

The Effectiveness of Da'i as Zakat Executors in Strengthening Zakat Collection: Evidence from BAZNAS Dharmasraya Regency

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Abstract: This study examines the transformation of the role of *da'i* within BAZNAS of Dharmasraya Regency, where their function has expanded beyond the delivery of religious messages to encompass strategic responsibilities in the collection and management of zakat. The research seeks to analyze how this functional transformation occurs and to assess its effectiveness in increasing the potential collection of zakat, infak, and sadaqah (ZIS).

Employing a qualitative methodology with a transformative approach, this study adopts the Community-Based Research (CBR) model, which emphasizes active collaboration among researchers, *da'i*, and local communities in identifying challenges and formulating context-sensitive solutions. Data were generated through participatory engagement, enabling an in-depth understanding of the social and institutional dynamics surrounding zakat management.

The findings indicate that the repositioning of *da'i* as zakat executors has significantly enhanced collective community awareness of the religious and social importance of zakat, while also strengthening zakat management systems grounded in local culture and community potential. Furthermore, the integration of cultural approaches and managerial capacity-building initiatives has proven effective in reinforcing the role of *da'i* as agents of social change, particularly in promoting community empowerment and sustainable zakat governance.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini berangkat dari persoalan perubahan peran da'i di lingkungan BAZNAS Kabupaten Dharmasraya, di mana peran da'i tidak lagi terbatas pada penyampaian pesan-pesan keagamaan, tetapi juga mencakup peran strategis dalam pengumpulan dan pengelolaan zakat. Permasalahan utama dalam penelitian ini adalah bagaimana proses transformasi fungsi da'i tersebut berlangsung serta sejauh mana efektivitasnya dalam meningkatkan potensi penghimpunan zakat, infak, dan sedekah (ZIS). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan transformatif melalui model *Community-Based Research* (CBR), yang menekankan kolaborasi aktif antara peneliti, da'i, dan masyarakat dalam mengidentifikasi permasalahan serta merumuskan solusi yang berbasis pada potensi dan kearifan lokal.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi peran da'i sebagai eksekutor zakat berhasil meningkatkan kesadaran kolektif masyarakat akan pentingnya zakat serta memperkuat sistem pengelolaan zakat yang berlandaskan budaya dan potensi lokal. Pendekatan kultural dan pelatihan manajerial terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kapasitas da'i sebagai agen perubahan sosial yang berorientasi pada pemberdayaan masyarakat. kesepakatan awal, di mana pedagang memperoleh sekitar 30–40 persen dari total keuntungan, sedangkan sisanya menjadi hak pemilik barang titipan. Dalam penanganan

kerugian akibat barang titipan yang tidak terjual, terdapat beberapa mekanisme yang diterapkan, antara lain pengembalian barang kepada pemilik, renegotiasi harga melalui penjualan kepada pedagang besar dengan harga lebih rendah, pembagian kerugian terkait biaya penyimpanan, atau pembelian barang oleh pedagang dengan harga yang lebih rendah berdasarkan kesepakatan bersama. Apabila terjadi kerusakan pada barang titipan, tanggung jawab berada pada pemilik barang, sepanjang pedagang telah memenuhi kewajiban untuk melaporkan kerusakan tersebut.

Ditinjau dari perspektif hukum ekonomi syariah, pelaksanaan akad penitipan penjualan di Pasar Ombilin telah sesuai dengan prinsip wakalah bi al-ujrah. Penetapan harga dalam transaksi penitipan penjualan mencerminkan prinsip keadilan dan kemaslahatan ekonomi, distribusi keuntungan dilakukan berdasarkan proporsi yang disepakati, serta pengelolaan kerugian selaras dengan konsep dhaman dalam hukum ekonomi syariah.

Keywords: *Da'i Transformation, Zakat Management, Community Empowerment*

Introduction

Zakat is one of the most important spiritual and social instruments in Islam (Aqilah & Mohd, 2020). As the third pillar of Islam after prayer, zakat is not merely understood as a ritual obligation, but also as a mechanism of economic redistribution aimed at fostering social justice (Ishak et al., 2025; Nuruddin, 2014). Through zakat, Muslims purify their wealth from the rights of others while simultaneously nurturing social solidarity. This dual dimension of zakat—vertical devotion to God and horizontal responsibility toward fellow human beings—positions it as a form of social worship capable of balancing spiritual growth and communal welfare (Marthon, 2007; Sari, 2006).

The Qur'an specifies eight categories of zakat beneficiaries, as stated in Surah At-Tawbah verse 60, including *amil zakat*, those entrusted with the responsibility of managing, collecting, and distributing zakat to eligible recipients. The position of *amil* as frontline implementers underscores the importance of managerial competence and professionalism in zakat administration. The effectiveness of zakat, therefore, depends not only on the personal piety of *muzakki* (zakat payers), but also on the efficiency and credibility of its management system (Hafidhuddin, 2012; Qaradhwani, 2005).

In Indonesia, zakat management is regulated under Law No. 23 of 2011 on Zakat Management. This regulation establishes two main institutions: the National Zakat Board (*Badan Amil Zakat Nasional*—BAZNAS) as a government-affiliated body, and Community-Based Zakat Institutions (*Lembaga Amil Zakat*—LAZ) formed by civil society (Al-Mubarak et al., 2021). BAZNAS operates through a hierarchical structure extending to the district and municipal levels, with a mandate to collect, distribute, and utilize zakat, infak, and sadaqah (ZIS) funds in a professional and accountable manner (Aziz, 2014).

Despite this institutional framework, the potential of zakat in Indonesia remains largely underutilized. The Chairman of BAZNAS RI, Noor Achmad, reported that national zakat collection has reached only approximately IDR 14 trillion, far below the estimated national zakat potential of IDR 327 trillion. This means that actual zakat collection accounts for only about 4.28 percent of its potential. Such a significant gap indicates low public awareness and the limited effectiveness of zakat outreach and da'wah strategies at the grassroots level. A similar situation is evident in Dharmasraya Regency, West Sumatra—an

area known for its strong religious values and relatively robust economic growth (Thamrin et al., 2020). The annual potential of zakat, infak, and sadaqah in this region is estimated at IDR 10 billion; however, data from BAZNAS Dharmasraya show that average annual collection reaches only around IDR 4.5 billion. In 2021, zakat collection even declined compared to the previous year, amounting to IDR 4.65 billion against a target of IDR 7 billion. This disparity between potential and realization represents a critical issue requiring in-depth examination.

An interview with the Vice Chairman for Zakat Collection at BAZNAS Dharmasraya, Ridwan Syarif (preliminary research, July 15, 2024), revealed that the majority of zakat funds are still derived from automatic salary deductions of civil servants (ASN), while participation from the broader community remains very limited. Of the 52 mosques in the regency, only six Zakat Collection Units (*Unit Pengumpul Zakat* – UPZ) actively remit zakat to BAZNAS. This situation reflects weak da'wah penetration and a lack of public trust in zakat management institutions.

In response to these challenges, BAZNAS Dharmasraya introduced an innovation in 2019 by establishing a group of BAZNAS-affiliated *da'i*. This group, consisting of 20 members, functions not only as conveyors of religious messages but also as key mobilizers of zakat within the community. Their activities include public outreach, identification of *mustahik* (zakat beneficiaries), visits to potential *muzakki*, and *da'wah bil hal* initiatives that are educational and productive in nature. Since 2023, their role has been further institutionalized through an official decree issued by BAZNAS Dharmasraya, authorizing them to act as “zakat executors” – *da'i* who are directly empowered to collect and distribute ZIS funds within their assigned areas.

This transformation of roles merits deeper academic inquiry. On the one hand, it signifies a paradigm shift in da'wah—from the mere transmission of spiritual messages toward a form of social activism oriented to community welfare. On the other hand, it demands new competencies from *da'i*, including managerial skills, effective communication, and economic empowerment strategies. In this context, BAZNAS *da'i* no longer function solely as *muballigh*, but also as *amil zakat* responsible for the sustainability of socio-economic development programs.

Based on this reality, the present study focuses on the transformation of the *da'i*'s role as zakat executors within BAZNAS Dharmasraya Regency. The study aims to examine how this role transformation occurs, assess its effectiveness in increasing zakat, infak, and sadaqah collection, and identify the challenges and strategies involved in its implementation. This research is expected to contribute conceptually to the development of empowerment-oriented da'wah and zakat management at the regional level, as well as serve as a reference for other zakat institutions seeking to integrate da'wah and community-based economic management in a synergistic manner.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative methodology grounded in a transformative approach that emphasizes social change and the empowerment of the BAZNAS *da'i* community in Dharmasraya Regency, particularly in optimizing the collection of zakat, infak, and sadaqah. This approach integrates reflection and action through an action research framework, in which the researcher acts as a facilitator who promotes active collaboration among *da'i*, *amil zakat*, and the wider community (Setiadi & Pradana, 2022).

The research process begins with the identification of local needs and potential through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, aimed at understanding the challenges and opportunities involved in strengthening the role of *da'i* as zakat executors. Based on this initial assessment, a participatory mentoring program is designed, encompassing technical training, spiritual development, and capacity-building in communication and managerial skills. Throughout the mentoring process, the researcher conducts participatory observation and continuous reflection to capture the dynamics of change and to assess the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. Data are analyzed using techniques of reduction, display, and verification to identify patterns of social transformation and improvements in the *da'i*'s competencies (W & Kemmis, 2004).

The expected outcome of this study is the development of a transformative mentoring model that can be replicated in other regions. This approach not only enriches the discourse on empowerment-based *da'wah* but also offers tangible contributions to improving community welfare through the optimization of zakat, infak, and sadaqah potential in Dharmasraya Regency..

Results and Discussion

Effectiveness of BAZNAS Da'i Mentoring in Zakat Collection

The mentoring program implemented for the BAZNAS *da'i* in Dharmasraya Regency has proven effective in strengthening both individual and institutional capacities. Through intensive training and mentoring, the *da'i* developed a more comprehensive understanding of zakat management, encompassing the identification of zakat potential, collection mechanisms, and transparent reporting to the public. This effectiveness is reflected in the increased amount of zakat collected during the mentoring period, accompanied by greater community participation in BAZNAS programs. These findings are consistent with the study by Hassan et al. (2023) in the *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, which highlights continuous capacity-building for *amil* and *da'i* as a key determinant of successful zakat collection.

Beyond technical improvements, the mentoring process also had a significant impact on the moral and spiritual dimensions of the *da'i*. They evolved not only as conveyors of religious messages but also as moral role models who inspire the community to fulfill zakat obligations as a form of social responsibility. This outcome aligns with the principles of community empowerment articulated by Narayan (2005), which emphasize that effective empowerment must emerge from the active participation of target communities rather than from external intervention alone. Accordingly, the effectiveness of mentoring in Dharmasraya is measured not only by increased zakat revenue but also by the growth of community independence, awareness, and religious commitment to zakat-based social justice. The participatory mentoring approach positioned the *da'i* as active partners in the process of social transformation.

This mentoring initiative reflects the emergence of a modern zakat management model that places *da'i* in a strategic role as zakat executors and agents of social empowerment. Contemporary zakat management literature emphasizes that the role of *amil* has expanded beyond administrative functions to include educational, managerial, and social entrepreneurship dimensions (Dakwah et al., 2024). This transformation aligns with the Zakat Community Development (ZCD) model implemented by BAZNAS in various regions, including Dharmasraya. ZCD represents an integrated strategy for socio-economic empowerment grounded in participatory and collaborative principles. Research by Sugianto

et al. (2023), for instance, demonstrates that ZCD initiatives positively affect the economic growth of *mustahik* through integrated programs combining da'wah, economic development, education, and humanitarian efforts (Wulandari et al., 2025).

The mentoring process further illustrates that the role of *da'i* is deeply embedded within the social and economic dynamics of the communities they serve. When equipped with managerial skills and a solid understanding of zakat governance, *da'i* are able to deliver da'wah that is more relevant and context-sensitive. They provide not only moral guidance but also practical solutions that contribute to community welfare. This transformation is evident in field activities where *da'i* act as intermediaries between BAZNAS and the community, assist in identifying local zakat potential, and ensure that programs respond to the real needs of *mustahik* (Dakwah et al., 2024).

As their capacity increased, *da'i* in Dharmasraya began adopting more humanistic and problem-oriented da'wah approaches. They conducted regular community visits, engaged in dialogue with local groups, and identified pressing economic challenges faced by residents. These interactions strengthened emotional bonds between *da'i* and the community, enabling zakat messages to be perceived not merely as religious obligations but as collective efforts to build economic self-reliance. Similar findings were reported by Fadilah, Maemunah, and Hernawati (2019), who observed that such approaches enhance social capital and improve the effectiveness of community-based empowerment programs (Fadilah et al., 2024).

Within the Zakat Community Development framework, mentoring the *da'i* of Dharmasraya serves as a critical foundation for establishing a sustainable empowerment ecosystem. *Da'i* are no longer positioned solely as religious instructors but as facilitators who encourage communities to design and manage their own development agendas. This approach has generated various local innovations, including the formation of small business groups, strengthening mosque-based cooperatives, and initiating productive zakat-based agricultural programs. Sugianto et al. (2023) found that ZCD models emphasizing cross-sector collaboration – among religious leaders, government institutions, and communities – enhance the ability of *mustahik* to operate businesses independently and sustainably (Wulandari et al., 2025).

Moreover, intensive mentoring enabled *da'i* to reconceptualize zakat not only as an act of worship but also as a development instrument. Through workshops and discussions, they were introduced to concepts such as productive zakat, sustainable fund management, and social impact evaluation. With this broader understanding, *da'i* were able to guide communities in viewing zakat as a resource for economic mobilization rather than merely consumptive assistance. This perspective is supported by Raehana et al. (2022), whose study on productive zakat implementation in South Sulawesi demonstrates that structured mentoring enhances *mustahik* entrepreneurial skills and expands access to capital and markets (Kara & Amiruddin, n.d.).

The relationship between *da'i* and *mustahik* also underwent a significant transformation as a result of the mentoring process. Previously characterized by hierarchical dynamics, this relationship evolved into a partnership-based interaction. *Da'i* were no longer perceived as authoritative figures who “know better,” but as companions who support communities in making informed economic decisions. This egalitarian approach fostered greater self-confidence and a stronger sense of ownership among *mustahik* toward BAZNAS programs, consistent with Narayan's assertion that genuine empowerment enables communities to control their own change processes.

Additionally, mentoring contributed to broader shifts in community mindset. By aligning da'wah activities with economic empowerment initiatives, communities increasingly understood zakat as not only a religious duty but also a strategic instrument for collective welfare. Individuals who were previously passive zakat contributors began actively participating in village deliberations, reporting forums, and program planning discussions. This participatory awareness is essential for program sustainability, as it ensures that empowerment agendas remain relevant and responsive to community needs.

The transformation of the *da'i's* function became even more pronounced as they began bridging religious traditions with modern community development principles. In various settings, *da'i* acted as communicators who translated Islamic values—such as justice, generosity, and social responsibility—into concrete economic development practices. Consequently, da'wah was no longer confined to sermons but manifested through visible and tangible social actions.

The mentoring process, which spanned several months, also fostered a two-way learning dynamic between *da'i* and researchers or facilitators. *Da'i* shared field-based insights into community behavior patterns, program acceptance, and cultural factors influencing da'wah effectiveness, while researchers contributed conceptual frameworks and strategic tools to enhance the *da'i's* performance. This reciprocal interaction reinforces the principles of Community-Based Research, emphasizing collaboration and continuous reflection as foundations for sustainable social change.

Ultimately, the mentoring of BAZNAS *da'i* in Dharmasraya demonstrates that institutional transformation within religious organizations can be effectively achieved through sustained training, participatory approaches, and adaptive communication. The shift in the *da'i's* role—from religious communicators to zakat executors and empowerment agents—highlights the substantial potential of religious institutions to contribute to socio-economic development. By strengthening *da'i* capacity, BAZNAS Dharmasraya has established a mentoring model that not only increases zakat collection but also significantly expands its social impact across the wider community.

Cultural Approach and the Utilization of Local Potential

A cultural approach emerged as a key factor in the success of the mentoring program for the BAZNAS *da'i* group in Dharmasraya Regency. The socio-cultural context of Minangkabau society, which strongly upholds the principle of "*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*" (custom founded upon Islamic law, and Islamic law founded upon the Qur'an), provides substantial social and cultural capital for integrating zakat-based da'wah into everyday life at the *nagari* level. The *da'i* strategically utilized local religious and cultural gatherings—such as *barzanji* recitations, *wirid yasinan*, and *maulid nagari* celebrations—as platforms for socializing the obligation of zakat, infak, and sadaqah (ZIS). Through this approach, da'wah messages were not merely delivered as religious rhetoric but were embedded within the cultural practices and collective identity of the community.

This culturally grounded da'wah strategy aligns with findings in the literature indicating that when zakat institutions and da'wah actors understand and respect local customs and social norms, public trust (*social trust*) in zakat institutions increases significantly. For instance, one study demonstrates that cultural variables and community trust have a positive and significant influence on public participation in paying zakat fitrah through formal zakat institutions (Anam, 2024). Similarly, research on institutional trust in zakat organizations

shows that disclosure practices and effective stakeholder management significantly affect the level of trust among business-oriented *muzakki* (Aqilah & Mohd, 2020).

From a broader theoretical perspective, culture provides an important framework for understanding sustainable development. Development rooted in moral values and local wisdom tends to generate more resilient and long-lasting outcomes. As articulated by Amartya Sen in *Development as Freedom*, meaningful development must take into account human freedom and cultural values as essential elements. Accordingly, adapting zakat da'wah strategies that respect and leverage local cultural values not only enhances the legitimacy of zakat institutions but also strengthens collective awareness of ZIS as a socio-economic instrument.

Practically, the findings of this study indicate that local cultural support offers several strategic advantages. *Da'i* who are well known and respected within their communities are able to reach potential *muzakki* who were previously beyond the reach of formal institutions. Da'wah activities linked to local traditions are more readily accepted, while economic empowerment programs based on local potential gain strong social legitimacy and community ownership. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the success of this cultural approach depends heavily on the *da'i*'s capacity to understand local cultural dynamics and social capital. Without such cultural sensitivity, the approach risks losing relevance or becoming merely symbolic rather than transformative.

The Transformation of the *Da'i* Function as Zakat Executors

The findings of this study demonstrate a significant transformation in the function and role of *da'i* within BAZNAS of Dharmasraya Regency. Previously positioned primarily as conveyors of religious messages, *da'i* have now evolved into zakat executors who are actively involved in the collection, management, and distribution of zakat. This transformation reflects a paradigmatic shift in da'wah—from a *tabligh*-oriented approach focused on religious instruction toward an empowerment-oriented model aimed at strengthening community welfare. In this context, da'wah no longer ends with moral exhortation but develops into a socio-economic instrument that promotes community self-reliance. This finding aligns with the study by Choirin et al. (2024), which emphasizes the need for professional empowerment of *da'i* to enable them to manage zakat effectively and contribute meaningfully to social welfare (Dakwah et al., 2024).

This functional shift is driven by BAZNAS's institutional awareness of the importance of field agents who possess a deep understanding of the community's social and religious context. Through structured training and mentoring programs, *da'i* are equipped with managerial skills, social communication competencies, and zakat literacy, enabling them to perform dual roles as religious preachers and drivers of community economic development. This finding is reinforced by Amuda et al. (2021) in the *Journal of Islamic Social Finance Management*, which argues that contemporary *ulama* and *da'i* must assume socio-economic roles to ensure that zakat functions as an effective and sustainable development instrument.

The transformation observed in Dharmasraya is also consistent with the concept of transformative leadership as articulated by Burns, where value-based and morally grounded leadership serves as a catalyst for social change. Within the BAZNAS Dharmasraya context, *da'i* function as religious social entrepreneurs who integrate da'wah missions, spiritual values, and economic empowerment. Field evidence indicates that direct involvement of *da'i* in zakat management significantly enhances public trust in zakat institutions and increases *muzakki* participation. Similar conclusions are drawn by Hasan (2023), who notes that active

engagement of religious figures within zakat systems strengthens institutional legitimacy and accelerates the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the framework of Islamic economics (Hasan, 2020).

This role transformation has profound implications for the direction of contemporary da'wah. Da'wah is no longer limited to the transmission of Islamic teachings but increasingly functions as a social movement that fosters economic justice and humanitarian solidarity. Research by Andriansyah (2024) confirms that *muzakki* motivation to pay zakat increases when *da'i* are directly involved in zakat collection, as trust in religious figures embedded within zakat management systems tends to be higher (Andriansyah et al., 2024). Therefore, the transformation of *da'i* into zakat executors should be understood not merely as an administrative adjustment but as a conceptual renewal that bridges da'wah, economic governance, and community development.

Accordingly, the BAZNAS Dharmasraya mentoring model can be viewed as a socio-religious laboratory that successfully integrates faith, culture, and economic management within a transformative da'wah framework. *Da'i* are no longer solely spiritual communicators but active agents of social change who promote community welfare through zakat, infak, and sadaqah mechanisms. This transformation reinforces the relevance of *da'wah bil hal*—preaching through concrete action—as a contemporary paradigm capable of addressing the socio-economic challenges facing Muslim communities today.

The findings further suggest that this transformation represents not merely an administrative phenomenon but an epistemological shift in understanding the function of da'wah in the modern era. It illustrates how religious authority can adapt to increasingly complex social needs without losing its spiritual essence. *Da'i*, once positioned mainly as doctrinal communicators, are now reoriented as development actors equipped with technical and social capacities. This argument is particularly important given that persistent socio-economic inequality remains a major challenge within Muslim societies, necessitating da'wah approaches that are closely linked to welfare concerns.

Field observations also reveal that this transformation is supported by a responsive institutional structure. BAZNAS Dharmasraya provides space for *da'i* to act as strategic partners rather than mere program implementers. The mentoring model adopted is participatory in nature, allowing *da'i* to reinterpret their da'wah roles based on local community needs. This approach aligns with community empowerment frameworks that emphasize collaboration, reflection, and collective action in capacity-building processes. As a result, the transformation of the *da'i* role does not occur in a top-down manner but through a dialogical process that enables grassroots social innovation.

Furthermore, the transformation of *da'i* into zakat executors demonstrates a consolidation between religious authority and modern management practices. *Da'i* not only foster emotional bonds with the community but also carry out zakat administration functions that require professionalism and accountability. This combination produces a more holistic model of religious leadership—one that connects spiritual values with measurable organizational systems. The positioning of *da'i* as religious social entrepreneurs strengthens BAZNAS's public legitimacy, leading to increased trust among *muzakki* and higher levels of community participation in zakat. This effect underscores the continuing importance of religious figures in establishing institutional credibility within zakat governance.

Finally, this transformation carries important implications for future da'wah strategies. Da'wah can no longer rely solely on sermons delivered from the pulpit; it must also address

structural issues directly related to community economic needs. When *da'i* become integral to empowerment systems, *da'wah* evolves into a social movement that mobilizes collective awareness and action toward welfare-oriented goals. Consequently, the Dharmasraya model offers a valuable reference for other regions seeking to develop transformative *da'wah* approaches that are responsive to contemporary social dynamics.

Overall, this study affirms that the transformation of the *da'i* role constitutes one of the most strategic innovations in strengthening the modern zakat ecosystem. The integration of *da'wah*, zakat management, and economic empowerment not only fosters community self-reliance but also expands the role of religion in the public sphere as a driving force for justice and sustainable social change.

Conclusion

Research on the transformation of the *da'i* function within BAZNAS of Dharmasraya Regency demonstrates that *da'wah* has undergone a fundamental shift—from an activity centered on the delivery of spiritual messages to a socio-economic movement oriented toward community empowerment. *Da'i* are no longer positioned merely as transmitters of religious teachings, but also as zakat executors who are directly involved in the collection, management, and distribution of zakat funds to enhance public welfare. Through a cultural approach that integrates Islamic values with local customs, combined with training programs that strengthen managerial capacity and leadership skills, *da'i* have been able to bridge spiritual objectives and the socio-economic needs of the community in a harmonious manner. This transformation not only reinforces public trust in zakat institutions but also demonstrates that *da'wah bil hal*—preaching through concrete action—can serve as an effective strategy for fostering social solidarity and economic self-reliance. Accordingly, the mentoring model implemented by BAZNAS Dharmasraya may serve as a best-practice example of transformative *da'wah* that integrates faith, culture, and welfare within a sustainable *da'wah* movement.

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