

Arab Republic of Egypt
Ministry of Awqaf
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Zakah and Charity and their Role in the Development of Society

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Ever Glorious Book, **“Keep up the prayer, pay Zakah, and bow down in prayer with all who bow down.”** I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow their path to the Day of Judgment.

The Islamic Shari‘ah establishes a strong societal system for people that is based on compassion, interdependence and solidarity, as our Prophet (PBUH) says, “The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.” The Prophet (PBUH) also said, “When the people of Ash‘ari tribe ran short of food during the battles, or the food of their families in Medina ran short, they would collect all their remaining food in one sheet and then distribute it among themselves equally by measuring it with a bowl. So, these people are from me, and I am from them.”

Thus, Islam has prescribed *Zakah* (the obligatory charity), making it one of its key foundations, and urged people to pay extra voluntary charity stating that this charity is one of the greatest paths of goodness in order to relieve the poor and fulfill their needs. The Almighty Allah said, **“In order to cleanse and purify them [Prophet], accept a charity out of their property.”** Allah also said, “Whatever you spend in charity, He [Allah] will compensate [you] for it. For He is the Best Provider.” The Prophet (PBUH) said, “Islam is based on five pillars: the testimony that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, the observance of the Prayer, the payment of *Zakah*, the Pilgrimage, and the fast during Ramadan.”

When contemplating the Glorious Qur’an, one finds that the Almighty Allah mentions both *Zakah* along with Prayer, which is the greatest and most important obligation in Islam. This indicates the significance of *Zakah* and encourages people to adhere to paying it. Allah said, **“Keep up the prayer and pay the prescribed *Zakah*. Whatever good you store up for yourselves, you will find it with Allah: He sees everything you do.”** Allah also said, **“...those who keep up the prayer, pay the prescribed *Zakah*, and are certain of the Hereafter.”**

The Islamic Shari‘ah has warned against negligence in the performance of *Zakah*, as the Almighty says, “Those who are miserly with what Allah has granted them out of His grace should not think that it is

good for them; on the contrary, it is bad for them. Whatever they meanly withhold will be hung around their necks on the Day of Resurrection. It is God who will inherit the heavens and earth: Allah is well aware of everything you do." Also, Allah said, "[Prophet], **tell those who hoard gold and silver instead of giving in God's cause that they will have a grievous punishment; on the Day it is heated up in Hell's Fire and used to brand their foreheads, sides, and backs, they will be told, 'This is what you hoarded up for yourselves! Now feel the pain of what you hoarded!'**" Abd Allah Ibn Abbas said, "Three verses were revealed in connection with three others; one will not be accepted without its counterpart. First, the verse, 'Establish prayer and give charity;' whoever prays and does not give charity, his prayer is not accepted. Second, the saying of the Almighty, 'Be grateful to me and your parents;' whoever is grateful to Allah and is not grateful to his parents, it will not be accepted from him. Third, the saying of the Almighty, "Obey Allah and obey the messenger;' whoever obeys Allah and does not obey the messenger, it will not be accepted from him."

There is no doubt that charity supports the role of *Zakah* in achieving its community role. Therefore, the noble Shari'ah urges us to give charity, as the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Indeed there is a duty on wealthy aside from *Zakah*," then he recited this *Ayah*, '**Goodness does not consist in turning your face towards East or West. The truly good are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, in the angels, the Scripture, and the prophets; who give away some of their wealth, however much they cherish it, to**

their relatives, to orphans, the needy, travellers and beggars, and to liberate those in bondage..."

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his companions and followers:

Zakah and charity have great fruits, including: the great blessing and great reward, as the Almighty Allah said, "**Allah blights usury, but blesses charitable deeds with multiple increase.**" Allah also said, "**Those who believe, do good deeds, keep up the prayer, and pay the prescribed *Zakah* will have their reward with their Lord: no fear for them, nor will they grieve.**" The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Two angels descend every morning, and one says: O Allah, give him who spends something, in place of what he spends.' The other one says: 'O Allah, give destruction to him who withholds."

Also, the fruits of *Zakah* and charity include: It leads to safety, as the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Treat your sick by giving charity, and protect your property by paying the due *Zakah*, and face your misfortunes by making supplication." The Prophet (PBUH) also said, "Indeed charity extinguishes the Lord's Anger and it protects against the evil death."

Zakah plays a major role in achieving community balance and societal development. This is very clear when it comes to charity with all of its forms, including the public projects and initiatives, such as sacrificial *Sukuk*, feeding *Sukuk*, collecting clothes for the poor, house rehabilitation or job creation, and other forms of goodness that achieve humanitarian care for families that deserve care or for the regions that deserve care.

How much do we need to achieve the meanings of goodness, kind communication and community solidarity in order to promote love and fraternity and achieve development!

May Allah save our country Egypt and all countries of the worlds!