally by developing ZIS fund management through the establishment of a Food Bank (Minhajuel & Widiastuti, 2021). Therefore, finally a conceptual design for the Islamic Food Bank was created which allows for a synergistic process in establishing an Islamic Food Bank in Indonesia.

Synergistically, the presence of the Islamic Food Bank has an impact in the form of increasing community welfare, equal distribution of wealth, increasing the presence of both, reducing poverty rates, overcoming food gaps, and alleviating food insecurity. Apart from that, the Islamic Food Bank is also present as an effort to reduce malnutrition and hunger by reducing costs and avoiding waste. The Islamic Food Bank concept is designed for widespread use. Therefore, BAZNAS, the party that officially operates ZIS, can also apply this concept.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

As time goes by, problems continue to emerge in every country, both domestically and globally. One of the problems that still plagues several countries is food insecurity and hunger. Food insecurity and hunger are serious problems that must be addressed immediately. Hunger is a serious problem because every region in this country is affected when people experience hunger. Islam recognizes the importance of food security and considers it a great blessing that must be appreciated and pursued. In Islam, there is a strategy to solve the problem of people's hunger, namely by giving alms to people in need. One concept that can be applied is the Islamic Food Bank. Islamic Food Bank uses charitable donations to fund the Food Bank to achieve the goals of reducing poverty, reducing hunger, reducing food waste, distributing wealth fairly, and reducing food waste. The Islamic Food Bank concept is the result of collaboration between the Food Bank concept and the ZIS concept which is supported by mutual synergy between the Food Bank and BAZNAS. This synergy is realized by food banks managing ZIS legally (registered as LAZ at BAZNAS) and BAZNAS forming a Food Bank so that ZIS fund management is more optimal. The Islamic Food Bank concept is considered an evolution of an existing concept and is intended to be used as a way to expand the presence of BAZNAS and Food Bank, as well as a step to build the spread of sharia economics. The hope is that countries in the world and cities in Indonesia can apply the Islamic Food Bank concept as an effort to solve the problem of global hunger and food insecurity. It is hoped that future research can examine more research instruments and research data sources in order to strengthen research results. It is hoped that future researchers will also be supported by interviews with

sources who are competent in research so that the research will be better and more complete.

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