110137 - Can zakah be used for da’wah purposes?

the question

Is it permissible to use zakat money which has been collected by a Muslim organisation for dawah purposes in a non-Muslim country like Australia where most of the zakat goes overseas to needy Muslims while money is desperately needed for dawah activities in Australia?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Allaah has explained the categories on which zakah may be spent in the verse in which He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“As-Sadaqaat (here it means Zakah) are only for the Fuqaraa’ (poor), and Al-Masaakeen (the poor) and those employed to collect (the funds); and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allaah’s Cause (i.e. for Mujaahidoon — those fighting in a holy battle), and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allaah. And Allaah is All-Knower, All-Wise”

[al-Tawbah 9:60]

It is not acceptable to spend zakah funds on anything other than these eight categories.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Mughni (2/280): It is not permissible to spend zakah on anything other than what Allaah has mentioned here, such as building mosques, bridges and aqueducts, maintaining roads, shrouding the dead, providing hospitality to visitors and other acts of charity that Allaah did not mention here. End quote.

What is meant by “for Allaah’s Cause” is jihad for the sake of Allaah.

Some contemporary scholars are of the view that jihad for the sake of Allaah includes jihad of knowledge, establishing proof, explaining and calling people to Allaah, so they regarded it as permissible to spend zakah on da'wah to call people to Allaah, on the basis that this comes under the heading of "for Allaah's Cause".

We have quoted the fatwa of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem Aal al-Shaykh (may Allaah have mercy on him) and the statement of the Islamic Fiqh Council, please see the answer to question no. 121551.

Here we are referring to the fatwa of Shaykh Ibn Jibreen (may Allaah preserve him) which says that it is permissible to donate zakah to da'wah efforts.

He was asked about donating zakah to circles (halaqahs) for Qur'aan memorization, so that prizes may be given from zakah to the students, as well as salaries for the teachers and drivers. He replied:

Because zakah has been prescribed to meet the needs of the poor and weak, and it has also been prescribed to support charitable causes such as giving to mukaatibs (slaves who have contracts of manumission with their owners), mujaahideen, those who are cut off and those whose hearts are to be softened towards Islam, this indicates that it is prescribed for charitable causes which lead to good outcomes and will bring benefits, goodness and blessing to the Muslims. Our Shaykhs have issued fatwas stating that it may be spent on da'wah and calling people to Allaah, and the means of da'wah such as essays, tapes and salaries for full-time daa'iyahs. That also includes spending it on charitable schools for Qur'aan memorization, because of the good effect and outcomes that they have, and to encourage people to memorize and follow Qur'aan. I think it is permissible to give zakah to these people if there are no other organizations who are doing that, so that these religious activities will not cease. End quote from the Shaykh's website:

http://ibn-jebreen.com/ftawa.php?view=vmasal&subid=13108&parent=786

And Allaah knows best.