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THE ROLE OF BMT BINA UMMAH IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of BMT Bina Ummah in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by integrating social functions (maal) and financing functions (tamwil). The research subject is BMT Bina Ummah, located in Gamping, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta. This study employs a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, focus group discussions (FGDs), and documentation. The data were then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model. The research results indicate that BMT Bina Ummah contributes to eight SDGs: No Poverty, Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Clean Water and Sanitation, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Partnerships for the Goals. These contributions are realized through sharia-compliant microenterprise financing, qardh hasan (sharia loans), mudharabah savings, educational scholarships, the rice ATM program, clean water provision, financial literacy, and social partnerships. The study concludes that BMTs (Islamic Microfinance Institutions) function not only as Islamic microfinance institutions but also as instruments for enhancing the community's economic and social empowerment.

Keywords: *BMT, SDGs, Islamic microfinance, economic empowerment, social fund*

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development is now the primary framework for global policy, as embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United

Nations in 2015. This agenda, which comprises 17 development goals, underscores the need for collaboration among governments, the private sector, civil society, and local financial institutions to achieve poverty eradication, equitable prosperity, and economic inclusion (Aziz & Najicha, 2024). In the Indonesian context, *Baitul Maal wat Tamwil* (BMT), as an Islamic microfinance institution (hereinafter referred to as an IMFIs), plays a strategic role through its dual functions—namely, a social function *(Baitul Maal)* and a commercial function *(Baitul Tamwil)*, thereby having the potential to become a key actor in supporting the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in the areas of poverty alleviation, improved well-being, and the empowerment of small-scale community groups (Anwar et al., 2023).

Globally, Islamic microfinance has been recognized as a financial instrument capable of integrating social and economic justice values to promote sustainable development. Sharia principles, such as profit-sharing financing, qardh hasan, and the management of social funds, enable this institution to support SDG goals such as (No Poverty), Decent Work and Economic Growth, as well as a narrowing of the gap (Reduced Inequalities) (Kurniawan & Rahman, 2024). Various international studies show that the IMF contributes positively to financial inclusion and improved social welfare in developing countries, including Indonesia, which is a top priority for the IMF (Ma'ruf et al., 2025).

Previous studies have identified two main directions in the development of Islamic microfinance: the role of BMTs in promoting economic inclusion for low-income communities and the integration of Islamic social instruments (zakat, infaq, wakaf) into development programs (Lubis et al., 2023). Some studies indicate that BMTs contribute to increased access to capital for small businesses and to reduced poverty rates. However, common challenges include limited capital, insufficient managerial capacity, and suboptimal governance of social funds. In addition, the integration of financial technology (fintech) and Islamic capital market instruments such as micro-sukuk is now gaining attention as a means to enhance the performance and scalability of BMTs (Kamilah & Rispan, 2025).

Within the framework of sustainable development, BMTs have significant potential to serve as key actors in achieving the SDGs and to make strategic contributions to their attainment. Through the management of social functions and Islamic-based financing, BMTs play a role in expanding access to financial services and promoting the economic empowerment of low-income communities

(Ma'ruf et al., 2025). Several studies indicate that BMTs' development of Islamic financing programs and social initiatives can strengthen financial inclusion and improve members' well-being. Financing innovations and collaboration with various external parties are considered effective strategies for expanding access to capital for microenterprises (Wirianisa & Castrawijaya, 2024).

Based on these considerations, this study selected BMT Bina Ummah, located in Gamping, Sleman, Yogyakarta, as the case study subject. This selection was based on the institution's track record in implementing sharia-based economic empowerment programs and social activities, as well as its role as a microfinance institution that interacts directly with the local community. The Yogyakarta region is also considered representative for illustrating the practice of Islamic microfinance at the local level. This study aims to comprehensively examine the role and effectiveness of the BMT Bina Ummah program in supporting the achievement of the SDGs, both directly and indirectly, without limiting the analysis to specific SDG goals (Sihombing et al., 2024).

Although studies on the relationship between Islamic Microfinance and the SDGs continue to grow, most research still focuses on specific dimensions—such as financial inclusion, microenterprise financing, or social fund management—in isolation. In fact, the key characteristic of BMTs lies in the integration of social (maal) and economic (tamwil) functions, thereby supporting various SDG goals simultaneously. Based on this, this study aims to describe BMT Bina Ummah's contribution to achieving the SDGs through various sharia-based products, services, and empowerment programs.

This study contributes to the Islamic microfinance and sustainable development literature by providing an in-depth institutional analysis of how the integration of *maal* and *tamwil* functions within a BMT operationally supports multiple SDGs simultaneously at the local level. Unlike previous studies that focus on financial inclusion or social financing in isolation, this research highlights the interconnected roles of social empowerment programs, sharia financing mechanisms, and community-based partnerships in achieving sustainable development objectives. The selection of BMT Bina Ummah is also significant because the institution demonstrates a relatively comprehensive implementation of both economic and social functions through various empowerment programs, making it a relevant model of a community-based Islamic microfinance institution in supporting the SDGs framework.

Based on the earlier description, this study is designed to address three research questions, namely: 1) What are the forms and characteristics of the products developed by BMT Bina Ummah to support the achievement of the SDGs? 2) What is the relationship between BMT Bina Ummah's Sharia Microfinance products and financing activities and the SDG achievement indicators? 3) How do BMT Bina Ummah's activities contribute to improving community welfare and economic empowerment within the SDG framework?

Literature Review

BMT in Islamic Microfinance

Essentially, a BMT is an Islamic-based microfinance entity that integrates two core functions: the socially oriented Baitul Maal function, which involves the collection and distribution of religious social funds, and the Baitul Tamwil function, which focuses on productive financing through Sharia-compliant contracts for micro-entrepreneurs. Institutionally, BMTs are generally established as Sharia Savings, Loan, and Financing Cooperatives (KSPPS), which enables them to serve as both social and economic agents within the community (Mursid, 2018).

The legal framework for BMTs in Indonesia is based on Law No. 1 of 2013 on Microfinance Institutions, which requires BMTs to have a valid legal entity, be subject to supervision by the Financial Services Authority (OJK), and have a Sharia Supervisory Board (DPS). Although regulations have been formally established, the practical implementation of BMTs reveals a diversity of organizational forms, ranging from Sharia cooperatives, foundations, and pesantren business units, resulting in variations in governance standards and risk management mechanisms (Sitopu & Edi, 2024). This diversity also illustrates the flexibility of BMTs in adapting to social contexts and the needs of local communities, as emphasized by (Wirianisa & Castrawijaya, 2024), who note that the managerial capacity of BMTs is largely determined by the institution's organizational strategies and its social and business orientation.

The Functions and Roles of Baitul Maal in BMT Social Services

From a functional perspective, Baitul Maal emphasizes a social orientation through the collection and distribution of zakat, infaq, and waqf. At the same time, Baitul Tamwil focuses on economic empowerment through Sharia-compliant financing schemes such as *mudharabah, musyarakah, murabahah,* and

qardhul hasan. The integration of the two forms an inclusive microfinance system that is not solely oriented toward financial profit but also generates social benefits in accordance with the principles of *maqasid al-shariah,* which emphasize the protection of property, life, and the welfare of society (Yaqin, 2021). BMT social services generally include assistance with basic necessities, educational scholarships, charitable loans (qardhul hasan), productive zakat, and entrepreneurship training and mentoring for micro-entrepreneurs.

Several previous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of integrating the social and economic functions of BMTs. (Afriansyah, 2020) concluded that productive zakat significantly improves the economic capacity of mustahik if supported by ongoing business mentoring. (Azzahro et al., 2025) emphasize that implementing qardhul hasan strengthens the social role of BMTs and increases public trust in the institution. Meanwhile, the success of empowering beneficiaries is greatly influenced by trust-based social capital, community networks, and collective norms (Subchi et al., 2024). Therefore, the integration of the Baitul Maal and Tamwil functions serves as the institutional foundation for BMTs to generate long-term socioeconomic impacts consistent with Sharia principles.

The Mechanism of BMTs as Sharia Cooperatives

As an institution generally established as a KSPPS, BMTs operate based on the principle of membership as stipulated in the laws and regulations governing cooperatives, namely Law No. 25 of 1992 (Republik Indonesia, 1992), and the Ministry of Cooperatives Regulation No. 16/2015 on KSPPS (Kementerian Koperasi dan UKM Republik Indonesia, 2015). Each member is required to contribute a basic deposit and a mandatory deposit as a form of capital participation, with a minimum capital requirement of Rp 15,000,000 at the regency/city level and Rp 75,000,000 for operations spanning multiple regencies/cities within a single province.

From a governance perspective, BMTs adopt a member-based governance approach in which members are directly involved in decision-making through the Annual General Meeting (AGM), internal oversight, and the formulation of institutional policies. This mechanism ensures that BMT operations are conducted transparently, accountably, and based on the principle of mutual support, while also serving as the foundation of trust that encourages active

member participation in the institution's development (Wirianisa & Castrawijaya, 2024).

BMT Products and Services as an Islamic Microfinance Institution

BMTs play a crucial role in providing Sharia-compliant savings and financing products to support microenterprises and promote financial inclusion. In raising funds, BMTs manage savings accounts based on the mudharabah contract, which allows members to receive a proportional and sustainable share of profits (Kurnia et al., 2023). In disbursing funds, BMT employs various financing contracts, including *murabahah, musyarakah*, and *mudharabah*, to support microenterprise capital development. *Murabahah* is the most common due to its simple structure and relatively low risk, while mudharabah and musyarakah offer flexibility and a risk-sharing arrangement suitable for the microenterprise segment (Arsela & Zen, 2025).

From a social perspective, BMTs offer *qardhul hasan* services as an economic safety net for low-income communities facing urgent needs. In addition to financial products, BMTs also provide business mentoring and financial literacy education to their members, given that the success of Islamic microfinance is largely determined by trust-based social capital and community networks (Subchi et al., 2024). Thus, BMT's products and services are not limited to the financial realm, but also promote the holistic empowerment and social well-being of its members.

Stakeholder Theory

The Stakeholder Theory proposed by (Freeman & McVea, 2001) is a conceptual framework in strategic management that emphasizes the need for organizations to consider the interests of all parties affected by their operations, not just shareholders. The theory states that business entities should be viewed as systems of ethical and strategic interactions with stakeholders, including individuals or groups such as employees, consumers, suppliers, communities, government authorities, and the broader ecosystem. This approach promotes corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability, in which business decisions are made by balancing financial gains, moral values, and social implications.

Within the scope of a qualitative study on the contribution of BMT Bina Ummah to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this

theory facilitates an in-depth exploration of the relationship between BMT and local stakeholders, such as customers and residents in Gamping, Sleman, in order to assess its impact on global goals such as the eradication of poverty or the promotion of gender equality. One significant development in this theory stems from the work of (Mitchell et al., 1997), who introduced the concept of "*salience*" or stakeholder significance based on the characteristics of their relationship. As cited in the article: "*Stakeholders are identified by their possession of one or more of three relationship attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency*" (Mitchell et al., 1997). These characteristics enable the categorization of stakeholders into primary or secondary groups, thereby allowing institutions such as BMTs to prioritize the most dominant relationships, which in turn enhances the efficiency of supporting sustainable development. Although this theory faces criticism due to its broad scope, it remains meaningful for empirical research examining social and economic dynamics from both Sharia and international perspectives.

The SDGs from an Islamic Economics Perspective

The SDGs were established by the United Nations in 2015 as a global framework for sustainable development, comprising 17 strategic goals and 169 development targets to address multidimensional challenges, including poverty, social inequality, quality of education, health, and environmental sustainability. Their implementation requires cooperation among governments, the private sector, financial institutions, and civil society (Suryanto et al., 2024). In the national context, the SDGs serve as a significant development policy guide for Islamic microfinance institutions to develop programs that support social inclusion and community well-being.

The concept of sustainable development in the SDGs aligns closely with the principles of Islamic economics, particularly in efforts to eradicate poverty, promote equitable distribution of wealth, and improve economic access for vulnerable groups. The principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah,* such as the protection of wealth *(ḥifẓ al-māl),* distributive justice, and the public interest, serve as a normative foundation for Islamic financial institutions, including BMTs, to harmoniously manage the functions of maal (social welfare) and tamwil (financing) in support of achieving the SDGs (Sari et al., 2023; Suryanto et al., 2024; Ma'ruf et al., 2025). The integration of maqasid into the operational practices of Islamic microfinance institutions directly contributes to

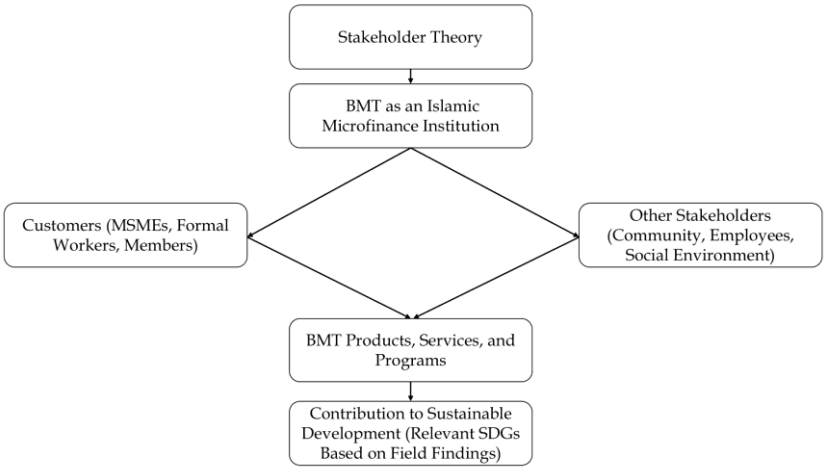
socioeconomic sustainability, thereby strengthening the position of BMTs as key entities in implementing the SDGs at the local level.

Several empirical studies indicate that BMTs play a significant role in microeconomic empowerment. Mudharabah and musyarakah financing have been shown to expand access to capital and enhance the resilience of MSME operators (Iman et al., 2025), Meanwhile, the integration of financing services with social programs strengthens the capacity of local communities and ensures the sustainability of the institution (Sitopu & Edi, 2024). Nationwide, BMTs make a substantial contribution to financial inclusion and microeconomic empowerment across various regions of Indonesia (Sihombing et al., 2024). However, most studies remain limited in scope and have not yet comprehensively analyzed the integration of these two BMT functions within the SDG framework (Fitriana et al., 2024). Therefore, this study aims to address this gap through an empirical analysis based on a case study of BMT Bina Ummah.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Stakeholder Theory, which asserts that an organization's sustainability depends on its ability to meet the interests of its various stakeholders (Freeman et al., 1984). Figure 2 summarizes the framework. In the context of BMTs, this theory is relevant to analyzing the interactions among Islamic microfinance institutions, their clients, members, employees, and surrounding communities.

From the perspective of Stakeholder Theory, BMT Bina Ummah's products and activities are understood as the institution's response to the needs and characteristics of its diverse stakeholders. Therefore, this study focuses its analysis on the characteristics of BMT customers, products, and operational mechanisms, as well as the institution's strategies in serving various stakeholder groups as part of its efforts to fulfill its social and economic roles (Ginanjar & Kassim, 2021).

Figure 1. Research Framework



Source: Data Processed (2026)

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2. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative case study design focused on BMT Bina Ummah in Gamping, Sleman, Yogyakarta. This approach was chosen because it provides an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in real-world contexts, particularly the role of Islamic microfinance institutions in advancing the achievement of the SDGs. The case study design was chosen. After all, BMT Bina Ummah possesses unique characteristics, such as its rice ATM program, educational scholarships, and management of the real sector, including the Magelang sheep farm, which require comprehensive empirical exploration. With this approach, researchers can directly explore the experiences, perceptions, and practices of stakeholders regarding financial management, the social functions of *Baitul Maal,* and the program's impact on the community (Yin, 2014).

Research Location and Subject

This study was conducted at BMT Bina Ummah Gamping in Sleman, a KSPPS actively engaged in social and religious activities, economic empowerment, and sharia financing. The research subjects included Baitul Tamwil's products and services, Baitul Maal's social programs, economic empowerment programs in the real sector, and the institution's operational systems and internal services.

Types, Sources, and Data Collection Methods

This study used two data sources: primary and secondary. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants purposively sampled for their involvement in and understanding of BMT Bina Ummah's activities. The research informants consisted of 4 (four) members of BMT customers from different business backgrounds, 1 (one) board chairperson, one secretary, one savings and loan unit manager, one finance director, and one director of the BMT Bina Ummah LAZ. Interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding financing products, social programs, the institution's operational mechanisms, and BMT's contribution to achieving the SDGs, in addition to interviews, primary data collection was conducted through direct observation of BMT's social and economic activities, including the Rice ATM program, member services, and real-sector business unit activities.

Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from the institution's internal documents, including annual reports, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Baitul Maal activity reports, and product brochures. Additional supporting data comes from academic literature, including journal articles, books, and research publications related to BMTs, Islamic microfinance, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah,* and the SDGs. Furthermore, this study uses regulatory documents on Islamic cooperatives and Islamic microfinance institutions in Indonesia.

Data collection methods were employed in a complementary manner through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), participant observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they provide researchers with the flexibility to explore information in depth without losing sight of the research focus. FGDs were used to obtain comparative perspectives across various BMTs, particularly regarding social management and financing, as well as opportunities for collaboration to support the SDGs. Participant observation allowed researchers to directly understand

operational practices and program implementation, while documentation was used to supplement and verify field data.

Data analysis techniques

The data analysis in this study follows the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which comprises three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction was conducted by selecting, simplifying, and classifying information into key themes, including the education pillar, the ATM Beras program, financing, economic impact, and contributions to the SDGs. Next, the data is presented as descriptive narratives, tables, and a mapping of the relationships between BMT programs and SDG indicators. The final stage is drawing conclusions, which is achieved through data interpretation and verification using source triangulation.

In the data analysis process, all interview and FGD recordings were first transcribed and organized into textual data. The researchers then conducted an initial coding process to identify recurring statements, activities, and institutional practices related to financing, social empowerment, and community development. Similar codes were subsequently grouped into broader thematic categories, such as poverty alleviation, educational support, financial inclusion, environmental contributions, and community partnerships.

After the thematic categorization process, the findings were mapped to relevant SDG indicators based on the operational relevance of BMT programs to SDG targets. For example, microfinancing and qardh Hasan programs were categorized under SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). In contrast, scholarship and financial literacy programs were linked to SDG 4 (Quality Education). This mapping process was conducted interpretively by comparing empirical findings with the SDGs' conceptual indicators from the relevant literature.

Data validation

To ensure data validity, triangulation was conducted by comparing interview results, observational findings, institutional documents, and FGD discussions. The researchers also applied member checking by reconfirming several findings and interpretations with key informants to ensure consistency and credibility of the data interpretation.

The application of this triangulation method is consistent with recent studies demonstrating the effectiveness of qualitative case study methods in analyzing the contributions of Islamic financial institutions to sustainable development. Studies on the integration of the SDGs and *Maqasid al-Sharia* show that qualitative approaches are capable of identifying strategic alignment between Islamic values and sustainable development (Marpaung & Lubis, 2025). Islamic finance also has significant potential to support the SDGs through the *maqasid al-sharīʿah* (Rahawati et al., 2025). Furthermore, BMTs have been shown to play a significant role in social and environmental aspects in supporting the achievement of the SDGs (Ma'ruf et al., 2025).

The integration of Islamic social finance with the SDGs has also proven to remain a growing and relevant topic (Siregar, 2025). This is supported by findings that demonstrate a strong synergy between the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* and the SDGs in promoting global prosperity (Kurniawan & Rahman, 2025). Therefore, the use of qualitative case study methods in this research is considered appropriate for generating an in-depth, contextual, and relevant understanding of the role of BMTs in supporting the achievement of the SDGs.

3. Result and Discussion

Overview of BMT Bina Ummah

BMT Bina Ummah is an Islamic-based microfinance institution established in 1995 in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. In its operations, the institution integrates two main functions: the *tamwil* function, which encompasses commercial financing activities, and the *maal* function, which concerns the management of social funds, thereby constituting a form of community-based Islamic microfinance (Wardiwiyono, 2012). The vision of BMT Bina Ummah is to become a leading and trusted institution dedicated to the economic empowerment of the community, with a mission that encompasses community economic empowerment, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability, as well as the development of a trustworthy and professional management system.

BMT Bina Ummah provides access to inclusive financial services for unbanked communities through a network of offices strategically located in Godean (Headquarters), Gamping, Ambarukmo, and Wates. During the study

period, the institution served approximately 5,500 members, 70% of whom were women, mostly traditional market vendors, supported by 43 staff members. This focus on women's empowerment aligns with the SDGs' goal of reducing disparities in financial access (Suryanto et al., 2024).

In conducting its operations, BMT Bina Ummah is organized into three strategic units. The Savings and Loan Unit provides sharia-compliant financing services to micro-entrepreneurs, the Baitul Maal Unit is responsible for managing and distributing social funds through various empowerment programs, and the Real Sector Unit develops productive businesses, such as sheep farming, to strengthen the institution's financial independence. This overall structure is supported by the Sharia Supervisory Board (DPS), which ensures operational alignment with Islamic sharia principles, making BMT Bina Ummah not only a financial institution but also an agent of social and economic empowerment for the community.

Characteristics of informants

This study employed purposive sampling to select informants based on representativeness of perspectives, including management as a source of policy data and members representing a diversity of social backgrounds and business sectors. To maintain the confidentiality of their identities in accordance with the ethical principles of qualitative research, all informants were coded as I1, I2, I3, and I4 (Miles et al., 2014). The general profile of the informants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that the four informants represent a diverse group. I1 and I2 are female food vendors who rely on BMT financing to sustain their businesses and meet their families' needs. I3 is an entrepreneur in the environmental management sector who appreciates the role of BMT not only as a provider of capital but also as a partner in addressing serious financial problems resulting from the online loan trap (pinjol). Meanwhile, I4, as a savings-and-loan unit manager, offers an institutional perspective on BMT strategies and policies to support the achievement of the SDGs.

Table 1. General Characteristics of Research Informants

Informant Code	Gender	Role or Work Background	Length of Membership	Information Focus
I1	Female	Food vendor (Lotek and Gado-gado)	> 2 Years	Financial inclusion and children's education
I2	Female	Street food vendor (Angkringan)	> 10 Years	Family economic resilience and capital
I3	Male	Self-employed (waste management services)	> 3 Years	The environment and debt relief
I4	Male	Savings and loan unit manager	-	policies, vision and mission, and SDG strategies

Source: Processed Primary Data (2025)

The diversity of the informants' backgrounds facilitated source triangulation in this study. As stated by Patton (2015), the use of diverse data sources through triangulation plays a crucial role in testing the consistency of information and ensuring the validity of research findings.

BMT Bina Ummah Products and Services

BMT Bina Ummah offers products and services that reflect the institution's commitment to community empowerment and to achieving the SDGs through its two core functions: the *Tamwil* Unit and the *Baitul Maal* Unit.

First, the *Tamwil Unit* offers *mudharabah-based* savings products as well as a variety of sharia-compliant financing products, including murabahah for the procurement of business capital goods; mudharabah and musyarakah for profit-sharing business financing; ijarah for rental needs, including hospital expenses; and *qardh hasan* as charitable financing for members in emergency situations. These services are supported by an outreach system through Account Officers who regularly visit members at traditional markets, thereby facilitating access for community groups with limited time and mobility.

Second, the *Baitul Maal Unit* is responsible for managing and distributing social funds such as *zakat, infaq, and sadaqah* (ZIS) through flagship programs, including the Gen Smart Scholarship for orphans and the underprivileged from elementary through high school, the Rice ATM program to meet the food needs of the underprivileged, the Water of Life program in Gunung Kidul, and a six-month Sharia Economics Business School accompanied by transportation

subsidies for members. The relationship between BMT Bina Ummah's products and programs and the SDG indicators can be mapped as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mapping of BMT Bina Ummah Products and Programs against SDGs

Products/Programs	Unit	Supported SDGs
Microfinancing (murabahah, mudharabah, musyarakah)	Tamwil	SDGs 1, 8, 10
Mudharabah savings	Tamwil	SDGs 1, 8
Ijarah (Hospital fees, Rent)	Tamwil	SDGs 3
Qardh hasan	Tamwil	SDGs 1, 10
AO ball pick-up system	Tamwil	SDGs 10
Gen Smart Scholarship	Maal	SDGs 4
Rice ATM	Maal	SDGs 1
Gunung Kidul living water program	Maal	SDGs 6
Entrepreneurship training and Sharia Business School	Maal	SDGs 4, 8
Financing waste management business	Tamwil	SDGs 6, 11

Source: Processed Primary Data (2025)

Based on this mapping, the products and programs of BMT Bina Ummah demonstrate broad alignment with various SDG indicators, illustrating the institution's role not only as a financial institution but also as an instrument of socio-economic development grounded in Sharia principles (Ma'ruf et al., 2025).

BMT Bina Ummah's Contribution to Achieving the SDGs

Based on in-depth interviews and document analysis, BMT Bina Ummah contributes to eight SDG goals: 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 17. These contributions are realized through integrated synergy between the *tamwil* and *maal* functions. A summary of these contributions is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of BMT Bina Ummah's Contribution to the SDGs

SDGs	Objectives	Activities/Programs	Resources
1	No Poverty	Microfinance, qardh hasan, access for the unbankable	I1, I2, I3, I4
3	Good Health and Well-Being	Ijarah for hospital costs, psychosocial support for members	I1, I3, I4

SDGs	Objectives	Activities/Programs	Resources
4	Quality Education	Gen Smart Scholarship, Islamic Economics Business School	I3, I4
6	Clean Water and Sanitation	Gunung Kidul living water program (Maal fund)	I4
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth	Micro-business financing, financial literacy, outreach system	I1, I2, I3, I4
10	Reduced Inequalities	Serving the unbankable group, 70% of members are women	I1, I4
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Financing waste management business	I3, I4
17	Partnerships for the Goals	Dompet Dhuafa Partnership, MKU community, member trust	I1, I2, I3, I4

Source: Primary Data Processed (2025)

Based on the summary in Table 3, it is evident that BMT Bina Ummah contributes to various SDG indicators through a combination of Islamic financial services, social programs, and community-based empowerment. These contributions demonstrate the integration of economic *(tamwil)* and social *(maal)* functions in supporting sustainable development at the local level. The implementation of these programs is not only oriented toward improving members' welfare but also toward strengthening social inclusion, reducing inequality, and developing community partnerships. To gain a deeper understanding, each contribution to the SDGs is explained in the subsections that follow.

a. SDG 1: No Poverty

BMT Bina Ummah supports the achievement of SDG 1 by providing access to financing for communities marginalized by the conventional banking system. It is illustrated by the experience of Informant 1, who had previously been denied access to conventional financing but successfully obtained financing from BMT. Informant 1 stated:

> *"If they can supply 20,000, then we will accept 20,000. If they can supply 50,000, then alhamdulillah." (I1)*

In line with this, I4 emphasizes that the mission behind the establishment of BMTs since 1995 has specifically focused on freeing the community from the clutches of loan sharks:

> *"Our main goal is to help low-income communities break free from the clutches of loan sharks." (I4)*

This finding is consistent with a study (Suaidah & Arjun, 2023), which states that Islamic microfinance institutions play a strategic role in poverty alleviation through community-based economic empowerment.

b. SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

BMTs' contribution to SDG 3 extends beyond the physical to encompass the psychosocial dimension. *Ijarah* products facilitate the financing of healthcare needs not covered by BPJS, as experienced by I1 in covering the medical expenses for her child, who required special care.

Furthermore, BMTs also contribute to maintaining members' mental well-being. I3 stated:

> *"If it were not for the BMT, I might have separated from my wife. The BMT staff have given me a lot of advice and support, and they have helped me out too."*

This humanistic approach illustrates the role of BMTs, which goes beyond conventional financial functions, in line with the concept of social finance within the framework of Islamic finance (Sihombing et al., 2024).

c. SDG 4: Quality Education

BMT Bina Ummah supports SDG 4 through two main channels. First, through the Gen Smart Scholarship program, managed by the Baitul Maal Unit, which provides regular educational assistance to orphans and the underprivileged from elementary through high school, as well as Quran recitation training. I4 explains:

> *"There is a sponsorship program under the Baitul Maal pillar. It is an educational scholarship program called Gen Smart. We provide monthly scholarships: Rp50,000 for elementary school, Rp100,000 for middle school, and Rp150,000 for high school."*

Second, through a six-month Islamic Economics Business School program that provides Islamic financial literacy training to members. I3 shared the benefits it has gained:

> *"There is a six-month Islamic economics business school that provides members with Islamic financial literacy training, including transportation costs."*

Indirectly, the economic stability that members achieve through BMT financing also supports their children's education, as is the case with I2, who has two children still in school.

d. SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

BMT's contribution to SDG 6 is realized through the "Water of Life" fundraising program for communities in the Gunung Kidul region, funded by Maal. I4 states:

> *"BMT has previously participated in the 'Water of Life' fundraising program for Gunung Kidul through the Maal fund."*

Although this program is temporary, the initiative demonstrates BMT's commitment to environmental issues and the basic needs of the community in the context of sustainable development (Suryanto et al., 2024).

e. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

BMT's contribution to SDG 8 is the most prominent and is directly felt by all informants. Through sharia financing schemes and an outreach system led by Account Officers, BMT has created a financial ecosystem that supports the growth of microenterprises. I2 stated:

> *"The loan is for 3 million rupiah for the lotek food cart."*

Meanwhile, I1 appreciates the flexibility of the installment plan, which does not place a financial burden on customers:

> *"Now I make a hundred thousand a week. Thank God, it does not feel like a burden."*

In addition, I4 reaffirmed BMT's commitment to building long-term economic resilience for its members:

> *"We frequently hold financial literacy workshops for our members, especially when we are out in the field. We also use social media for that purpose."*

It is consistent with the findings of (Kusuma et al., 2021), who emphasize that financial literacy is a crucial foundation for supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

f. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

BMT Bina Ummah consistently serves communities that lack access to formal banking services. With 70% of its members being women, primarily traditional market vendors, the institution's focus on vulnerable groups is evident. I4 states:

> *"Our main goal is to help low-income families break free from the clutches of loan sharks."*

This is something that I1 has experienced firsthand, as he previously had no access to conventional banking services:

> *"At first, I was hesitant to come here because a conventional bank had previously denied me a loan."*

This finding is consistent with a study (Kurniawan & Rahman, 2024), which states that Islamic microfinance institutions serve as an effective tool for reducing economic inequality through financial inclusion grounded in Islamic values.

g. SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

BMT's contribution to SDG 11 is achieved through financing for I3's waste management business, which serves approximately 300 households. I3 shares its journey with BMT:

> *"We had already settled things with the bank, so we decided to stay with BMT. Many people say that joining BMT is expensive, but the benefits are all ours to enjoy."*

Meanwhile, I4 explained that BMTs have begun to integrate environmental considerations into their financing processes:

> *"There was once a case involving a member who ran a tempeh business. We asked whether the waste would bother the neighbors."*

Financing for this environmentally friendly business indicates that BMTs indirectly contribute to the creation of cleaner and more sustainable communities (Ma'ruf et al., 2025).

h. SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

BMT Bina Ummah has established an extensive partnership network as the foundation for the institution's sustainability. Externally, BMT collaborates with Dompet Dhuafa, its founding institution, as well as various sharia cooperative associations. Internally, the institution strengthens its cohesive member

community through the MKU program. Members' trust is reflected in Statement I1:

> *"May BMT Bina Ummah be able to serve, provide capital, and understand the needs of the little people."*

I3 emphasizes the value of partnership as it sees it, which goes beyond mere financial transactions:

> *"BMT does not just provide funds; it also offers support. More accurately, BMT is not in the business of capitalizing on people's misfortune."*

Meanwhile, I4 expressed its desire to strengthen its partnership with the government:

> *"We hope the government will pay more attention to cooperatives, because cooperatives are the foundation of the economy."*

This organic partnership, based on trust, is consistent with the findings (Subchi et al., 2024) which states that trust is the primary social capital for the sustainability of Islamic microfinance institutions.

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of BMT Bina Ummah in supporting the SDGs is strongly influenced by the integration between its social and commercial functions. Unlike conventional financial institutions, which primarily focus on financial performance, BMT Bina Ummah integrates access to finance, social assistance, financial literacy, and community empowerment within a single institutional framework. This integrated approach enables the institution to address not only economic vulnerability but also educational, social, and environmental issues simultaneously.

The study also demonstrates that trust-based relationships between BMT and its members play a crucial role in strengthening financial inclusion among underserved communities. This finding supports the argument of Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes that institutional sustainability depends on the organization's ability to respond to the needs and expectations of various stakeholders. In the context of BMT Bina Ummah, stakeholders are not merely customers but also social partners, local communities, and vulnerable groups requiring both financial and social support.

Furthermore, these findings are consistent with previous studies by (Ginanjar & Kassim, 2021) and (Subchi et al., 2024), which highlights that Islamic

microfinance institutions are more effective when financial services are integrated with social empowerment and community engagement. However, this study extends previous literature by demonstrating how the simultaneous integration of maal and tamwil functions contributes to multiple SDGs at the institutional level rather than focusing on a single development objective.

From a socio-economic perspective, the programs implemented by BMT Bina Ummah contribute not only to improving access to capital but also to enhancing social resilience, reducing dependency on informal lenders, strengthening educational opportunities, and encouraging environmentally responsible economic activities. Therefore, the role of BMT can be understood not solely as a microfinance provider but also as a community-based development institution operating within the framework of sustainable Islamic social finance.

Obstacles and Challenges Faced by BMT Bina Ummah in Supporting the Achievement of the SDGs

Although BMT Bina Ummah has made a substantial contribution to achieving the SDGs, the institution faces several challenges in optimizing its role. Based on the results of in-depth interviews, these challenges can be categorized into three main dimensions.

a) Regulatory Challenges

Regulatory uncertainty is a major obstacle faced by BMTs. I4 states:

> *"The government's tax regulations, ma'am. For example, Ministerial Regulation No. 8 remains a major point of contention. If our management or supervisors do not meet the requirements, they could face imprisonment. Yet we already have certification from the DSN MUI."*

The burden of complying with these complex regulations weighs heavily on BMTs as microfinance institutions with limited resources, consistent with the findings (Wirianisa & Castrawijaya, 2024) which states that the complexity of ever-evolving regulations significantly influences the operational capacity of BMTs.

b) institutional challenges

Internally, BMTs face the challenges of low financial literacy among members and a reliance on trust-based approaches. I4 (Savings and Loan Unit Manager) stated:

> *"Whether a BMT can grow or not depends on the active participation of its members. If they actively save, they can also borrow. But, it's true that many still need to be educated."* "

As noted by (Subchi et al., 2024), rust and community networks are both strengths and challenges in the management of Islamic microfinance institutions.

c) external challenges

The rise of online lending has become a real threat to BMT members, as experienced by I3, who became trapped in online debt, which disrupted his family's stability. In addition, the public perception that BMT financing is more expensive also poses a challenge. I3 stated:

> *"Many people say that joining a BMT is expensive, even though you get to keep the profits all to yourself."*

The lack of government support for the Islamic cooperative ecosystem also poses a structural barrier, as noted by I4:

> *"We hope the government will pay more attention to cooperatives, because cooperatives are the foundation of the economy."*

Overall, the sustainability of BMT Bina Ummah's contributions to the SDGs depends on supportive regulations, improved public financial literacy, and the strengthening of the Islamic cooperative ecosystem at the national level.

Research implications

1. Practical implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for various stakeholders. First, for the management of BMT Bina Ummah, these results can serve as a reference for strengthening the integration of social and financial programs more systematically and measurably, based on SDG indicators, particularly by expanding the scope of the *Baitul Maal* program and continuously improving members' financial literacy.

Second, for the government and regulators, this study provides empirical evidence of the concrete contributions of BMTs as Islamic microfinance institutions to the national development agenda. These findings can serve as a basis for formulating regulations that are more conducive to the development of Islamic cooperatives, including simplifying tax regulations and strengthening institutional protections for BMTs.

Third, for the public and prospective BMT members, this study reveals that BMTs are not merely financial institutions but also partners in social and economic empowerment, contributing holistically to improving family well-being, access to education, and the resilience of microenterprises.

2. Theoretical implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of Islamic microfinance institutions within the framework of sustainable development. First, these findings reinforce the relevance of Stakeholder Theory in analyzing the operational dynamics of BMTs, where an institution's success depends not only on financial performance but also on its ability to simultaneously meet the interests of various stakeholders, ranging from members and employees to the surrounding community (Freeman et al., 1984).

Second, this study expands the empirical literature on Islamic microfinance and the SDGs by presenting field evidence that a single BMT institution can contribute to eight SDG goals in an integrated manner through the synergy of its *maal* and *tamwil* functions. This offers a new perspective that the BMT's dual-function approach has significant potential as a relevant institutional model for implementing the SDGs at the local level.

Third, this study confirms that the principle of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* as the operational foundation of BMTs is conceptually well-aligned with the SDGs framework, and thus can serve as a normative basis for the development of Islamic finance theory oriented toward sustainable development (Sari et al., 2023; Suryanto et al., 2024).

4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, BMT Bina Ummah plays a crucial role in advancing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

through the synergistic integration of its tamwil and maal functions. Through Sharia-compliant financing products, social services, and empowerment programs such as scholarships, rice ATMs, and entrepreneurship training, BMTs function not only as financial institutions but also as agents of social and economic empowerment, improving community welfare, particularly for those underserved by the banking sector. This contribution is reflected in their support for eight SDG indicators: No Poverty, Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Clean Water and Sanitation, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Partnerships for the Goals. However, this study has limitations because it focuses on a single research subject, has a limited number of informants, and does not measure the impact quantitatively. Therefore, the results cannot be widely generalized.

Research recommendations

Given these limitations, future research is recommended to expand the study's scope by including more BMTs across regions to obtain a more comprehensive and representative picture. Furthermore, a mixed-methods approach is recommended to quantitatively measure the impact of BMTs' contributions on the achievement of the SDGs. Practitioners, particularly BMT Bina Ummah, are advised to strengthen the documentation and reporting of their contributions to the SDGs in a structured manner and to enhance sharia financial literacy programs for their members. Meanwhile, the government and regulators require more supportive policies, including regulatory simplification and strengthening the sharia cooperative ecosystem, to optimize the role of BMTs in sustainable development.

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