

is sacred but bears a great responsibility to prosper on the earth. He concluded by asserting that *laïcité* (liberty, equality, and fraternity) is in line with Islamic values, specifically *wahdatul wujud*, which ascribes the unity of everything with God. The Q&A session brought up interesting topics, such as the question of state intervention in religious affairs, the theological implications of ‘self-Islam’, and the causes of breakdown in a multi-religious society.

Roundtable Discussion: Designing *Sadaqah* Models For Child Grant Project in Malaysia: Shariah, Legal & Financial Analysis (IAIS Malaysia, 26 November 2019)

Abdul Muhaimin Misran

At a glance, Malaysia seems to be doing fine economically. However, child-related problems remain unresolved. Over 1.5 – 1.8 million children are living in relative poverty, a figure that impacts the fabric of society.

On 26 November 2019, IAIS Malaysia in collaboration with UNICEF hosted a roundtable discussion on “Designing *Sadaqah* Models For Child Grant Project in Malaysia: Shariah, Legal & Financial Analysis” in an attempt to find a feasible initiative by maximising Islamic financial tools to overcome child-sensitive social protection issues.

The event managed to gather policy-makers, scholars, religious bodies, bankers, *takaful* providers, as well as NGOs to discuss the feasibility of leveraging *sadaqah* as a means of assisting child welfare.

A universal child grant is more than the government can provide. At the moment, the allocation channelled through Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (JKM) is only RM100 per month per child under the B40 segment known as *Bantuan Kanak-Kanak* (BKK).

Sadaqah House, which was initiated by Bank Islam, is the first institution of its kind and a living example of using *sadaqah* collection to provide aid for *asnaf* (the needy). Since its establishment in 2017, the yearly collection has been RM300,000.00 with an average of RM20,000.00 per week, 5 per cent from *Surau Waqf*.

The Chief of Social Policy from UNICEF, Stephen Barret, ended the session by stressing that UNICEF will continue to support child-sensitive social protection in Malaysia, which requires a lot of thinking and consultation. He expressed his gratitude to everyone for their ideas and contributions during the session.