




ZISWAF INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO ACTIVATE IDLE AGRICULTURAL LAND AS A CATALYST FOR THE AGRO-FOOD SECTOR IN MALAYSIA

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PUBLISHED: 07/11/2022

Accepted: 28/10/2022

Submitted: 05/08/2022

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CITE THIS PAPER:

Mohamed, Muhammad I.; Mohd Shafiai, Muhammad H.; Hilmi, Mohd H. (2022). "ZISWaf Institutional Approach to Activate Idle Agricultural Land as a Catalyst for the Agro-Food Sector in Malaysia" *Journal of World Economy: Transformations & Transitions (JOWETT)* 2(05):20. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52459/jowett25201122>

ABSTRACT

In various efforts to strengthen the agro-food sector, development on idle land is one of the keys to achieving it. Neglect of idle land is a waste that needs to be well managed to mobilize all resources properly and produce crop yields to the maximum level. Therefore, this paper will discuss the factors that lead to the occurrence of idle land and finds a solution from a Malaysian perspective. Referring to this problem, it is seen, through the institutional approach, that it is capable of being one of the best alternatives because institutions are a set of rules that affect human economic life. Through an institutional approach, it can apply the ZISWaf management recommended by previous Islamic scholars divided into four schemes to activate idle agricultural land with proper coordination. This paper is using qualitative methods based on data and information from the literature review and then it is analysed based on a deductive approach. As a result, the ZISWaf institutional approach can realize the concept of implementing the agro-food Waqf institution to solve the issue of idle land.

KEYWORDS

Institutional approach, ZISWaf, Agro-Food, Idle land, Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of idle land is not only synonymous in our country – Malaysia, but in most countries. Ironically, for a developing country, the economic downturn factor is not because of the lack of fertile land resources that can be used as agricultural areas, but rather abandoned or some constraint for the community to cultivate it. The issue of unused land has existed since the early days of Islam. Idle land is known as '*al-mawat*' or land that is left barren, and uncultivated but owned by someone and is abandoned for three consecutive years. To assist the government's efforts to address the issue of idle land, the method of setting the period for land development can be refined.

The determination of this period was done in the time of *Sayyida Umar al-Khattab*. He set the condition that the land should be explored and cultivated continuously for a period of three years. Failure to do so will result in the landowner being deprived of that property rights and the land will be given to a new operator as a farmer, so the benefits of the land continue to be cultivated. However, land ownership in Malaysia is based on the Torrens System Land Title registration. Ownership signifies legal property rights to a person who becomes the owner of a piece of land or house under the National Land Code 1965 through a land grant to be given as documented evidence (Buang, 2010). So, through this system, uncultivated land will become abandoned and will not be deprived of its ownership. This is a phenomenon of loss that occurs because it is not taken advantage of.

This paper provides research on idle agricultural land as it is considered a waste of economic resources if not utilized. this will also lead to wastage of labour capital or migration of farmer labour to other sectors. Looking at this problem, the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah (almsgiving) and Waqf (ZISWaf) Institution is one of the potential institutions to activate idle lands to provide benefits to the community and contributors to the agro-food sector. Therefore, ZISWaf institutions are Islamic institutions that manage, or handle funds obtained from zakat, infaq, shadaqah and waqf. Therefore, using descriptive analysis, this study uses inductive and deductive methods from existing studies to suggest or answer how Islamic financial mechanisms and instruments can activate idle agricultural land and improve the socio-economic well-being of the *ummah*.

2. Definition of Idle Land

Basically, according to the Department of Agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry Malaysia (MAFI) defines idle land as land or paddy field land with a minimum area of 0.4 hectares and above either contiguous or scattered which is owned land that has not been cultivated for three consecutive years. Based on the National Land Code of Malaysia, show that idle land can be defined as land with a freehold title or temporary occupation license that meets one of the following criteria (Vincent & Ali 2010):

1. Paddy field land that has not been cultivated or used for grazing purposes for three consecutive years.
2. Paddy field land provided with physical infrastructure for multiple cultivations but with only single cultivation.

3. Paddy field land planted with crops other than paddy.
4. Rubber and other croplands that are abandoned or not fully used as rarely tapped.

Mustapha and Alam (1985) stated that the meaning of idle paddy field refers to a paddy field that has no yield production and is not used or idle for at least three consecutive years. In the case of land other than a paddy field, it refers to land for cultivation that has no yield production or is not utilized productively, and the land is neglected or lacks productivity which is not commensurate with the land advantage. Noor (2003) has divided idle land in Malaysia into three categories namely neglected and abandoned land immediately after granting, abandoned and unproductive land in the land settlement plan program, and existing idle land neglected for permanent crop cultivation and paddy field.

2.1. Factors that Cause Land Become Idle Land

Many factors cause the land to become idle land. Some of the reasons are very complex and contain various factors but most of them are solely due to economic factors. Whatever the reason, it needs to be solved so as not to give more serious implications and tend to be wastage to the detriment of the Nation.

In Malaysia, the determination of idle land lots carried out by the Department of Agriculture is according to the spatial method based on the matching of land use data with the cadastral map. The information obtained is then verified at the field level to verify the idle land lot. Idle land information is dynamic and constantly changing from time to time based on the addition of new idle land area that meets the definition of idle land and the reduction of idle land area with the implementation of development projects.

In 2019, the Department of Agriculture identified a total of 103,563 hectares of idle land involving 46,382 lots in Peninsular Malaysia, including in the Federal Territory of Labuan. Idle lands that have been identified are as follows:

Table 1: Statistics of Idle Land

BNO.	STATE	NO. OF LOT	AREA (Ha.)
1.	<u>Johor</u>	4,561	10,098
2.	<u>Kedah</u>	1,774	2,655
3.	<u>Kelantan</u>	3,690	4,815
4.	<u>Melaka</u>	1,915	2,332
5.	<u>Negeri Sembilan</u>	5,885	11,324
6.	<u>Pahang</u>	11,292	29,391
7.	<u>Perak</u>	4,004	11,013
8.	<u>Perlis</u>	14	12
9.	<u>Pulau Pinang</u>	877	2,622
10.	<u>Selangor</u>	4,485	20,058
11.	<u>Terengganu</u>	7,027	7,862
12.	<u>Wp Labuan</u>	858	1,381
	TOTAL	46,382	103,563

Source: [Department of Agriculture Official Portal](#)

A study conducted by Dardak (2015) stated that the contributor to the increase in idle agricultural land is due to labour shortage factors. The agricultural sector is also dependent on foreign labour. Studies from Hussein and Thiran (1982) also showed that labour shortages, low paddy land productivity, high outside farm income, water scarcity and multiple land ownership were significant variables influencing farmers' decision to leave their paddy field land and abandoned that land. Research conducted by Anem (2009) found that the factors that turn land into idle land are small areas, scattered locations, uneconomical farms for cultivation, farmers losing interest and changing sectors, no road facilities and basic amenities, quality problems land (peat soil), high-cost startup, high development costs (over RM20,000/ha), difficult to verify landowners and limited government assistance and subsidy programs.

According to Hitam (1986), land use occurs in a sphere that includes physical, economic, and social. Physical limits for agriculture determine that land use must comply with climate, soil, and topography. The Economics of production guides owners to sustainable land use to determine the factors of production to obtain the highest return from the land. In turn, social and institutional factors also influence land use. Because of this, the land needs to be identified so that it can be cultivated to make it productive. Therefore, necessities such as labour, tools, capital, and seeds are important. Sometimes, the problem of the absence of one or more of these production factors, or in situations when landowners are unable to cultivate their land due to reasonable limiting factors such as prolonged disease or ageing, results in a tendency to fallow land (Shafiai & Moi, 2015).

The study conducted by Rani and Mahalle (2015) categorizes into four factors that result in the occurrence of idle land which include demographic factors, crop type factors, marketing place factors and personal factors. Demographic factors such as age and work culture where the field studies found that the average farmer who has reached the age of 55 years and above cannot afford to work on their agricultural sites and agricultural activities are also done only as a side income (Zainalabidin Mohamed, 2005). As for the crop type factor, farmers prefer crops that are more profitable and that do not require high maintenance costs such as permanent crop types which result in idle land if the land is not suitable for the desired crop.

The marketing factor is the unsuitability of where farmers market their agricultural products. Agricultural produce must be sold at an appropriate place so that it can reduce middlemen in the chain so that commodity costs do not increase due to speculative factors that cause food price spikes (Rani & Mahalle, 2015). Through appropriate marketing channels, farmers' agricultural products are also easily sold and can avoid oppression from middlemen. Personal factors are referring to the community's declining interest in the agricultural sector. The study found that more than 50% of farmers are not concerned with making certain preparations for cultivation activities of their agricultural land even though they have the ability for that, no planning, no agricultural tools, no nurseries, and no seeds. Even worse, some apply for agricultural land to be used only as heritage property (Rani & Mahalle, 2015).

Based on previous studies, there are various causes of idle land in Malaysia. Mustapha and Alam (1985) mentioned that the situation that causes idle land in Malaysia is migration. In this situation, it is played by three

players namely youth, small farmer entrepreneurs and tenants. The migration of small farmers is due to the small size of their farms coupled with the pressures of increasing population, large household size and increasing labour-land ratio. From the perspective of land tenants, migration is due to their difficulty in renting good land or more land, unsecured holdings and unfair or unprofitable fixed lease cultivation agreements.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Hitam (1986) found that the factor of idle land in Peninsular Malaysia occurs due to factors of landform, land distance, employment outside the field of agriculture, age of trees and agricultural methods or technology. This study was conducted in the Hulu Selangor district among Malay small rubber planters. Meanwhile, Sivalingam (1993) stated that idle land occurs because lowlands have access difficulties due to a lack of transport facilities, high production costs, labour shortages and inability to purchase machinery, poor soil quality, drainage and irrigation, and labour migration to other more profitable economic sectors.

Buang (2001) describes four main causes of agricultural land in Malaysia being abandoned as an unfavourable physical property. The first is the soil factors namely climate, topography, soil type, water supply, accessibility, and constraints of economic and social conditions such as large holding size. The second is the skills factor, which is a lack of technical knowledge, skilled labour and having severe machinery. Third are economic factors namely expensive inputs, unpredictable market prospects and biased competition from the non-agricultural sector. Next are the social factors which are negative attitudes and behaviours in the farming community, such as mistrust, disagreements of agricultural expertise, and self-important attitudes among landowners.

A further study by Vincent and Ali (2010) stated that land can become idle because the land's owner does not have strong finances to develop their land. This study also supports the fact that the occurrence of idle land is due to the outmigration of labour from the agricultural sector which is mostly small farmers to other sectors such as services and manufacturing that generate more than average income from agriculture. In addition, Azima and Ismail (2009) divide factors into formal and informal constraints. Under the formal factor, there are three main reasons including customary land rules or customary land owned by sisters and multiple relatives, financial support conditions and loss of lease agreements. As for informal constraints, there are more common factors such as job dropouts, financial incapacity, low location, old age and fear of risk, limited land for rent, and passive and carefree attitudes.

The factors that contribute to the occurrence of idle land need to be solved immediately so as not to complicate the situation in the future. The government should immediately take care of the phenomenon of idle land in Malaysia because the first occurrence of idle land is a symbol of loss to the economy since the land is a productive resource, but it does not add value. Second, idle land is associated with high poverty rates in rural areas where it can be used to boost the local economy. Third, the existence of idle land raises doubts about the wisdom to pursue new land development (Vincent & Ali 2010).

3. ZIFWaF Institution Approach

The need for an institutional approach to the issue of idle agricultural land is based on the rules, frameworks, and management of various organizations responsible for addressing this issue to preserve food security. To form an institutional approach, there are scientific studies and approaches on institutional concepts and institutional elements related to idle land. Institutions responsible for food security and the agro-food sector are key institutions in solving the problem of idle agricultural land. This is because idle agricultural land will give a negative perspective on the agro-food sector and food security management. The basic standard of food security is considered to be the agro-food system, which covers a wide range of activities, including production, processing, sales and retail trade ([Maxwell et al., 1999](#)).

The related institutional component considers two types of factors, first is internal, namely the institutions that create food security. The second is external which is having a direct or indirect influence on agricultural development, which includes legal institutions, liaison institutions, regulatory institutions, and the institutional environment ([Bondarev et al., 2019](#)). In Malaysia, the institution responsible for making food security is the MAFI and in addition, the ZISWaf institution as an Islamic economic institution can give a direct influence on agricultural development including the development of idle land. Looking to the ZISWaf institution where the funds and framework have the support of the public and are closer to small or poor farmers and which is one of the factors as agricultural land cultivators. Consistent with North's ([1990](#)) view, which sees institutions as a way of life of individuals or communities that are collectively stable and organized and any change in institutions will bring about change in society.

Samuels (1990) has defined an institution as a set of rules that affect human economic life. Administration and management in an institution will shape the pattern of action or culture in a society. Therefore, the changes in actions and policies caused by the development of institutions should build the situation, the environment and even the economic chain that benefits society. Brinkerhoff in Israel ([1989](#)) also supports institutional development as a process that forms a new plan for ongoing activities and behaviours over time because the development of these institutions is supported by the norms and values of a society. Thus, institutional development can also be defined as a process of increasing the capacity of institutions to mobilize existing financial and human resources that can be utilized effectively ([Israel, 1989](#)).

For example, among the things that contribute to the issue of idle agricultural land is the problem of allocation in the terms of financial loans raised by banking institutions ([Manaf, 2007](#)). The terms of the financial loan will influence the landowner to leave the land abandoned for refusing to engage in usury and worrying about not being able to repay the loan. Conflict also arises when there are differences of opinion regarding the importance of renting land between those involved ([Manaf, 2007](#)). Agreements between landowners and farmers often lead to conflicts where they do not trust each other, emphasize each other's profits to the point of dissatisfaction and the tenancy period is too long. This shows that the institutional approach is important and the ZISWaf institution can be an alternative in dealing with idle agricultural land which can provide finance

from ZISWaf funds to cover the cost of idle land development and in addition, can create Islamic contracts between landowners and farmers by prioritizing mutual benefits and to society.

3.1. Findings: Waqf Management by ZISWaf Institution

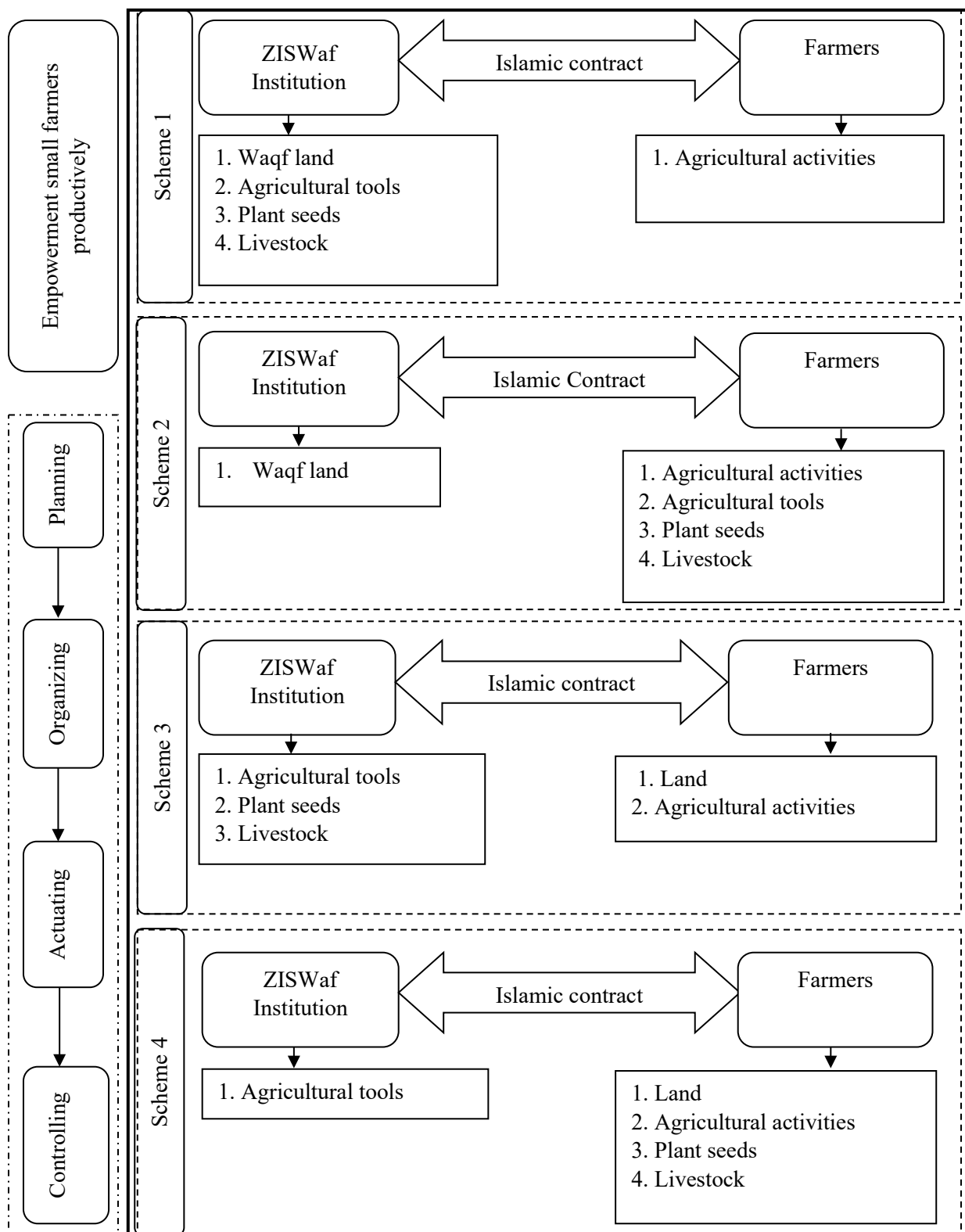
One of the ways to increase productivity and the agro-food sector is through the concept of developing agricultural land in idle land by government institutions or private institutions. Among the methods that may be implemented by the institution is an agricultural endowment. The *waqf* instrument is synonymous with the development of idle agricultural land. Where ZISWaf Institutions also need to play a comprehensive role when required to institutions specialized in agriculture. Othman (2011) also believes that comprehensive efforts should be made to ensure that waqf institutions can play their role to benefit all.

In this writing, look at the form of ZISWaf management recommended by previous Islamic scholars divided into four schemes as shown in figure 1. The first scheme is waqf land, agricultural tools, plant seeds and livestock provided by the ZISWaf institutions while agricultural activities (efforts) are carried out by farmers. In the basic context, ZISWaf institutions will provide funds for an agricultural start-up, while labour is provided by farmers. Thus, in this context, the scheme can be used to obtain seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides along with irrigation, storage, and marketing requirements of agricultural commodities. The ZISWaf institutions can use the waqf land and then give it to potential farmers to cultivate it according to the productive method. In this case, the ZISWaf institutions hold the trust as the custodian of the waqf land and cooperate with the farmers.

The second scheme is waqf land provided by the ZISWaf institutions and the rest is provided by farmers different from the first scheme, in the second scheme, farmers provide agricultural tools, plant seeds and livestock and then do agricultural activities. In this context, farmers have the equipment to carry out agricultural activities but do not have or cannot afford to rent land for cultivation. The third scheme is the ZISWaf institutions' assistance in funds for agricultural tools, plant seeds and livestock while farmers have land and will also engage in agricultural activities. And the fourth scheme, the ZISWaf institutions only assists in the equipment of agricultural tools while the farmers already have land, plant seeds, and livestock and do agricultural activities.

Agricultural tools, plant seeds and livestock are productive assistance that can be given directly which aims to help increase the efficiency and improvement of agricultural activities to a better level. For assistance in terms of land will involve large and limited costs. In this way, waqf property can be used to have economic value as well as be a productive waqf since waqf property has economic value in it when used productively. Waqf management for agricultural land will involve Islamic contracts in developing waqf property while improving the economic ability of farmers based on the scope and principles that exist in the Islamic waqf law so that there is no wastage of waqf property and failure of farmers. Among such contracts can be applied *musaqah*, contract of *muzaraah*, *mukhabarah* and contract of *Ijarah* (Mohamed & Shafiai, 2021b).

Figure 1: The Role of ZISWaf Institutions as A Solution

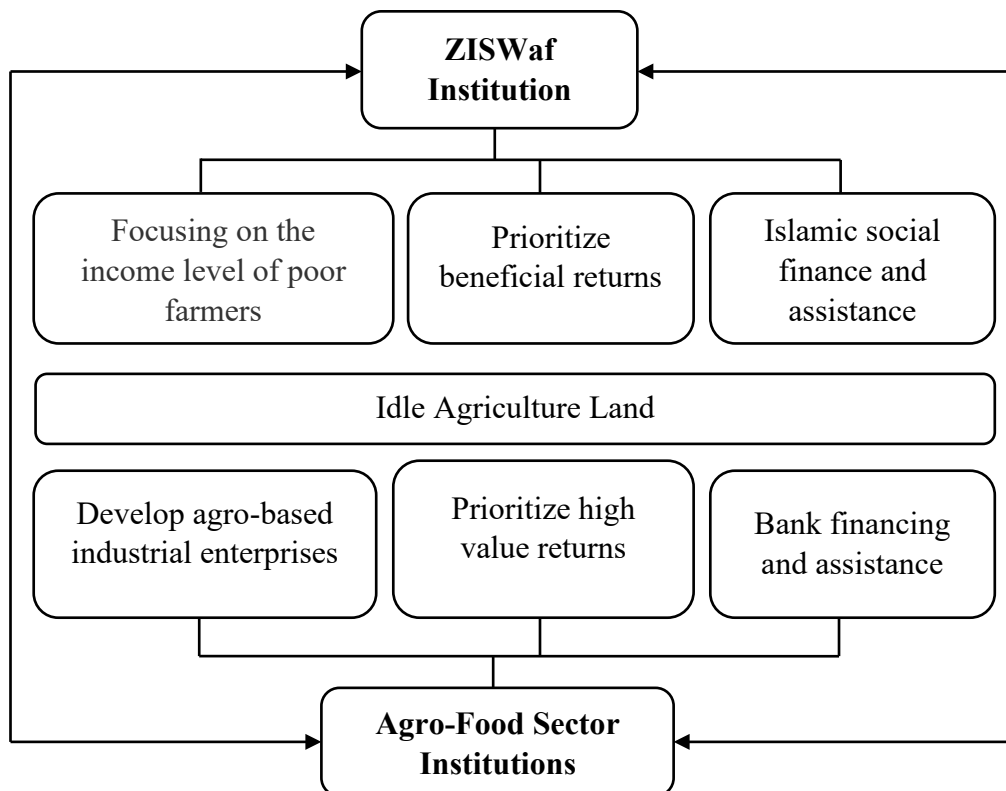


Source: Mohamed and Shafiai (2021a)

Waqf in Malaysia is growing from time to time through legislation. Unlike in the past when waqf moved undocumented. Those who intend to endow their land only verbally express their desire to hand over their land as a charity endowment (waqf) in the presence of two Muslim witnesses. The appointment of waqf managers is

also from those who are not able to administer, manage and develop waqf land (Ismail et al., 2015). Due to this problem, the administration of waqf without legal provisions in the past has resulted in inefficient and unsystematic administration of waqf land or waqf property. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a special endowment institution and focus on the agro-food sector which has a single master plan which connects the endowment institution and the agro-food institution.

Figure 2: ZISWaf Institutional Concept Framework in the Agro-food Sector



Based on figure 2, through an institutional approach in activating abandoned land, ZISWaf institutions and agro-food sector institutions can play their respective roles objectively. ZISWaf institutions need to prioritize objectives that produce socio-economic returns to the community, which is to focus on the income levels of poor farmers, prioritize returns that develop the community and optimize Islamic social finance and aid. This Islamic social finance instrument can play an important role in addressing socioeconomic issues by reducing poverty, creating job opportunities, reducing unemployment and economic disparity, strengthening equitable distribution of wealth and income, supporting social justice and equality, promoting financial inclusion, and promoting comprehensive human development (Mohamed & Shafiai, 2022). Institutions in the agro-food sector can focus on developing agro-based industrial enterprises, prioritizing high-value returns to the country and providing bank financing and assistance. Therefore, the institutions of the agro-food sector will be able to pay more attention to the return of profits to the country through the agricultural sector apart from welfare programs.

Institutions that manage zakat, infaq, shadaqah and waqf need to be agro-food oriented to drive efficient and systematic management. The focus of the framework and administration of waqf institutions on the agro-food sector is important to create a clear point of purpose towards the objectives that prioritize returns that benefit the community. Most waqf institutions have many branches of framework and administration other than agro-food which causes obstacles and constraints in the distribution of waqf benefits. This is worth discussing because the agro-food sector is extensive and very important in building food security sustainable.

The study of Farouk et al. (2019) sees the legal framework and implementation of waqf in Kano State. This study discusses the challenges affecting the efficient and systematic implementation and management of waqf property in Kano State. He concluded that the strategies and policies of poverty eradication in Islam are multidimensional, one of which is waqf. Waqf institutions are designed to reach all areas of social welfare and socio-economic development of the Muslim community. Therefore, the waqf institution in Kano State, faces so many challenges in legislation as well as its practical implementation and causing it to fail to achieve the desired objectives in terms of efficient administration, resource management and increased revenue inflows to support the high demand for waqf social services.

In addition to driving the growth of large-scale agro-based industries by prioritizing profit returns and increasing the value of agricultural commodities in the market, the small farmers' group cannot be excluded. There is no doubt that agro-food sector institutions including banking institutions that create agricultural programs need to prioritize profit returns so that the agro-food industry is more competitive and high-income. Therefore, ZISWAF institutions can play a role in supporting agro-food sector institutions by creating agricultural programs that prioritize benefits to the community. Bello (2009) sees ZISWAF institutions through waqf can help with material infrastructure and revenue streams to support social welfare programs at the family, community, and state levels. The study emphasizes the institution of waqf as an effective instrument in Islam to combat the challenges of endemic poverty to promote social balance and increase welfare in society.

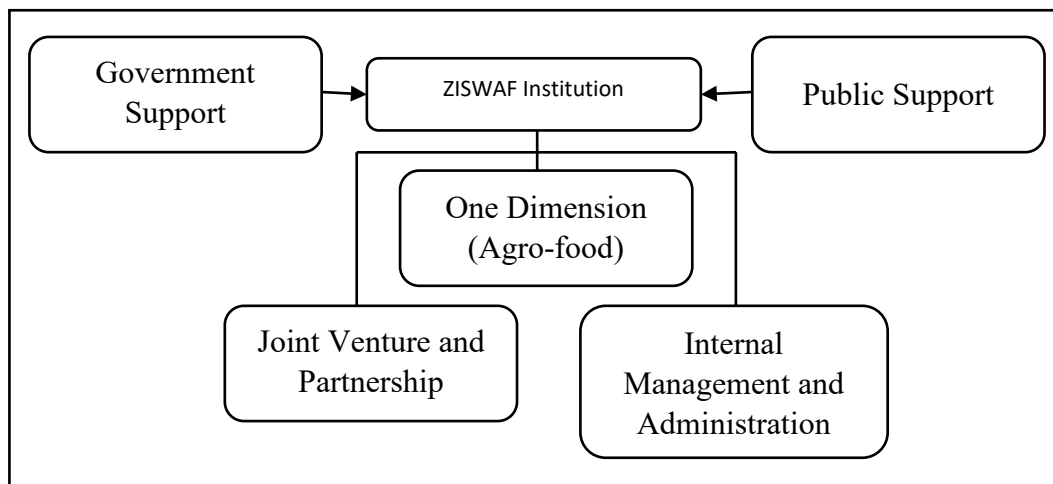
Azima and Ismail (2009) and supported by Mustapha et al. (2013) stressed that the agricultural sector is an important sector as it allows for significant savings in reducing the volume of product imports. Nevertheless, concerns about existing idle agricultural land and low productivity must be managed to solve the domestic production shortages. Cizakca (2004), El-Gari (2004) and Mohsin (2008) suggested the establishment of Islamic financial institutions based on waqf. Capital to set up an Islamic financial institution will be generated from wealthy Muslims and cash waqf donors who will deposit cash waqf with the institution. The objective of this institution is basically to finance entrepreneurs through Islamic financing methods. This can be managed by the ZISWAF institution as an alternative to poor and small farmers in developing idle land.

3.2. Theoretical Framework of Agro-Food Waqf Modus Operandi

The findings section of the study will discuss the relevance of this study with the aim of the study which is to examine the descriptive ability of institutional approaches in the context of dealing with idle land. In

connection with that, research on ZISWAF institutions in their implementation is seen to build a comprehensive theoretical and practical framework. The ZISWAF institutional approach for the agro-food sector to the issue of idle land is divided into five approaches.

Figure 3: ZISWaf Institutional Approach Framework



Based on figure 3 above, below is the explanation:

3.3. Approach 1: One Dimension (Agro-food)

A study discusses the challenges that affect the implementation and management of waqf property towards efficient and systematic management. That study stated the strategy and administrative policy in managing ZISWaf properties are multidimensional and one of them is waqf. A waqf institution is utilized to reach out and take care of all areas of social welfare and socio-economic development of the Muslim community (Farouk et al., 2019). This makes the ZISWaf institution unable to act thoroughly for one sector. The objectives, mission, and vision of each established ZISWaf institution should focus on one dimension so that the string of matters can have an efficient and systematic impact on data management, documentation, accounting information, expertise, collaboration, administration and government and public support.

For information, the State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) is an institution that has full authority over ZISWaf properties, but its authority is only limited to the respective states. In addition, MAIN does not have comprehensive authority in the agricultural sector which results in ZISWaf funds not being able to be optimized effectively and beneficially in the agricultural food commodity sector. MAIN efforts will not respond to the real issue of national food security. MAFI is an institution that is responsible for and makes policies for food security in Malaysia but has no authority over ZISWaf's properties. Therefore, Agro-Food Waqf Institution will be an institution that coordinates MAFI and MAIN through strategic cooperation and continuous collaboration. MAFI as the federal government and MAIN as the state government will empower the country's agro-food sector along the food supply chain to improve food security.

3.4. Approach 2: Government Support

Government support can be through financial allocation support and expert support to facilitate land development. This form of support is important to form a ZISWaf institution from the beginning to become a stable institution. The financial allocation support is an initiative for ZISWaf institutions to move and equip various facilities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration, management, and development of waqf. From the aspect of expertise, the support is to facilitate the framework in the development of idle land in terms of advisory, economic and information on agro-food but coordinated in accordance with the objectives carried by the ZISWaf institution. In addition, legal support is also important to reduce constraints and obstacles in its implementation.

The State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) is the sole trustee for all waqf property as specified through Islamic legal acts or enactments in the states ([Ab Rahman, 2009](#)). Although MAIN has a large amount of potentially productive waqf land, most of the land is still neglected ([Pitchay et al., 2018](#)). Therefore, the Malaysian federal government has established the Department of Wakaf, Zakat, and Hajj (JAWHAR) and Malaysia Waqf Foundation (YWM) to coordinate the development of waqf property under MAIN. These entities are responsible for administering and managing matters related to waqf specifically. For now, the Malaysian government has been the main source of funding for MAIN to develop waqf land through many projects and developments ([Thaker & Pitchay, 2018](#)).

JAWHAR also published several guidelines for MAIN to improve their knowledge and practice ([Harun et al., 2017](#)). Government support for waqf development continues as the National Waqf Master Plan is currently being drafted. The Government is preparing the National Waqf Master Plan, which is a holistic plan to strengthen waqf management. The Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, said the plan was in line with the government's intention to make waqf part of the 12th Malaysia Plan framework and through the Budget 2022, the government allocated an initial fund of RM10 million to start the initiative of Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Halal Waqf, Agricultural Waqf and Disaster Waqf ([BH Online, 2021](#)).

3.5. Approach 3: Joint Venture and Partnership

ZISWaf institutions need joint ventures and partnerships to manage and solved the issue of idle agricultural land under their control. This allows ZISWaf institutions to expand their network to find the best alternatives in implementation through a diversity of expertise, research and development and agreement on outcomes that ultimately benefit the community. The main problem of waqf land development is financial resources ([Mohammad et al., 2007](#)). Such financial issues can be solved through ventures and partnerships. According to Mohammad et al. ([2007](#)) also, ZISWaf institutions act as landowners and enter partnerships with financiers or development companies. The company will seek funds for project financing. The way of collaboration between ZISWaf institutions and development companies can be continued either through *Mudarabah* or *Musharakah* partnerships.

From the perspective of idle agricultural land development, joint ventures and partnerships can also be done with stakeholders such as individuals, federal departments, state agencies, corporate institutions, financial institutions, and private firms. Joint ventures and partnerships between ZISWaf institutions and agro-food institutions can provide cooperation throughout the food supply chain and increase the development potential of agricultural waqf lands. In terms of agro-food institutions, they can contribute to the research, development, and information that they have been doing, modern agricultural technology as well as finance and everything related to the field of agriculture. On the other hand, the institution ZISWaf will provide agricultural waqf land to be developed and create an Islamic contract agreement with third parties for land cultivation activities. So here see the waqf institution also needs to cooperate with professionals who have certain expertise to make waqf property can be more productive ([Mahmood & Markom, 2014](#)).

The waqf system not only involves changes in the administration and implementation of waqf land but also needs to combine the efforts of all parties in finding the best policy that can be applied to their existing waqf management methods ([Shafiai et al., 2015](#)). In a nutshell, significant constraints to developing agricultural land also include farmers where financial incapacity is due to low farmers' income, low output prices and expensive inputs such as seeds and fertilizers ([Buang 2001](#); Sivalingam 1993; [Azima & Ismail 2009](#)). Therefore, joint ventures and partnerships can also be done between ZISWaf institutions and farmers to cover the gaps in developing agricultural land as well as to be rewarded with productive and consumptive *zakat*.

3.6. Approach 4: Public Support

The strength and uniqueness of the ZISWaf Institution are also based on the support of the public or the community and from the government support in the effort to the development of waqf agricultural land. Although the Federal Government has allocated several budgets through the Malaysia Plan to support the waqf system in Malaysia, the amount is not enough to develop a large area of waqf land (Jalil et al., 2019). Furthermore, the ZISWaf institution which strives to reach out to all welfare and look after all areas of social welfare and socio-economic development of the Muslim community will make the allocated budget look small and difficult to manage systematically in prioritizing the required sectors. As an example of the success of Wakaf FELDA that the focus of its establishment is to preserve the settler community and FELDA itself.

This situation can also be adjusted by creating an agro-Food Waqf to focus efforts on preserving the agro-food sector. Therefore, public support is important to realize this because the agro-food sector involves all in maintaining the sustainability of food supply and food security. One of the participations from the public can be done through financial donations in the form of cash. Cash waqf is considered a method of crowdfunding because it raises money from the public to fund the development of waqf land ([Thaker & Pitchay, 2018](#); Isa et al., 2011; Jalil et al., 2019; Isa et al., 2011). There are many waqf resources that can be introduced and implemented by ZISWaf institutions that use various concepts of waqf and Islamic finance that involve public participation. For example, ZISWaf institutions can introduce waqf products such as waqf shares which involve

the sale of certain property units which are then endowed, waqf *irsod* which involves land from the government and corporate waqf that involves individuals or corporate companies ([Mahamood et al., 2018](#)).

From the perspective of benefiting farmers, Shafiai et al. ([2015](#)) claim that instead of relying on banking facilities that introduce specialized financing services for farmers, the establishment of trust endowments can be considered as a possible alternative instrument to activate idle agricultural land by linking public support with farmers. In addition, two main scopes need to be highlighted, the first is to create a trust endowment that can overcome the issue of idle land and the second is a trust endowment to ensure the administration and implementation of institutions in fulfilling the idea of agricultural development. Waqf institutions need to be careful in implementing this trust to realize the aspirations of waqf because it faces the interests and rights of society ([Mahmood & Markom, 2014](#)).

3.7. Approach 5: Internal Management and Administration

Elements of internal management and administration are one of important aspects of managing ZISWaf institutions. The elements found in internal management and administration are the control environment, control activities, monitoring, information, and communication as well as risk assessment. All these elements are tools to control the management of an institution towards the better ([Mahmood et al., 2017](#)). Usually, management and administration problems arise because the assigned implementer is not skilled enough in handling various cases involving the management of waqf properties. Ineffective waqf management cause apprehension among waqf givers ([Noor Inayah, 2014](#)). Other than that, data management and storage are also important because of lack of data or loss of information about waqf land will cause difficulties to develop waqf land in the future ([Hussin & Rashid, 2015](#)).

In order to establish good internal management and administration of ZISWaf institutions in dealing with idle agricultural land, ZISWaf institutions need to standardize governance with agro-food institutions. This is aimed at improving management and administration that better understands the ins and outs of the agro-food sector. However, the work or implementation can be done in different ways according to the perspective of each institution. This orderliness will increase the trust and confidence of waqf givers, investors, communities and many stakeholders as internal management and administrative policies are in line with the agro-food sector. Due to this, ZISWaf institutions can hold more ongoing campaigns and promotions to build awareness and attract the public to participate in waqf, especially young people that involved in agriculture.

In addition to that, success and smoothness in the development of agricultural waqf land are through planning, organizing, action, monitoring and finally evaluation as a method of internal management and administration of institutions with farmers ([Mohamed & Shafiai, 2021a](#)). This is important to ensure that productive efforts on waqf land do not stop halfway or become fail. Most of the causes of idle agricultural land are due to the negligence of farmers in carrying out agricultural activities according to the agreed agreement

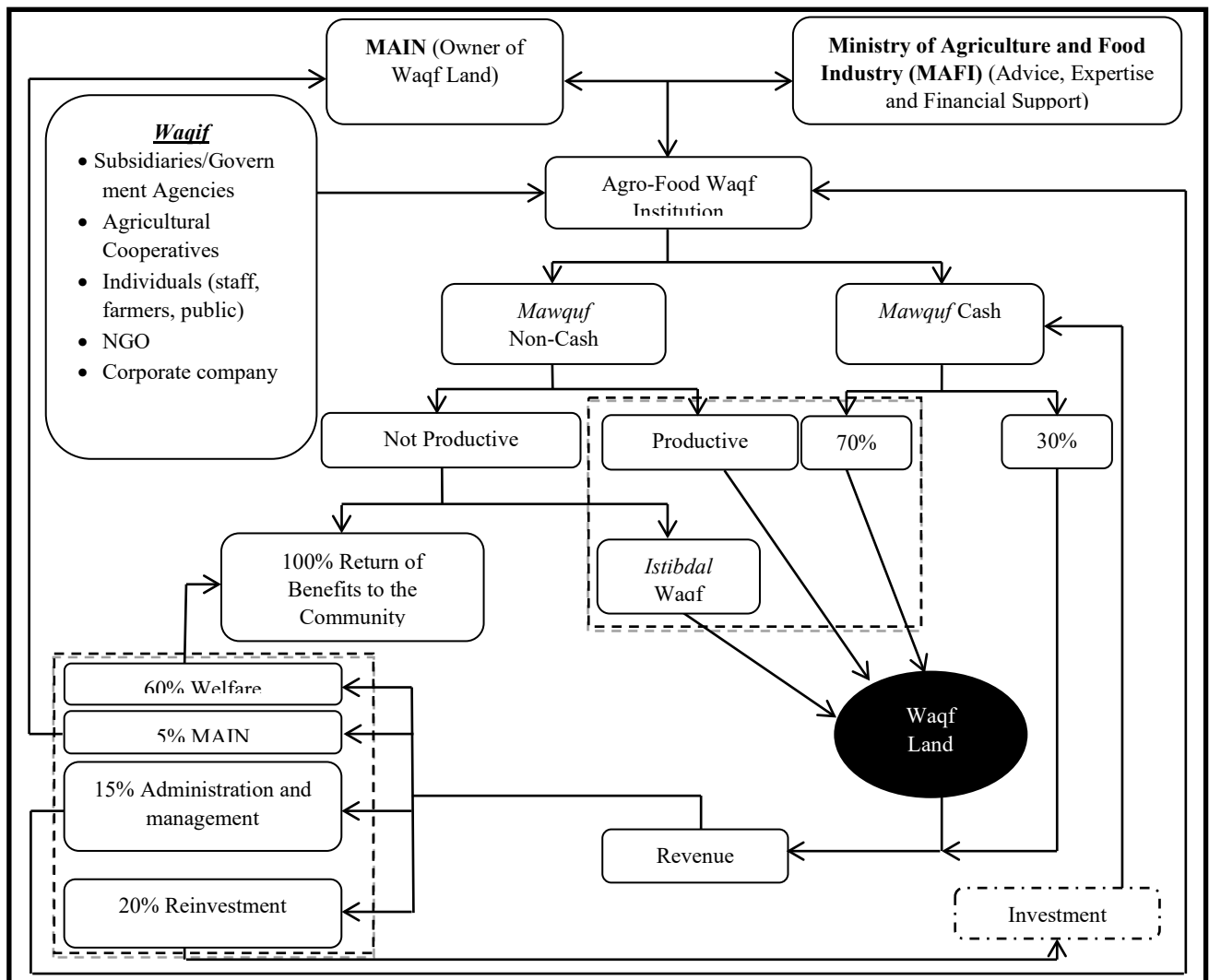
resulting in waqf land as a production site of agricultural products does not happen as expected ([Rani & Mahelle, 2015](#)).

3.8. ZISWaf Institution Modus Operandi (Agro-Food Waqf)

Agro-Food Waqf needs to be clear on the concept, principles of waqf implementation and the direction that will be used. It must be made in line with the needs of the agro-food sector without denying its compliance with current laws and fatwas of the state. This is because the matter of waqf is a state matter where any implementation needs to follow according to the regulation made by the state authorities.

This writing emphasizes and focuses on the discussion of agro-Food Waqf in dealing with idle agricultural land through an institutional approach. Nevertheless, its benefits and contribution to the agro-food sector can give a significant impact on the entire food supply chain and can also sustain food security. The following is the theoretical framework of the modus operandi of agro-Food Waqf in developing agricultural land:

Figure 4: Theoretical Framework of Agro-Food Waqf Modus Operandi



Source: Data processed from Aziz et al. (2013), Mahmood et al. (2018), Amin & Muda (2019), Wakaf Felda (2020), Mohamed & Shafiai (2021a)

Based on figure 4 above, cooperation needs to be established between the institutions responsible for the agro-food sector and the trustee of the institutions of ZISWaf resources, especially waqf. MAFI and the State Islamic Religious Council will enter joint ventures and partnerships to establish the management, administration, and institutional committee of agro-Food Waqf. The objectives of the agro-Food Waqf institution need to be outlined to reach an agreement and coordination to form the institutional system. Basically, the waqf implemented in the agro-Food Waqf institution is aimed at the development of agricultural waqf which prioritizes food commodities that can be a return of benefits to farmers and subsequently to society. Meanwhile, government agricultural institutions can boost the agricultural economy and elevate the agro-food sector to a higher level.

With the existence of the agro-Food Waqf institution, it requires resources or funds to operate. Initially, MAFI can provide financial support, expertise, and advice. Next, the agro-Food Waqf institution will introduce agricultural waqf products. There are many waqf resources that can be introduced and implemented that use various concepts of waqf and Islamic finance. Here, the internal management and administration of the agro-Food Waqf institution will promote various forms of waqf products including Islamic agreement contracts with farmers that are suitable for agriculture.

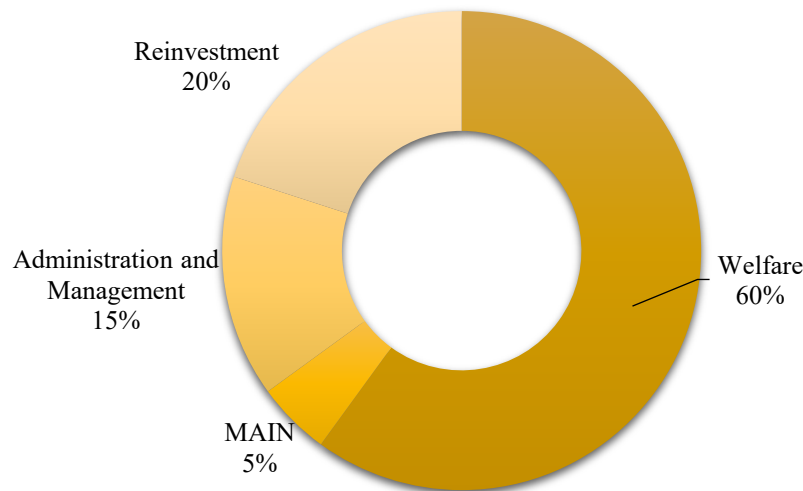
The waqf resources obtained will be divided into two, namely cash *mawquf* (endowed property in the form of money) and non-cash *mawquf* (endowed property such as movable property, immovable property, benefits, intellect, expertise, or services). Cash *mawquf* will be categorized into two, 70 percent will continue to be used for the development of waqf land to make the land generate income or revenue and 30 percent will be channelled directly to revenue. That 30 percent of cash *mawquf* is as a guarantee for the institution to carry out work without waiting for the return of revenue and is also important to ensure the continuity of the agro-Food Waqf institution.

Non-cash *mawquf* will be identified whether it can be productive or unproductive towards the development of waqf land and the agro-food sector. If the *mawquf* is productive, it will continue to be used, such as land, machinery, storage warehouses and farming tools. Whereas if the *mawquf* is unproductive it will be categorized into two, the first is not productive but has the potential to be *istibdal*. *Istibdal* can be done when a waqf property has no revenue to can be obtained from the property or when it is found that a waqf property is no longer brings any benefit or it no longer fulfils the original purpose of the waqf (Amin & Muda, 2019). The second is an unproductive but charitable property whose benefits can be used by the farming community consumptively.

From the theoretical framework of the modus operandi of agro-Food Waqf, it has seen the source of cash *mawquf* of 70 percent, productive non-cash *mawquf* and *istibdal* waqf property will be allocated in financing agricultural waqf land development activities and will generate income or to earn revenue. From time to time, agricultural waqf land will be added value as well as will create employment opportunities for the local community and improve the economy of the farming community. However, the management and administration

of the institution must delegate a person to monitor each program or project of agricultural waqf land so that it is in the correct planning.

Figure 5: Revenue Distribution of Agro-Food Waqf Institutions



Source: Data processed from Aziz et al. (2013), Mahamood et al. (2018), Amin & Muda (2019), Wakaf Felda (2020), Mohamed & Shafiai (2021a)

Next is the result of revenue. Based on figure 5 above, revenue distribution will be distributed based on the percentage that is the highest percentage of 60% is distributed for welfare and benefits to meet the purpose of waqf and the objectives of waqf institutions while the second highest is for reinvestment that is 20% invested in shariah compliant investments and its returns will be used for the development of agricultural waqf land and will be redistributed the revenue again. Next is 15% to cover the cost of administration and management of the institution and 5% will be distributed to MAIN as the trustee of waqf property.

4. CONCLUSION

Through our perspective as an *ummah*, the Islamic agricultural economy should be upheld and prioritized by all as an alternative to other economic systems, especially capitalism. Strongly suggested that Islamic economists place more emphasis on research for agricultural development. Factors that cause the land to become idle land is due to labour factors, multiple land ownership, limited government assistance and subsidy programs, marketing place factors, difficulty in renting good land or more land, the owner does not have strong finances to develop their land and outmigration of farmers from the agricultural sector to another sector.

The institutional approach of ZISWaf or MAIN can realize the concept of implementing agro-Food Waqf institutions where it is a necessity in fulfilling the gap and boosting the economy of the agro-food sector through various unique products or Islamic social financial agreement contracts, especially in the issue of idle

agricultural land. However, MAIN will not be able to implement it by itself alone. The issue of idle agricultural land under the jurisdiction of MAIN is mainly due to insufficient funds and a lack of experience or expertise in the agro-food sector. MAIN is an institution that has full authority over ZISWaf properties, but its authority is only limited to the respective states. In addition, MAIN does not have comprehensive authority in the agricultural sector which results in ZISWaf funds not being able to be optimized effectively and beneficially in the agricultural food commodity sector.

Therefore, Agro-Food Waqf Institution will be an institution that coordinates MAFI and MAIN through strategic cooperation and continuous collaboration. It can apply the ZISWaf management recommended by previous Islamic scholars divided into four schemes to activate idle agricultural land with proper coordination. The Agro-Food Waqf Institution is one institutional approach for the agro-food sector to the issue of idle land is divided into five approaches, namely approach 1: one dimension, approach 2: government support, approach 3: joint venture and partnership, approach 4: public support and approach 5: internal management and administration.

In addition to its own initiatives, MAIN and MAFI as an Agro-Food Waqf Institution need a creative movement in partnering with private companies, developers, and public participation to enhance its role in managing the issue of idle agricultural land. Finally, the author hopes that this coordination can create a ZISWaf institution so that it is in every food supply chain and not only focused on the issue of idle land so that it can expand cooperation to the entire agricultural sector and further elevate this institution to the world stage. Strongly recommended once again that Islamic economists place more emphasis on research for agricultural development.

FUNDING: The authors did not receive any external funding.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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