International Journal of Humanities and Social Science
ISSN: 2220-8488 (Print), 2221-0989 (Online)

BRPI

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Integrating Agricultural Waqf and Musaqah Contract Towards a Sustainable Food Security

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Article History:

Received: 7 August 2025; Accepted: 24 September 2025; Published: 28 September 2025

Abstract Agriculture is among humanity's earliest activities, essential for the development of civilization. A sufficient and nutritious food supply ensures a high quality of life within society. However, global climate change, soil and water pollution, and high operational costs pose significant challenges to both global and local food security. Additionally, achieving zero hunger is a key target under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting the global aspiration for food security. This study explores the integration of waqf (Islamic endowment) and the Musaqah contract as mechanisms for enhancing food security. Employing a qualitative methodology, this study utilizes content analysis of relevant documents sourced from the Department of Agriculture Malaysia and the Department of Waqf, Zakat & Hajj (JAWHAR). The findings indicate that agricultural waqf and the Musaqah contract practices adopted in several ASEAN countries have high potential and effectiveness. The implications of this study can serve as valuable references for policymakers and communities engaged in agriculture.

Keywords Integration; Agricultural Waqf; Musaqah Contract; Food Security; Sustainable

Volume 15, 2025

Publisher: The Brooklyn Research and Publishing Institute, 442 Lorimer St, Brooklyn, NY 11206, United States.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.30845/ijhss.v15p41

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Citation: Akhir, N. S. B. M., Yusof, A. S. B.M., Ismail, I. A., & Ismail, M.S.I. (2025). Integrating Agricultural Waqf and Musaqah Contract Towards a Sustainable Food Security. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *15*, 426-440. https://doi.org/10.30845/ijhss.v15p41

1. Introduction

Food security must be taken seriously and demands specific strategies to ensure preparedness for future challenges. Various global factors, such as climate change, political leadership, and economic dynamics, significantly impact food security unpredictably. Reliance on imported commodity supplies is one of the main contributing factors to this issue. High domestic demand exceeding local supply leads to dependence on imports (Mohamed & Shafiai, 2021). This dependence makes the country vulnerable to fluctuations in global market prices (Yusof, Ahmad & Othman, 2022).

Climate change phenomena such as floods and droughts adversely affect agricultural production (Hassan & Ismail, 2021), necessitating increased investment in climate-resilient agricultural technologies. In 2022, India, a major rice producer alongside Thailand, Myanmar, and Vietnam, limited its rice exports due to changes in monsoon climate patterns (Reuters, 2022). This action directly led to higher global prices for this staple food. Additionally, India restricted wheat and sugar exports to control inflation and maintain domestic supply stability (Noh, 2022). A study by Talib et al. (2024) revealed that Malaysia also experienced a 19% decline in rice production compared to 2022 due to climate change. Meanwhile, research by Badaruddin (2015) predicted that local rice supply could decline by approximately 6% by 2050 and 12% by 2090 without proactive measures to enhance rice self-sufficiency.

The country also faces challenges in the livestock sector, notably shortages of chicken and eggs experienced in 2022, during which the government halted chicken exports to stabilize domestic supply (Noh, 2022). This issue was closely linked to rising feed costs, particularly imported corn from Brazil, which reduced chicken production and subsequently drove price increases (Ahmad, 2022). This scenario underscores the importance of national preparedness for future uncertainties.

Malaysia's commitment to the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) or the Zero Hunger Agenda aims to eradicate poverty, provide adequate and nutritious food for all, and promote sustainable agriculture (United Nations, 2015). Within the Malaysian context, food security and poverty reduction are prioritized due to their direct correlation with the country's socio-economic development. Malaysia, as a middle-income nation, implements various initiatives to reduce food access disparities.

To achieve this target, several strategic policies have been established to strengthen the national food security system. The National Agro-Food Policy (2021–2030) aims to enhance local food production, reduce import dependency, and ensure food reserves security (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries Malaysia, 2021). This policy emphasizes increasing the productivity of staple crops such as rice, vegetables, fruits, livestock, and fisheries through modern technology and sustainable agricultural practices. Additionally, the government encourages urban farming programs as an alternative to boost food production in urban areas.

This study highlights the need to strengthen and empower the development of waqf land for agricultural sectors as an alternative platform to enhance agricultural productivity. Agricultural waqf not only improves food security but also empowers marginalized communities and promotes sustainable practices (Abdullah et al., 2020). However, realizing this potential requires addressing existing challenges through policy reforms, capacity building, and stakeholder collaboration. Strategically implemented, waqf land can become a smart solution for achieving Zero Hunger and driving development in Malaysia.

Data from the Department of Agriculture Malaysia indicates that, up to 2019, there were 91,677 hectares of idle land suitable for agriculture, comprising 35,221 lots (Department of Agriculture Malaysia, 2024; Shukor, Mahmud & Valeriano, 2022). Pahang recorded the highest area of idle land at 25,329 hectares, followed by Johor with 16,492 hectares and Selangor with 15,983 hectares. Table 1 below details data on idle land suitable for agricultural activities (Jabatan Pertanian, 2019). [Refer to Appendix Table 1]

Malaysia also possesses significant waqf land holdings. According to Romli et al., (2022), a total of 4,836.60 hectares are classified as general waqf land, while 6,225.32 hectares are designated as specific waqf land that remains idle (Romli et al., 2022). As of 2023, out of 18,402 waqf land lots, 15,384 (84%) were already utilized, while 3,018 (16%) remained unutilized. In 2024, this number increased to 23,364 lots, with 19,166 (82%) utilized and 4,198 (18%) still idle (JAWHAR). Unutilized waqf land represents an underused asset and a loss of opportunity for various stakeholders. Table 2 presents the complete statistics on waqf land in Malaysia as of 31 July 2024 (JAWHAR). [Refer to Appendix Table 2]

The management of waqf land should not be confined solely to traditional methods. The application of istibdal (substitution or exchange) is among the alternative approaches that can be employed in waqf asset management to yield more profitable returns (Arifin, Muhtadi & Aziz, 2020). Idle waqf land holds substantial potential for development in the agricultural sector. Such utilisation can indirectly contribute to increasing national food production and reducing reliance on imported food commodities. Moreover, it can generate employment opportunities, enhance skills development and technological adoption, and ultimately benefit the wider community.

The Musaqah contract has shown promising potential in managing idle waqf land. Musaqah refers to a form of partnership between landowners and farmers, wherein the farmers undertake the cultivation and maintenance of the land, and, upon harvest, are remunerated based on terms agreed in the contract (Rastini et al., 2021). From a strategic perspective, Musaqah arrangements are intended to alleviate the burden on stakeholders in managing extensive agricultural lands, particularly the underutilised waqf lands. This model is capable of creating substantial employment opportunities while significantly boosting agricultural output (Rozalinda, 2016; Ghazaly, 2010; Hamid et al., 2024).

Therefore, this article focuses on the integration of agricultural waqf and the Musaqah contract as a viable strategy for strengthening national food security. This study is aligned with the country's objective of enhancing domestic agricultural production without excessive dependence on foreign sources. The findings indicate that integrating these two mechanisms can serve as an innovative solution to revitalise Malaysia's agro-food sector.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach through the method of library-based research. Library research is a methodological strategy aimed at collecting and analysing information from credible and authoritative sources (Ritchie, Spencer, & O'Connor, 2003; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), library research sources include both printed and electronic materials that are available in libraries or accessible through digital platforms. This method involves systematic information retrieval using relevant keywords to review previous studies and existing literature (Spencer & O'Connor, 2003). The keywords used for the library search are waqf, agricultural waqf, musaqah contract, sustainability, and food security.

The study draws upon authoritative materials such as documents published by the Department of Agriculture Malaysia, the Malaysian Waqf Foundation 2019 (Yayasan Wakaf Malaysia, YWM), and the Department of Waqf, Zakat & Hajj (2024) (JA

WHAR). In addition, scholarly journal articles and doctoral dissertations (2019 & 2024)erve as key sources, enabling a detailed identification and analysis of the concepts of agricultural waqf and food security. Simultaneously, the study explores various Islamic contractual frameworks, with a particular focus on the Musaqah contract as a suitable mechanism to be integrated within the context of agricultural waqf.

Specifically, the library research method offers a critical review-based approach to fulfilling the study's objectives in a cumulative manner. In this context, "cumulative" refers to the researcher's intent to acquire prior research findings in a constructive and comprehensive way (Awang & Rahim, 2003). Through this approach, the researcher is able to gather authoritative sources and identify gaps in the existing body of literature.

3. Findings and Discussion of the Study

3.1 Issues and Challenges in Food Security

Food is a fundamental component for the sustainability of human civilisation. An adequate and nutritious food supply ensures a good quality of life. According to Aris and Ab Rahman (2011), food security can be interpreted at multiple levels. At the international level, it refers to the responsibility of all nations to ensure stable food market prices. At the national level, it signifies a country's capacity to maintain a stable domestic food supply. At the individual level, food security encompasses not only having sufficient food but also meeting proper nutritional requirements.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website reports that between 702 an 828 million people worldwide suffer from hunger (https://www.fao.org/hunger/en/, 3 Mac 2023). FAO outlines four essential components of food security: (i) food availability, referring to sufficient quantities of food from domestic production or imports; (ii) food access, meaning adequate resources for obtaining appropriate food; (iii) food utilisation, which

entails consistent and balanced food consumption; and (iv) food stability, ensuring that individuals or households are not at risk of losing access to food in times of market shocks, such as economic crises (FAO).

The Qur'an also touches upon the issue of food security in Surah Yusuf, verses 46–49, where the nation of Egypt endured a seven-year drought. Strategic planning was initiated beforehand to mitigate the impact of the crisis. According to an article by Beta Pujangga Mukt (2019), several measures were undertaken, including maximising wheat production before the drought period, efficient stockpiling of food, and practising moderation in food consumption. Egypt not only survived the crisis but was also able to export wheat to neighbouring countries during the drought.

Food security is not merely a global concern but also a national priority for the Malaysian government. It is closely linked to human survival, national development, and civilisational progress. In Malaysia, agricultural development is central to ensuring a stable food supply and meeting domestic demand. To achieve this, the government has consistently prioritised agricultural policy despite the competing growth of the industrial sector. Even before independence, the country focused on food crop production, including rice, fruits, and vegetables (Damin & Mohamed, 2015). Over the years, various agricultural policies have been implemented, including the First National Agricultural Policy (1984–1992), the Second National Agricultural Policy (1992–1998), the Third National Agricultural Policy (1998–2010), and the Food Security Policy (2008–2010) (Aris & Ab Rahman, 2011).

Currently, under the National Agro-Food Policy 2021–2030 (NAP 2.0), the agricultural sector is seen as capable of reducing rural poverty by up to 80% and ensuring a sufficient food supply by the year 2050 for an estimated global population of 10 billion. The policy identifies several critical issues and challenges to food security, including the depletion of natural resources, low agricultural productivity and innovation, demographic shifts and dietary transitions, food loss and waste, and climate change (National Agro-Food Policy 2021–2030).

Figure 1 illustrates the challenge posed by limited natural resources, such as land and water, for agriculture, which are in competition with the industrial sector. Globally, FAO estimates that the amount of arable land available per capita will continue to decline until 2025. Hence, agricultural productivity must be significantly improved to meet growing food demands and the rising global population (FAO) (https://www.fao.org/hunger/en/, 3 Mac 2023). Demographic change and evolving food consumption patterns also pose challenges, as global food demand is projected to increase by 59% to 98% by 2050. Inefficient food resource management leads to food spoilage and waste, further exacerbating the problem. Uncontrolled deforestation, unsustainable farming practices, and excessive fertiliser use have all contributed to climate-related disasters (National Agro-Food Policy 2021–2030). [Refer to Appendix Figure 1]

Damin and Mohamed (2015) recommend that the government collaborate with private sector stakeholders and adopt comprehensive planning, alongside strengthening research and development (R&D) technologies and considering climatic factors, in order to optimise agricultural production as a sustainable food source. Such external partnerships are viewed as a strategic solution, particularly in the context of developing agricultural waqf initiatives that benefit multiple stakeholders while contributing to national food security in Malaysia. This form of collaboration between private entities and local communities is aligned with the objectives outlined in the Food Security Policy Action Plan 2021–2025. The Action Plan outlines four key objective i) to increase domestic resources and diversify sources of food imports, ii) to enhance private sector and community participation in the food system, iii) to ensure the availability of safe food at affordable prices and to promote healthy dietary practices, iv) to strengthen the nation's preparedness in addressing food security crises (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2021). [Refer to Appendix Figure 2]

3.2 Agricultural Waqf in Islamic Civilization

Agricultural waqf has played a pivotal role in the social, economic, and civilizational development of the Islamic world from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the modern era. The waqf institution has functioned not only as a charitable instrument but also as a sustainable development mechanism for society. Over time, the concept of waqf has expanded beyond immovable assets such as land and buildings to encompass more dynamic forms, including cash waqf, corporate waqf, and digital waqf. This diversity demonstrates the adaptability of the waqf system to contemporary societal needs and the evolution of civilisation.

This variety of waqf forms also extends into the agricultural sector, where agricultural waqf has emerged as a vital mechanism for ensuring economic continuity and societal well-being. Agricultural waqf refers to land or agricultural-

related resources endowed for public benefit. This definition is consistent with both classical and contemporary Islamic scholars who emphasise that waqf assets must benefit society without diminishing the principal value (Kahf, 2003). Typically, agricultural waqf includes land, irrigation systems, fruit orchards, and other agricultural resources.

The history of agricultural waqf began when the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) endowed seven date orchards in Madinah, including A'raf, Shafiyah, Dalal, Barqah, and others (Khusaeri, 2015; Hidayat, 2023). This practice was followed by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA), who endowed a date orchard in the seventh year of Hijrah. He had acquired land in Khaybar and consulted the Prophet (PBUH) on how best to manage it. The Prophet advised him to endow the land, ensuring that its produce be allocated to the poor and that the land itself not be sold or inherited (Ab Latif et al., 2024). It is a common practice that the benefits or proceeds derived from waqf assets are allocated to support the impoverished segments of society.

The practice of agricultural waqf continued to expand during the Islamic caliphates. Under the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, specific institutions were established to manage waqf development, with the state acting as the overseeing authority to ensure effective administration (Kasdi, 2018). Notably, the Abbasid era saw the establishment of institutions such as *Shadr al-Wuquuf* (Khusaeri, 2015; Hidayat, 2023). During the Ayyubid reign, almost all agricultural lands were converted into waqf and managed entirely by the *Bayt al-Mal*. The Mamluk period witnessed the flourishing of waqf, where nearly all assets that could provide benefit—including agricultural land—were endowed (Khusaeri, 2015; Hidayat, 2023).

The momentum of agricultural waqf development persisted into the Ottoman era, during which the waqf system became more structured and played a crucial role in the national economy. During the Ottoman administration, a significant portion of state revenue was derived from agricultural lands and their associated taxation, with nearly 20% of the empire's territory comprising waqf land (Zainal, 2016). Waqf management during this period was not confined to immovable property but also included agricultural tools and cash waqf (Setyorini & Kurniawan, 2022).

In the Ottoman era, agricultural waqf was an important source of infrastructure financing, including the development of irrigation systems, farms, and agricultural zones. Many nobles and state leaders endowed farmland for public welfare. These waqf lands were often cultivated by farmers under *istibdal* arrangements, allowing them to work the land without ownership while the proceeds supported other waqf institutions (Cizakca, 2000).

The tradition of agricultural waqf extended beyond the Islamic heartlands and spread widely across other nations. In Turkey, agricultural waqf once accounted for approximately one-third of the country's total farmland (Kasdi, 2018). Strategic initiatives were undertaken, such as long-term agricultural lease schemes and the application of modern technology to enhance productivity. The historical experience of Turkey demonstrates how agricultural waqf served as a pillar of economic stability (Cizakca, 2000). In contrast, Egypt experienced a major shift after the 1952 Revolution, when the government transferred waqf lands to the Land Reform Committee for redistribution to farmers. This led to widespread privatisation of agricultural waqf land, diminishing its economic and social role (Cizakca, 2000).

In Morocco, following French colonisation, agricultural waqf land could no longer be freely used for farming. Instead, it was auctioned to farmers under public lease agreements. Tenants were incentivised to cultivate trees or improve soil fertility. Upon the lease's expiry, harvest yields were shared between the waqf administration and tenants, often resulting in shared ownership of the land (Cizakca, 2000).

In the ASEAN region, agricultural waqf has seen growing recognition. In Malaysia, agricultural waqf has become a component of contemporary waqf practice. It is employed as an instrument to strengthen national food security, as seen in its integration into the halal food industry development model (Ahmad Rashid et al., 2023). Within this context, the application of *al-Muzāra'ah* (profit-sharing contract) has been recommended as an effective mechanism to encourage productive utilisation of waqf land by farmers (Romli et al., 2024).

In conclusion, agricultural waqf has historically proven to be a critical instrument in Islamic civilisation, contributing significantly to community welfare and economic growth. In the current context, agricultural waqf holds strong potential to enhance agricultural output and play a vital role in ensuring national food security.

3.3 Agricultural Waqf Projects in Malaysia

Shaharuddin (2022), former Chief Executive Officer of the Malaysian Waqf Foundation (Yayasan Waqaf Malaysia, YWM), stated that agricultural waqf could serve as a viable solution to the rising cost of living and contribute

significantly to ensuring food security. Waqf is not limited to religious activities but can provide benefits to both Muslims and non-Muslims. When properly promoted and managed, waqf has the potential to yield substantial benefits for multiple stakeholders. Several studies in Indonesia have shown that productive agricultural waqf has had a positive impact on community empowerment. Research conducted by Sunjoto et al. (2022), Milawati (2023), and Salim (2023) demonstrates the positive effects of agricultural waqf in various regions of the country. Similarly, in Brunei, Puteh (2019) has emphasised the need for the development of agricultural waqf.

In Malaysia, agricultural waqf has been implemented through several specific projects under the administration of State Islamic Religious Councils (Majlis Agama Islam Negeri, MAIN) and the Malaysian Waqf Foundation (YWM). One notable initiative is the Integrated Agricultural Waqf Project (Wakaf Pertanian Bersepadu, WATANI), which aims to support national food security policies, reduce dependence on imported food supplies, fully utilise idle or underutilised waqf land, offer employment opportunities to those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and optimise resources through agricultural and livestock ventures to enhance local economies (https://www.ywm.gov.my/pengumuman/451). Other projects include the Pineapple Farm Project in Penang, the Palm Oil Plantation Waqf Project in Perak, and the Waqf Orchard of Knowledge Project at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Melaka Branch (Abdul Hamid et al, 2024).

These agricultural waqf projects are generally managed by the respective MAINs as the appointed trustees (*mutawalli*) of the waqf. The councils collaborate with relevant partners to implement projects, with profits distributed according to mutually agreed terms. In addition to MAINs, YWM actively engages in developing waqf-based initiatives such as water waqf, healthcare waqf, and agricultural waqf in collaboration with government agencies, private sectors, or corporations.

(i) WATANI Integrated Agricultural Project, Putrajaya

The WATANI project is an agricultural waqf initiative spearheaded by YWM through its subsidiary, YWM MAIN Sdn. Bhd. Developed on 10 acres of waqf land in Putrajaya, the project aims to ensure food supply security, reduce reliance on imported food, rehabilitate idle waqf land, create job opportunities for *asnaf* (eligible zakat recipients), and optimise resources through agricultural and livestock activities (Rashid, Yusof & Bhari, 2023).

Launched on 22 February 2022, the project includes the cultivation of short- and medium-term crops such as vegetables, *pisang tanduk* (horn bananas), pineapples, red chillies, and corn, with a target sales value of RM240,000 within three months of harvest (Johar & Saad, 2024). In the same year, the government allocated RM3 million to support the WATANI project (Ali & Naserun, 2024), which has shown positive impacts by delivering affordable produce to the community.

(ii) Pineapple Farm Project, Penang

Initiated in 2020, this project is a collaboration between MAIN Penang (MAINPP), Zakat Pulau Pinang (ZPP), and the Malaysian Pineapple Industry Board (LPNM). Located in Kampung Tun Sardon, Ara Kuda, Penang, the farm was previously 2.4 hectares of idle waqf land (Talib, Sarip & Norhayati, 2023).

The project was conceptualised by the former chairman of ZPP (2017–2019), YBhg. Dato' Abdul Malik bin Abul Kasim. Six *asnaf* individuals were selected to work on the farm, receiving technical training from LPNM. A total of 140,000 pineapple plants were cultivated, with profits distributed to the *asnaf* farmers (Mohamad, 2021).

(iii) Palm Oil Waqf Plantation Project, Perak

In Perak, the State Islamic Religious Council (MAIPk) partnered with Perbadanan Ekonomi Islam Perak Sdn. Bhd. (PSB), which is responsible for palm oil plantation management, real estate development, and healthcare services. As part of this initiative, PSB developed the Palm Oil Waqf Plantation Project.

Under this project, oil palm trees were designated as *mawquf* (endowed assets) and their fruits as *manfa'ah* (benefits). The yields are allocated to MAIPk for funding other waqf-related developments, such as schools and mosques. The Sg. Siput and Sungkai plantations are two examples managed by PSB and MAIPk. Project implementation includes clustered planting schemes (RTB), *al-musyarakah* (partnership), *wakalah* (agency), and waqf (Perbadanan Ekonomi Islam Perak).

(iv) Waqf Orchard of Knowledge Project, UiTM Melaka Branch

The Melaka Islamic Religious Council (MAIM) serves as the sole trustee for waqf in Melaka. In collaboration with six higher education institutions (HEIs), including UiTM Melaka, MAIM initiated the Educational Waqf Fund. UiTM Melaka was designated for the development of the Orchard of Knowledge Waqf Project, a part of agricultural waqf initiatives. Ustaz Muaz Mohd Noor from UiTM's Unit of Waqf, Zakat, and Infaq (El-Wazif) coordinates the project (Mohd Noor, 2022).

In partnership with the Melaka Department of Agriculture, MARDI, and FAMA, the project began in February 2021 with the planting of over 140 fruit trees. These trees are expected to mature in three to five years, with an estimated seasonal profit of RM227,800. The returns will benefit the campus community, including students, *asnaf*, and entrepreneurs (Johar & Mat Saad, 2024). The orchard includes Musang King durian, mangosteen, Mutiara rambutan, cempedak, jackfruit, and Mataq coconut. The site also features recreational facilities like jogging tracks and gazebos (Mulia, 2021).

(v) PERKAYA Palm Oil Plantation Waqf Project, Terengganu

This plantation was established in 1992 on 830 acres of state land in Kemaman, Terengganu. A total of 2,995 individuals participated as donors (*waqif*), and in 2010, the trusteeship was transferred to the Terengganu Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council (MAIDAM) (PERKAYA Terengganu).

The project employs a waqf model involving the endowment of both land and trees. Donors could purchase and endow palm oil trees, with the benefits directed toward orphans under the care of the Terengganu Orphan Welfare Organisation (PERKAYA) (Mohamad Idris et al., 2023; Johar & Saad, 2024). Additionally, proceeds are used to repay loans provided by Agro Bank, which initially funded the plantation (Mahamood et al., 2009). The annual return from the PERKAYA Plantation Waqf Scheme is estimated at RM1.3 million, sustaining orphan-related institutions (Ab Rahman, 2009).

3.4 The Musaqah Contract in the Agricultural Sector

The Musaqah contract is an Islamic legal agreement (*akad*) that is permissible under Shariah. It constitutes a partnership between a landowner and an agricultural worker or farmer, wherein both parties benefit based on mutually agreed terms (Wahab et al, 2014 ; Syaickhu et al 2020). According to the Federal Territory Mufti Office, the wisdom behind Musaqah lies in addressing the needs of parties where landowners may lack the skills or time to manage their land, while others may have the necessary expertise but no access to land. Thus, the contract promotes mutual benefit and social harmony.Unlike fixed-wage labour arrangements, which can result in losses for landowners if crops fail, Musaqah involves a profit-sharing model agreed upon before planting begins. In the event of crop failure, neither party profits, as losses are shared—landowners contribute capital while farmers contribute labour (Portal Pejabat Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan).

Research by Wahab et al. (2014) identifies Musaqah as a viable alternative for developing idle waqf land. Agricultural ventures using Musaqah contracts have proven to be profitable and sustainable over the long term.

Several academic studies in Indonesia have examined the application of Musaqah, including Implementasi al-Musaqah pada Petani Sawit Di Kecamatan Tapung Hilir Kabupaten Kampar Menurut Perspektif Ekonomi Islam (2012), Analisis Sistem Pengairan Sawah Masyarakat Gampong Bineh Blang Kabupaten Aceh Besar Dalam Perspektif Akad al-Musaqah (2016), Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Sistem Musaqah Antara Pemilik Kebun Karet dan Penyadap di Desa Tanjung Bulan Kecamatan Rambang Kuang Kabupaten Ogan Ilir (2017), and Analisis Penggunaan Akad Mukhabarah dan Musaqah Terhadap Peningkatan Pendapatan Petani di Aceh Selatan. These studies confirm the significant potential of Musaqah contracts in developing agricultural land.

Figure 3 illustrates the Musaqah model as implemented in South Aceh, where landowners cultivate oil palm, durian, and coconut. To maintain the productivity of these farms, collaboration with farmers is essential. Farmers contribute labour and time through a mutually agreed Musaqah contract to manage the farms (Zaki, 2024). [Refer to Appendix Figure 3]

A slightly different approach is presented in a study from Brunei by Puteh (2019), titled *"The Potential of Waqf in Agriculture in Brunei Darussalam: Application of Islamic Methods"*, which proposes a Musaqah contract model incorporating waqf principles. Figure 4 illustrates the role of the Brunei Islamic Religious Council (Majlis Ugama

Islam Brunei, MUIB) as the *mutawalli* (trustee) in Brunei Darussalam. MUIB supplies the waqf land, provides seeds and fertilisers, as well as farming tools and equipment such as ploughs, hoes, and other gardening implements. Farmers, selected from among *asnaf* (eligible zakat recipients) who are physically capable and possess farming skills, are tasked with cultivating the land.

The Musaqah contract is established once both parties agree on the profit-sharing ratio or percentage (Puteh, 2019). This model is regarded as particularly effective, as the labour force is sourced from among the *asnaf* community. The integration of waqf and zakat instruments (specifically *asnaf* beneficiaries) is perceived as an intelligent system to help uplift the poor from poverty while simultaneously developing idle waqf land. [Refer to Appendix Figure 4]

Malaysia also possesses a substantial amount of idle land. A study by Mohamad 'As' Syaqim Mohamad Idris (2023) identified three main factors contributing to idle land in the country: (1) unsuitable physical conditions for agriculture, including poor soil and unfavourable climate; (2) landowners' attitudes, particularly those who prefer to preserve land as inheritance without utilising it; and (3) the absence of effective legal enforcement, especially regarding the National Land Code 1965 (KTN 1965). In addition, a lack of capital to develop the land is also cited as a significant constraint (Mohamad 'As' Syaqim Mohamad Idris, 2023; Yunus et al., 2022).

The country also holds a large area of waqf land, some of which remains idle due to similar constraints—high operational costs, unsuitable conditions, and low productivity. This study suggests that alternative mechanisms grounded in Islamic economics may offer solutions to these challenges. Mohd Faiz et al. (2021) proposed several Shariah-compliant methods for managing idle waqf land, including the contracts of Musaqah, al-Muzara'ah, al-Hukri, Istibdal, al-Khuluw, and al-Ijarah. Among these, this study focuses on exploring the potential of the Musaqah contract in developing agricultural waqf in Malaysia.

To date, the specific application of the Musaqah contract in Malaysia's agricultural sector remains limited. Most existing agricultural waqf projects have adopted alternative models, particularly investment and corporate partnerships. While Musaqah arrangements may be practised informally between private landowners and individual farmers, they are generally small-scale. Typically, these involve private landowners who lack the time, skills, or physical ability to manage their land, entrusting it to trusted farmers in exchange for a share of profits based on a mutually agreed ratio.

This same concept should be adopted by institutions responsible for managing waqf assets. Waqf land should not be left idle without generating benefits. State Islamic Religious Councils (MAIN) serve as trustees (*mutawalli*) for waqf asset collection and development. MAIN is responsible for ensuring that waqf administration complies with Shariah law and is managed effectively to yield optimal returns for the public good, particularly in areas of welfare (Ismail, 2010). In this context, the Musaqah contract offers a promising solution—not only in revitalising idle waqf land but also in generating employment. Agricultural output can be increased, thereby enhancing the national food supply.

Agricultural waqf is a component of contemporary waqf that has recently gained attention in Malaysia. Both MAIN and YWM have taken steps to strengthen agricultural waqf as part of efforts to enhance food security. However, literature review findings indicate that studies specifically addressing the integration of agricultural waqf with the Musaqah contract in Malaysia remain limited. Nonetheless, Rashid et al. (2023) concur that agricultural waqf can contribute to food security stability. Collaboration among stakeholders—including the food industry and waqf institutions—is necessary (Rashid et al., 2023). Agricultural revolutions have long been part of human civilisation, and continuous exploration and research remain vital (Ismil, Baharuddin & Lutfi, 2024). Smart farming models should be thoroughly examined as part of national strategies for food security.

4. Conclusion

Food security is a vital component of Islamic economic principles aimed at ensuring social well-being and the equitable distribution of resources. A stable and sufficient food supply is critical to sustaining a high quality of life. However, food security has become a pressing concern at both global and local levels. This study concludes that agricultural waqf can serve as a strategic alternative in addressing food insecurity, in alignment with the objectives of maqasid al-shariah.

Accordingly, the integration of smart farming approaches—particularly through agricultural waqf and the Musaqah contract—holds strong potential to optimise agri-food production. This method has been implemented in several ASEAN countries and serves as a viable solution to the issue of idle waqf land. Musaqah-based initiatives present low

risk, generate employment and skill-building opportunities, increase food production, and reduce dependence on imported food.

Successful implementation of smart agricultural waqf requires strong collaboration among ministries, waqf institutions, private sector actors, and civil society. Challenges related to legal frameworks, management efficiency, and land sustainability must be addressed with effective strategies to maximise their benefits. Further research is needed in areas such as technology adoption and innovative farming techniques to improve agricultural yields. Waqf institutions, in particular, must proactively engage in partnerships to expand and strengthen agricultural waqf. In doing so, national food security can be enhanced, local commodity prices stabilised, and overall quality of life improved.

Acknowledgement

This article is part of a research project funded under the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS), bearing the code (FRGS/1/2024/SS103/UITM/02/1), entitled *"The Madani Agrotani Model: Integrating Agricultural Waqf and the Musaqah Contract for Sustainable Food Security."* The authors express their sincere gratitude for the FRGS funding that supported the publication of this article.

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Appendix:

Table 1: Data on Idle Land Suitable for Agriculture in 2019

State	No. Lots	Area (ha)
Johor	3,055	16,492
Kedah	1,004	1,557
Kelantan	2,767	3,700
Melaka	1,497	1,926
N. Sembilan	4,295	8,704
Pahang	8,799	25,329
Perak	3,434	9,605
Perlis	10	8
P. Pinang	221	793
Selangor	3,917	15,983
Terengganu	5,565	6,480
Sabah	n.a	n.a
Sarawak	n.a	n.a
W.P Labuan	657	1,099
Malaysia	35,221	91,677

Source : Jabatan Pertanian Malaysia, 2019

Table 2: Statistics on Waqf Land in Malaysia as of 31 July 2024

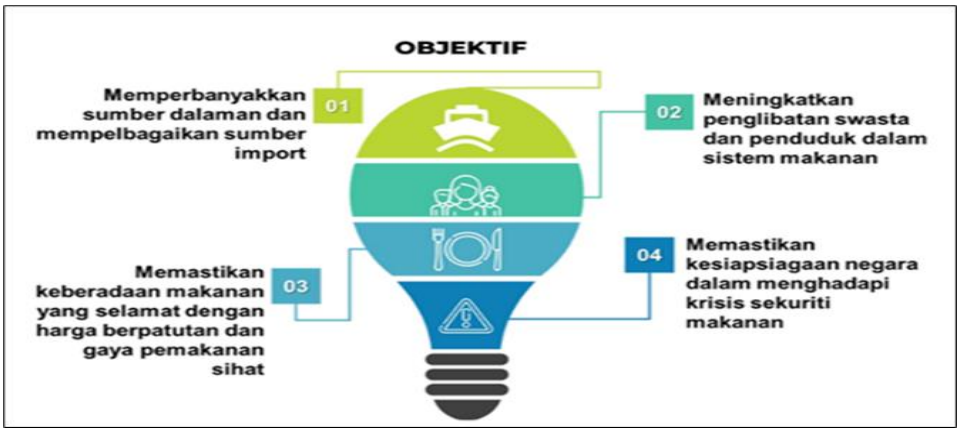
Item	2023	2024
Lots Utilised	15,384 (84%)	19,166 (82%)
Lots Not Yet Utilised	3,018 (16%)	4,198 (18%)
Hectares Utilised	18,577 (88%)	20,782 (83%)
Hectares Not Yet Utilised	2,415 (12%)	4,265 (17%)

Source: JAWHAR

Figure 1: Issues and Challenges in the Agro-Food Sector

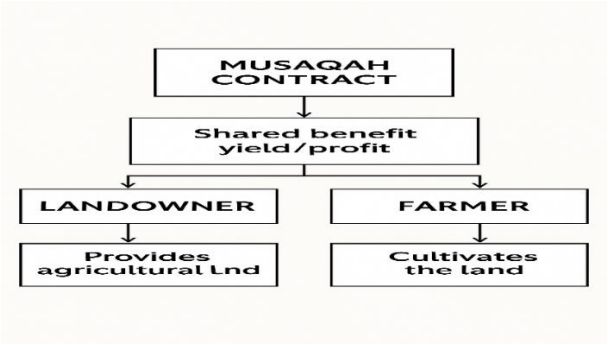
Source: Buku Dasar Agromakanan Negara 2021-2030

Figure 2: Food Security Policy Action Plan 2021–2025



Source : Kementerian Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan (2024).

Figure 3: Flowchart of Musaqah Contract in South Aceh, Indonesia



Source : (Zaki, A., 2024)

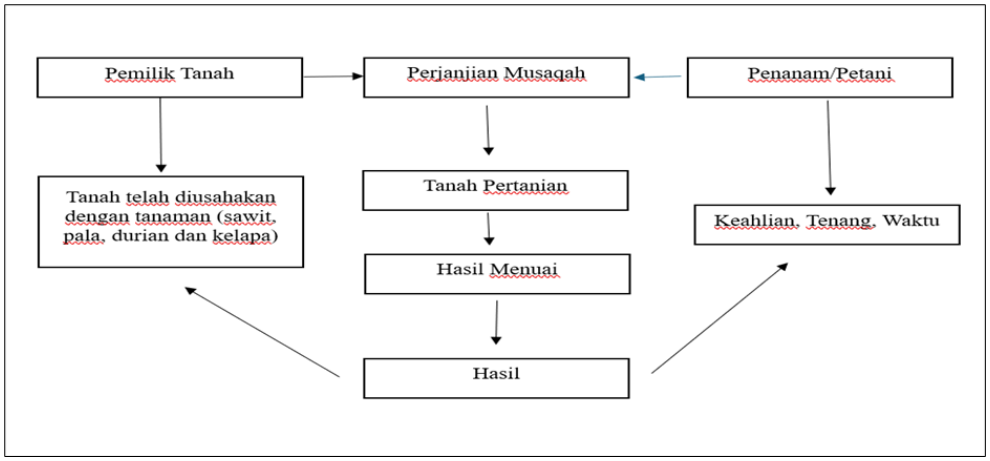
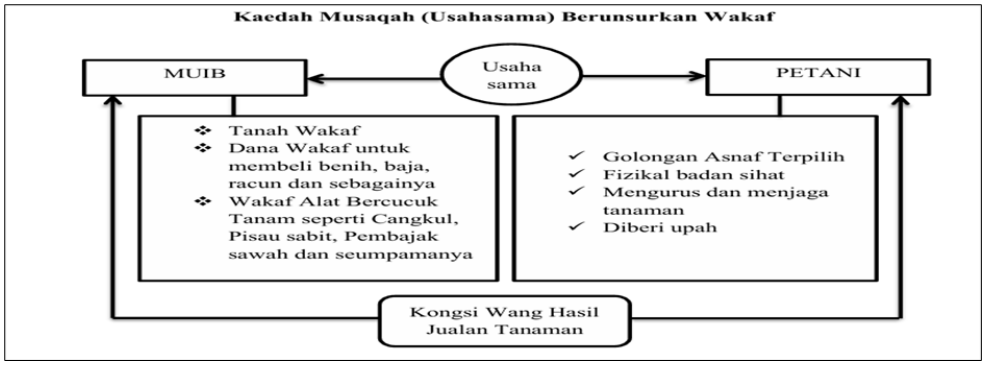


Figure 4: Flowchart of Musaqah Contract in Brunei



Source : (Puteh, 2019)

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