128635 - Can the employees of the charity accept the share of zakaah that is given to those who are employed to collect it?

the question

The Jubayl Women’s Organization receives zakaah funds, to be given to those who are entitled to them, according to the eight categories that are mentioned in the Book of Allaah, and sometimes the organization is faced with financial difficulties. Is it permissible to give some of this zakaah to the employees who are in charge of financial matters and accounting, or to the employees in general? Are they included among those who are employed to collect it?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

“Those who are employed to collect (it)” -- who are mentioned in the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “As-Sadaqaat (here it means Zakaah) 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)” [al-Tawbah 9:60] -- are those who are in charge of collecting it, counting it and distributing it to those who are entitled to it, and are appointed to do so by the ruler. That includes clerks, accountants and others.

With regard to people other than them, who collect and distribute it, they are acting as deputies of those who give it, and they are not included among those employed to collect zakaah.

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Majmoo’ (6/165): Al-Shaafa’i and our companions (may Allaah have mercy on them) said: If the one who distributes the zakaah is the giver or his deputy, then the share of the worker employed to collect it is waived, and it must be given to the seven remaining categories, if they exist, otherwise it is to be given to those of them

who do exist. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Those employed to collect it are the workers who are appointed by the authorities to collect it and to travel to cities and oases where the wealthy people are so that they can collect it from them. They are its collectors and guardians and those who are in charge of it, and they may be given from it according to their work and effort, as the ruler sees fit. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa Ibn Baaz (14/14).

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

"Those employed to collect (it)" are those whom the ruler or authorities appoint to collect the zakaah and distribute it among the poor. They are the ones employed to collect it, i.e., they are the ones in charge of it.

As for the one who is privately appointed on behalf of the owner of wealth who says to him, "O So and so, take my zakaah and distribute it to the poor," he is not one of those employed to collect it, because he is a delegate or proxy, so he is working with it but he is not employed to collect it. End quote.

Fataawa Noor 'ala al-Darb, 206/29.

The Shaykh was asked: Can those who work for a charity be given some of the zakaah funds?

He replied: If the workers have been appointed by the state.

The questioner said: But in the charity organisation there is an accountant whose salary is not sufficient for him.

The Shaykh said: It can only be if he has been appointed by the state, because those who are employed to collect it are those who are working on behalf of the state and are appointed by the ruler. End quote.

Liqa’ al-Baab al-Maftooh, 141/13

If one of the charitable organisations volunteers and appoints some of its workers to do this task, then these workers are either volunteers who volunteered to do this task, seeking thereby the reward of Allaah, or their wages are paid by this organisation that they belong to from its own money or from general donations that they receive such as voluntary charity and the like. They should not take anything from the zakaah funds on the grounds that they are employed to collect it.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked:

We hope that you will answer these questions that have to do with work and financial matters in a fund that offers loans to people who want to get married. The fund receives some general zakaah money which is not allocated for any specific purpose or group. Is it permissible to spend some of this money on salaries for the employees who work for the fund and some other important expenses which have to do with ensuring that the work is done in an organized and uninterrupted fashion?

He replied:

I do not think that zakaah funds should be given to those who are working in that area, because they do not come under the heading of those who were employed to collect it. But with regard to charity and donations that are not zakaah, there is nothing wrong (with using that to pay their salaries). End quote.

Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 13/1577.