

Pastoral Assistance Model of the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa, Indonesia



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ABSTRACT: Pastoral Assistance of the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM) North Sulawesi, Indonesia has its own challenges due to the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and religions. Therefore, this study aims to describe the model of pastoral assistance of the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa to be interesting. This study uses a qualitative research method with participatory observation, interviews, and documentation data collection techniques. The results showed that the GMIM Pastoral Assistance Model was carried out in stages starting from the Personal, Family, Column, Region, and Synod levels to save and improve church members' welfare. The spearhead of GMIM's pastoral assistance is the column. Columns led by elders and deacons can be assisted by work teams and the Column Service Unit (UPK) which manages fellowship, witness, and ministry tasks for families and church members.

KEYWORDS: Model, Pastoral Assistance, GMIM, Special Servants

I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected many aspects of human life in the world, both directly and indirectly, both positively and negatively. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant negative impacts on human health, the economy, society, and the environment (Mofijur *et al.*, 2021).

Some examples that can be seen in Indonesia, including North Sulawesi, include: a father willing to end his life because of a failed business, a mother willing to poison her two children before she commits suicide (Pusvita, Mutia Fitra, 2021), a mother daring to steal in the market supermarkets to make ends meet, a father is willing to steal and seize other people's motorbikes to pay for his wife's birth, a young man is determined to drink poison because he is charged with debt (Pakpahan, 2020), a young woman is desperate to end her life by hanging herself because she is pregnant, a husband is willing to kill his wife because there is another legitimate ideal woman because there is a second person, the wife is willing to kill her husband because there is another ideal man; a group of children bullied which led to the death of a child, and a child dared to kill his father because the father did not fulfill his request.

The call to become a shepherd who carries out pastoral duties is a very important thing special for every Christian. A shepherd will be able to carry out his duties well if he imitates Jesus Christ who is the good Shepherd. The good shepherd is the one who hears a lot from his sheep (Bruce and Anderson, 2008).

Pastoral assistance or counseling is a process carried out by someone to give attention, care, and protection to someone in need. Pastoral assistance cannot be separated from holistic or integrated services (Nugroho, 2017). The assistance does not only have a horizontal relationship (humans with humans) but also a vertical relationship (humans with God) (Beek, 2003).

Pastoral assistance is a reciprocal relationship (interpersonal relationship) between God's servants (pastors, evangelists, etc.) as counselors and their counselees (clients, people with problems) to find solutions to their problems so that behavior changes occur (Sutirna, 2013). Pastoral counseling is also a therapeutic relationship with the client which aims to make self-change on the part of the client (Khairani, 2014). Solving problems or changes that occur because of God's inclusion, both to the counselor and the counselee (Susabda, 2006).

Pastoral assistance has a specificity, namely placing people in their relationship with God (Brister, 1978). God takes part and plays the most important role in the pastoral conversation, His voice – His word must also be heard (Abineno, 2015). Pastoral counseling can make a distinctive contribution to the general counseling repertoire (Oates, 1974).

Pastoral assistance services can deal with specific problems and general problems. Specific problems, such as dating, marriage, children's education, sexual violence, bullying and social deviation, children and the elderly. Common problems, such as anger, jealousy, anxiety, loneliness, grief, low self-esteem, and guilt (Susabda, 2008).

churches, including the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM), must provide pastoral assistance to people who are experiencing struggles or problems in any way. The struggle can be experienced by people, ranging from children, teenagers,

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youth, fathers, mothers, and the elderly. The scale of their struggles ranges from personal struggles, family struggles, and congregational struggles to the struggles of society, institutions, nation, and state. Pastoral Assistance is reflected in GMIM's Vision: Holy, Universal, and Apostolic GMIM, and GMIM's Mission: improving the quality of Christian character and spirituality of Church members and increasing holistic mission services for justice, peace, and social welfare that ensures the integrity of creation ('Rencana Strategis GMIM 2022-2027', 2022).

GMIM since its establishment in 1934 and has undergone 17 changes in the leadership of the Synod or has been led by 14 Synod Chairs, 4 (four) of whom are non-native Synod leaders. The church system has changed 14 times, namely the Church Order 1934, 1939, 1940, 1942, 1951, 1966, 1970, 1981, 1990, 1999, 2007, 2021, 2016 and 2021. GMIM has grown from a Local Church to a Global Church and now has reached the United States and Japan. The dynamics and development of GMIM from a local church to a global church is a form of GMIM's success in implementing Pastoral Assistance. Pastoral Assistance is understood as the Church's effort in pastoral assistance its congregation members so that the congregation can solve the problems it faces can grow and develop into a mature and independent congregation in power and funds.

GMIM Pastoral Assistance is different from other churches in the world. GMIM pastoral assistance in North Sulawesi, Indonesia has its challenges due to the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and religions.

Based on the above background, it is interesting to study how the model of GMIM pastoral assistance is, who implements and who is the target of pastoral assistance, how to do pastoral assistance, and what are the goals, objectives, and functions of pastoral assistance.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research with a phenomenological method, which wants to describe the GMIM model of pastoral assistance (Sidik and Sulistyana, 2021)(Sugiyono, 2017). The research site is the Evangelical Christian Church in Minahasa, North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. GMIM was chosen because this church has shown a very significant development, especially becoming a global church that already exists in the USA and Japan. Data collection techniques use participatory observation, interviews, and documentation. Sources of data or informants were determined by purposive sampling. Information related to the real life of the congregation is based on participatory observations and existing documents. Information is obtained through reference books (including the Bible) and research articles, both offline and online. Online information obtained via internet can Online information is obtained through the internet with the help of the Google search engine with the keywords "pastoral assistance". The collected information is processed by grouping the information according to themes, describing and understanding it so that a complete understanding is obtained (Sugiyono, 2017).

III. THE PASTORAL ASSISTANCE MODEL OF GMIM

A. Bible Basics

GMIM Pastoral Assistance is based on Chapter IX Article 10, Church Order 2021: Shepherding, supervision, and discipline function to maintain vocations and confessions as well as church life, to remain faithful to the vocation and acknowledgment of the Church that comes from the love and service of Jesus Christ. The biblical basis for GMIM Pastoral Assistance is from Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, John 10:1-20, John 21:15-19, I Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:5-16 (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, 2021). The point is that God is the Shepherd, namely (i) the Shepherd who saves his sheep, (ii) the Shepherd who knows exactly his sheep, and (iii) the Shepherd who looks after and cares for his sheep.

B. Pastoral Assistance Tasks

In the Regulation on Special Services, Chapter II Article 2, the Joint Tasks of Special Servants concerning pastoral assistance or pastoral assistance are (i) visiting members of the congregation to pastor to maintain fellowship with God while maintaining the secret of office, (2) providing physical and spiritual assistance. spiritually to the congregation and others who need it, (3) guiding and providing counseling by word and example to members of the congregation and the community to live physically, psychologically, and socially healthy, (4) leading witnessing, pastoral, surveillance, and ecclesiastical discipline services (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, 2021).

Based on the Joint Tasks of Special Servants, it can be explained that the purpose of pastoral assistance (pastoral assistance) is so that the function of the Church as salt and light of the world is maintained and grows in every living condition experienced by the Church, both as individuals and as a community. Pastoral assistance is the duty of the church, the duty of all who believe in Christ. This means that a church and members of its congregation must carry out their duties and functions as salt and light for this world, wherever they are. The implementation of pastoral duties is an expression of gratitude from all those who have received the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ronda, 2015).

It is very important for a counselor himself in carrying out his pastoral assistance task to have sensitivity and be a good listener to others. There are four qualities of a listener which are also qualities of a good spiritual guide, namely: (i) vulnerability

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(vulnerability), (ii) acceptance (acceptance), (iii) expectancy (hope), and (iv) constancy (steadfastness) (Borchert and Lester, 1985).

Based on the GMIM Church System, Pastoral Assistance or pastoral care is the duty of the Synod Council Working Body (BPMS), Regional Council Working Body (BPMW), Congregational Council Working Body (BPMJ), Fathers, Mothers, Youth, Teen, Children (BIPRA) Categorical Service Commission, Elderly Service Group, Pastor, Religion Teacher, Elder, and Deacon. In addition, there are Working Committees and Elderly Service Groups, starting from the level of the Congregation, Region to the Synod. Furthermore, even at the column level, a column service unit (UPK) was formed for Fathers, Mothers, Youth, Teen, and Children (BIPRA) who helped with the ministry tasks in the Column or to families and church members. Thus, the GMIM stipulates that those who carry out the task of pastoral assistance are Pastors, Religious Teachers, Deacons, Elders, and members of the congregation who are called and have the ability or gift from the Lord Jesus.

Pastoral assistance can be carried out by individuals, groups or institutions, or organizations. GMIM pastoral assistance must be carried out together and synergistically and integrated. The experience of GMIM shows that pastoral assistance that is not integrated and does not synergize with other church programs will fail. Moreover, if the church is a minority part of an area, it will be difficult to take care of the sheep, including looking for the lost ones.

C. Purpose of Pastoral Assistance

Regulations concerning Pastoral assistance, Investigation and Ecclesiastical Discipline Chapter II Article 3: (1). the purpose of pastoral ministry is that the function of the church as salt and light of the world is maintained and grows in every condition of life experienced by the church, both as individuals and as a community (Matt. 5:13-16), (2). pastoral assistance is carried out from, by, and to all GMIM members, and (3). pastoral assistance for those with problems is carried out within 3 (three) months (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, 2021).

Specific goals Pastoral assistance can be expressed as the efforts of a special minister (pastor, religious teacher, elder, deacon) and church members to help others through a process to resolve the inner conflicts they experience. Inner conflict can be caused by social problems or economic problems. The task of pastoral assistance is part of the duties of special ministers. Pastoral assistance contributes in a special way to the fulfillment of its goals. This is what distinguishes it from other occupations, in that Special Service not only leads the congregation (the sheep) but also finds ways to help themselves (Hiltner, 1949).

The goals of pastoral assistance for Christians, as exemplified by Jesus as the Shepherd are:

1. Shepherd who saves Man. Christ is the only door for anyone (sheep) to lead to God's salvation (Hendry, 2010) (Barclay, 2010). Shepherd who is willing to risk His life for the salvation of His sheep. God, our great owner, the owner of the pasture who has created us as His sheep, has appointed His Son Jesus as our Shepherd. GMIM based on the example of Jesus has delivered the news of salvation or the gospel for the Minahasa people. Evangelism was started by missionaries Riedel and Swars from the Netherlands in 1831 in the land of Minahasa. Since then many Minahasa people have been saved (received the gospel) and the GMIM Church has started to become institutionalized. On September 30, 1934, GMIM became an independent church for the first time in Minahasa land. Since then GMIM has been growing, not only saving the Minahasa people but also starting to expand to surrounding areas in Indonesia, such as Central Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Sumatra. Since 2021 GMIM has expanded the field of service not only to Minahasa lands but also beyond Minahasa lands. In the 2021 GMIM Church Order, it has been determined that GMIM is an independent and global church. Within 2 years GMIM has opened churches in several countries as pastoral fields to reach and save more people.
2. The great the great shepherd who gives life. Jesus came that man might have life, even life in abundance (John 10: verse 10). Jesus is the true Shepherd (*Alkitab Penuntun Hidup Berkelimpahan*, 2008) who knows and takes care of his sheep very well and leads them to fertile pastures to eat and rest there (*Tafsiran Alkitab Masa Kini 3*, 2012). He spoke gently to them, guarded them with His providence, guided them with His Spirit and Word, and went before them to make way for His sheep. (Barclay, 2010). God's church on earth is a sheepfold, a place where the children of God who were once scattered, gather together, so that they may be united and gathered there (Hendry, 2010). One of GMIM's service tasks is to bring a peaceful family. GMIM seeks to develop the potential of natural and human resources owned by church members through school education (from kindergarten to university), sermons at the pulpit, and training. Through developing the potential of members of the congregation, a peaceful family, both material and spiritual, can be realized. For this reason, the congregation needs to be educated, guided, and built so that they become a congregation that has a high work ethic and spirit of service based on the love of Jesus Christ.

D. Goals and Methods of Pastoral Assistance

The targets of GMIM Pastoral Assistance are members of the congregation and families, and organizational leaders starting from the column level to the Synod. The leaders of the organization in question are the Column Special Committee, Column UPK, BPMJ, Congregational BIPRA Categorical Service Commission, Congregation Elderly Group, Congregational Work Commissions, BPMW, Regional BIPRA Categorical Service Commission, Regional Elderly Group and Regional Working Commissions. The target of this pastoral assistance has also developed according to the needs so that the target of this pastoral assistance has become what it is today. With the wider target of this assistance, since then the GMIM organization has developed

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according to needs. Currently, pastoral assistance has reached the United States and Japan as well as Indonesia itself with a congregation of about one million people spread over 11298 congregations, 1057 congregations, and 144 regions with more than 30,000 special ministers. With the increasing number of church members and the increasing number of areas, columns and the number of special services, the management of GMIM pastoral assistance uses a Management Information System.

Pastoral Assistance or Pastoral assistance can be done by direct and indirect visits.

1. Every member of the GMIM and their families has the right to receive pastoral assistance which is carried out regularly at least once every 3 months by the Special Service, Categorical Service Commission, BPMJ, BPMW, BPMS, and/or the Pastoral assistance Commission at all levels.
2. Pastoral assistance of Deacons, Elders, Religious Teachers, and Pastors in the Congregation is carried out by BPMJ, in Regions by BPMW, and in Synod by BPMS.
3. Shepherd for GMIM Workers by BPMS.
4. Pastoral assistance for Pastors and Religion Teachers who work outside the GMIM structure is carried out by BPMS.
5. Oversight of the Categorical Service Commission, Elderly Service Group Management, Treasury Supervisory Commission, Work Commission, and other service apparatus by BPMJ at each level.
6. Pastoral assistance of BMPJ by BPMW, of BMPW by BPMS, of BPMS by the Synod Assembly.
7. Oversight of institutions at each level by the Council Working Board of each level.

Pastoral assistance is carried out in two ways, namely general pastoral assistance and special shepherding. General pastoral assistance is carried out for GMIM residents in the context of faith growth and maturity and special pastoral assistance is carried out for GMIM residents with problems.

General Pastoral Assistance, namely Worship services in the Church, column, and family aimed at improving the quality of human resources, especially for the growth and maturity of faith, so that the congregation runs according to the example of Jesus Christ. Specific pastoral assistance is services that are carried out specifically for members of the congregation or family or institutions that are having problems. This special pastoral assistance is carried out when individuals or families cannot solve their problems.

E. Functions of Pastoral Assistance

GMIM in carrying out its function as salt and light of the world to realize the Goals of Pastoral Assistance, namely Jesus as the good Shepherd, Jesus as the Shepherd who saves, and Jesus as the Shepherd who is willing to sacrifice. The GMIM service model whose spearhead is at the column level, and then the person in charge of service in the column is the Deacon and Elder. The deacon is in charge and responsible for the management, acceptance, use, and maintenance of resources and funds that are given by God for the implementation of the duties of the deacon field, both caricature in nature and the development of community initiatives. Elders are in charge and responsible for carrying out worship, preaching the word, and witnessing (Special Servant Regulation Chapter II Articles 3 and 4). Deacons and elders are responsible for all members of their congregations. One is responsible for the other; the other helps the other (Rom 15:1-7). Those who are "lost" are raised and those who fear death are comforted (2 Cor 4:16-18; 5:1-10). The sick are visited, and those in trouble are helped (Gal 6:1-2; 1 Thess 5:14-15) (Storm, 1997). Based on the duties and responsibilities of Special Servant and the objectives of pastoral assistance, the functions of pastoral assistance that have been and will be carried out by GMIM are as follows:

1. Rescue function. The main task of GMIM is to save people from the power of sin. Therefore, every church member who believes in Christ must save people from the power of sin, both those who do not know God and those who already know God and then fall into sin. Our task is to introduce God to those who do not know Jesus and reassure those who do know Jesus to return to the right path. Since the beginning, GMIM has built a school for pastors and religious teachers to provide pastors and religious teachers as counselors or pastoral assistants (shepherds). In addition to the Priests and Religious Teachers school, GMIM also conducts training for trainers (TOT) who prepare certain Special Services to become trainers for special ministers of elders and deacons in the categorical columns and groups of Fathers, Mothers, Youth, Youth, and Children.
2. Diakonia function. GMIM realizes that the food supply for the congregation is very important. For this reason, the first effort to carry out the Diakonia function is to build an Agricultural Development School (SPP) which aims to enable the congregation to meet their food needs. In addition, there is a partnership program between relatively advanced and relatively backward congregations. The strong petrify the weak. After successfully building agriculture and education and partnerships, pastoral assistance tasks are then carried out by the Church, pastors, religious teachers, deacons, and elders or by other members of the congregation who have the ability. For example, when a non-natural disaster occurs, the Covid-19 pandemic or other natural disasters, church leaders and special servants as well as other congregations assist and assist those affected by the disaster while simultaneously providing direct assistance to them as needed.
3. Guiding Function. GMIM provides guidance or guidance to congregation members through sermons at church services, columns, BIPRA Category Service Commission, and family. Besides Guidance is given to those who are less strong to walk, it is also given to those who are in darkness so that they come out of darkness, to those who are at crossroads so that they may

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choose the right path, to those who are lost so that they may be saved. In addition to these sermons, there are also visits from the special committee or congregation (e.g. prayer and evangelism teams) to those who need guidance or guidance. The guiding function is important in helping and assisting someone so that he can choose the best path for his future.

4. Reconcile function. GMIM gives priority to visiting families or individuals in conflict. This visit is carried out in stages. This means that the reconciling task is first performed by a special servant in the column. If the Special Servant in the Column is unable to reconcile, then the task is taken over by BPMJ, and if BPMJ is unable to reconcile, then it is taken over by BPMW, and so on until the Working Body of the Synod Assembly. One of the human needs in life is a sense of security and peace. A sense of security and peace occurs when there is a good relationship with others, whether with close people: husband and wife, children, in-laws, or with many other people: peer groups, society, and others. In such a situation, pastoral assistance can serve as an intermediary to repair damaged and disturbed relationships.
5. Healing Function. GMIM in carrying out its healing function is carried out through the construction of hospitals. GMIM has 6 hospitals and 3 clinics. Besides that, the service of one of the GMIM programs are visits to sick people, both at home and in the hospital, and consolation services to heal grief for families who experience grief. Besides that, there is also personal pastoral assistance for those who experience heartbreak, grief, alcoholism, addiction to online games, and so on.
6. Parenting Function. GMIM in carrying out its parenting function has established 5 children's orphanages, 1 orphanage for the illiterate, 1 orphanage for the elderly, and 1 orphanage for the blind. These orphanages carry out the function of caring for those who are helpless, both children and elderly parents. Powerless children, whether orphans or children of helpless people or elderly parents who do not have children or are neglected by children, need to be cared for by capable people. This parenting function is not only carried out by GMIM as an institution but also by individuals or families.
7. Educating Function. GMIM realizes that the key to all mentoring functions is the educational function. Through education, church members are expected to be able to help themselves to carry out other mentoring functions. Therefore, from the beginning, GMIM built an educational institution. Currently, GMIM has 1 (one) University, 1 (one) High School, and 1022 Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle, and High School schools. The schools established by GMIM have been able to provide opportunities for church members to get cheap and even free education ranging from Kindergarten to Higher Education.

Based on the description above, the model of GMIM pastoral assistance can be summarized in table 1 below:

Table 1. Pastoral Assistance Model for the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM)

No.	Level/ Executor PA	Pastoral Assistance (PA)	
		General Faith/HR Development	Special Problem solving
1	Synod -BPMS - BIPRA Synod - Elderly Service Group - Congregation Members	Worships Social activities Economic activity Higher education High school education PWG	- Institutional problems - Special maid problem - Church member problems
2	Region - BPMW - Regional BIPRA - Elderly Service Group	Regional Worship Regional Activities Middle School Education	Institutional problems Special maid problem Church member problems
3	Congregation BPMJ BIPRA Congregation Elderly Service Group	Church Services BIPRA Worship Trainings Social activities Economic activity Kindergarten & Elementary Education	Institutional problems Special maid problem Church member problems
4	Column - Pastor - Religion teacher - Elder - Deacon - Column UPK - Congregation Members	Column Worship Social activities Economic activity	Sick Visits Visits for special issues Family and personal assistance
5	Family Pastor	Family Worship Social activities	Sick Visit Family Assistance

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	Religion teacher Elder Deacon Congregational Members	Economic activity	Personal assistance for special problems
6	Personal Pastor Religion teacher Elder Deacon Congregational Members	Private Worship Social activities Economic activity	Private Visit Personal Assistance

The GMIM Pastoral Assistance Model is implemented in stages starting from the Personal, Family, Column, Region, and Synod levels. Pastoral Assistance is carried out by organizations, namely: BPMS, BPMW, BPMJ, BIPRA Synod Category Service Commission, Regional BIPRA Category Service Commission, Congregational BIPRA Category Service Commission, Column UPK and by individuals, namely: Pastor, Religious Teachers, Elder, Deacon and Members of the Congregation.

Pastoral assistance can be done for (i) coaching and developing church resources, and (ii) solving organizational, family, and personal problems. This pastoral assistance process is carried out in two directions, namely the first from the Column, Congregation, Region, and Synodal level and the second from the Synodal, region, congregation, and member level. Pastoral assistance must be carried out thoroughly (Beek, 2003) and jointly (go together) and synergize with each other. Therefore, this pastoral assistance process has been well planned or programmed, starting from the Column, Congregation, Region, and Synod levels through congregational meetings in the column, Congregational Council Sessions in the Congregation, Regional Council Sessions in the Region, and Annual/Five-Yearly Synod Assembly. at the Synod (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, 2021).

This pastoral service is also holistic (Nugroho, 2017) and is directed at developing the quality of human resources (congregation members), both spiritually, intelligently, and emotionally. Pastoral assistance is carried out to develop their potential, and to empower and improve their quality of life, both spiritually and economically (Engel, 2020).

GMIM pastoral assistance can run well because of the *Mapalus* culture (cooperation) in Minahasa, namely the spirit of helping each other, and sharing, regardless of status, ethnicity, and religion (Engel, 2020). The spirit of Mapalus has made the members of the congregation always ready to share in GMIM's service in carrying out the Tri Duties of the Church's vocation, namely fellowship in witnessing and serving both at the local and global levels.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The GMIM Pastoral Assistance Model is carried out in stages starting from the Personal, Family, Column, Region, and Synod levels and is carried out together (going together) and in synergy. GMIM Pastoral Assistance is the Duties of the Synod Council Working Body, Regional Council Working Body, Congregational Council Working Body, Pastors, Religious Teachers, Elders, Deacons, BIPRA Synod/Region/ Congregational Service Commissions, Synod/Region/Congregational Working Committees, The Synod/Region/Congregational Elderly Service Group and church members start from the column, Congregation, Region to Synod level. The spearhead of GMIM's pastoral assistance is the column. Columns led by elders and deacons can be assisted by a work team and the Column Service Unit (UPK) to serve fellowship, witness, and service tasks for families and church members.

The purpose of GMIM pastoral assistance is to (i) save people from the power of sin (darkness) to light, (ii) become the One Church, Holy and Apostolic Holy, and (iii) make families and members of the congregation peaceful both material and spiritual. The target of pastoral assistance can be individuals, families, columns, BIPRA categorical groups, the elderly, and the congregation. The function of pastoral assistance is to save, diakonia, guide, reconcile, sustain, heal, nurture, and educate.

Further research is needed regarding church surveillance and discipline as part of the continuation of GMIM's pastoral assistance.

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