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## Implementation of Food and Cash Assistance for Sustainable Welfare: A Sharia Economic Perspective in Eastern Gorom Ambon

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### Abstract

**Objective:** This study explores the implementation of food and cash assistance programs aimed at improving sustainable community welfare from a Sharia economic perspective in Aran Village, East Gorom District, Eastern Seram Regency, Maluku Province. The objective is to critically examine the distribution process and assess the socio-economic impacts of these programs, particularly within the framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 1 (No Poverty), and Goal 2 (Zero Hunger). **Theoretical framework:** The theoretical framework is grounded in concepts of social welfare, equitable distribution of social aid, and the Islamic economic principles of justice (‘adl) and mutual care (ta‘awun), emphasizing the government's role in alleviating poverty through inclusive and ethical means. **Literature review:** The literature review draws from prior studies on the effectiveness of social assistance schemes, challenges in beneficiary targeting, and the importance of synergy between central and local governments in ensuring program sustainability. **Methods:** This study employs a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, field observations, and secondary data analysis from government reports and institutional records. Data were gathered from various community actors, including aid recipients, local administrators, and program implementers. **Results:** Findings indicate that the distribution of basic food and cash assistance in Aran Village has been relatively well-executed, contributing to short-term relief and partial improvement in community welfare. However, significant challenges remain, including misidentification of eligible beneficiaries, limited budget allocations, logistical constraints due to geographic isolation, and weak inter-agency coordination. From a Sharia economic perspective, these inefficiencies contradict the ethical mandate to uphold justice and prioritize those most in need. **Implications:** The study concludes that enhancing transparency, refining verification mechanisms, and strengthening intergovernmental cooperation are crucial for achieving more effective, equitable, and sustainable aid delivery. Furthermore, integrating Islamic economic values into policy design can enhance the spiritual and ethical dimensions of poverty alleviation efforts in remote Muslim-majority areas. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in its localized focus on a remote region rarely studied in academic literature and its incorporation of Sharia economic insights in analyzing the practical challenges of aid distribution within the SDGs context.

**Keywords:** social assistance distribution, community welfare, sustainable development goals (sdgs), sharia economics, eastern gorom ambon.

## INTRODUCTION

The issue of poverty and inequality remains one of the most pressing challenges facing developing countries, including Indonesia. In remote and underdeveloped regions such as Aran Village in East Gorom District, Eastern Seram Regency, access to basic needs like food, clean water, and economic resources is still limited. To address these problems, the Indonesian government has implemented various social protection programs, including the distribution of basic food (*sembako*) and cash assistance (*bantuan tunai*) as part of its national poverty alleviation strategy. These programs also align with global commitments to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 1 (No Poverty), Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) [1].

Despite the ongoing implementation of these programs, there is a noticeable lack of research that critically evaluates their effectiveness in remote and marginalized communities. Most existing studies tend to focus on urban or more accessible rural areas, leaving a research gap in understanding how such interventions function in geographically isolated regions like Eastern Gorom. This gap is critical because logistical barriers, cultural differences, and administrative inefficiencies in these regions often compromise the intended outcomes of national welfare programs. Moreover, while numerous evaluations have emphasized economic or administrative dimensions, very few have integrated Islamic economic perspectives—particularly those grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law)—in assessing the justice, fairness, and ethical execution of these programs [2].

This study, therefore, addresses two significant research gaps: the geographical underrepresentation of remote areas like Aran Village in welfare studies and the minimal incorporation of Sharia economic principles in evaluating public assistance programs. It seeks to answer the following fundamental question: How effectively are food and cash assistance programs implemented in Aran Village, and to what extent do these initiatives support sustainable community welfare in accordance with Islamic economic ethics and SDG goals? [3].

The significance of this research lies in its multidimensional approach. First, by focusing on Aran Village, the study brings attention to the voices and experiences of communities often left out of policy evaluations. These insights are crucial for achieving inclusive development and localized solutions that are sensitive to cultural and geographical specificities. Second, the integration of Sharia economics offers a moral and spiritual dimension to welfare discourse, highlighting values such as *ʿadl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *taʿāwun* (mutual assistance). These principles encourage a holistic understanding of welfare that goes beyond material relief and includes dignity, empowerment, and ethical governance [3].

Furthermore, the timing of this research is especially relevant. In the post-pandemic recovery period, social safety nets have become more vital than ever, but budget constraints and growing inequality demand that welfare programs be more efficient, targeted, and ethically sound. Analyzing how assistance is distributed in remote areas from both practical and ethical standpoints can contribute significantly to policy refinement, especially in ensuring that national programs reach the most vulnerable populations. In conclusion, this study aims to contribute to the literature on welfare distribution by offering new insights into the challenges and potentials of food and cash assistance in remote Muslim-majority regions. By bridging the empirical realities of Aran Village with the normative ideals of Sharia economics and the global framework of the SDGs, this research aspires to inform policymakers, scholars, and practitioners about how to make welfare programs more inclusive, effective, and ethically grounded [4].

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) abbreviated as BLT, is not a new thing in Indonesia. It has been since 2005 when BLT was launched for the first time until it continued in 2009 and was renamed Temporary Direct Community Assistance (BLSM). Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) is assistance provided by the government to the poor in the form of cash to help them face economic difficulties amid rising fuel prices. Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) is one of the many models of social support schemes based on social support [5].

Not only in Indonesia, several other countries have also adopted social assistance programs as one of the social safety net strategies, both in the form of cash and non-cash. Cash Social Assistance (BST) is assistance in the form of money given to families classified as poor, unemployed/underprivileged. This is done as an effort by the government to overcome the impact of poverty. In this case, to solve problems in the social field, the government has prepared several program innovations to be carried out to overcome the problems faced by the Indonesian people. Based on the decision of the Minister of Social Affairs, the government created the Cash Social Assistance program. Cash Social Assistance (BST) is assistance in the form of money given to families classified as poor, unfortunate/underprivileged [6].

The policy is a written rule that is a formal decision of the organization, which is binding and regulates behavior to create a new value system in society. The policy will be the main reference for members of the organization or members of society in behavior. Public policy is decisions that are binding on the public at a strategic or outline level made by public authority holders [7]. As a decision that is binding on the public, public policy must be made by political authorities, namely those who receive a mandate from the public or the public, generally through an election process to act on behalf of the people and in the interests of the people. Implementation is defined as the interaction between the preparation of goals and the means of action in achieving those goals, or the ability to connect in causal relationships between the desired and the means to achieve them Pressman and Wildavsky [8].

Novelty of the Study. This study presents a unique contribution by combining an empirical investigation of food and cash assistance implementation in a geographically remote area with an evaluative framework grounded in Sharia economics and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While many studies on social assistance programs in Indonesia focus on urban or semi-urban settings, this research specifically targets Aran Village in East Gorom, a region that is rarely examined in academic literature due to its logistical inaccessibility and limited exposure to national policy evaluations.

The novelty lies in the integration of Sharia economic principles—such as justice (‘adl), mutual care (ta‘āwun), and protection of essential needs (ḍarūriyyāt)—into the assessment of government welfare initiatives. This ethical lens adds depth to the analysis, moving beyond technical or economic effectiveness to consider moral accountability and social equity. Furthermore, by aligning its findings with key SDG targets (Goals 1, 2, and 10), the study bridges local realities with global development agendas, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and context-sensitive policy design. This dual-framework approach—Sharia economics and SDGs—offers a fresh, multidimensional perspective that can inform more holistic and just models of welfare distribution in underserved regions [8].

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The implementation of social assistance programs, both in the form of basic food assistance and cash assistance, has become a topic that has been widely researched in the context of public policy and social welfare. In the existing literature, social assistance is seen as an important instrument in reducing poverty and improving

people's living standards [9]. In Indonesia itself, programs such as Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) and Cash Social Assistance (BST) have been implemented since the early 2000s in response to economic pressures, including rising fuel prices and the global economic crisis. Policy Implementation Theory In the context of public policy, implementation is a crucial phase that bridges policy formulation with real results in the field [10].

Pressman and Wildavsky stated that implementation is the process of interaction between policy objectives and the means used to achieve them. This includes the distribution mechanisms, the actors involved, and the local context that influences the course of the policy. Social Assistance as a Policy Instrument Social assistance for cash and necessities is often considered a short-term strategic step in dealing with poverty and economic inequality [11].

Lusk & Amanda underline that developing countries globally have adopted similar approaches, with variations in the form of aid, distribution systems, and oversight and accountability. In Indonesia, social assistance policies are regulated through the decree of the Minister of Social Affairs, which targets poor and vulnerable households based on integrated social welfare data (DTKS) [12]. Implementation Challenges in Remote Areas Studies show that the implementation of aid programs in remote areas, such as villages in archipelagos or border areas, often faces logistical and administrative constraints, as well as low capacity of local resources [13]. In addition, the problem of target accuracy, limited valid data, and lack of coordination between institutions are the main obstacles to the effectiveness of the program.

Aran Village in East Gorom, which has limited infrastructure and accessibility, is a clear example of the challenges of implementing assistance in the 3T (frontier, outermost, disadvantaged) area [14]. Efforts to Increase Program Effectiveness To increase the effectiveness of social assistance, the literature recommends several strategic steps, such as strengthening the recipient verification system, using digital technology in data collection and distribution, and increasing community participation in the distribution process [15].

Transparency and accountability are also important keys so that the assistance provided reaches those in need and is not abused by certain individuals [16]. By referring to the conceptual framework and previous findings, the case study in Aran Village, East Gorom contributes to enriching the understanding of local dynamics in the implementation of social assistance programs in Indonesia, especially in challenging geographical contexts and bureaucratic capacity [17].

**Table 1. Summary of Literature Review on Social Assistance Implementation**

Theme	Key Insights
Social Assistance as a Poverty Reduction Tool	Social assistance programs such as basic food and cash aid are essential instruments in reducing poverty and improving living standards.
Historical Context in Indonesia	Food and cash assistance programs have been implemented since the early 2000s in response to economic shocks, such as rising fuel prices and financial crises.
Policy Implementation	Implementation is the critical phase that connects policy formulation with outcomes in the field, involving distribution mechanisms, actors, and local context.
Social Assistance as a Policy Strategy	Food and cash aid are seen as short-term policy solutions to address poverty and reduce economic inequality.
Global Practices in Developing Countries	Many developing countries apply similar models of aid distribution, though they differ in forms of aid, delivery systems, and oversight mechanisms.
Indonesian Regulatory Approach	Social assistance in Indonesia targets poor and vulnerable households based on national integrated welfare data.

Challenges in Remote Areas	Geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, inaccurate targeting, data validity issues, and weak institutional coordination hinder effective implementation.
Case of Aran Village	Aran Village in East Gorom faces severe logistical and administrative constraints, representing the challenges in frontier and disadvantaged regions.
Strategies to Improve Effectiveness	Key efforts include strengthening recipient verification systems, using digital technology, and involving communities in the distribution process.
Need for Transparency and Accountability	Transparent systems and strong accountability are essential to ensure aid reaches rightful recipients and avoids misuse.
Contribution of the Current Study	This study highlights local dynamics in remote regions and provides new insights into implementing social assistance under challenging conditions.

## METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore and analyze the implementation of social assistance distribution in East Aran Gorom Village. **Research Approach.** A qualitative approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of social phenomena related to the distribution of basic food assistance and cash assistance. This research focuses on the interpretation of data from the perspective of the community and stakeholders [18].

**Data Collection Techniques.** In-depth interviews: Conducted with related parties, such as aid recipients, village government officials, and distribution officers. Interviews are designed to dig into information about the process, constraints, and impact of social assistance programs. Field Observation: Direct observation was carried out to see the implementation of aid distribution at the research site. Observation also includes the collection of visual and descriptive data on geographical and social conditions in East Aran Gorom Village [19].



**Figure 1. Pictures of Gorom Island Ambon**

**Data Analysis Techniques.** Organizing data by theme or category. Identify the main patterns, relationships, and problems in the implementation of social assistance distribution. Drawing conclusions based on the interpretation of the data that has been processed [20].

**Location and Research Subject.** The research was conducted in Aran Village, Maluku Province, East Gorom District, Eastern Seram Regency. Research subjects include: The recipient community and local government officials are involved in the distribution process.



**Data Validity.** The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation of methods, sources, and theories. This triangulation aims to minimize bias and increase the validity of the research findings [21].

**Table 2. Field Research Methodology**

Component	Description
Research Approach	Qualitative approach used to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of basic food and cash assistance distribution.
Research Focus	Exploring the experiences and perceptions of beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in the assistance program in East Aran Gorom Village.
Location	Aran Village, East Gorom District, Eastern Seram Regency, Maluku Province.
Research Subjects	Aid recipients, village government officials, and distribution personnel directly involved in the implementation process.
Data Collection Techniques	In-depth Interviews: Conducted with beneficiaries, local officials, and aid distributors to understand processes, challenges, and impacts. Field Observation: Direct observation of aid distribution and documentation of social and geographic conditions in the village.
Data Analysis Techniques	Thematic analysis by organizing data into categories, identifying key patterns, and interpreting findings to draw meaningful conclusions.
Data Validity Strategy	Ensured through triangulation of methods, sources, and theories to enhance reliability and minimize bias in the research findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of aid and cash assistance is an important part of the government's efforts to improve the welfare of the community, especially in areas facing poverty challenges such as Aran Village, East Gorom. The program aims to provide direct support to people in need, in the hope of reducing the burden of living and improving their quality of life.

### Aran Village: Geography and Demographics

Aran Village, East Gorom is one of the islands located in the province of Maluku, East Gorom District, Indonesia. This island is included in the administrative area of Eastern Seram Regency and has typical geographical conditions, with a landscape that includes mountains, forests, and beaches. People in East Gorom generally work as fishermen, farmers, and traders, with a high dependence on natural resources. In some villages, there is misuse of government funds or assistance that is misused and the assistance provided is not to the needs of the community [22].

### Socio-Economic Conditions

The people of Gorom Island face various social and economic challenges, including  
**Poverty Level:** East Aran Gorom Village has a relatively high poverty rate compared to other regions in Indonesia. Many families live below the poverty line, with limited access to basic services such as education and health.  
**Accessibility:** Access to the island is often hampered by weather conditions and inadequate transportation infrastructure, affecting the distribution of goods and services [23].

### The Role of the Government in Community Welfare

The government, both at the central and regional levels, plays an important role in efforts to improve the welfare of the people in Deasa Aran through various social programs.

## Social Assistance Policy

The Indonesian government has launched various social assistance policies to reduce poverty and improve people's welfare. The basic food assistance program and cash assistance are two main initiatives aimed at providing direct support to people in need. **Basic Food Assistance:** This program provides basic food packages that include necessities such as rice, oil, sugar, and other foodstuffs. The goal is to help families meet their daily food needs. **Cash Assistance:** In addition to necessities, the government also provides cash assistance to help people overcome urgent needs and improve their economic conditions. This assistance is often given in the form of a direct transfer to the recipient's account [24].

## Implementation and Coordination

The implementation of social assistance programs in Aran Village involves various government agencies, including:

**Ministry of Social Affairs:** Responsible for designing and implementing social assistance programs at the national level.

**Regional Social Service:** Coordinates the implementation of programs at the district level, including identification of recipients and distribution of aid.

**Village Government:** Plays a role in identifying communities in need and assisting in the distribution process [25].

## Challenges Faced by the Government

### Accessibility and Infrastructure Issues

Gorom Island has quite complex geographical challenges, where inter-regional transportation is often hampered by bad weather or damaged road infrastructure. This can affect the smooth distribution of aid, especially in remote areas. **Solution:** One solution that can be taken is to work with local transportation authorities, such as fishing boats, land transportation, or pioneer aircraft, to ensure the distribution of aid to all areas in Aran Village. Local governments can also consider the use of geospatial technology to map hard-to-reach areas and identify more effective distribution channels [26].

### Inaccuracy of Aid Recipient Data

Inaccuracy of aid recipient data is often a major problem in the implementation of social assistance programs. Many recipients are not registered or their data is no longer relevant, while others do not receive assistance due to administrative constraints. This problem causes inclusion errors (groups that do not deserve to receive assistance) and exclusion errors (groups that do not deserve assistance). **Solution:** To solve this problem, it is necessary to update the data regularly. Data collection can be done by prioritizing community participation so that the results are more accurate. In addition, the use of information technology such as mobile applications or web-based information systems can speed up data updates and ensure that all beneficiary data is properly managed [27].

### Limited Human Resources (HR)

The implementation of social assistance programs requires competent and trained human resources (HR), especially for the process of identifying recipients, distributing aid, and monitoring and evaluation. However, in many areas, especially in remote areas such as Aran Village, there are often limitations in the number and quality of human resources available. **Solution:** Regular training and intensive

mentoring for field officers and village governments are essential. In addition, strengthening the capacity of local governments in terms of administration and distribution of aid can be done through technology-based education and training programs that allow them to work more efficiently [28].

#### Less Effective Inter-Agency Coordination

The implementation of social assistance programs involves many parties, ranging from the Ministry of Social Affairs to village governments. However, often the coordination between these institutions or agencies does not go well, which leads to inaccuracies in the implementation of programs, and even delays in the distribution of aid. Solution: Improved coordination between agencies is urgently needed. This can be done by forming integrated coordination through regular meetings between relevant agencies. A more efficient program management system, such as the establishment of a dedicated implementation team, consisting of representatives from various government agencies, can be an effective solution to improve coordination and accelerate aid disbursement [29].

### Program Implementation

The implementation of the social assistance program in Aran Village involves several key steps:

**Identification of Recipients:** This process aims to determine who is eligible to receive assistance. Accuracy of the target is important so that assistance can reach those who need it.

**Distribution of Aid:** After the recipients are determined, basic food and cash assistance are distributed. The distribution process must be carried out transparently to avoid irregularities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** After distribution, it is important to conduct monitoring to assess the impact of the assistance on community welfare. This evaluation also helps in the development of future programs [30].



**Figure 2. Distribution of Cash and Basic Necessities**

**Distribution of Aid** After the recipient of aid has been determined, the next stage is the distribution of aid, which involves the delivery of necessities and cash assistance. This distribution process must be carried out carefully so that the aid reaches the right hands and on time. The stages of aid distribution in Aran Village can be described, the program that will be carried out in 2024 (dredge maser) flood suppression in the field of physical resistance, food security (distribution of seeds and machetes, distribution of ropes) [31].



**Distribution of Basic Food Assistance:** Basic food assistance that includes staple foodstuffs such as rice, oil, sugar, and others must be distributed by considering the accessibility of the East Gorom area of Aran Village which has geographical challenges. Transportation constraints, especially during the rainy season or bad weather, can affect the smooth distribution. Therefore, the local government needs to work with the local community to ensure that the aid reaches each recipient household at the right time [32].

**Cash Assistance:** Cash assistance is provided directly to the recipient via bank transfer or a simpler method if the banking infrastructure is limited. In some areas, such as Aran Village, banking agents are often used to reach remote areas. For this distribution to run smoothly, coordination between government banks, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and local governments is needed.

**Oversight and Transparency:** To avoid irregularities in aid distribution, governments need to conduct intensive field surveillance. In this case, the village government together with the security forces can help ensure that the distribution is carried out transparently and there is no manipulation in recording the amount of aid received by the community. **Monitoring and Evaluation** After the distribution of aid is carried out, the next stage is monitoring and evaluation to assess the extent to which the assistance provided can have a positive impact on the welfare of the community [33].

**Continuous Monitoring:** Monitoring is carried out to monitor the progress of the program and ensure that the assistance that has been provided reaches the eligible recipients. This monitoring is also useful for identifying obstacles that arise in the field, such as logistical problems or difficulties in shipping goods to certain areas.

**Aid Impact Evaluation:** An evaluation is conducted after the aid is disbursed to assess the long-term impact on community welfare. Some of the indicators used to measure the impact could include: Increased accessibility to education and health services. **Feedback Collection:** One of the important aspects of the evaluation is the collection of feedback from the recipient community. This feedback can be obtained through surveys or discussion forums involving aid recipients. By listening directly to the public, the government can gain better insight into shortcomings in program implementation and areas that need to be improved [34].

## **Challenges in Program Implementation**

Although the implementation stages have been carefully planned, major challenges remain, especially in hard-to-reach areas such as Aran Village. Some of the main challenges that are often faced in the implementation of social assistance programs include:

**Lacking Accuracy of Objectives:** Inaccurate data or incomplete verification can cause aid not to reach those who need it. This often happens due to the slow data collection process or lack of coordination between the institutions involved in data collection [35].

**Limited Infrastructure:** Access to remote areas that are difficult to reach, especially during the rainy season, can hinder the distribution process. Limited vehicles and unfavorable geographical conditions are often obstacles in accelerating aid delivery [36].

**Misuse of Funds:** Sometimes, misuse of aid funds by irresponsible individuals becomes a problem. Therefore, strict supervision from the local government and the community is needed to ensure that assistance is distributed according to applicable regulations [37].



**Figure 3. Distribution of Agricultural Fertilizers and Agricultural Equipment**

### **Solutions to Improve Program Effectiveness**

To overcome the existing challenges, some improvement steps that can be taken include: 1). Improved Data Verification and Updates: Regularly update data to ensure the accuracy of beneficiary data and prevent duplicate data or unauthorized recipients [38]. 2). Utilization of Information Technology: The use of technology-based applications to facilitate data collection, monitoring aid distribution, and impact evaluation to be more transparent and accurate. 3). Human Resource Capacity Building: Train village and local government officials to be more skilled in carrying out their duties, especially in terms of data collection, distribution, and monitoring of social assistance programs. 4). Improving Inter-Agency Coordination: Strengthening coordination between the Ministry of Social Affairs, local governments, village governments, and other related institutions to facilitate the running of social assistance programs [39].



**Figure 4. Realization of assistance to the Aran village community**

### **Analysis**

The implementation of food and cash assistance programs in Aran Village, East Gorom, demonstrates both promise and complexity, especially when viewed through the dual lenses of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Sharia economic principles. While the intention behind these programs aligns with SDG targets—specifically, eradicating poverty (Goal 1), ending hunger (Goal 2), and reducing inequalities (Goal 10)—the actual execution in geographically isolated regions such as Aran reveals critical gaps that hinder full realization of these goals [39].

Geographical isolation presents a core logistical challenge. Difficult terrain, underdeveloped infrastructure, and harsh weather conditions impede timely and equitable distribution of aid. Additionally, inaccurate recipient data often leads to misallocation—either through the exclusion of eligible beneficiaries or the inclusion

of ineligible ones—undermining the principle of ‘adl (justice) central to Sharia economics. This situation reflects a broader issue of systemic inefficiency, particularly in updating databases and verifying beneficiary eligibility [40].

Human resource limitations further complicate aid distribution. Field officers in remote areas often lack adequate training, reducing the effectiveness of outreach and monitoring efforts. The study shows that weak coordination between national, regional, and village authorities contributes to delays and procedural inconsistencies. From a Sharia perspective, this lack of amanah (trustworthiness) violates the ethical mandate to deliver aid responsibly and justly [40].

Nevertheless, the study identifies actionable solutions. These include enhancing digital infrastructure for real-time data updates and monitoring, engaging local communities in decision-making, and improving inter-agency coordination. More importantly, incorporating Sharia economic ethics such as ta’awun (mutual assistance) and maslahah (public benefit) into program design can instill a stronger sense of moral responsibility among both implementers and recipients.

Community participation, highlighted as a key recommendation, is crucial for ensuring transparency and fostering accountability. This approach not only increases the effectiveness of aid delivery but also empowers the recipients—fulfilling both material and spiritual dimensions of welfare. In conclusion, while food and cash assistance programs in East Aran Gorom offer vital support, their long-term success depends on systematic reforms, ethical governance, and active stakeholder engagement. By integrating SDG frameworks with Sharia economic values, policymakers can craft more inclusive, just, and sustainable welfare models for Indonesia’s most underserved communities [41].

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of food and cash assistance programs in East Aran Gorom, Ambon, plays a crucial role in addressing the persistent issue of poverty and enhancing the welfare of the local community. These programs, aligned with the goals of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 1 (No Poverty), Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), aim to provide immediate relief while contributing to long-term socio-economic development. From a Sharia economic perspective, the concept of social assistance is deeply rooted in the principles of al-adl (justice), maslahah (public interest), and zakat-like mechanisms that promote wealth distribution and social solidarity. Despite the noble objectives, the implementation faces several challenges. Accessibility constraints, outdated or inaccurate beneficiary data, misuse or diversion of aid, limited human resources, and weak inter-agency coordination are major obstacles to achieving optimal impact. These issues not only affect the efficiency of aid distribution but also compromise the trust and participation of the community. To overcome these issues, strategic solutions have been identified, including improving transportation and logistics to reach remote areas, regular updates of beneficiary databases to ensure accuracy and fairness, stricter monitoring and surveillance systems to reduce fraud, and enhanced training for local personnel involved in aid distribution. Moreover, empowering the local community to actively participate in the process “through monitoring, feedback, and involvement in decision-making” can significantly increase transparency and accountability. The integration of Sharia economic principles in the management of social assistance adds moral and ethical values to the program. Concepts such as amanah (trust), ihsan (benevolence), and ta’awun (mutual help) encourage both the implementers and recipients to fulfill their roles responsibly. When combined with technological innovations and strong institutional cooperation, these efforts can significantly enhance the impact of the programs. In conclusion, achieving sustainable welfare through food and cash assistance in East Aran Gorom requires continuous

commitment, multisectoral collaboration, and alignment with both SDGs and Islamic economic ethics. With a people-centered, just, and transparent approach, such programs can serve as an effective instrument for poverty alleviation and inclusive development in Eastern Indonesia.

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### Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and writing of this paper. The first author led the field research and data interpretation, while the second author provided the Sharia economic framework and academic guidance. Both authors collaborated closely in reviewing and finalizing the manuscript to ensure academic rigor and relevance.

### Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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