Education Rigorous Literature Review

The role and impact of philanthropic and religious schools in developing countries

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Acronyms

ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BMC	Bombay Municipal Corporation
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (Former)
CfBT	Centre for British Teachers (Former)
CSO	Community Support Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSS	Doorsteps School
ePPP	Public–private partnerships in education
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh
FSSAP	Female Secondary School Assistance Programme
GS	Gyan Shala
IDFC	Infrastructure Development Finance Company
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ITA	Idara-Taleem-o-Aaghi
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
OBE	Open Basic Educational Programme
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEF	Punjab Education Foundation
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
QSSMEB	Quality of Secondary School Madrasa Education in Bangladesh
RIVER	Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources
RNGPS	Registered Non-Government Primary Schools
ROSC	Reaching Out of School Children Programme
RTE	Right to Education Act
SFL	School for Life
SFP	School Feeder Programme
SSA	Sarva Sikhsa Abhyaan
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report summarises the findings of a rigorous review on the role and impact of philanthropic and religious schools in developing countries. A prior review initially sought to cover all types of non-state schools, but was subsequently separated into two parts. The first reviewed the role and impact of private schools in developing countries (Day Ashley et al., 2014). The second part – this report –covered other forms of non-state provision. The categorisation of these providers has been driven by the coverage of the literature with a focus on those education providers whose foundational ideology is religious (religious schools) and those founded as philanthropic organisations, such as NGOs, CSOs, etc., (philanthropic schools). A full discussion of these categories is set out in the full report. The two reviews will be synthesised in a final report, which will enable the drawing of comparisons across these types of provision. This review was commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID), and carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of researchers and advisers from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the University of Birmingham and other independent senior researchers.

While there has been a growing interest in the potential contribution of non-state providers of education to meet international educational goals much of the recent debate has focused on low-cost private schools. The potential and implications of other forms of providers have received relatively little attention, despite playing a substantial and important role in a range of developing countries. BRAC, for example, operates over 32,000 primary schools, mainly in Bangladesh. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Catholic schools are the dominant form of education provision, while in South Asia madrasa schools play an important role – serving almost 1.8m students in Bangladesh and with over 16,000 of these schools registered in Pakistan. There are also a range of smaller scale NGO providers targeting apparently neglected populations in rural and urban areas, and our knowledge of the true scale of this provision is limited by poor data collection. These providers may operate with a very different set of incentives and purposes than those of private schools, affecting how and where they operate as well as their relationship with the state and state education systems. Mapping our existing knowledge and gaps on the role of these providers – how they operate, which communities they serve and the quality and type of education they provide – as well as understandings of how they interact with international actors, the state and state education provision, can therefore provide important insights into if and how they might improve access to quality education for all.

Conceptual framework

This review uses a conceptual framework that aims to be consistent with that used for the review on private schooling, with adaptations for the different motivations and providers we deal with here. The research question driving the review is: *Can philanthropic and religious schools improve education for children in developing countries?* The conceptual framework sets out a number of hypotheses and assumptions that underpin debates on the

role of these schools. These are divided into three fields of analysis: supply, demand and the enabling environment.

Methodology

This review followed the same methodological protocols and process used in the private schools review in order to ensure consistency and comparability. This involved a phased review process, so that investigation was undertaken in sequence and in parallel across the full team of researchers, coordinated by a team leader and reviewed by a team of advisers. To ensure reliability for policymakers and researchers, the review adopted a comprehensive search strategy with transparent inclusion criteria. This resulted in 61 eligible studies. Rigorous measures were implemented (detailed below) to ensure that the evidence was assessed, analysed and collated in as balanced and objective a way as possible.

Key Findings

Where is evidence strongest?

- **Quality:** Philanthropic provision tends to use more innovative, child-centred pedagogies and have curriculums and content that are adapted to the needs and abilities of their pupils. Schooling structures are also found to be more flexible and the literature also identified benefits from locally-hired staff, community involvement, smaller class sizes and greater staff support and management. However, there is little evidence for religious schools. **[STRONG]**

- **Equity (poor and marginalised):** Philanthropic and religious provision can geographically reach the poor and marginalised, although the evidence is stronger for philanthropic providers. Philanthropic schools often purposefully locate themselves in marginalised areas (e.g. slums) and adapt their practices to cater to the needs of these groups. There is also evidence that religious schools, and particularly madrasas, serve more marginalised areas and reach out to poor communities. However, evidence is complicated by a lack of consistent or clearly defined measures of poverty by income level or degree of marginalisation, making it difficult to compare coverage across non-state schools or contexts. **[STRONG]**

- **Adapting to users:** Both religious and philanthropic schools often adapt their teaching methodologies, curricula and structures to users. Religious schools, such as madrasas, tailor teaching to religious preferences, and philanthropic schools offer adapted curricula and flexible forms of organisation, for instance to reach particular marginalised groups. **[STRONG]**

Where is evidence moderate?

- **Learning outcomes:** Overall, most studies give positive evidence regarding philanthropic schools and there is a consistent message that students in these schools achieve learning outcomes that are better than, or at least as good, as those of state school students. The evidence for religious schools is ambiguous with a mixture of negative and neutral findings. These findings must be treated with

caution, as studies concentrated on a relatively small number of providers; there is a lack of direct empirical studies that compare learning outcomes for philanthropic and religious providers with state schools; and much of the literature does not take into account socio-economic factors or 'unobservables'. **[MODERATE]**

- **Equity (gender):** Philanthropic schools often target female enrolment and achieve gender parity. There is more mixed evidence regarding religious schooling, specifically madrasas, with rising female enrolment and gender parity in some contexts, while in others enrolment continues to be male dominated. **[MODERATE]**

- **Cost effectiveness**: Philanthropic schools have lower operating costs than state schools, with lower teacher wages and smaller input costs being widely noted. The few studies that examine cost-effectiveness directly find that philanthropic provision is more cost-effective than state provision. Precise estimates need to be treated with caution, however, due to low data availability in terms of monitoring costs and the hidden costs of donated resources and volunteer time. **[MODERATE]**

- **Choice and identity:** Parents choose schools on the basis of religious preference when selecting religious schools, but other factors influence this decision too (such as cost, distance and accessibility). The evidence also highlighted practices whereby a child may attend a madrasa while other children in the family attend other school types, such as private or government. No evidence was found regarding users' choices and their identities and beliefs for philanthropic schools. **[MODERATE]**

- **Accountability:** Philanthropic schools provide opportunities for users to participate in, and influence, decision making. However, it is unclear how substantive this participation is and how effective these mechanisms are in practice. **[MODERATE]**

- **Regulation:** Basic recognition of non-state schools is identified as a key precursor for developing more collaborative relationships and can enable smoother transitions for pupils to higher levels of education, although recognition itself is not sufficient to ensure this. There are also successful examples of regulation helping to implement a broader and more coherent national curriculum, in some cases with the assistance of subsidies. However, regulation also often focuses more on inputs than outputs, controlling and restricting market entry, and so appears less likely to have a positive influence on education quality. Overall, the current literature lacks in-depth examination of the specific impact of regulation on quality, equity and sustainability. **[MODERATE]**

- **Market effects:** Philanthropic schooling can be complementary to state provision and can help target specific gaps or groups, as well as providing positive examples that are emulated by some governments. However, often the available literature does not look at differing effects between different types of non-state provider and does not examine whether some types of provider or delivery arrangement may have more positive or negative impacts. **[MODERATE]**

Which areas of evidence are weak and inconclusive?

- There is a major gap in evidence on the **financial sustainability** of philanthropic and religious schools. The literature does identify some successful strategies and providers, but the evidence is very limited in coverage and scope and generally highlights the broad challenges of financial sustainability, particularly for philanthropic schools operated by NGOs.

- The **affordability** to parents of different types of philanthropic and religious schools is another significant gap. The evidence does suggest that many philanthropic providers absorb costs that would be shouldered by parents in government schools and that lower charges are a major cause of demand, but that these providers may also rely on in-kind contributions and so are not costless. However, there is little documented evidence on the formal and informal costs to parents of either philanthropic or religious providers.

- There is weak evidence regarding whether **perceived quality of education** is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools. The evidence indicates that choice of philanthropic or religious school is based on multiple complex priorities, which may include quality, such as cost, distance, accessibility, safety of learning environment, perception of child's academic ability and religious factors. There is a very limited evidence base for assessing whether users make informed choices about the quality of education.

- The evidence on **state capacity, capability and legitimacy to implement policy frameworks** (including recognition, regulation, subsidy mechanisms etc.) is negative, but inconsistent due to a number of neutral and context specific positive examples. While there is some high quality evidence that governments are able to develop and implement effective policy frameworks – particularly for curriculum regulation and co-operation – the overall balance of findings is more negative, with an emphasis on limited state capacity and legitimacy. The literature emphasises the importance of overlapping interests and the need for incentives for constructive engagement across politicians, bureaucrats and non-state providers.

- There is positive, but inconsistent evidence on the effectiveness of **state collaboration, partnership, subsidy and contracting** with philanthropic and religious schools. Some forms can improve sustainability, and some aspects of equity and quality, but these findings are highly context dependent. Much depends on broader levels of state capacity and capability, and on the nature of state- and non-state relations, with collaborative arrangements working best where they are implemented flexibly and build on strong informal relationships.

- There is also inconsistent evidence on the role of **international funders and organisations**. The balance of findings is negative, but context and the strategies and aims of both international donors and providers appear to be key elements affecting success. There is some evidence that international funders and organisations can effectively support philanthropic and religious schools by pushing for regulatory frameworks and by informally helping to broker and negotiate

relationships. Much of the evidence focuses on philanthropic providers, with international funders including both donor agencies and international NGOs. At the same time, overall, it is seen as damaging if providers are reliant on external funding, as it can create incentives and funding cycles that are misaligned with national and local priorities.

- There is limited evidence regarding the extent to which philanthropic and religious provision can support or undermine **peace-building processes** or **social cohesion**. Few studies explore different types of non-state providers in fragile settings, or their implications for these processes.

Where are the gaps?

In addition to the gaps identified above, where evidence is weak or highly mixed, some overarching gaps in the evidence were identified. These were:

- There is a **lack of agreed definitions/typologies** of type of provider. This means that it is very difficult to generalise, either within or across different types of provider.

- **Evidence is highly fragmented**; it is mainly composed of individual case studies that examine the experiences of a particular provider or programme. There are very few studies that compare different types of non-state school (e.g. religious, NGO, private) in the same country, and few that explore their performance against state schools or national benchmarks. Understanding how education systems operate as a whole is crucial to understanding how to design interventions and public policy, with analysis of different provider types and how they relate to each other being a key literature gap in that respect.

- There is **uneven coverage in terms of countries and providers**, with literature significantly concentrated in certain geographical areas and on particular providers. For example, over half of the studies reviewed examined cases in South Asia, and a third overall examined cases in Bangladesh. In contrast, just under a third of studies examined countries in sub-Saharan Africa. There is also a considerable concentration of literature on particular providers and types of providers (e.g. BRAC, madrasa schools).

- There is a lack of high quality published empirical research comparing **learning outcomes** across different types of providers. There may be other sources of data available, for example impact evaluations conducted for the internal purposes of donors or charities, but these do not seem to be reaching the arena of published research. Many of the measures currently used to track learning levels internationally (including PISA, ASER, Uwezo) do not systematically report outcomes for philanthropic and religious schools (these are often listed as 'other'). The need for better data collection, strong empirical analysis and peer-reviewed publication of this analysis is clear.

- There is very little in-depth analysis on **user choice or preferences**, or relationships of **power and accountability** between parents, users, providers and policymakers, which is necessary in order to understand how these types of schooling can work for poor people and how to increase access for the most marginalised.

- There is a lack of in-depth and high quality evidence regarding **the role of international organisations and funders**, which is surprising given how influential they are thought to be in some of the literature. There is a lack of evidence on the range of philanthropic and religious providers present in fragile contexts and their implications, including for aspects of **peace-building**. While there is grey literature available, this is limited in coverage and this is a particular gap given DFID's and other donors' investment in fragile states.

Based on a gap analysis from the rigorous review, the report outlines some areas for further research that could strengthen this evidence base. These include:

- **Supporting greater definitional clarity:** This could include greater mapping of the range of types of providers and schools available, in order to develop a more comprehensive and rigorous typology than was possible for this review.

- **Broadening the evidence base:** This should include expanding the evidence base on philanthropic and religious schools in sub-Saharan Africa, and examining a broader range of providers to go beyond the high profile cases that are already well documented.

- **Understanding learning outcomes:** Empirical analyses of learning outcomes for philanthropic and religious schools need to be strengthened, with more published quantitative analysis, a greater focus on longitudinal studies and increased efforts to account for student background and establish value added. More systematic inclusion and disaggregation of the non-state sector in major learning assessments (e.g. PISA, ASER and Uwezo) would improve the evidence base.

- **Choice, fees and accountability**: Greater mapping is needed of how and why parents and students choose schools, and how they move between them. Improved analysis of the accountability relationships between users, providers and policymakers would also improve our understanding of the system and how interventions might affect it. Better mapping of school fees and parental contributions would also be a useful resource here.

- **Moving to a systems approach:** There is a need for more research that goes beyond focusing on individual providers and provider types. This includes a need to empirically compare their relative performance across state, private, philanthropic and religious schools, but should also examine how parents and pupils navigate the system and move between providers, and how these providers interact with each other and state institutions.

- **The role of international actors:** Richer and more detailed analyses of how international organisations and funders can successfully engage with non-state providers and broker relationship with the state are needed, along with greater understanding of the long-term implications of this engagement. This is particularly the case in fragile contexts, where philanthropic and religious providers are considered to play an important role.

As emphasised throughout, drawing out clear generalisations from the current evidence base is not possible. However, this review does usefully draw together the current state of the evidence base on a range of providers and forms of non-state provision. Some evidence was rated as strong or moderate, although the influence of context on these is important to highlight. Perhaps the most useful contribution the review makes is to identify some of the current gaps in knowledge and evidence and to suggest how these might be addressed. Bringing this evidence together with the private schools review, as will be done in a forthcoming synthesis, will be important in building up a much more comprehensive overview of what remains a diverse set of actors and forms of provision who can have significant impact on education outcomes and systems.

1. Introduction

1.1 Objectives and scope

This paper presents a rigorous review of evidence on the role and impact of philanthropic and religious schools in developing countries. It focuses on schools run independently of the state and not classified as 'private'. It accompanies a previous review on the role and impact of private schools in developing countries (Day Ashley et al., 2014). The original design of the review was to cover all forms of non-state provision, however this was split into two parts (private schools, philanthropic and religious schools) to reflect the spread of the literature and available resources and capacities.

These reviews were commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID). This review has been carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of researchers and advisers from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), University of Birmingham, and other independent senior researchers. It combines significant expertise in education with disciplines such as economics, political economy and a broad understanding of international development trends and thinking.

The purpose of the review was: (i) to present the latest quality published evidence on whether and, if so, how philanthropic and religious schools improve education; and (ii) to identify gaps in the evidence and highlight areas for future research. The paper uses an adapted conceptual framework originally developed for the previous private schools review, to allow for future comparison. Throughout, it tests assumptions underpinning key hypotheses identified through a review of the evidence, and provides an evidenced theory of change.

1.2 Definitions

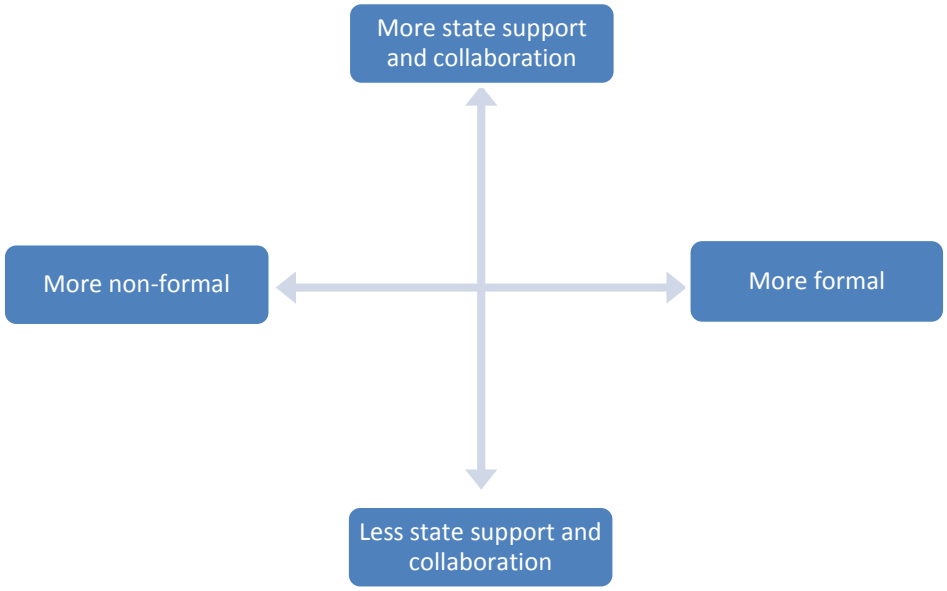
This review aims to complement and augment the review of literature conducted by Day Ashley et al. (2014), which concentrated on non-elite private schools, defined as schools that 'are dependent on user fees to cover all or part of their operational and development costs…managed largely independently of the state, and owned and/or founded independently of the state' (Ibid., p. 7), with an additional caveat that it 'did not include studies that did not explicitly define their focus as private schools' (Ibid., p. 8). The scope of this review focuses on other forms of non-state schools that explicitly did not define themselves as 'private' and were not referred to as such in the literature. It should be noted that despite this, some of the provision reviewed here does include schools that charge user fees. We include this information where available, but it is not always clearly noted in the literature and there may be some blurred boundaries as a result.

Precisely defining and classifying this group of schools and education providers presents a significant challenge. It includes a wide range of actors outside the state and not classified as private, implementing education in a variety of ways and involved in a spectrum of relationships with the state. Within the literature itself, there is no one agreed typology that currently captures this diversity and there are ongoing definitional debates.

In the process of reviewing this literature, the bulk of cases examined could be divided into two broad categories based on their organisational or foundational ideology: those founded explicitly as religious schools, including madrasas, other form of Islamic schools, and Catholic Mission schools; and those founded as philanthropic organisations, including schools run by national or international non-government organisations (NGOs), community support organisations or other charitable foundations. In the main body of the report and in the conclusions, we try to distinguish between these different groups and highlight where and how findings apply to each of them.

The review also highlighted two other important dimensions along which this group could be categorised: the extent to which schools are formal or non-formal and the degree to which they are supported by, or collaborate with, the state (see Figure 1). Creating typologies and precisely defining schools by these categories is problematic due to the fact that these are continuums rather than fixed categories, because of the lack of agreed definitions within the literature itself and because of authors' tendencies not to provide sufficient information on the nature of provision. However, where possible, we aim to refer to where different schools might be located in these continuums and we note that it is useful to distinguish between providers in this vein.

Figure 1: Continuum of state support and degree of education formality



These dimensions have implications for selection and categorisation. The term 'non-formal' is sometimes treated in the literature as synonymous with 'non-state', while in other cases it indicates schools that utilise child-centred approaches or have a specialised curriculum to cater to children not fully school ready, or which adopt more flexible teaching hours and locations to reach more marginalised groups. In practical terms, many philanthropic and religious schools use a mix of these strategies and more formal schooling mechanisms, and there are numerous examples of elements being fully or partially integrated within the state system. The search strategy for this review focused on education provision that was 'school-like', in that we excluded short-term and one-off

education programmes and instead focused on organisations that aimed to provide continuous education analogous to formal schooling. In the body of the review we do not attempt to specifically categorise schools into formal/non-formal given these limitations, but instead provide details of the nature of the organisation where it is available and highlight those cases where schools can be clearly classified.

The degree of state support and collaboration also varies widely across actors and defies easy categorisation. Few philanthropic and religious schools have absolutely no interaction or collaboration with the state, but the continuum is broad and not necessarily linear. The schools included in the review vary from fully state-supported and financed mission schools, to schools that receive state funding, for example for teachers, but operate largely independently, to non-formal schools, which operate under government contracts or with memorandums of understanding or even informal agreements. The question of the nature of collaboration and support is explored extensively in Hypothesis 8 and, as with the question of formal/non-formal categories, we do not attempt to impose a classification system here, but instead provide details of the nature of the relationship and structure in the body of the report where it is available.

In order to ensure comparability with the private schools review, we focus primarily on the operation of primary and secondary schooling, incorporating education for children of that age that is not explicitly primary or secondary in line with the caveats and restrictions mentioned above.

1.3 Emergence of the debate

While there has been increased interest in the potential contribution of non-state providers of education to meet international educational goals, particularly in the light of growing public finance pressures, much recent research interest has focused on non-elite private schools (see Day Ashley et al. 2014). The implications and potential of other types of non-state schooling appears to be largely 'off radar' for the international community, despite the fact that they are playing a substantial and important role in a range of developing countries. BRAC operates over 32,000 primary schools, mainly in Bangladesh, but also in African countries. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Catholic and other religious schools are the dominant form of education provision, while in South Asia madrasa schools form an important element of the mix of providers – serving almost 1.8m students in Bangladesh and with over 16,000 of these schools registered in Pakistan. There are also a range of smaller scale NGO providers targeting apparently neglected populations in rural and urban areas, and our knowledge of the true scale of this provision is limited by poor data collection.

While private schools, which operate explicitly within the logic of a market, will seek to attract and retain pupils for income or profit-maximisation, other non-state providers will have a variety of motivations, interests and target populations. These range from responding to 'differentiated demand' associated with particular religious beliefs to 'gap filling' by NGOs, to community schools in areas where the state has limited reach. These all have different implications. Some prompt concerns over inclusion and equity, for instance as to whether schooling is exclusionary if it is based on religion. Others prompt views that non-state providers will substitute for the state or undermine provision, or that this can be an important component in extending state provision, including to the most

marginalised. Different types of provider may respond differently to policy changes, challenges and opportunities and have a wide range of relationships and funding arrangements, including with governments, international donors and others.

While there has been a growing policy interest in the implications of philanthropic and religious providers of services (such as NGOs) in fragile states, and in the potential impacts on processes of state-building and peace-building, there is very little empirical research evidence regarding these providers in fragile settings. These providers have also been largely ignored by recent attempts to map global education quality – for example PISA, ASER and Uwezo do not consistently report on philanthropic or religious providers, instead either conflating them with private providers or reporting only their numbers and not results.

In light of this, evidence on a range of non-state schools remains highly fragmented and dispersed, focused on only a narrow range of provider types, with a few high profile providers attracting significant numbers of studies, and otherwise reliant on a limited set of individual case studies. Again, this reflects the nature of much of this provision, which focuses on reaching pockets of those most hard to reach or particularly removed from the state and hence is itself fragmented. This also makes drawing comparisons with state provision more challenging.

Mapping our existing knowledge and gaps on the role of these providers – how they operate, which communities they serve and the quality and type of education they provide – as well as understandings of how they interact with international actors, the state and state education provision, can therefore provide important insights into if and how they might improve access to quality education for all.

2. Conceptual framework: an initial theory of change

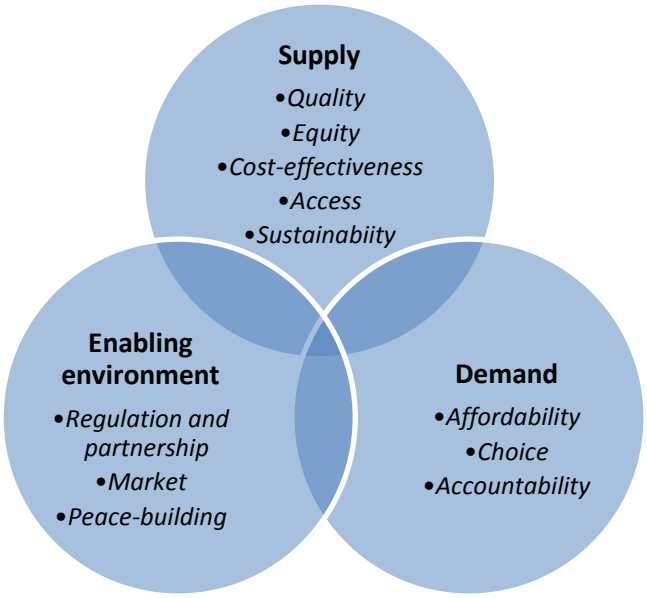
The research question driving this review is:

Can philanthropic and religious schools improve education for children in developing countries?

The conceptual framework of this review followed the same basic structure as that of Day Ashley et al. (2014). That framework included three thematic fields of analysis, namely: supply, demand and the enabling environment (illustrated in Figure 2). For this review, these refer to:

- The nature of the supply of philanthropic and religious education, which affects the quality, equity and accessibility, cost-effectiveness and financial sustainability of education
- The dynamics of demand, which include issues of affordability, the nature of user choice and provider accountability
- The enabling environment, including market conditions, state and international interventions which may enable or impede philanthropic and religious provision of education and the potential impact of these providers on peace-building.

Figure 2: Fields of the review: Supply, demand and enabling environment



The development of the testable theory of change was also based on the form adopted by Day Ashley et al. (2014), which produced a series of hypotheses about the relationship between policy inputs and supply, demand and enabling conditions that could lead to

impacts on learning outcomes, equity and access to quality education. The assumptions on which these hypotheses were based were formulated in a specific and testable form, as were countervailing assumptions, enabling the evidence for each to be evaluated and conclusions reached on each hypothesis. Care was taken to ensure that the assumptions and hypotheses provided policy-makers with clear and practical implications for the design of interventions in this area.

The hypotheses and assumptions tested in this review have been adapted from those of Day Ashley et al. (2014) to take into account the differences in the focus of the literature and areas of specific research interest. This was done through the creation of specific additional hypotheses and assumptions, modifications to the phrasing of existing hypotheses and assumptions, the removal of certain assumptions where evidence was lacking and the inclusion of wider or differentiated search terms in the creation of the master bibliography. These changes were derived from a process of rapid appraisal of policy debates and the literature to be reviewed. Those hypotheses and assumptions that saw no coverage and were removed are noted in later sections on research gaps.

The design of this conceptual framework and theory of change focused strongly on ensuring a high degree of comparability with the private schools review. This was intended to facilitate the creation of the overall synthesis report and to maximise the usefulness of this research in highlighting the differences and similarities between these groups of providers – both in terms of research coverage and the implications these have for programme and policy design. This comparative but flexible approach has presented some interesting challenges and opportunities for this review.

On the one hand, there are many issues relevant to both private and other non-state providers, such as questions of overall education quality, the extent of coverage, their relationship with governments and elements such as cost-effectiveness, sources of finance and affordability[1]. On the other hand, differences between these types of providers mean that we are not comparing like with like and the way issues are operationalised and framed may be very different. For example, differences in the purposes and organisation means that these different provider types cater to very different types of pupils under very different conditions and have differing expectations and benchmarks as to what constitutes quality. Similarly, as mentioned previously, other non-state schools have a wide range of relationships with the state that may overlap with those of some private schools, but which may be far broader. There are also some specific areas, for instance, to do with the motivations and practices of religious schools, which have implications for diversity, equity and social cohesion.

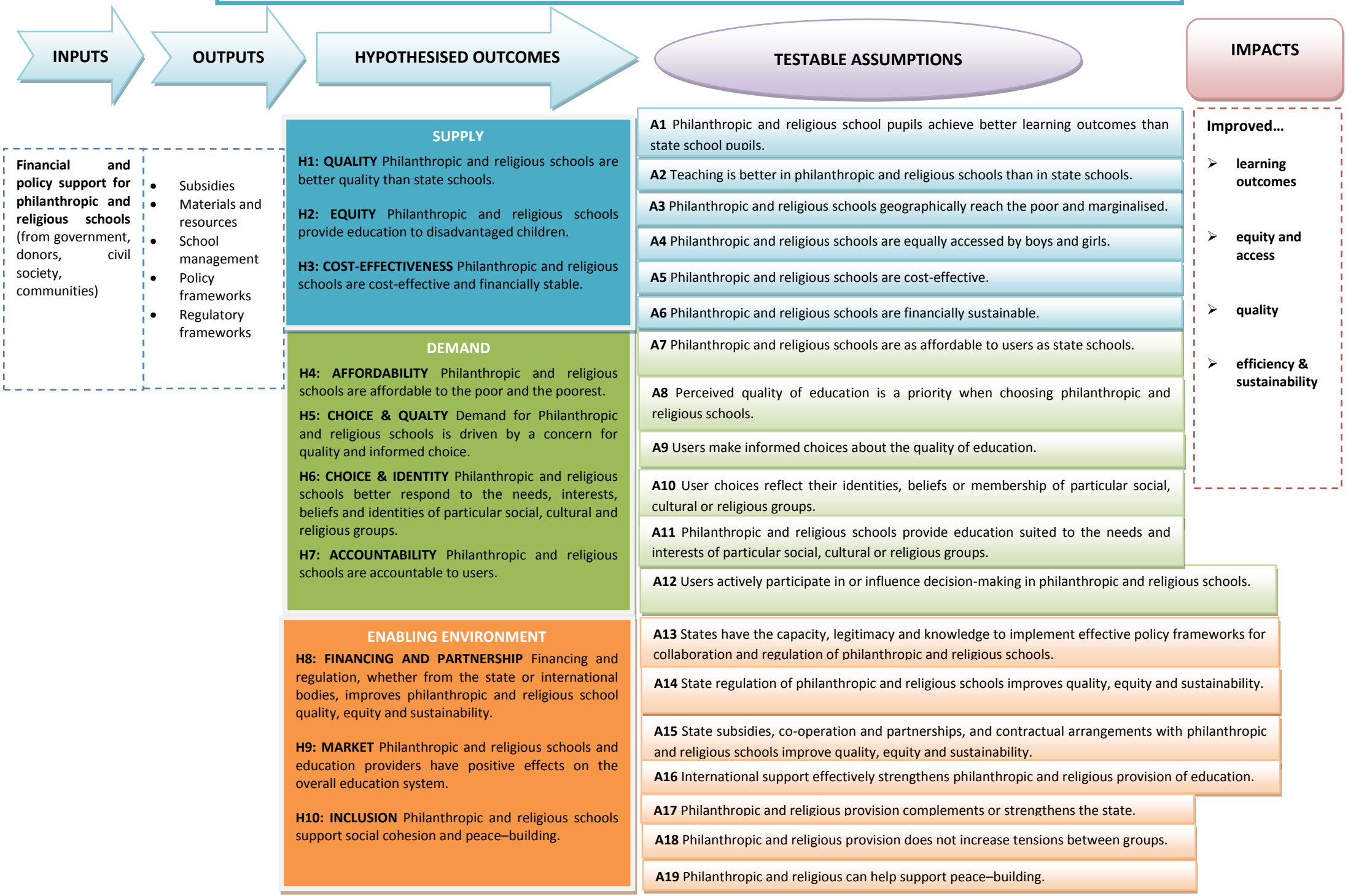
These differences present challenges in terms of finding a common framework within which to address and explore them fully, but provide opportunities too to cast light on the way that the education sector operates as a whole – with a variety of providers playing a range of roles and engaged in constant reaction and interaction with each other. The synthesis report will unite the different pieces of this puzzle and allow us to look across a range of non-state provision to provide a better picture of this aspect of education

[1] This is a particularly interesting area of comparison, as there are philanthropic and religious providers that are part-financed by user fees.

systems. This review therefore aims to provide a source of information comparable to that of the private schools review while aiming to address issues in ways specific to the types of non-state provision that it focuses on.

In light of this, Figure 3 presents the testable theory of change in the form of a logical flow from policy inputs through to anticipated impacts. The hypotheses, counter-hypotheses and assumptions are laid out in full in Appendix 3. The evidence for each hypothesis and assumption was evaluated, interrogated and challenged throughout the review, using the methodology set out in Section 3.

Figure 3: 'Philanthropic and religious schools improve education for all': A *testable* theory of change



3. Methodology

This review followed the same methodological protocol and process used by Day Ashley et al. (2014) to ensure comparability, with some minor alterations (noted below) to account for differences in the literature. The language and certain sections and tables in this chapter are reproduced from that report with the permission of the authors[2]:

The review was conducted in phases that enabled a common working framework, with investigation undertaken in careful sequence and in parallel across the review team, coordinated by a team leader and checked in consultation with advisers. To ensure its reliability for policymakers and researchers, the review adopted a comprehensive search strategy with transparent inclusion criteria and incorporated measures to ensure a balanced, objective approach to assessing and synthesising the evidence.

3.1 Search strategy

Researchers applied a multi-pronged search strategy, entailing:

- ***Searching a wide range of citation and journal indexes**, online research and evaluation repositories, resource centres, development agencies and other search engines, which included (but was not limited to) the full list of sources included in Appendix 5.*

- ***Using the key search terms** set out in Appendix 4. These were formulated around the three key themes of the review (supply, demand and enabling environment). Searches of major journal repositories, and of Google scholar, deployed all synonyms listed. Searches of smaller research repositories and websites deployed only the search terms listed in the first column.* This list was generated by revising and adapting the search terms from the private provider review, as noted in the preceding chapter. All references to 'private' were removed and a range of new search terms were included. These are highlighted in red in the table.

- ***Building on recent policy-oriented reviews** undertaken by leading international organisations, as well as meta-reviews in this field of study, by identifying the key texts referenced within them (a process known as 'pearl-growing').*

- ***Verifying an initial master bibliography** of all materials compiled by the research team by circulating it among a selection of experts working in this area. The aim was to solicit feedback and to ensure the team had captured the best materials, including grey literature difficult to obtain online.*

[2] The elements of this chapter that are presented in italics closely reproduce the methodology section language used in Day Ashley et al. (2014).

3.2 Inclusion criteria

The search process above was used to generate an initial master bibliography of literature to be reviewed. The decision on whether to include studies for review was made on the basis of the inclusion criteria laid out in Table 1 below and followed the process of two stages of sifting that was utilised in Day Ashley et al. (2014). The inclusion criteria were selected on the basis that they should provide neutral and transparent measures for reducing the literature base to a manageable number, thus maintaining the commitment to objectivity and balance, and that they ensured a focus on publications of the highest quality and greatest relevance. It was decided to use the same temporal and geographic criteria as in the private provider review in order to ensure comparability of the evidence across the two reviews and generate a similar quantity of literature in practice.

The focus of this rigorous review on quality published research has meant the exclusion of broader policy and grey literature, and it is likely that there is a broader evidence base of published, internal and unpublished evaluations that were not reviewed here. We are unable to speculate on the likely impact that inclusion of this broader literature might have on the findings of this review, but believe broader study of this literature would be valuable in improving our understanding of the non-state education sector. Improved transmission of this evidence into published materials would be beneficial, as would efforts to co-ordinate with non-state providers and international donors to gather and rigorously review unpublished materials.

Table 1: Criteria for inclusion of studies in the review

Criteria	*First sift*	*Second sift*
Publication date	*Material published from 2003 onwards*	*Material published from beginning of 2008.*
Relevance	Primary focus on non-state schools (as defined above) and that make a substantive, empirical finding on demand *or* supply *or* enabling environment	Substantive, empirical finding related to Hypotheses 1-10.
Geography	*Primarily developing countries emphasising DFID priority countries. Materials from more developed regions, where they report findings applicable to developing countries*	*DFID priority countries only (i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe)*[3].
Language	*English*	*English*
Quality	• *Basic threshold of quality: based on empirical research or evaluation, or review of empirical research.* • *Cogent: clear presentation and logical conclusions that follow on from the findings*	*Only empirical research rated high or medium quality according to the assessment of quality of individual studies (see below).*
Completed work		*Only completed material, not work in progress*
Repetition		*Where publications repeat similar findings, the most empirically focused or higher quality publication was included in the review*

3.3 Assessing and recording data from individual studies

The quality of individual studies was assessed in accordance with DFID's How to Note (2013). A 'checklist for study quality' was completed for each study included in the review and based on this, studies were rated as high, medium or low quality, with reference to a shared 'guide for grading the quality of individual studies'. Studies rated 'low quality' were not included in the review. These tools enabled an assessment of the quality of individual studies that 'acknowledges the diversity of methodological approaches of multiple academic disciplines' by focusing on 'principles of credible research enquiry that are common to all' (DFID, 2013: 10). Applying the same standards allows for a common framework to be used across the team and across different methodological approaches, e.g. across observational and experimental studies.

[3] DFID priority countries are listed on the DFID website https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about

The process of reviewing individual studies also involved the completion of templates, to facilitate the extraction of relevant data in a consistent way across all the studies. These templates recorded substantive data as well as methodological information. Single research studies were described according to research type, design and method using a categorisation based on the DFID How to Note. Additionally, the methodological strengths and limitations of each study were recorded on the templates - both those noted by the authors of the studies themselves and any additional methodological weaknesses identified by reviewers that may qualify the study's findings.

The templates and classification criteria that were used for this study, alongside the guidance in DFID (2013), can be found in Appendixes 6 and 7.

3.4 Assessing and synthesising bodies of evidence

The assessment, review and synthesis of the evidence from the studies, grouped under each testable assumption, were carried out by teams of researchers guided by an advisory panel member. Outputs from this work were reviewed by advisory panel members before being edited and cross-checked further by other researchers in the team.

The assessment of the body of evidence for each testable assumption involved two processes. First the extraction, synthesis and discussion of evidence that supported, countered or was ambivalent or neutral in relation to the main assumptions. Here it was important to distinguish between areas where there was evidence of positive or negative impact and areas where there was no evidence of impact (i.e. knowledge gaps). Second, an assessment was made of the overall strength of the body of evidence indicating positive, negative or neutral/ambiguous findings in relation to the assumption. DFID's How to Note was drawn on to develop a guide for assessing overall strength using the criteria of quality, size, context and consistency. See Table 2 below and the following explanation.

Table 2: Criteria for assessing bodies of evidence

Quality	Size	Context	Consistency
Strong: >50% of studies rated strong (with remainder of studies rated medium).	**Strong**: >10	**Strong** (5+ countries)	**Strong**: Findings are highly consistent, with >75% of studies clearly supporting or refuting assumption.
Medium ≤50% studies rated strong **(with remainder of studies rated medium).**	**Medium**: 6-10	**Medium** (3-4 countries)	**Medium**: Findings are moderately consistent, with 51% to 75% of studies clearly supporting or refuting assumption.
Not used in the study. (No low quality studies were included in the review.)	**Weak**: ≤5	**Weak** (1-2 countries)	**Weak**: Findings are inconsistent, with ≤50% studies supporting/ refuting assumption, or with a majority of neutral findings.

(Based on DFID's Assessing the Quality of the Overall Body of Evidence, 2013)

*Only high and medium **quality** studies were included in the review; therefore, there was no weak rating for this category. A threshold was set so that if an assumption's body of evidence had more than 50% high quality studies then it would be rated as 'strong' quality overall; if it had 50% or less high quality studies or only medium quality studies then it would be rated as 'medium' quality overall*[4]*. **Size** refers to the number of studies reviewed for each assumption; these were counted. The thresholds were set as more than 10 studies for a strong rating, 6-10 studies for a medium rating and five or less studies for a weak rating. **Context** refers to the number of country contexts covered by the body of evidence under an assumption. The thresholds applied were 5 or more countries for a strong rating, 3-4 countries for a medium rating and 1-2 countries for a weak rating. **Consistency** refers to the extent to which there was or was not a clear consensus in the body of evidence supporting of or refuting an assumption. Where more than 75% of the findings supported or refuted an assumption, a strong rating was given. Where 51% to 75% of the findings supported or refuted an assumption, a medium rating was given. Where 50 % or less supported or refuted an assumption or where the majority of findings were neutral, a weak rating was given.*

This review diverged from the methodology of Day Ashley et al. (2014) in terms of its assessment of consistency. A number of individual studies identified for the philanthropic and religious schools review contained case studies or information related to either multiple contexts or multiple provider types, a phenomenon that rarely occurred in the private schools literature. Where the findings for these case studies diverged within an individual study (i.e. it contained evidence supporting the hypothesis for one type of provider or one context, but also evidence refuting the hypothesis for another type of provider or context) these were not recorded as a single neutral finding, but as one positive and one negative finding to better reflect the nature of the evidence. The consistency rating was therefore based on the percentage of all findings that were positive, neutral or negative, as opposed to the percentage of individual studies containing positive, neutral or negative cases.

With this caveat, the methodology used for rating the strength of evidence matched that used by Day Ashley et al. (2014).

*The **overall strength of evidence** for each testable assumption was given by assessing the ratings across the four criteria as described below:*

***Weak (overall strength)**: If a weak rating appeared in any of the categories, then the body of evidence was rated as weak overall.*

***Moderate (overall strength)**: If two or less categories were rated strong and the remainder of categories were rated medium, then the body of evidence was rated as moderate overall.*

***Strong (overall strength)**: If all categories were rated strong or three were rated strong with one rated medium, then the body of evidence was rated strong overall.*

[4] All bodies of evidence in this review were rated medium in terms of *quality*, i.e. none had more than 50% high quality studies.

3.5 Limitations of the methodology

The following methodological limitations of the rigorous review need to be taken into account:

1. There have been definitional challenges for this review including difficulties in distinguishing between non-state and non-formal, and how to approach non-state providers that may be delivering services as part of government programmes. Our approach to these is noted above, but where there is uncertainty this has been clearly stated in relation to each study.

2. Due to the large volume of available material beyond the scope of the time and resources available for the review, and the need to remain comparable to Day Ashley et al. (2014), the same criteria were followed to narrow the evidence base (as described above). The findings need to be understood in the context of these limits to the set of literature reviewed. The exclusive focus on DFID priority countries and English-language literature may have excluded bodies of evidence from Latin America and French-speaking North Africa, but these limitations were necessary given the timescale of the review and the linguistic skills of the team.

3. In order to reduce researcher bias, and to enhance the quality and objectivity of the review, a series of rigorous measures were applied. However, even with the most rigorous process, researcher subjectivity cannot be completely eliminated.

4. Despite the overall strength of evidence being assessed through a rigorous and transparent protocol it is important to note that the strength of evidence is a relative term, which needs to be understood in the context of the review. The nuances of the evidence are not always fully captured by indicators of strength and of positive, negative and neutral findings, and the limitations of methodology must also caveat our confidence. Where there are particular concerns, these are highlighted in the text.

3.6 Limitations of the literature

The findings of this review must be understood in the context of the limitations of the body of literature itself. These include:

1. The focus of this rigorous review has been on quality published research, and as a result it does not capture much of the current policy debate around non-state schools, including grey literature and other policy literature. It is likely that there is a broader evidence base of published, internal and unpublished evaluations that could be reviewed. Improved transmission of this evidence into the published field and better access to it would improve the scope of our understanding of non-state provision. This rigorous review therefore cannot claim to be a comprehensive representation of all research and evidence in this area because it only covers that which falls within strict search and quality criteria.

2. The risk of confirmation bias in terms of research and publications that focus on positive cases rather than negative cases must be acknowledged. This review covers only literature that is published, so it is possible that there is a wealth of unpublished materials that could materially alter our conclusions. As reviewers, our

ability to compensate for this is limited, but it should be noted that most hypotheses and assumptions find a mix of positive and negative evidence, as do many articles reviewing multiple programmes.

3. The findings and definitions within the review are limited by the level of detail given by authors in the studies reviewed. The authors reviewed studies did not consistently provide information on the types of non-state schools, on the level of schooling (primary, middle or secondary school), or on the location (urban, peri-urban or rural). There was also a lack of clear and consistent definitions of different non-state school types.

4. The extent to which these findings can be generalised is limited by the concentrations of literature on particular geographical areas and types of non-state school. Although the literature overall focuses on a wide range of countries, there is a strong concentration on South Asia (57% of all studies; 35% for Bangladesh alone), while those studies that focus on sub-Saharan Africa (32% of all studies reviewed) also concentrated on a small number of countries. The vast majority of studies focus on either religious schools or schools and education programmes operated by non-government organisations. There was relatively little literature focusing on community schools or schools founded by individual philanthropists or other charitable organisations. It is notable that these types dominate the literature and are the focus of several hypotheses: religious schools feature heavily in hypotheses concerning choice, while philanthropic schools are the frequent focus of hypotheses concerning interactions with the state.

5. Studies focus on particular projects or individual providers. Comprehensive investigations of education systems or multiple types of non-state schools in similar contexts are limited.

4. Outline and assessment of the evidence

The evidence under each hypothesis and for each testable assumption is presented below. Each section is structured in the same format as for the previous review on private schooling. An introductory box is used to present some of the main findings, and which summarises the total number of studies reviewed, country coverage, whether evidence supported, countered or was ambiguous in relation to the assumption, and an overall assessment of the relative strength of the evidence (in accordance with the criteria set out in the previous section). It should be noted that due to certain studies covering multiple country contexts, or containing both positive and negative cases, the number of individual studies will not always match the sum of listed country coverage or the count of positive, negative and neutral evidence. Under this box, the evidence is presented and is organised according to whether it supports, refutes or is neutral in relation to the testable assumption. Any caveats identified are also included in each section.

4.1 Supply – An assessment of the evidence

Hypothesis H1: Philanthropic and religious schools are better quality than state schools

Two testable assumptions that underpin this hypothesis were identified: that pupils attending philanthropic and religious schools achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils (A1), and that teaching is better in philanthropic and religious schools than in state schools (A2).

Assumption 1: Philanthropic and religious school pupils achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils.
No. of studies: 9 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (7) Ghana (2) India (2) Zambia (1) ***POSITIVE* (5)** Neutral (3) Negative (1)
Summary assessment of evidence: The overall size of the evidence base is moderate, but studies are mostly of medium quality (with a single high-quality study). Context is also strong, with evidence from across five countries, although there is a strong focus on Bangladesh. There is moderate level of consistency, with just over half of studies reporting positive findings. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline findings: There is a lack of direct empirical studies that compare learning outcomes philanthropic and religious providers with state schools. Overall, most studies give positive evidence regarding philanthropic schools and there is a largely consistent message that students in these schools achieve learning outcomes that are better, or at least as good, as those of state school students. The evidence for religious schools is ambiguous with a mixture of negative and neutral findings. A range of indicators are also used – including academic performance, drop-out rates, completion rates and continuation rates in non-state providers, as well as later performance once students have transferred to government schools. These findings must be treated with caution, as many of the empirical analyses did not take into account socio-economic factors or 'unobservables' that may bias the findings and the studies were concentrated on a relatively small number of providers – raising questions of external validity.

Supporting evidence

There is evidence that **students enrolled in particular philanthropic providers out-perform their state school counter-parts**, particularly where these providers work in partnership with the state system. This draws on evidence from arrange of contexts, but particularly Bangladesh, Ghana and India, using both quantitative and qualitative data. However, limited attention is paid to the socio-economic backgrounds of students and evaluation results are often reported, rather than quantitative analysis being detailed in the literature itself. The nature of performance also varies across cases, with a mix of learning outcomes, exam pass rates, drop-out rates, completion rates and continuation rates being cited across the studies.

The Gyan Shala (GS) programme[5] in India is analysed by Bangay and Latham (2013), whose findings support the view that philanthropic provision, even as part of public programmes, is beneficial (2013: 251). GS offers primary- and middle-level education to more than 17,000 children. Initially piloted in the city of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, it expanded to slum areas in the cities in Bihar and in Calcutta in West Bengal. It works in partnership with the state system (a form of NGO schooling which is contracted out). This study mentions evidence from three assessments of learning outcomes – two quantitative, involving student testing, and one qualitative, involving classroom observations. Quantitative studies find that GS students outperformed their municipal (state) school counterparts across both Language and Mathematics components by more than 100%, according to an assessment by Pratham/MIT of Grade 3 GS students. Referring to findings from a 2006 study, which assessed the impact of GS pedagogy, curriculum and training as applied in state Municipal schools in a pilot programme, they found evidence that again supported the superiority of GS inputs: 'Municipal treatment schools receiving Gyan Shala support recorded improved results in various subjects and in various grades in the range of 35%.' (Ibid: 248). This was corroborated by more evidence collected at a later stage and cited in the same study.

Qualitative evidence discussed in the study is from an independent assessment by CfBT Education Services, involving classroom observation, which indicated that GS schools were ranked 'Good' in terms of their attainment in Maths, Science, Leadership and Personal Deportment and 'Acceptable' for all other aspects except student attendance (Ibid: 249).[6] In addition to the evidence on student academic performance and classroom observation assessments, the authors argue that the significantly lower rate of dropout (just over 5% over the seven grades) in GS schools as compared to government schools was another indicator of the better quality provided in the former. In addition, the authors note that the performance of girls studying in GS schools is on a par with that of boys, although no

[5] The Gyan Shala programme is an interesting example of the definitional challenges involved in examining the non-state education sector. Students attending these schools are charged a monthly fee, leading some authors to classify this as a form of low-fee private schooling. However, these fees constitute only a small fraction of its funding, with the vast majority coming from charitable donations and government funding (full details can be found under Assumption 7). It was therefore included in this review, rather than Day Ashley et al. (2014).

[6] CfBT's assessment involved classroom observations over a period of three weeks with a team of 12 assessors; 330 classes were observed across 112 'shalas' (schools). Qualitative and subjective assessments were carried out based on these observations.

comparative data for state schools is provided. Bangay and Latham (2013) therefore find that a good quality of education can be achieved through this type of non-state provision and can address equity concerns, given gender parity in enrolment and academic performance. They emphasise, too, the importance of partnership with the government in terms of administrative co-operation and funding for the programme.

Dang et al. (2011) is one of the few studies that uses empirical techniques to identify whether student learning is different across different school types. The authors use panel data from rural Bangladesh to evaluate the impact of the Reaching Out of School Children Program (ROSC), a non-formal schooling intervention aimed at targeting the hard-to-reach and marginalised children, implemented in the 60 poorest sub-districts of the country since 2005. The overall findings confirm that students in these schools performed *as well as* those in schools outside the programme in terms of test scores. Given the small size of these schools and that ROSC schools are more recent, the authors argue that the fact that the performance of their students is as well as that of state school students is '…no small achievement of the ROSC project.' (p. 24). The study also found that academically higher-achieving students attending these schools improved their test scores by about 0.2-0.4 standard deviations compared to their peers in other schools. It is noted that the relatively good performance of these schools despite their low operating costs suggests that they are more efficient compared to non-ROSC schools and they also show these estimates to be conservative due to the selection of more disadvantaged students into these schools. Moreover, these schools appear to confer externality effects on non-ROSC students i.e. they appear to improve test scores for students in non-ROSC schools in programme areas. However, again no evidence is provided in relation to performance against national benchmarks.

DeStefano and Schuh Moore's (2010) analysis of 10 case studies of complementary education programmes in multiple countries also concludes that these programmes '…produce educational outcomes that match or exceed what regular public schools achieve.' (p. 513). The authors present comparative data from the USAID EQUIP2[7] study on the percentage of students meeting learning outcome thresholds in complementary education programmes and state schools for six examples. In five of these examples students from philanthropic schools outperform those in state schools, including all three examples from DFID priority countries[8]. However, the performance gap varies widely. For example, in the case of School for Life in Ghana 81% of students meet the learning outcome threshold, compared to 9% in state schools; and 70% of students in BRAC schools in Bangladesh met the threshold, compared to 27% in state schools. The gap between students in community schools in Zambia and those in state schools was much narrower, however, with 40% in the former meeting the threshold, compared to 35% in the latter (p.514).

[7] Educational Quality Improvement Program 2

[8] DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) show students in selected non-state providers outperforming those in state schools in Bangladesh (BRAC), Egypt (community schools), Ghana (School for Life), Mali (community schools) and Zambia (community schools). State school students outperformed those in non-state provision only in the case of community schools in Haiti.

A study by Farrell and Hartwell (2008)[9] notes that BRAC students perform better academically than students in state schools in Bangladesh. Completion and continuation rates (and learning outcomes) are found to be markedly higher, a finding supported by Morpeth and Creed (2012).

There is also evidence that **students in philanthropic schools are meeting government benchmarks and have higher exam pass rates than state schools**. In Ghana, Farrell and Hartwell (2008) note that the School for Life programme providing alternative schooling demonstrated that over 80% of the students in schools achieved the minimum standard at grade 3 for literacy and numeracy and over 50% had reached the government-defined 'mastery' level for that grade in 2003. Continuation rates as analysed in a tracer study also indicated that two-thirds of these students carried on to grade 4 and performed well there too. The authors state that the individuals who are part of these programmes do as well as, if not better than, their traditional school counterparts and this is especially striking as they are often very marginalised individuals. The authors also note that continuation rates compare well to those of state schools and cite evidence from earlier studies (Hartwell, 2006) that School for Life students had significantly higher pass rates than state school students for grade 5 primary tests conducted in 2001. However, the Farrell and Hartwell (2008) study is not controlled for socio-economic and regional differences that should favour state schools, although they do note that the results for both groups remained very low overall. Both of these studies are likely to reflect the benefits of more targeted teaching methods, discussed in A2 below.

It should be noted that only one of the studies mentioned undertook rigorous primary analysis of learning outcomes comparisons across the different types of schools. Most of these papers cite results from other evaluations or studies.

Counter-evidence

Us Sabur and Ahmed (2010) present evidence of **lower learning outcomes in madrasa schools** from the Bangladesh Education Watch Report 2008. This utilised a cohort analysis of a national sample of 15,000 primary school students and provided data on the performance of students in tests administered to a sample of grade five students on 27 competencies prescribed in the primary education curriculum. This data demonstrated that students in *Ebtedayee madrasas* (referred to elsewhere in this report as Aliyah madrasas) scored the lowest (achieving an average of 15.2 of 27 competencies) and there was a substantial gap between these students and those in other types of schools. Marginal differences were also found in learning outcomes between students in philanthropic schools and those in government schools. Students in Registered Non-Government Primary Schools (RNGPS) achieved an average of 18 competencies, compared to an average of 20 for students in Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) – a category that includes BRAC schools – and an average of 19 for students in government schools (p20-21). However, it should be noted that this data does not take into account the socio-economic

[9] Farrell and Hartwell (2008) examine various forms of philanthropic alternative education provision in Colombia, Bangladesh, Egypt and Ghana – finding positive evidence in terms of learning outcomes across all.

characteristics of students and so the extent to which differences in learning outcomes are the result of school, rather than student, type is unclear.

Neutral evidence

There is some evidence that indicates **students at philanthropic schools perform as well as their state school counterparts.**

Epstein and Yuthas (2012) evaluate three educational NGOs that target marginalised groups and have achieved both scale and quality in educational outcomes. Two of these are direct providers of education – either independently of the state, in the case of BRAC in Bangladesh, or through implementing programmes in particular state schools, in the case of Escuela Nueva in Colombia. In some cases (e.g. Pratham and Escuela Nueva) the model supports government schools, whereas BRAC owns and runs separate schools too. The study notes evidence from a review of existing studies on BRAC activities (Nath, 2006) that supports the view that students in BRAC schools performed equally as well as students in formal schools, despite the apparent disadvantages faced in terms of socioeconomic background and intensity of school resources (Epstein and Yuthas, 2012: 106)[10]. This provides an interesting result in light of the findings of the review on private schooling (Day Ashley et al. 2014), which identified that pupils attending private schools tended to achieve better learning outcomes than state school counterparts, but that studies often did not effectively account for social background factors as well as 'unobservables' which cannot typically be controlled for easily in statistical studies. For example, those going to private or non-state schools may come from families where the home educational environment is more stimulating, or where parents are more educationally motivated/engaged. If there are such unobservable differences which are not controlled for effectively, then any estimated school 'advantage' from standard methods is likely to be biased.

There is some evidence on improvements in education indicators associated with philanthropic provision, although this is not compared directly against state school performance. Blum (2009) provides evidence from an evaluation in Andhra Pradesh, India, on the Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources (RIVER), which runs 12 one-room 'satellite' schools in rural communities that are supported and subsidised by the organisation's fee-charging Rishi Valley School in a neighbouring community. These provide a model for improving multi-grade teaching, a teaching set up that is used in many small, rural schools due to their small size and resource constraints. The author highlights early evidence from a self-evaluation of Rishi Valley 'satellite' schools, which showed significantly reduced dropout rates and increased enrolment in the upper age groups as compared to before their foundation. Additionally, a higher percentage of students were reportedly found to now be passing class six government exams. However, the study does not make direct comparisons with state schools or national benchmarks. Nevertheless, the author notes that government policy-makers at the national and state levels frequently cite this programme as an example of success, and reports that states which have taken up the teaching methodology (explored further under A2) have also reported positive

[10] Note that this contrasts with the evidence presented in Hartwell and Farrell (2008), also listed under A1, that showed students in BRAC schools outperforming those in state schools.

results[11]. However, the author also clearly identifies some limitations of these schools – such as heavy reliance on a single teacher, greater community engagement (which it finds can be both beneficial and unfavourable) and financial and other constraints.

Limited evidence suggests **that religious schools perform no differently than state schools in terms of learning outcomes.** Asadullah et al. (2009), one of the few studies using empirical techniques from Bangladesh, finds that **relative performance varies according to the type of non-state provider**. The study compares the effect of attendance at madrasa schools in rural Bangladesh (often privately owned but publicly subsidised at the secondary level) against the effect of attendance at secular schools, both state and non-state. The study draws on test-score data for students studying in grade 8 in secondary schools in rural Bangladesh and uses an instrumental variable approach to account for the possibility that parental choice of school type is correlated in some way with student performance, controlling for a range of socio-economic factors[12]. While it finds that there is no significant difference in test scores between religious and secular school students, madrasa attendance at *primary level* is found to exert a significant negative effect on test scores at the secondary level, regardless of whether the student attends a madrasa or secular secondary school.

Caveats

There is surprisingly little robust empirical evidence that specifically investigates this assumption. Instead, it is often dealt with in passing as part of studies concerned with other factors. In particular, it was noted that studies often reviewed only certain type of schools – such as particular NGO schools – and did not directly compare outcomes with those of state/government schools or national benchmarks. This limited the usefulness of the evidence, as did the lack of socio-economic data on students that would have given a clearer picture of the "value-added" of these forms of providers. The consistent finding that students in philanthropic and religious schools perform as well, or better, than state school students should be viewed in the light of this finding, as it is likely that the students in the former will be more marginalised and so have an initial learning disadvantage.

Some of evidence gap may be explained by limitations in the way data on the non-state sector is collected and analysed, which is often not broken down by type of non-state provider. Both ASER and Uwezo, for example, give breakdowns of enrolment by 'state', 'private' and 'other', but do not present information on learning outcomes for the 'other' category. While this could be because 'other' constitutes a very small proportion of the

[11] The author cites evidence from RIVER organisers that after one year of implementation, around 75% of students in the Tamil Nadu programme achieved the expected national benchmark for their age group, compared to 25% of their counterparts in state schools (Blum 2009: 11).

[12] The econometric methodology uses school and classroom-fixed effects to look at the determinants of student achievement (measured as a percentage of correct answers in a maths test). The authors control for numerous child characteristics (age, age squared, religion and gender), family background (parental education and socioeconomic status as proxied by whether house is pucca (well built) or not and whether a household has a mobile phone), and schooling history (whether the child attended primary madrasa, private school, NGO school or primary grade in school being sampled).

total enrolment, distinguishing between the different categories would be useful in filling this key gap in the literature.

Moreover, **even where relative better performance is identified, overall learning outcomes may still be low**. Both Asadullah et al. (2009) and Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) note in their respective analysis of learning outcomes across providers in Bangladesh that low learning outcomes remain a major concern across all types of provision, with Asadullah et al. (2009) adding that there is also a consistent pattern of female disadvantage.

We must also be cautious as to the external validity of these findings. Rose (2009) notes that much of the literature concentrates on a relatively small number of successful examples (including School for Life and BRAC) and cautions that the tendency for reports and analyses to be commissioned by funders and NGO operators may mean more negative appraisals may be softened or remain internal documents. Asadullah et al. (2009) also note the phenomenon of un-registered religious and non-formal education in rural areas of Bangladesh and the difficulties of gathering data on these providers and their performance. There is therefore a risk that the findings presented here only apply to one part of the broader spectrum of philanthropic and religious providers.

Assumption A2: Teaching is better in philanthropic and religious schools than in state schools.
No. of studies: 13 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (5) Ethiopia (1) Ghana (2) India (3) Kenya (1) Malawi (1) Pakistan (1) Uganda (1) Zambia (1) ****POSITIVE*** **(10)** Neutral (3) Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: The overall size of the evidence base is strong, but of medium quality, with only two high-quality studies. The context is strong, with evidence from across 11 countries, although there is a concentration in South Asia. There is also a strong level of consistency, with ten of the thirteen studies finding positive evidence for the assumption. However, the evidence is fragmented and only examines individual programmes and organisations. ***Overall strength of evidence: STRONG***
Headline findings: There is consistent evidence supporting this assumption, but it is strongly focused on philanthropic schools with few studies comparing the teacher quality of religious schools with that of state schools. The majority of studies in this section find that teaching is better in philanthropic schools than in state schools for a variety of reasons. For example, innovative pedagogy and flexibility of schooling structures are identified in several instances as driving success. The evidence on the factors enabling these pedagogical differences is more limited and studies cite a range of factors, from the benefits of smaller class sizes to more locally adapted teaching, to greater staff support and management.

Under this assumption, 'better teaching' is defined as innovative pedagogy relevant to community needs, supportive and well-supported teachers, better learning environments, organisation and management.

Supporting evidence

The majority of studies support the assumption that philanthropic schools offer forms of better teaching than state schools and identify a number of enabling factors, such as smaller class sizes[13].

A number of studies identify **innovations in pedagogy and curriculum**, which tends to be more child-centred and locally adapted in philanthropic schools. Blum's (2009) analysis of small multi-grade rural NGO-run schools (run by Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources, RIVER) in Andra Pradesh, India, finds that they have adopted teaching models which are **small-scale and locally rooted**, allowing for flexibility and room for innovation in curriculum design and teacher education, something that the author argues is not possible in government schools. Identified pedagogy innovations include the development of a set of materials appropriate to local languages and local customs of the community and appropriate for teaching in a multi-grade setting. Existing government textbooks have also been deconstructed and reorganised into a set of 'learning activities', and included local stories and images to make the materials more locally relevant (Ibid: 7). Other areas of innovation identified are: effective teacher training and support system and the advancement of programmes to develop strong school-community relationships (Ibid: 7). Sommers (2012) also reinforced this by noting that there is substantial community awareness that BRAC schools in Bangladesh use 'different' teaching methods which provide 'joyful learning environments' and 'colourful materials' in the child learning experience. Akyeampong (2009) also highlights **flexible school calendars aimed at meeting local needs, adopting local language teaching and local hiring of teachers** as features of the Shepherd School Programme aimed at pastoral communities in Northern Ghana.

Similarly, analysis by Epstein and Yuthas (2012) of Escuela Nueva (Colombia), BRAC (Bangladesh) and Pratham (India) highlights pedagogical innovations that address **the needs of target communities**. This involved supporting students to work in an independent, self-paced manner in later grades, which the authors argue is essential in multi-grade schools. They also identify innovations in the content and pedagogy, as well as teacher and administrator training, which was designed to incorporate state of-the-art learning theory. Programmes were designed to be **tailored** to logistical challenges faced by children, for example having the potential for children to 'catch up' with the curriculum when they return from harvest. This has been identified as a key feature that has allowed these programmes to achieve the scale they have in the respective countries. Sud (2010) also corroborates the tailored nature of these schools as being a key contribution. By examining NGO non-formal schools that aim to educate children involved in child labour in Punjab, India, Sud finds that philanthropic schools are more flexible with regard to how they are structured (for instance, offering accelerated curricula for over-age children), thereby contributing to overall positive results.

[13] We note that the comparison with state schools may not be adequate here, as state schools may not be able to operate in the same way as non-state schools, for instance in terms of limitations to class sizes and so on. Where possible, this section therefore tries to note both any comparisons identified with national standards or benchmarks and enabling factors that support these better teaching methods.

Other analysis suggests that, rather than philanthropic schools necessarily offering better teaching, **the principles by which teachers are hired and supported** within these school types are different in some cases, and this can lead to improved outcomes. This applies to specific types of school and provider. Thus the quality of teachers at BRAC schools is described by Dang et al. (2011) to be higher than that of their government school counterparts, reflecting the fact that they are hired from within the community, have strong relationships with their students and are seen as 'affectionate' towards students rather than resorting to corporal punishment (Dang et al. 2011). Also, while BRAC teachers on average have lower qualifications, their skills have been upgraded through regular refresher trainings and improved systems of monitoring and supervision (Ibid.). The study finds that these teachers also generally tend to be more motivated, partly because of the sense of empowerment they gain within their community.

Some studies highlight the importance of effective **organisation and management systems** to improve teaching within certain forms of non-state provision. DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) examine non-state provision of 10 complementary education programmes[14] across a range of countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mali, and Zambia), including community/village schools and NGO-run schools. They conclude that these organisations achieve better teaching in primary schooling, due to a 'better engineering approach', and better management and organisation for teachers than state counterparts (Ibid.). Examples include reductions in expensive inputs, such as pre-service teacher training and salaries, and increases in other key inputs, such as instructional material/time and supervision. DeStefano and Schuh Moore also identify examples of local hiring and stronger community led management processes, including better monitoring and greater opportunities for recognition and reward of teachers. These improved systems, in turn, were found to encourage teachers to be present in the classroom, and to incentivise teachers to teach more effectively (for example, where they have better access to instructional materials or a more structured work environment) (Ibid.). The fact that in many instances 'locally recruited, less-educated and often minimally compensated teachers produce educational outcomes that match or exceed what regular public schools obtain' (p. 513) is noteworthy.

Evidence of the ability of state-supported forms of community schools to use innovative teaching methods and greater organisational flexibility is also given by Dang et al. (2011). Their analysis of ROSC, a state-supported but strongly community based form of education in Bangladesh, finds that a decentralised system with strong community participation and flexibility for teachers contributed to lower levels of absenteeism for teachers and high effort (based on survey visits, with 80% of present teachers actually found to be teaching during visits).

Evidence provided by Bangay and Latham (2013) on Gyan Shala schools in India suggests that these schools have sound and child-centred pedagogy, but provide no direct

[14] Defined in the study as: 'programmes designed specifically to complement the government education system in each country and … not meant as non-formal alternative programmes. In each case, the programmes provide a different approach to helping children obtain the same educational objectives as students in state schools. Also, in each case, the programmes serve populations that have limited or no access to government-provided schooling.' (p. 525).

comparison with state schools. They note that the pedagogy in these schools has been extensively redesigned, for instance to involve both individual and group work, with well-structured classes allowing project work and creativity. This design was found to significantly support both teachers (through regular supervisory support visits, training and refresher days) and children (who received individual guidance and feedback daily).

Perceptions of better teaching may reflect other factors too, such as lower **levels of overcrowding in classrooms and this is also noted for religious schools** where there has been little analysis of teaching quality. Biziouras and Birger (2013) find that in Uganda, non-state schools (including both private and religious schools) generally had better learning environments than state schools, with particular reference to teacher effort, discipline and teaching methods. However, they find that this is partly attributed to incentives to maintain lower pupil-teacher ratios in schools rather than as a result of superior teaching standards or methods. A study by Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) also indicates better pupil-teacher ratios in non-state as compared to government schools in Bangladesh across all types of non-state school.

Neutral evidence

One study of non-state and state schooling in formal and informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya finds mixed evidence on the relative quality of teaching in philanthropic, religious and private schools compared to state schools. Ngware et al. (2011) find teachers to be more qualified in state schools (which are found to be the only school type where teacher standards according to national benchmarks are being met). State schools also have better rates of textbook provision, particularly compared to individually owned private schools and community owned schools. Similarly, philanthropic, religious and private schools generally were found to have poorer infrastructure in terms of classrooms, maintenance and sanitation facilities. However, philanthropic, religious and private schools were found by comparison with state schools to have smaller class sizes and lower pupil-teacher ratios, both of which possibly improve student-teacher interactions.

Bano (2008b) also notes significant variations within the broad category of philanthropic schools in Pakistan. She notes that in schools run by NGOs, the teachers were more monitored and intensively trained than was the case for schools run by Traditional Voluntary Organisations (TVOs). Schools run by NGOs were found to making greater use of audio-visual aids and students learning through experience, whereas those run by TVOs made much less use of child-centred teaching methods. However, Bano notes that "TVOs with dynamic leadership were also making similar attempts [to integrate child-centred teaching methods]" (Ibid, p.476).

Rose (2009) also cautions that while the rhetoric around philanthropic (and especially NGO) provision focuses on child-centred and flexible approaches, in practice these programmes may have a very standard form. She notes evidence from an assessment of NGO led education programmes across four country contexts (Ethiopia, Guinea, Malawi and Mali) that finds very similar approaches being used in all cases.

Caveats

There is evidence that philanthropic schools appear to be recognised as more effective in terms of teaching. However, there is a lack of evidence on the teaching quality of religious schools. Only a small number of studies examine the enabling factors for flexibility and innovation, outlining different contributing elements such as class sizes. Greater knowledge in these areas would enable us to better understand the extent to which these pedagogical innovations could be scaled or replicated elsewhere.

Hypothesis H2: Philanthropic and religious schools provide education to disadvantaged children

This hypothesis is separated into two elements. First, we examine whether philanthropic and religious schools geographically reach the poor and the marginalised (A3), and second, whether philanthropic and religious schools are equally accessed by boys and girls (A4).

Assumption 3: Philanthropic and religious schools geographically reach the poor and marginalised.
No. of studies = 21 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (7) Democratic Republic of the Congo (1) Ghana (3) India (7) Pakistan (2) Sierra Leone (1) South Asia (1) Zambia (1) ****POSITIVE*** **(19)** Neutral (3) Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: There are a large number of studies which give evidence on this assumption, largely of medium quality, with only four high-quality studies, and few studies which focus directly on this issue. The context is strong overall, covering eight countries and one region, although evidence is highly concentrated in India and Bangladesh. The findings across these studies also show strong consistency, with over four-fifths of studies giving positive evidence. ***Overall strength of evidence: STRONG***
Headline findings: There is strong evidence that philanthropic and religious schools reach the poor and marginalised, in different ways. Philanthropic schools often purposefully locate themselves in marginalised areas (e.g. slums) and adapt their practices to cater to the needs of these groups. There is also evidence that religious schools, and particularly madrasas, serve more marginalised areas and reach out to poor communities. Madrasas are also more concentrated in rural areas in certain countries, although there is not clear evidence as to whether they serve poor or marginalised groups in these areas. However, evidence is complicated by a lack of consistent or clearly defined measures of poverty by income level or degree of marginalisation, making it difficult to compare coverage across non-state schools or contexts. Moreover, these findings must be seen in the context of the heavy concentration of research in India and Bangladesh.

Supporting evidence

There is consistent evidence that some non-state providers – such as philanthropic schools run by NGOs – are **purposely located in areas that enable them to reach marginalised groups** and operate flexibly to reach these communities. BRAC schools and other NGO initiatives in Bangladesh were found to locate in rural areas and slums (Dang et al., 2011, DeStefano and Schuh Moore, 2010 and Morpeth and Creed, 2012). BRAC is also identified as catering to children who have never enrolled in schooling or who have dropped out, as well as ethnic minorities, vulnerable and other marginalised groups (Asadullah and Chaudhury, 2013 and Sommers, 2012).

Other examples that successfully serve disadvantaged groups or rural or marginalised areas include the Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) in Bangladesh (Dang et al. 2011), School for Life in Ghana (Akyeampong, 2009,Casely-Hayford and Hartwell, 2010, and DeStefano and Schuh Moore, 2010); RIVER, Gyan Shala and others in India (Bangay and Latham, 2013[15], Blum, 2009, CfBT, 2011 and IDFC Foundation, 2013); Traditional Voluntary Organisations (TVOs) in Pakistan (Bano, 2008b); and community schools in Zambia (DeStefano and Schuh Moore, 2010). DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) note, for instance, that community schools in Zambia account for 25 per cent of the enrolment in primary schools, BRAC in Bangladesh meets the educational needs of 50 per cent of the school age population in rural areas (p. 522). Akyeampong (2009) describes how School for Life provides schooling to out-of-school children covering about 25 per cent of communities in 30 districts across Northern Ghana. Similarly, the Shepherd School Programme specifically focuses on disadvantaged pastoral communities in Northern Ghana (p. 144).

Cameron (2011) found, in a survey of 492 households in four urban slums of Dhaka, Bangladesh, that most of the children in the poorer slums (Cholontika and Korail) went to NGO schools and that enrolment choices varied by family income, with propensity to enrol in NGO schools declining with increasing family income.

The study by Dang et al. (2011) shows that not only are those children enrolled in ROSC schools from more disadvantaged backgrounds, they are also able to empirically show an increase in enrolment probability of between 9 and 18 percent as a result of the ROSC schools, which the authors state are specifically placed in underserved areas with limited provision of formal schooling in order to serve out-of-school children. In particular, the authors note that ROSC has the strongest impacts on enrolment on the age cohort of 6-8 years. They state that over the 5 years of implementation studied the ROSC schools have enrolled and provided education allowances (through demand side interventions) to about half a million out of school children from 60 of the most disadvantaged upazilas in the country.

Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) also cite evidence that, in South Asia, unregistered non-state schools serve poor families, but they do not clarify the types of non-state schools to which they refer (drawing on Rose, 2006; Rose and Greeley, 2006; Andrabi et al., 2006). Issues of flexibility and outreach to more marginalised groups are covered in more detail under A10.

In the case of providers targeting child labourers, there is some evidence that **philanthropic schools can reach some marginalised groups but may still face challenges in reaching the very *most* marginalised**. In Jalandhar, India, Sud (2010) finds that although a non-formal schooling programme made efforts to reach marginalised out-of-school child labourers, the mix of children they reached were not the most marginalised in the region. This reflected the nature of the child labour involved. Compared to other

[15] Bangay and Latham (2013) note that Gyan Shala does not retain specific details regarding the socio-economic status of its students, but that its accessibility can be inferred from the presence of centres in urban slums and pockets of extreme policy, as well as the design of the programme to accommodate students from the lowest economic quintiles (p249).

activities, these children were found to be in relatively privileged sectors (such as soccer ball stitching, which offered more flexible schedules, ability to work from home and so on, compared to other sectors). Furthermore, around a third of students had some prior level of education before enrolling in these philanthropic schools – a measure that Sud uses as a proxy for true need for this form of education. On this basis she concludes that some parents were opportunistically taking advantage of the programme and specifically the absence of fees and presence of other subsidies. Thus, while the programme was reaching marginalised child labourers, its ability to reach and retain students from even more marginalised groups, particularly migrant workers and those working in industries less linked to export markets, was much more limited.

Madrasa schools are found to particularly reach marginalised areas too. Sommers (2012: 16), drawing on a review of literature on Bangladesh, cites evidence that at the primary level 86% of madrasas are located in rural areas and that two-thirds of households with students in madrasas are classified as 'absolute poor'[16] (p16). This evidence is also supported by Cameron (2011) who found that while madrasas only served a small minority of each income group surveyed in four urban slums in Dhaka, the majority of students enrolled were from the poorest two quintiles (p358-359).

Alam (2008) finds that madrasa schools in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh largely serve students from non-literate or semi-literate labouring or petty-trading families, in which the provision of free board and lodging provided relief to financial burdens. Nelson (2009) finds that, in Pakistan, while only a small number of students attend madrasas full-time, they are mostly from poor families, whereas part-time enrolments are more common and cut across social classes.

Evidence from Bano (2012) shows that around 30% of students enrolled in elite madrasas in Pakistan come from poor families, suggesting they are reaching the poor and marginalised. However, she also notes that these schools largely serve lower middle-income families and that the fathers of madrasa students are twice as likely to be literate than the average Pakistani man – suggesting a lower level of social marginalisation (Ibid. p102). She also notes evidence that madrasas are often established by communities themselves, emerging from communities establishing mosques in new settlements or under-served areas – some 80% of cases in rural or new urban communities according to her analysis (Ibid. p.162).

Thachil (2009) also presents evidence that madrasa schools in Pakistan and schools run by Hindu organisations in India (RSS schools) have expanded enrolment particularly amongst poor groups that lack access to government schools.

In their research on religious schools in Sierra Leone, Wodon and Ying (2009) analyse data from the 2004 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS) and find that in rural areas in particular, students in these schools tended to be poorer than those in state schools. A third were identified to be in the lowest income quintile, compared to 21% for government schools. However, they observed a more ambiguous pattern in urban areas, where religious schools still served the poor more than other school types, but were also over-represented in the middle (third) income quintile. Religious schools did not appear to

[16] No definition of 'absolute poor' was given in the report.

discriminate between children of different faith in terms of enrolment (Wodon and Ying, 2009: 104).

Neutral evidence

There is some neutral evidence that **madrasa schools are more heavily concentrated in rural areas** than other types of schools, although this evidence does not detail clearly whether these schools serve the poor and marginalised in these areas. Bano (2008a) finds that Aliya madrasas in Bangladesh are heavily concentrated in rural areas (89.55%) compared to 10.45% in urban areas (p8). Similarly, Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013) find that, at secondary level, 90.9% of madrasa pupils in Bangladesh were in rural areas (compared to government and mainstream education where 77% of pupils were in rural areas) (p226). They find in a series of regressions that the poverty variable (proportion of population below the poverty line in 2001) is always positively correlated with madrasa enrolment, however it is insignificant in most cases and so does not constitute strong evidence for madrassa schools reaching the poorest (p234).

Backiny-Yetna and Wodon (2009) note that religious schools in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) serve similar constituencies to state schools in terms of income quintiles. It is important to note that all schools are fee-charging in practice and so the extent to which they reach marginalised groups or not is not clear. The larger gap in income is with pupils at private schools, who were on average better off. This study also found that there was little evidence of discrimination in admissions on the basis of faith (p. 123).

Assumption 4: Philanthropic and religious schools are equally accessed by boys and girls
No. of studies = 12 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (7) Ghana (1) India (1) Pakistan (1) Sierra Leone (1) ****POSITIVE*** **(10)** Neutral (0) Negative (4)
Summary assessment of evidence: The size of the evidence base for this assumption is strong but of medium quality, with only three high-quality studies. It is strong on context, with evidence from six countries, although a strong concentration on Bangladesh too; while its consistency is moderate, with ten studies containing positive evidence. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline finding: There is moderate evidence for this assumption overall, with consistent evidence that philanthropic schools target female enrolment and have achieved gender parity. The evidence regarding religious schools, however, is more mixed and focused largely on madrasas. There is evidence of significant increases in female enrolment in madrasas in Bangladesh, linked closely to a programme of conditional state support for madrasas, resulting in gender parity in enrolment overall. However, while there has been increased female enrolment in madrasa schools in Pakistan, these still fall far short of gender parity overall. The evidence from other contexts is fragmented and much of the literature for both philanthropic and religious schools only examines whether there is gender parity of enrolment and so provides only a partial assessment for whether schools are equally accessed by boys and girls in practice.

Supporting evidence

There is some evidence that **NGO schools target girls' enrolment** and achieve gender parity. Analysis[17] of primary education provision in Bangladesh by Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) finds that NGO, community, experimental, registered and non-registered, non-formal primary schools achieve gender parity in enrolment (with 49-51% of students being female). Similarly, analysis of village-based schools run by Catholic Relief services in Afghanistan found that the introduction of these schools virtually eliminated the gender gap in enrolment: while the gender gap in control villages was 20.9%, this reduced to 4% in treatment villages[18], and girls' enrolment increased by 52% compared to 35% for boys (Burde and Linden, 2013).

This finding is supported by other analysis that highlights cases where NGO schools target girls' enrolment. Two-thirds of the 2.4 million students who had graduated from BRAC primary schools in Bangladesh by 2002 were girls (Farrell and Hartwell, 2008 p22). More recent estimates show similar ratios from 65% female students (Sommers, 2012[19] p13), rising to as high as 70% (Asadullah and Chaudhury, 2013 p226) [20]. Akyeampong (2009) reports evidence from the School for Life programme in Ghana where 50 per cent of the 50,000 children enrolled between 1996 and 2003 were girls.

Analysis of the Gyan Shala programme in India by Bangay and Latham (2013) also finds gender parity in both enrolment and learning outcomes. Parity of gender enrolment is supported by survey evidence focusing on three areas in Bihar from CfBT (2011), which found that 54% of the children attending Gyan Shala from the families interviewed were female. The study by Dang et al. (2011) shows that overall, the impact of the ROSC schools in Bangladesh on girls' enrolment is significantly higher than that of boys - girls are about 10 percent more likely than boys to be enrolled in schools among all age groups studied, and controlling for other factors. The authors conclude that not only do ROSC schools have the strongest impacts on enrolment for children aged 6-8 years residing in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Bangladesh, but that the effects on enrolment are stronger for girls than boys. However, the effects appear to be stronger for girls in the earlier years (2006) and relatively stronger in the later years (2008) for boys (p. 19).

There is also evidence of gender parity in religious schools in certain contexts. Wodon and Ying (2009: 104) find gender parity in faith-based schools in Sierra Leone at the primary level and note that they have a higher share of female students than government schools at the primary and secondary level overall, although this is not the case for urban areas at the secondary level.

[17] This used official records from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) for 2004.

[18] The authors note that the remaining gender gap in treatment villages is not statistically significant at conventional levels (p37).

[19] According to Dang et al. (2011), the most comprehensive assessment of the relative performance of BRAC schools in Bangladesh finds that non-formal schools in Bangladesh are effective in raising female enrolment and test scores in rural areas (Sukontamarn, 2006).

[20] Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013) also cite evidence from the same author (Sukontamarn, 2005) suggesting that BRAC schools have improved female retention rates at primary level amongst poor families.

Asadullah and Wahhaj (2012) find that in 2008 in Bangladesh 52% of students enrolled in registered secondary madrasas were female. Interestingly they note that in conservative districts madrasas were correlated with expanded female secondary enrolment, whereas there was no significant association with the presence other, secular forms of schooling. This is part of general pattern of expanding female enrolment in madrasa schools, which Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013) attribute to the Government of Bangladesh introducing the Female Secondary School Assistance Programme (FSSAP) in 1993. Before this the Aliyah madrasa schooling system (which is partially-state supported and teaches elements of the state curriculum) was predominantly male only, but by 2013 more than 90% of registered secondary madrasas were admitting females students and the share of girls enrolled rose from 7.7% in 1990 to effective parity at 52% in 2008 (Ibid.). These schools accounted for 35% of the overall growth in girls' enrolment in secondary schools in Bangladesh over 1990-2008 – with the rate of female enrolment growth in these schools being much more rapid than that in the secular secondary school sector (Ibid.).

There is also some evidence that there may be **synergies between different provider types in raising female enrolment.** Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013) note that the presence of BRAC primary schools may have played a role in driving increasing female enrolment in registered madrasas at the secondary level. Their analysis found that registered madrasas located in sub-districts with larger numbers of BRAC schools saw a higher growth in female enrolment, with the effect being particularly large compared to the relationship between the presence of BRAC schools and overall secondary enrolment[21].

Counter evidence

Some studies highlight that **there are still inequities in terms of gender parity for madrasa schools and that it difficult to generalise across national systems and different contexts**.

While Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) found gender parity in some types of schools in Bangladesh, they also found that kindergartens and madrasas tend to enrol more boys than girls. This was particularly the case for primary providers attached to Alia (secondary) madrasas, where only 43% of students were female[22].

Bano (2008a) finds that while the gender balance in Aliyah madrasas in Bangladesh has improved they are still not at gender parity: 47.6% of students in post-primary madrasa education were girls compared to 52.4% boys' enrolment. These figures are slightly lower than the secular education system, which has 50.6% female students to 49.4% male. A key finding of her research is that the ratio of female enrolment declines the higher the level of madrasa education: at the Alim level[23] 48% of students are female, at the Fazil level

[21] Analysis utilised annual enrolment figures spanning 1999-2003 from the Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh census dataset on secondary registered schools and madrasas. Findings were robust to control for sub-district level poverty, road access and geographical remoteness.
[22] This used official records from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) for 2004.
[23] Bano (2008a) gives a breakdown of these levels relative to equivalent secular education levels. The Alim level is roughly equivalent to higher secondary education, the Fazil level to the first years of an undergraduate degree (age 18-20) and the Kamil level to a completed undergraduate degree (age 20-22).

this falls to 37.3%, and at the highest level (Kamil), only 17% of students are girls. Bano (2008a: 7-8) speculates that: 'This might reflect the fact that females have less incentive to study up to the highest level since they cannot achieve positions within the religious hierarchy' .

These findings are also supported by Sommers (2012), who cites evidence that 91% of students in unregistered (*Quomi*) madrasas in Bangladesh are male – although she also notes the lack of reliable data on these schools, which are primarily dedicated to the training of religious teachers, in comparison with the more mainstream Aliyah madrasas.

In Pakistan, Bano (2012) finds that, despite a steady growth in the establishment of female madrasas since the late 1970s, there are almost five times as many boys enrolled in madrasas than girls, with madrasas tending to be gender-segregated (p128).

Caveats

Much of the available evidence focuses on gender parity of enrolment and does not address other indicators of access (such as retention rates).

Hypothesis H3: Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective and financially stable

This hypothesis is separated into two elements. First, we examine whether philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective (A5) and second, whether philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable (A6). The first of these also examines what evidence there is of cost-effectiveness relative to state provision.

Assumption 5: Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective
No. of studies = 8 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (5) Ghana (2) India (1) Zambia (1) Unspecified (1) ***POSITIVE (7)*** Neutral (1) Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence base for this assumption is of medium size and quality, with only a single high-quality study. Its overall context is strong, with evidence from 5 countries, and there is strong consistency, with all studies providing positive evidence. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline finding: There is moderate evidence that philanthropic schools have lower operating costs than state schools and that they are also more cost-effective in terms of costs relative to outcomes. Lower teacher wages and smaller input costs seem to be key elements. However, these estimates may need to be treated with caution due to low data availability, particularly in terms of monitoring costs; the hidden costs of donated supplies and volunteer time; and a lack of accurate measures of direct and indirect benefits. There is also a lack of evidence on the cost-effectiveness of religious schools.

Supporting evidence

A number of studies find that **philanthropic schools have lower operating costs per child when compared to state schools, with smaller input costs and lower teacher salaries** noted as key elements.

The most comprehensive analysis of cost-effectiveness is found in DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2010), covering a range of philanthropic and community education providers in four DFID target countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana and Zambia)[24]. They conclude that **across these contexts these philanthropic and community schools are more cost-effective than state schools**. Detailed data is shown in the table below – compared to equivalent government schools, all but one of the philanthropic schools had lower annual costs per pupil (the exception being School for Life in Ghana); that all of the philanthropic providers had lower costs per completing students; and that (wherever data was available) philanthropic education providers had significantly lower costs per learning outcome (DeStefano and Schuh Moore, 2010. P.514). The authors also note the hiring practices of these organisations – working with volunteers or teachers recruited locally – as playing a role in reducing costs by avoiding the higher salaries of a professional teaching corps. The authors also note that in two of the cases – Home-Based School in Afghanistan and School for Life in Ghana – teachers are considered to be volunteers and so may only receive occasional in-kind support from communities.

	Afghanistan COPE		Afghanistan IRC		Bangladesh BRAC		Ghana School for Life		Zambia Community Schools	
	NGO	Govt.	NGO	Govt.	NGO	Govt.	NGO	Govt.	Community	Govt.
Annual Cost per pupil	$38	$31	$18	$31	$20	$29	$39	$27	$39	$67
Completion rate	50%	32%	68%	32%	94%	67%	91%	59%	72%	72%
Cost per completer	$453	$485	$132	$485	$84	$246	$43	$135	$376	$655
Students meeting learning outcome	94%	-	99%	-	70%	27%	81%	9%	40%	35%
Costs per learning outcome	$482	-	$134	-	$120	$991	$53	$1500	$939	$1873

Source: Reproduced from DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010, p.514)

Further evidence for the relative cost-effectiveness of these providers is noted by other authors. Casely-Hayford and Hartwell (2010) examine data on the School for Life programme included in government assessments. They find, in contrast to the data from DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010), that annual costs per pupil (recurrent) were lower for SFL students ($38) than for the average public-school pupil in northern Ghana ($79). Salaries were also a smaller proportion of recurrent costs in SFL schools than in public-schools (4% compared to 97.8%). They also note evidence from both SFL and government impact assessments that conclude that SFL is effective in improving basic literacy amongst deprived rural communities and that they do this at lower costs than state schools would.

[24] The data analysed in this paper came from case studies conducted by the USAID-funded Education Quality Improvement Program 2 (EQUIP2) over 2006-2007. The same data is also analysed in Hartwell and Farrell (2008), with similar conclusions. Only DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) is included here, as it is the later paper and also includes a broader range of countries and providers.

Epstein and Yuthas (2012) examine evidence on BRAC in Bangladesh and, while they note a higher annual cost per pupil figure ($38 in 2008) than DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010), they conclude that "BRAC has developed an extremely cost-efficient basic model" (p110). Important elements of this seem to be a model of single room schools, which are rented rather than owned, and teaching staff primarily being community mothers on a small wage.

A range of other philanthropic providers are also noted as being cost effective. Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) cite evaluation evidence that suggests philanthropic providers (specifically non-formal primary education programmes) in Bangladesh are more cost-effective than government schools. However, they also cite Rose (2007) to caution readers that non-state providers are not necessarily more cost-effective because they are non-state providers, but rather because they are able to create efficiency under the specific conditions in which they are designed and managed.

Bangay and Latham (2013) find that Gyan Shala (GS) in India has annual costs of INR 2200 (GBP 30) per child, compared to state school costs of INR 18,000 (GBP 240)[25]. Although this is not proof of cost-effectiveness per se, the size of the gap, combined with evidence on the effectiveness of GS schools, is indicative. The authors attribute this cost-differential to lower teacher salaries in the informal sector (typically a fifth or sixth of tenured government teachers) and to using single-room, rented class rooms with no playgrounds or amenities.

Dang et al. (2011) also note similar factors contributing to lower operating costs for schools operated by the ROSC programme in Bangladesh, with annual expenditure per student at Taka 1,489 compared to Taka 3,108 in government primary schools. Classes are organised around a single teacher in one classroom who teaches multiple grades, and classrooms can also be as simple as a rented room in a house. Teacher salaries are also considerably lower, at around a sixth of the costs of the least qualified teachers[26] in government primary schools (Dang et al. 2011:29).

A single study provides evidence that **religious schools, as well as philanthropic schools, have teacher salaries that are lower than those in state schools, but higher than those in private schools**. Sommers (2012) research in the Dimla upazila of Bangladesh found that average monthly head teacher pay is highest in government schools, followed by two forms of philanthropic provision – RNGPS (Registered Non-Government Primary Schools) and community schools. It finds that Quomi madrasas pay US$66, while Aliya madrasas pay US$48. In contrast private schools pay US$31, while pay is the lowest at what Sommers dubs "non-formal" schools. Full details are in the table below. However, it should be noted that these figures do not provide information on the cost-effectiveness of these providers and it is not clear how representative this sample is of Dimla or Bangladesh as a whole.

[25] The figures in Indian Rupees (INR) are identical to those cited in CfBT (2011), although the two articles appear to use different exchange rates for conversion to British Pounds Sterling (GBP). Only Bangay and Latham (2013) is included here, as it is the later article.
[26] These are assistant teachers without a Primary Training Institute (PTI) certificate.

Head teacher pay in:	Government	RNGPS	Community Schools	Non-Formal	Private schools	Aliya Madrasa	Quomi Madrasa
Bangladeshi Taka	12,120	5,909	4,800	1,200	2,283	3,527	4,833
US Dollar	$166	$81	$66	$16	$31	$48	$66

Source: Reproduced using data from Sommers (2012, p.26). Data is from author's interviews with head teachers. In the case of Aliya madrasas, this figure is for teacher salaries.

Sommers (2012) also provides some data on teacher salaries, which shows greater ambiguity than the data on head teacher salaries. Government-funded teachers (assumed to mean those in state schools) receive from Tk. 4,500 to 10,500/month (US$60 to US$140) compared to an average of Tk. 4800/month ($64) for teachers in RNGPS and Aliya madrasas; Tk. 2900/month (US$39) for teachers in Quomi madrasas; and around Tk. 1,500/month (US$20) for BRAC and private school teachers. However, it was noted that for the latter, two teachers were able to supplement their income with other activities due to the system of half-day schooling.

Neutral evidence

Assessments of the cost effectiveness of philanthropic provision should be interpreted cautiously. Rose (2009) highlights that limited data availability undermines the rigour of many cost-effectiveness assessments and that certain types of costs and benefits may be unaccounted for. She notes in particular the opportunity costs of borrowed facilities and volunteer help[27]; the lack of costing for the monitoring and supervision of teachers; and the lack of accurate estimates for the direct, in-direct and non-economic benefits experienced by students and communities.

Assumption 6: Philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable
No. of studies = 10 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (4) Ethiopia (1) Ghana (2) India (4) Pakistan (2) Sierra Leone (1) Yemen (1) Zambia (1) Positive (3) ***NEUTRAL* (7)** Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence base for this assumption is medium in size and of medium quality, with only a single high-quality study. Its overall context is strong, with evidence from nine countries, and the majority of studies provide neutral evidence, so overall consistency is classified as weak. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline finding: There is relatively limited evidence regarding whether philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable. The literature does identify some successful strategies and providers, but much of the evidence highlights challenges of financial sustainability, particularly for philanthropic schools operated by NGOs. There are some examples where these schools have diversified their funding, including through government part-financing or individual or corporate contributions, enabling greater financial sustainability, but this has raised issues of organisational coherence in some cases.

[27] Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013), for example, note that the maintenance of BRAC schools is the responsibility of the community.

There is relatively limited evidence that directly addresses whether philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable and no evidence on survival rates of schools over a school cycle, which has been suggested as a proxy for financial sustainability elsewhere (Day Ashley et al. 2014). Supporting evidence identifies certain successful strategies and providers, while the majority of evidence is neutral and highlights a range of factors that can pose challenges for funding philanthropic provision, including where they are reliant on external funding sources. As such, it is classified as neutral but does highlight some potentially negative effects that could undermine sustainability.

Supporting evidence

Several studies note the **success of philanthropic and religious providers in consistently raising funds**. Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010) note evidence from an earlier Aga Khan Foundation review that non-state providers in Bangladesh have become "quite skilled at mobilising resources" (p.21), including contributions from communities, parents and external donors. They argue this is partly a necessary response to a lack of access to traditional revenue streams and capital. Sommers (2012) notes BRAC as a strong example of this, having operated in Bangladesh since 1985 without receiving support from the state and instead successfully mobilising resources from external donors.

Both Bano (2012) and Sommers (2012) note, in Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively, that madrasa schools have generally been able to sustain themselves through a mixture of community support, patronage from prominent families or individuals and international support – sometimes from private donors abroad, but also from expatriates donating to their home region. In Bangladesh, Aliyah madrasas also receive state subsidies that contribute to teacher salaries (based on particular conditions) and in Pakistan, certain madrasas are also supported by religious political parties.

Neutral evidence

Challenges for how certain forms of philanthropic schools are funded are identified, particularly their reliance on external funding sources. Berry (2010) highlights examples of welfare-oriented NGOs in Yemen (including those supporting mentally disabled children in education) that are often reliant on external funding and can only be maintained as long as it is in place, leading to fragmentation of the sector. However, the study does not provide direct evidence of how this might affect non-state education provision.

DeStefano and Schuh-Moore's (2010) analysis of non-state providers of complementary education projects in 10 countries highlights that these organisations face financial uncertainty, in that they are often heavily reliant on external sources of funding, which are usually temporary. For example, six of the 10 programmes[28] studied were funded by time-constrained projects and will require alternative funding sources once these projects end. The authors expressed scepticism as to whether communities would be able to bear the full cost of these programmes in the absence of external funding – noting the under-resourced nature of the schools in the cases where funding came entirely from

[28] From the language of the document it is unclear how many of these programmes are located in DFID priority countries.

communities. They note that in some cases, governments may replace external funding and also outline a broad spectrum of 'relationships' between the state and these providers, which had improved their sustainability by collaborating with the government and entering into shared funding arrangements, with differing impacts on sustainability. Rose (2009) highlights the challenges of financial sustainability for philanthropic provision in Ghana and Ethiopia, noting that governments in these states are often willing to work with these providers when they are supported by external resources, but that there is considerably more reluctance when these providers are competing for state resources that could be used to support state schooling. This suggests that in these contexts, the transition from external funding to state support is uncertain, with significant implications for sustainability. However, this is clearly context dependent, with Rose (2009) noting that in India that particular providers had been integrated into government education strategies and sustained by state funding.

One study highlights broader concerns about the sustainability of certain forms of public-private partnerships. The CfBT (2011) study of Gyan Shala schools notes that parental fees made up no more than 4% of total funding in 2009-2010 (2% for Grades 1-3 and 11% for Grades 4-7) and that they are "relying very heavily on donations and grants from public donors, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or private philanthropists" (p25-26). They also note that there is a significant shortfall between anticipated funding from the Indian government and actual funds received (p26)[29]. This mix of funding is also noted by Bangay and Latham (2013), who argue that these multiple funding streams give the programme greater security as it is not over reliant on any single source, although each also has particular vulnerabilities.

CfBT (2011) note that GS has proven to be sustainable and scalable in Bihar and Gujarat – in part due to its ability to target densely populated urban and peri-urban areas – and propose a plan for expansion that they consider to be sustainable involving extending the coverage of the model to Grade 10. However, this would continue to require the current mix of funding from fees, donations and government funds. The authors argue that the strengths of the schooling model pose significant challenges with respect to its political and financial sustainability and the extent to which it can be scaled up. Visible inequities in salaries between regular government school teachers and teachers employed in GS schools, who are paid significantly less, are identified as creating pressures for the state to regularise the latter. Concerns are also identified as to the feasibility of sustaining and expanding the high levels of quality in training, standards and curriculum required for the GS school model. The study did note potentially sustainable options, but highlights that the aspects that make GS schools successful are those that may be hardest to integrate into the state education system and would pose the greatest financial strains for expansion outside of it.

Furthermore, Rose (2008) highlights a series of individual qualitative case studies of NGO schools – including Idara-Taleem-o-Aaghi (ITA) in Pakistan, Doorsteps (DSS) in India and Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB Bangladesh) – which draw funding from

[29] The authors state that Gyan Shala expected to receive between INR 2200-2400 per child enrolled in Grades 1-3, but the figures they give suggest that actual funding received per child was INR 518 – a significant shortfall.

a variety of sources (such as individual, family and corporate contributions). This can ensure their survival beyond individual project cycles and improve their sustainability overall. The author notes particularly that "DSS does not have problems getting funds for its work – rather, given its reputation, funders seek them out" (p10). However, Rose notes that some blended funding sources can pull organisations in multiple directions or lead them to prioritise projects that will enable highly visible contributions, for example from corporate donors – both of which are identified as challenges particularly for ITA. The drive to diversify is also noted as a reason for these providers entering into contracts with the government that put them in a subordinate position, with FIVDB in particular noted as pursuing government contracts to secure the organisation against uncertainties in DFID funding (p.27). These examples suggest that philanthropic providers can achieve sustainability, but that this involves trade-offs, the extent of which will depend on the strength and reputation of the provider.

Nishimuko (2009) notes that FBOs in Sierra Leone are often under-resourced in comparison with NGO-run providers – restricting the size and range of their operations – but that they are frequently asked by the government to implement projects and are offered grants accordingly.

Caveats

The relationships between non-state providers, government and international organisations and donors are explored in more detail in the 'enabling environment' section below. For this specific assumption, as noted above, evidence is limited. A small number of studies highlight funding challenges, which could undermine financial sustainability, and outline some of the strategies adopted to address these. We also cannot eliminate the possibility that there may be some degree of confirmation bias in the literature, as there are practical difficulties in studying organisations which have ceased to exist as a result of sustainability issues.

4.2 Demand – An assessment of the evidence

Hypothesis H4: Philanthropic and religious schools are affordable to the poor and the poorest

The main assumption identified for this hypothesis is that philanthropic and religious schools are as affordable to users as state schools (A7).

Assumption 7: Philanthropic and religious schools are as affordable to users as state schools
No. of studies = 12 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (5) Democratic Republic of the Congo (1) Ghana (1) India (5) Occupied Palestinian Territories (1) Zambia (1) Positive (1) ***NEUTRAL (10)*** Negative (1)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence base is strong in terms of size, of medium quality, with two high-quality studies, and is rated strong in terms of context, with evidence from seven countries. All but two studies report neutral evidence and are therefore it is weak in terms of consistency. None of the papers provide direct cost comparisons with state schools and there is a strong concentration in India and Bangladesh. ***Overall strength of evidence*: WEAK**
Headline finding: There is little specific evidence on the affordability of philanthropic or religious schools in direct comparison with state schools. The evidence does suggest that many philanthropic providers absorb costs that would be shouldered by parents in government schools and that lower charges are a major cause of demand, but that these providers may also rely on in-kind contributions and so are not costless. Certain providers also charge fees, but the comparative expense is unclear, and low fees that are affordable may also be associated with under-resourcing. There is some suggestion that religious schools may be more expensive than state schools in some contexts and that the provision of particular financial incentives by some madrasas suggests they are generally not affordable to students from poorer families. However, this is an area of weak evidence overall.

Supporting evidence

Sud (2010) examines philanthropic schools serving child labourers in Jalandhar in Punjab, India and notes that these forms of school attract pupils in part because they avoid the informal fees that are often charged by government schools. She notes that these may include an admission fee of Rs.250, a monthly fee of Rs.50 and payments for books and uniforms (Ibid. p44). These costs may be a barrier to particular families and so philanthropic schools in this context are more affordable. However, these schools are still not costless for families in terms of foregone earnings, with students' chances of remaining in school roughly halving in the event of a serious illness in the family, theorised as a result of the child's labour being needed to compensate for the direct costs of illness or the lost earnings of other family members.

Counter evidence

There is evidence that religious schools in the DRC are considered to charge excessive costs by a higher percentage of potential users than state schools. Backiny-Yetna and Wodon (2009: 122) found that 27% of potential users thought religious schools had excessive costs for users, compared to 22% for government schools. These were also low in

comparison with perceptions for private schools, where around 66% thought costs were excessive.

Neutral evidence

Madrasas and other religious schools may improve affordability for some poor students through scholarships and free materials. However, the extent to which this provides broad access or that fees act as a barrier to entry for non-scholarship students is unclear. In an analysis of six religious schools[30] in Maharashtra state, India, Rew and Bhatewara (2012) find that scholarships and free school materials (textbooks, uniforms, bags) were offered to the poorest families, though sometimes this was limited to children of the same religion as the school. They provide evidence of take-up from one Hindu school (St Mira), in which 400 out of 2,700 students benefited from scholarships for the poor (amounting to a 50% reduction in school fees, free school bags textbooks and uniforms). Figures were not provided for other schools, but the authors note that the number of scholarship students and conditions for acceptance vary considerably between schools. Alam (2008) finds that madrasa schools in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh provide free board and lodging to some students, lowering the financial burden for their families. Bano (2008a) notes that certain Quomi madrasas in Bangladesh do not charge fees to students and that some offer free food and materials to support poor students. Høigilt (2013) notes the offering of scholarships by madrasas in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, although the proportion of the student body made up of scholarship students varies widely.

Gyan Shala schools in India charge monthly fees of Rs.50 at the elementary level and Rs. 100 at the middle level (CfBT 2011, p.26). Survey evidence of parents whose children are enrolled in these schools suggests that they are currently willing and able to pay, and would be willing to do so at a similar price level for middle school. However, fees are not compared with government schools and the sample by design excludes any families who are unable to afford the current fees. Bangay and Latham (2013) also interestingly note that "the programme does not deem it appropriate to take punitive action for non-payment" (p.250) – complicating assessments of affordability in practice.

Sommers (2012) presents detailed evidence from an earlier study (Ahmad et al, 2007) that makes it clear that there are opportunity costs for all forms of schools operating in Bangladesh. In addition to costs of materials, transportation, school uniforms, and mid-day snacks for students, almost 90% of households make some kind of direct payment to schools. They contend, "the annual private per student expenditure, on average, has been found to account for 54% of the annual total per student expenditure in non-government registered madrashas [sic] and 59% in government schools, while it is as high as 88% in non-government non-registered madrashas [sic], 82% in non-government non-registered schools, and 77% in non-government registered schools" (Ahmad et al 2007 p. xxiv). In rural areas, families shoulder an average of 63% of the cost burden, or nearly Tk. 2,200/year [US$29]. Per student expenditure among families from the wealthiest quintile was nearly two and a half times more than that of households in the poorest quintile (Nath & Chowdhury 2009). Sommers (2012, p.27) also notes that in Bangladesh students in NGO

[30] Three of the religious schools are classified as Hindu; the other three are Buddhist, Islamic and Roman Catholic.

schools (RNGPS and community schools) often have to pay exam registration fees and for equipment, and that parents choose BRAC schools because of their perceived lower costs (amongst other factors), but provides no detailed evidence on fee rates.

Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013) note that, in Bangladesh, BRAC and most Aliyah madrasas will bear the cost of students' education, as opposed to their families. In the case of BRAC, communities will contribute labour and materials to building and maintaining classrooms – suggesting this is not a costless model. These benefits and costs, in relation to BRAC, are also noted by Epstein and Yuthas (2012).

DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) note the issue of in-kind contributions across a range of contexts and philanthropic providers too (including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana and Zambia). They note that certain providers also charge fees or rely on community contributions to budgets, however they do not provide details on costs or costs relative to state schools. They note that community-run schools in Zambia have no external support, relying entirely on communities and, as a result, can be "chronically under-resourced" (p518). This suggests a dynamic for some schools where fees or in-kind contributions do not limit access, but instead limit quality as what communities can afford does not necessarily translate into a high quality of education provision.

Caveats

Some philanthropic and religious schools may charge user fees of some kind or expect some contribution, for instance to learning materials or maintenance of classrooms. The issues of affordability and opportunity costs these create are not clearly addressed in much of the current literature for either philanthropic or religious schools, and there are few clear comparisons of the individual fee costs (or in-kind contributions) with those of state or private schools. This is an important gap in research.

Hypothesis H5: Demand for philanthropic and religious schools is driven by a concern for quality and informed choice

Issues of user choice are explored through two assumptions: the first is that perceived quality of education is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools (A8), and the second is that users make informed choices about the quality of education (A9).

Assumption 8: Perceived quality of education is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools
No. of studies = 8 Bangladesh (3) India (2) Occupied Palestinian Territories (1) Pakistan (2) Positive (2) ***NEUTRAL* (4)** Negative (2)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence on this assumption is largely of medium quality, with two high-quality studies, and is also medium on context, covering four countries. However, it is weak in terms of consistency, with half of the studies providing neutral evidence. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline finding: *There is limited evidence for this assumption, and it is of varying quality. The evidence suggests that users have multiple and complex priorities when choosing philanthropic and religious schools, which can involve quality alongside other factors such as cost, distance or accessibility, and perceptions of their children's academic ability. Cultural and religious values also play a role, but are explored under Hypothesis 6.*

Supporting evidence

There is positive evidence that **selection of Gyan Shala schools is driven by the quality of education** they provide. CfBT (2011) found in their survey evidence from Bihar that 69% of parents who chose Gyan Shala gave the quality of education as the primary reason. In terms of the second most important factor, 36% gave distance to school and 30% the cost of schooling. However, it was clear that motivations varied, even within families. At least one case was documented with male children being sent to private schools and female children to Gyan Shala schools. Moreover, the primary motivation for students moving from private schools to Gyan Shala was found to be the level of charges, while quality was the motivating factor for those moving from government schools to Gyan Shala (Ibid. p56). Bangay and Latham (2013) conclude, with regards to Gyan Shala, that schooling decisions were being made on the basis of families' perceptions of quality.

Counter evidence

There is some limited negative evidence that **education quality is not a high priority for users** when choosing philanthropic and religious schools. In rural Pakistan, Park and Niyozov (2008) attribute the growing popularity of madrasas to the lack of state provision and religious motives (explored in the following section), rather than as being motivated by education quality. One other study, Cameron (2011), found in a survey of 492 households in four urban slums of Dhaka, Bangladesh, that quality was not a high priority for parents when choosing a philanthropic (NGO) school. The top two reasons were proximity (42%) and cost (i.e. that the school was free) (34%).

Neutral evidence

The majority of the evidence base is neutral for this assumption. Studies point to the **multiple factors reflected in users' choices** regarding philanthropic and religious schooling. Sommers (2012) finds that in Bangladesh, parents chose BRAC schooling both because of perceived high quality and lower cost. Through qualitative focus group research, Sommers finds that parents prefer government schools for children they perceive to be academically stronger, as this is seen to lead more easily to formal employment (the importance of private tuition is noted too), whereas they prefer to send children perceived as academically weaker to madrasas. All parents interviewed reported that if they could afford to, they would send their children to private schools (the reasons for this are not stated).

Findings from a quantitative analysis based on a rural household survey, the Quality of Secondary School Madrasa Education in Bangladesh (QSSMEB), by Asadullah, Chakrabarti, and Chaudhury (2013), are also ambiguous in relation to the assumption. They find that, while 46% of parents in Islamic communities stated that religious preference was the main reason for sending a child to a registered madrasa, this was followed by perceived quality, concerns for the 'after-life' and distance to school. Their analysis also finds a strong correlation between religiosity of a household and the probability of a child being enrolled in a madrasa. However, no correlation was found between enrolment in madrasas and the quality of the education they provide, with enrolment instead being correlated with lower incomes, poorer access to electricity, living in a less developed village (with lower educational attainment of villagers and poorer road conditions), and proximity. They therefore conclude that religious and economic factors, possibly to a greater extent than quality, have the most influence in decision- making.

Similarly, for madrasas in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Høigilt (2013) finds, in interviews with teachers and parents, that the main reasons for choosing madrasa education were that they provided better education and a safer social environment (including transport and local connections) compared with public schools (p69).

Some qualified positive evidence is reported in Batley and Mcloughlin (2010), who argue that the poor choose non-state provision not only because of a lack of access to public services, but also because of levels of satisfaction, citing evidence from user surveys in Pakistan, where respondents report dissatisfaction with government services and greater satisfaction with non-state services, including for education.

Assumption 9: Users make informed choices about the quality of education
No. of studies = 3 Bangladesh (2) India (1) Positive (0) ***NEUTRAL (2)** Negative (1)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence base is weak in terms of size, medium in quality, weak in terms of context (covering only two countries) and largely made up of neutral studies, and so is weak in terms of consistency. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline finding: *There is very limited evidence on the ability of users to make informed choices on education quality. The available evidence suggests parents have difficulty in defining education quality in the abstract and that their knowledge of conditions in schools may be limited, instead basing decisions on general perceptions of school types. Researchers note the challenges of finding accurate information on quality, as understood in conventional terms. This is a major evidence gap.*

Counter-evidence

Cameron (2011) finds that parents interviewed for this study, from all types of schools in urban slums of Dhaka, struggled to identify what constituted good teaching when this was asked as an abstract question. Instead, they valued other factors, including security, learning systems, strong discipline, a good atmosphere and engagement with the family. Parents also stated that they had little knowledge of what happened in their child's school and had little direct engagement with the school. This study finds that decisions by parents relating to quality were based more on general perceptions of quality than on an actual understanding of a particular or type of school's quality.

Neutral evidence

Survey evidence from Bihar collected by CfBT (2011) found ambiguous evidence on the ability of parents to judge the quality of education. Parents of children enrolled in Gyan Shala schools described quality of education as "comprising methods of teaching, discipline and the relationship between the teacher and student" (p.56). However, there were indications that their knowledge of teacher qualifications were limited, and that greater importance was placed on the presence of learning materials and the improved infrastructure of the Gyan Shala centres.

Sommers (2012) reflects, in her research on non-state providers in Bangladesh, that there are considerable difficulties faced even by researchers in evaluating education quality (understood as student achievement, as well as teacher qualifications and experience) in these schools. She notes "While the research was underway, however, I found these metrics either to be impossible to obtain or lacking in significance in terms of the individual children's experiences at school; school quality varied among different kinds of schools and from one child to the next in the same school. Test scores, for instance, were not always available and were often illegible paper records, and I questioned their validity and relevance as an indicator due to widespread reports of cheating. Teacher qualifications and years of experience were easy to obtain, but seemed to give an incomplete picture of teachers' attendance, motivation and behaviors [sic] at school"

(p.21). Given these issues, parents may find it challenging to analyse education quality as it is generally understood by international researchers.

Hypothesis H6: Philanthropic and religious schools better respond to the needs, interests, beliefs and identities of particular social, cultural and religious groups

This hypothesis has two components: the first examines whether users' choices reflect their identities, beliefs or membership of particular social, cultural or religious groups (A10), and the second whether philanthropic and religious schools provide education that is suited to the needs and interests of particular social, cultural or religious groups (A11).

Assumption 10: Users' choices reflect their identities, beliefs or membership of particular social, cultural or religious groups
No. of studies = 6 Bangladesh (2) India (1) Pakistan (3) South Asia (1) ***POSITIVE* (6)** Neutral (0) Negative (1)
Summary assessment of evidence: The size of the evidence base is moderate, and is mainly of medium quality, with two high-quality studies. It is medium in terms of context, with evidence from three countries, and strong on consistency, with five studies reporting positive evidence. These studies are, however, strongly concentrated in South Asia and on madrasa schools. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline finding: There is moderate evidence, focused heavily on madrasa schooling and South Asia, which supports this assumption. Religious motivation is identified as an important factor in deciding to send a child to a madrasa, although other factors, including economic factors, were found to be important too. The evidence also highlighted practices whereby a child may attend a madrasa with other children in the family attending other school types, such as private or government.

Supporting evidence

For madrasas, **religious motivations are clearly prominent in school choice**. In Pakistan, Bano (2012) found that for 90% of children surveyed in elite madrasa schools, religious motives were their stated reason for enrolling (Ibid., p.103). Her survey finds that in 90% of cases there was only one child from the household studying in a madrasa with siblings enrolled in government or private schools, or involved in economic activity (Ibid., p.103-4). She argues that this indicates that the preference for madrasa education cannot simply be explained in economic terms but rather is 'the result of a genuine demand for religious rewards' (Ibid., p.113) for the child and their family.

This is supported by analysis from Bangladesh, cited in the previous assumption, which found that for almost half of parents in Islamic communities, religious preference was the main reason for sending children to a registered madrasa (followed by quality and distance to school) (Asadullah et al., 2013). Their analysis finds a strong correlation between religiosity of a household and the probability of a child being enrolled in a madrasa. However, they also note that this relationship should be treated as descriptive, rather than causal, given the nature of the variables for religiosity. Furthermore, they note that only 18 percent of families sending a child to a madrasa send all their children to madrasas – the vast majority of those with more than one school-age child utilise both religious and non-religious schools (Ibid. p12).

Nelson (2009) finds that 62% of parents surveyed in four provinces of Pakistan (Punjab, Kashmir Sindh, Balochistan and North West Frontier Province) identified religious education as their top educational priority. However, this is qualified by noting that most parents do not seek to educate their children exclusively in a local maktab (mosque-based school) or madrasa; rather that most children are expected to attend more than one school (i.e. attending their local madrasa before or after their regular school day).

There is broad support for this assumption in other research. Park and Niyozov (2008) find that in South and Southeast Asia, the growth of madrasas is due in part to the increased demand from parents to teach religious or traditional values to children. However, they note evidence from Asadullah et al. (2006) on Pakistan that suggests variation in madrasa enrolment is greatest within, rather than between, households – consistent with most households utilising both madrasa and other forms of education provider.

Sommers (2012) finds that, in interviews with parents and teachers conducted in the rural sub-district of Dimla, Bangladesh, the stated reasons for families' choice of Aliyah madrasas include religious sentiment, social expectations and a desire to have at least one child learning about Islam. The author notes that parents are partially motivated by the belief that children who are more religious are more likely to care for parents in their old age. This interview evidence suggests that parents tend to send their less academically gifted children to Aliyah madrasas, with the more gifted students being sent to government schools, where it is perceived they have a higher chance of securing better work. This suggests an overlapping set of religious and economic motivations for parents when selecting schools for different children.

Counter evidence

Thachil (2009) notes survey evidence that half of students surveyed in Lahore, Pakistan, attributed their enrolment in a madrasa to economic factors, compared to just 6% citing religious motivation. According to Thachil, this correlates with madrasas actively targeting poorer communities and he notes a similar phenomenon with RSS schools, which have grown particularly where the coverage and investment in government schools has been more limited.

Caveats

All the evidence cited here is concerned with the choice of madrasas over other types of school, rather than choice of a particular madrasa over another (as was found in private school choice, in Day Ashley et al 2014). No studies were found that explored users' choices and their identities and beliefs for philanthropic schools or other types of non-state school.

Assumption 11: Philanthropic and religious schools provide education that is suited to the needs and interests of particular social, cultural or religious groups
No. of studies = 12 Bangladesh (4) India (4) Nigeria (1) Occupied Palestinian Territories (1) Pakistan (2) ***POSITIVE* (11)** Neutral (1) Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence base for this assumption is strong in terms of size and medium in terms of quality, with three high-quality studies. It is strong in terms of context, covering five countries and of consistency, with all but one study reporting positive evidence. The studies are heavily concentrated in South Asia. ***Overall strength of evidence: STRONG***
Headline finding: *There is strong evidence that both religious and philanthropic schools adapt their organisation and teaching methods to meet the needs of particular groups. Evidence concerning religious schools, particularly madrasas, finds that these schools frequently use the state curricula and supplement these with religious materials and teaching methods to meet parental preferences. Philanthropic schools offer more adapted curricula as well as more flexible operations in order to more easily serve particular marginalised groups and increase their enrolment rates. However, the evidence is fragmented and focuses on individual organisations.*

Supporting evidence

There is consistent evidence that **religious schools offer education which is suited to the needs and interests of particular groups** – in the sense that it incorporates both important aspects of a religious education and a broader curriculum. Alam (2008) finds that madrasas in India provide a religious ethos and instruction appropriate to the Islamic and sect identity of the students enrolled. Alam also notes that, in the absence of a single governing body, madrasas can have considerable freedom, for instance in choices over books to be taught, and as such, these are often adapted to differing religious interpretations or preferences. However, the study notes that over time their curriculum has seen a reduction in non-religious content and less of a focus on what the author dubs "rational studies" (p615).

Bano (2008a) finds in Bangladesh that state-subsidised Aliyah madrasa education covers the same core courses as the Ministry of Education's general stream at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels, though with additional emphasis being given to religious studies. However, she finds that after the post-secondary level, the focus shifts primarily to religious education. Quomi madrasas, which are not subsidised, are also noted as teaching secular subjects, but to a much more limited extent than Aliyah madrasas, with their main focus throughout being on religious education. These findings are supported by Sommers (2012), Asadullah et al. (2013) and Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013). The latter authors note that the introduction of secular subjects such as mathematics and science into Aliya madrasas, and the alignment of their curriculum with that of state schools, was a condition of the state subsidies introduced in Bangladesh for Aliyah madrasa teachers in the early 1990s.

This mixture of religious and secular studies in madrasa curricula is found by studies in other contexts as well. Bano (2012) notes two chains of private schools in Pakistan that combine modern and religious education – "Iqra" and "Roza-tul-Atfal Trust" which provide English, computer science and mathematics as well as memorising the Quran and teaching of the core of Islamic theology. Høigilt (2013) finds that madrasas in the Occupied

Palestinian Territories use the national curriculum with added religious content and classes. Rew and Bhatewara, (2012) find a similar phenomenon with religious schools run by Hindu organisations – noting two in Pune, India that use the state curriculum, but with additional religious content and lessons.

There is evidence that **philanthropic providers adapt their provision to meet the needs of particular groups**. Umar and Tahir (2009) find that, while the curriculum used for nomadic schools in Nigeria is based on the state curriculum, it is modified and added to in order to be more appropriate to the lives of nomadic peoples and more acceptable in terms of their values and beliefs. They note innovations in terms of temporary and mobile schools that can move more easily alongside nomadic communities. However, the authors argue that these schools are still modelled too closely on conventional schools and lack the necessary flexibility in terms of timetables and holidays for them to be fully effective.

There is evidence from BRAC schools in Bangladesh that the needs of marginalised children are met, for example through the provision of flexible hours (Sommers, 2012). The Gyan Shala NGO programme in Gujarat and Bihar, India, provide flexible schooling in slums and emphasise a process of continuous adaption of its curriculum – aiming to ensure that it meets the needs of local context while conforming to the requirements of state and national curriculum (Bangay and Latham, 2013).

Rose (2008) provides evidence from a qualitative case study in India and finds that **both state education providers and philanthropic providers can adapt to the needs and demands of the community.** However, these providers use different strategies to do so and can reach different groups as a result. For example, she finds that the Bombay Municipal Corporation has responded to demands from the large migrant, multilingual population by providing education in English medium schools, whereas NGOs such as DSS have focused their attention on particular slum areas (along the ports) and schools on pavements and parks, using two local languages. In practice, Rose notes that this may allow for effective targeting of different social groups through state and non-state provision.

Neutral evidence

Park and Niyozov (2008) note a range of pressures – both from parents and reforming governments – to broaden madrasa curriculums across South Asia and South East Asia. However, they document a range of reactions – from schools that are integrating secular subjects or vocational education; to those that would like to but lack the necessary resources and teaching staff; and to more traditional schools that reject these pressures or view them with suspicion and focus strongly on religious studies and providing a traditional Islamic education. The authors argue that these systems and perceptions are evolving, although "educational dualism" (in terms of a split between religious and secular education) is still very much a reality in many places.

Hypothesis H7: Philanthropic and religious schools are accountable to users

The accountability hypothesis examines a single assumption – that users actively participate in or influence operational decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools (A12), as one key element of accountability. The first review (Day Ashley et al 2014) examined the assumption that private schools are responsive to users' demands. However, no evidence was found for this assumption for philanthropic and religious schools, and it was not included for this review.

Assumption A12: Users actively participate in or influence operational decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools
No. of studies = 7 Afghanistan (1) Bangladesh (5) Ghana (1) India (2) Pakistan (1) Zambia (1) Unspecified (1) ***POSITIVE* (5)** Neutral (0) Negative (2)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence for this assumption is largely of medium quality, with two high-quality studies, but is strong in terms of context, covering five countries. It is moderate in terms of consistency, with just under three-quarters of the studies giving supporting evidence. The studies are also highly concentrated in Bangladesh and on NGO providers. There is a lack of detailed descriptions of accountability mechanisms and few provide empirical measures. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline finding: There is moderate evidence for this assumption, examining only select philanthropic providers in a limited number of countries. This evidence suggests that NGO schools can provide opportunities for users to participate in or influence decision-making, through specific forums (such as School Management Committees or Parents Forums) or through parental involvement in specific decisions (such as creating the school calendar). These schools may also have management structures which facilitate greater interaction with users and parents. Some studies suggest that user involvement in decision-making is largely nominal and selective, with the ability of communities to hold providers to account being limited in practice.

Supporting evidence

There is some evidence to suggest that users in philanthropic schools actively participate in or influence the decision-making process. In some cases, **NGO schools may establish specific mechanisms for user participation and influence**. There are a number of examples from BRAC schools in Bangladesh that identify forums aimed at building user and parental involvement, such as School Management Committees and Parents' Forums (which perform school maintenance and ensure regular school attendance) (Epstein and Yuthas, 2012). Additionally, accountability mechanisms are seen as being strengthened by hiring community mothers as teachers and although many do not have prior teaching experience, this study finds that they are typically "strongly committed" to improving their communities' children's educational experiences (Epstein and Yuthas, 2012: 110). Sommers' (2012) review of BRAC schools in Bangladesh supports the view that parents are actively involved in decision-making in these philanthropic schools. For example, it is noted that families are involved in planning the annual school calendar and setting school hours to ensure they are flexible enough to meet the needs of the community and allow seasonal working. The author noted that most of the teachers in BRAC schools are women, none of whom would have jobs if they were not teaching for BRAC. These teachers reported feeling empowered through this employment, which gave them a 'voice within their communities' (p.25).

Some cross-country analysis supports the assumption that some forms of non-state education providers offer opportunities for user involvement. DeStefano and Schuh Moore's (2010) study of 10 complementary education programmes finds that these forms of non-state provision allow for what they term greater 'political accountability' – essentially, the ability of community members to influence education leaders in the formulation of policies and practices to improve educational outcomes (p.524). They highlight the existence of management committees, with decision-making and monitoring authority at the school level, which enables effective and rapid monitoring, feedback and reporting. The involvement of communities in teacher selection and management is also cited as an effective mechanism used by some of these programmes and organisations. The authors also note that the more flexible organisational structure and focused agendas of the non-state providers means that they are perceived to be more 'innovative, accountable, and effective in terms of cost and delivery, while having a greater knowledge of community needs than state providers.' (Ibid: p.512). Moreover, across the 10 case studies the authors reviewed, they found that all non-state programmes promoted community selection and management of teachers, a feature that they found enhanced accountability to end users. An important point highlighted by the authors that in all instances reviewed, accountability appeared to be limited to the operational management aspects of non-state schools (hiring, finances, etc.) **and not to be applied to student performance**. No-one in the community, for instance, could be held accountable for the performance of students graduating from these schools.

Similar evidence is found in a study from rural Bangladesh, on NGO-run schools delivering non-formal primary education within a broader government programme (Dang et al., 2011). These schools, which were partly inspired by the BRAC model, were more decentralised than their state counter-parts. This involved the incorporation of Community Management Centres that worked closely with local NGOS. The study found that this lead to enhanced accountability and strong community participation in school management (Dang et al., 2011: 30-31). The authors note that the daily management of the ROSC schools is highly decentralised. In particular, these ROSC schools are managed and run by a Centre Management Committee, which, according to the authors, '… is usually comprised of 11 members, which include five parents/guardians, a local education officer, a local administrative officer, an NGO representative, the head of the local government primary school, a person from the community, and the teacher of the ROSC school.' (footnote 9, p. 8, Ibid). High interaction with local NGOs reportedly allows these schools to reach the out-of-school children and the disadvantaged.

The authors of this study also cite further evidence on the BRAC schools themselves as being based on models of 'listening to the people' where constant feedback and criticism drives these school models forward (p. 31). Bangay and Latham (2013) note that the Gyan Shala programme in parts of India has operated on a 'demand driven' basis (p. 249) where a school is only set up if a community wishes and the community is encouraged to suggest teachers for the centre. They note that this is also one of the factors that could be of key importance in scaling such models across India.

Counter-evidence

Rose (2008) refers to case studies already cited in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, where the attempts of NGO schools to involve communities in provision were largely nominal and limited to one-off and in-kind contributions. For example, in the case of FIVDB in Bangladesh, communities nominally managed schools, but Rose found that, in practice, NGO staff carried out much of this role. For DSS in India, parents were involved in monitoring and encouraging school attendance, but not to a substantive degree (Rose 2008).

There is some evidence that, while communities participate in NGO schooling, they do so selectively and may face certain barriers. In a broad conceptual piece, Murtaza (2012) argues that while communities have the power to scrutinise based on their immediate proximity to service delivery, they tend to participate selectively. Where participation in formal accountability processes occurs, it tends to be managed and arranged by other stakeholders rather than by the communities. While Murtaza's review does not give specific evidence of users making demands or complaints, it makes a strong argument that NGOs in general do not necessarily respond to user demands, and identifies communities as relatively weak in terms of their accountability powers.

Caveats

Issues of participation and accountability are not the primary focus of the studies reviewed here and most concentrate on outlining formal structures, rather than analysing their effectiveness in practice. There is also no analysis of accountability and participation mechanisms in religious schools.

4.3 Enabling Environment – An assessment of the evidence

Hypothesis H8: Financing and regulation, whether from the state or international bodies, improves philanthropic and religious school quality, equity and sustainability

Under this hypothesis, four testable assumptions are investigated: states have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools (A13); state regulation of philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability (A14); state subsidies, co-operation, partnerships and contractual arrangements with philanthropic and religious schools improve quality, equity and sustainability (A15); and international support effectively strengthens philanthropic and religious provision of education (A16).

Assumption 13: States have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools
No. of studies = 23 Afghanistan (2) Bangladesh (7) Democratic Republic of the Congo (2) Ethiopia (1) Ghana (2) India (5) Liberia (1) Nepal (1) Nigeria (1) Pakistan (4) South Sudan (1) Zambia (1) South Asia (1)Range (non-specific) (3) Positive (5) Neutral (9) ***NEGATIVE* (12)**
Summary assessment of evidence: There is a large evidence base of medium-quality studies addressing this assumption, with only three high-quality studies. It is strong on context, covering 12 individual countries and regions as well as several broad overviews covering a range of states. However, it is weak in terms of consistency, with fewer than half of the studies having unambiguously negative results. This is closely related to the findings of studies being highly context specific. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline findings: The evidence base on state capacity, legitimacy and knowledge is extremely mixed with findings varying sharply by context. There is some high-quality evidence, albeit limited and context-specific, which reveals that governments are able to develop and implement effective policy frameworks in some circumstances – particularly for curriculum regulation and co-operation for philanthropic and religious schooling. Several studies draw broad conclusions about the enabling factors for this effectiveness, emphasising state capacity, overlapping interests and a will to engage on both sides, as well as the historical context of state relationships with the form of non-state organisation. A broader range of negative and neutral evidence suggests that this is highly context-specific. States can lack capacity, capability or legitimacy to implement these frameworks, particularly in fragile settings. In other settings too, national politicians may have little incentive to incorporate these schools within policy frameworks.

Supporting evidence

There is evidence from Bangladesh that **states have successfully been able to implement policy frameworks to broaden the curriculum of religious schools** to bring in elements of the broader, state-mandated curriculum in a context of substantial and conditional state subsidies. Asadullah and Chaudhry (2013) examine rural registered madrasas in Bangladesh at secondary level, using mainly quantitative methods, and analyse how the Government of Bangladesh successfully reformed these institutions in the early 1980s. They found that religious institutions were given the opportunity to incorporate secular subjects such as English, Bengali, Science and Mathematics alongside religion-related subjects and languages. Those religious schools that accepted this change received government recognition and subsequently qualified for aid money to finance 90% of teachers' salaries. Aliyah madrasas now follow the state-mandated curriculum and depend heavily on state finances. Moreover, the apparent 'feminisation' of the madrasas in Bangladesh has occurred due to the confluence of two government schemes – making the government's payment of teachers' salaries in madrasas conditional on their registering and adopting modern subjects, and the introduction of a cash transfer paying a small stipend in rural areas to encourage parents to send their daughters to school (of any type, including madrasa). Additionally, becoming eligible for government funding depending on number of females enrolled also encouraged many schools to 'open their gates to female students.' (Ibid: p. 227).

Similarly, in her study of the same three countries (India, Bangladesh and Pakistan), Bano (2010) finds that, while the potential exists for states to devise effective policies, it is heavily dependent on certain factors. In looking at madrasas across these country settings, the author demonstrates that financial incentives, the history of relations between state and religious authorities and establishment of a clear bureaucratic structure for engagement are all critical for making faith-based organisations partners in development. Comparing Bangladesh (positive in regard to partnership) with Pakistan (negative), the most critical factors identified by Bano are political will and a willingness to engage with the religious elites rather than to regulate them. These issues are examined in greater depth below.

Moreover, there are cases from India where the state has been able to **engage successfully with philanthropic schools to improve their complementarity with the state education system** and incorporate them more fully into state education plans. Morpeth and Creed (2012) use a mixed methods approach to look across multiple countries, with an example from India focusing on the National Institute for Open Schooling, a parastatal organisation that launched the Open Basic Educational programme (OBE). This programme resulted in nearly a quarter of a million children successfully completing courses between 2004-2009, giving them the ability to transfer to secondary education in the formal sector or to continue with other secondary programmes. The OBE works in a decentralised way by accrediting NGOs that serve local communities in various regions of India to provide external routes to recognised qualifications. It should be noted, however, that this is an example of a type of non-state provider designed specifically to work with and within the state system.

Rose (2008) gives an overview of a series of case studies in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, and provides another example from India, noting positive examples of engagement between the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) and DSS, an NGO operating mainly in urban slum areas of Mumbai and Pune. This engagement parallels that of the OBE in that the BMC now conducts examinations of children in DSS schools and allows DSS students to sit examinations of secondary schools. This study also notes that the BMC is actively seeking to engage with NGOs in the education sector to respond to growing demand for English medium education.

Moreover, Rose (2008) finds that government attempts to cooperate and work with non-state providers in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India required **both sides to have complementary interests.** She finds that cooperation may fail if these are not in place, and specifically if government interests do not fit the aims of the NGO. She finds that effective engagement was established through fairly basic but concerted efforts by NGOs to build cooperation and links with the government, often beginning outside the formal sphere. Rose (2010) develops this further and notes that the extent to which the state views building a national identity as important can be a major influencing factor, as can perceptions of the motivations of the non-state provider. She finds that relationships based on collaboration are much more likely to emerge where NGOs are engaged in service provision, rather than advocacy, and that those that do both (for example in the case of some civil society organisations) must balance these roles due to the influence this has on their relationship with the state.

Counter evidence

Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) draw on evidence from stable as well as fragile states, particularly in South Asia, in their review of government performance in creating a policy environment conducive to non-state service provision. They note that, while governments often have a considerable range of legal powers to regulate service provision, a lack of capacity means that in practice rules are rarely effectively designed or applied[31], and when applied are often used to harass rather than support non-state providers. A combination of under-staffing, poor skills, a lack of enforcement powers and a simple lack of information on the sector frequently undermine the imposition of effective regulatory frameworks. They go further, noting that even relatively strong states exhibit a weak ability to regulate service provision successfully, particularly in relation to enforcement and monitoring.

Evidence from other studies highlights that fragile states may not be able to effectively monitor or bargain with non-state providers, and in some cases relies on them to foster its own legitimacy. These studies are concentrated in post-conflict contexts in sub-Saharan Africa (see below), although one focuses on South Asia, comparing Pakistan, Bangladesh and West Bengal (Bano, 2012). Bano (2012) analyses the legitimacy of the Pakistani state, in relation to elite madrasas, arguing that these schools and associated religious authorities have strong bargaining power relative to the state limiting the ability of the state to credibly impose policy frameworks. Rose (2011) also notes the limited interest or capacity of some governments to engage in relationships with some philanthropic (NGO) providers. This is discussed further under Assumption 14.

Challenges of **fragmentation and coordination** are particularly highlighted for fragile states. Brannelly et al. (2009) demonstrate, in a case study of Liberia, that the state may lack the information and capacity necessary to coordinate between national and international stakeholders involved in philanthropic education provision, all of which have their own interests and priorities and may share relatively little information. This hinders the ability of the state to conduct effective policy-making for non-state providers. The authors note that coordination is improved when governments adopt an 'open' view in interacting with stakeholders and have a clear vision and strategy. Echessa et al. (2009) analyse education in South Sudan during the conflict and immediate post-conflict period and acknowledge similar difficulties faced in coordination between NGOs and international organisations involved in education financing and provision, as well as generally low government capacity to effectively implement policies and absorb external support.

Where **the central government has little or no presence at the local level, local governance structures are particularly important**. This is noted in the context of the DRC by both De Herdt et al. (2012) and Titeca et al. (2013). In these two studies, the authors examine Catholic schools in the DRC generally, and Kinshasa specifically, using qualitative analysis and mixed methods respectively. They conclude that the policies of the central state have no real impact on the functioning of the education system in

[31] They also find that regulations usually focus on inputs (teacher qualifications, school equipment) rather than outputs or outcomes (quality of education; students' qualifications).

practice, with the governance of education being determined at the local level and based on interactions between local actors, reflecting the nature of the central state in the DRC.

De Herdt et al. (2012) note that the state is unable to impose its regulatory framework on non-state religious networks while the Catholic Church has held a much more powerful position and has been able to impact upon state regulation rather than vice versa. This level of absolute power is disputed by Titeca et al. (2013), however, who argue that neither the church nor the state has much impact on how education is carried out and organised at the local level. Moreover, the failure of the "Fonds Commun de Solidarité" (FCS or joint solidarity fund), according to the authors, was caused not so much by issues of power between the state and the Church, but by the absence of effective authority. When the FCS became associated with one specific person (the archbishop), difficulties along the administrative chain could not be easily resolved and these further undermined communication at different levels. Thus, the actual functioning of the schools was driven by local level realities rather than Church policies, and in this situation the state regulatory framework was shown to be ineffectual. This, the authors claim, is an important reality for donors to consider when making programming decisions.

Other factors may shape policy frameworks, such as **information gaps and the incentives of politicians**. Evidence from a range of medium-quality studies concentrated mainly in South Asia suggests that states may have the capacity to engage with non-state actors, but that information gaps and the approach and incentives of politicians may mean these interventions are poorly executed and counter-productive. There is a particular concentration of evidence on these issues for religious schools, such as madrasas in Pakistan (see Park and Niyozov, 2008; Thachil, 2009; Bano, 2012). Park and Niyozov's (2008) study find that this has meant that reform efforts by the government have been seen as counter-productive and heavy-handed. This finding is shared by Bano (2012), particularly in relation to the legitimacy of Pakistan's madrasa reform programme, which was undermined by the government's inability to engage with the largest elite madrasas.

Bano (2008a) examines similar issues in relation to Bangladesh and finds evidence countering the largely positive reading of Asadullah and Chaudhry (2013) (discussed above). She argues that, the Bangladeshi government has succeeded in bringing secular education into the state-funded Aliyah madrasas, while leaving largely untouched the traditional Quomi madrasas system, which focus on training religious leaders rather than on school provision.

Thachil's (2009) review of the literature on religious schooling, including India and Pakistan, indicates that **clientelist systems can undermine policy frameworks and especially educational funding patterns during reforms.** Where religious organisations are politically aligned or when political actors are heavily dependent on political parties, there may be incentives for governments to underfund education in order to create gaps in supply that can be filled by the religious or community organisations aligned with their power blocs. The author points particularly to Pakistan as an example of these dynamics, with two recent leaders – Sharif and Musharraf – viewed as having curried favour with the religious parties through ineffective education policies. In 1997, for instance, the study finds that Sharif promised to facilitate welfare activities of Islamic organisations and

achieved this by dramatically reducing education spending and hailing the virtues of an Islamic state.

Berry (2010) notes a case in Nepal of community-initiated and managed schools which faced difficulties due to school management committees' belief that funds were allocated to schools along political lines, undermining their trust in the ministerial decision-making process. Teachers also worried that the communities would not protect their terms and conditions as agreed. Rose (2008) notes that, in the case of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, which allows students of DSS schools to sit exams in state schools, resistance arose from some teachers in state schools who reportedly marked students absent from tests or discarded their results. These examples demonstrate that policy frameworks may lack credibility if they cannot be enforced or are enforced selectively for political gain, potentially undermining legitimacy.

Neutral evidence

Some cross-country analysis highlights the **enabling factors for effective policy frameworks**, including multiple capacities and the importance of sequencing – with relationships between the state and non-state providers gradually evolving from very basic initial interactions rather than emerging fully-formed. DeStefano and Schuh-Moore's (2010) 10-country study sets out several pre-conditions that have been found to be crucial for the success of collaboration between state and non-state schools (NGO schools, community schools and other complementary education programmes). These include: government willingness and capacity to work with non-state providers, state capacity to develop basic levels of engagement in short- and long-term contracts, setting up of accountability structures to regulate and manage these partnerships, the political will to engage in effective conversations and the existence of a civil society that is representative and able to engage productively.

In the majority of the 10 cases studied by the authors, interactions started as basic and limited (i.e. the state simply allowed non-state provision). In most cases, this interaction evolved towards greater state promotion of non-state provision, albeit with limited state funding. Bangladesh is cited as an example where lack of government will and capacity have been crucial factors constraining the improvement of state/non-state relationships in the context of a large NGO (i.e. BRAC). Additionally, the authors note that the nature of the state and non-state relationship in their 10 case studies is mostly one where the government has promoted non-state provision without funding it, and often with very limited explicit (as opposed to merely implicit) policy support. Specifically, in Bangladesh, BRAC evolved with 'grudging acceptance' on the part of the government; in Afghanistan it emerged in 'defiance of government restrictions on who could attend school' when the government's capacity was severely constrained; and in Ghana, whilst the government formulated an education plan to encourage non-state actors to provide schooling, 'the government has, thus far, been unable to translate that policy support into operational or financial support' (p. 520).

Kirk and Winthrop (2009) document analogous experiences in Afghanistan, where the Ministry of Education has become more open to community-based education, including developing policy to allow the integration of students from community-based schools into government schools and the inclusion of these forms of providers into national education

plans. However, they note that the government has relatively limited resources and capacity that it is willing and able to use to support community-based schooling.

A mix of medium- and high-quality studies with a broader geographical focus highlights **the reluctance of some states to formalise and engage with non-state schools, depending on contextual factors** including the history of their relationship and mistrust of their motivations. Rose (2009) provides a review of evidence on Ethiopia, Ghana, India and Bangladesh which demonstrates a range of approaches. In Ethiopia and Ghana, governments have begun to pay greater attention to recognising NGO providers, but still focus their plans and resources on formal and government schooling. Rose also notes that this willingness to recognise NGO provision is dependent on it being funded externally and not competing for government resources. India and Bangladesh then provide polar opposite examples with NGO provision having become integral to education plans in India, with programmes designed and funded in a holistic manner; whereas in Bangladesh, NGO provision operates as a separate system running in parallel to state provision and is almost invisible to state planning. The reluctance of the Bangladeshi government to recognise and actively engage with non-state providers is also highlighted by Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010), although they note some positive signs for recognition of religious and philanthropic schools in the National Education Policy of 2009 that could build into more constructive engagement.

While government perceptions of non-state schools, and particularly philanthropic schools run by NGOs, may be generally negative, exceptions do exist. Non-state schools are more likely to be tolerated where they receive external funding and are not seen as a charge on the state. In Rose's (2008) case studies of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, she notes that in all three contexts and regardless of the extent to which NGOs are officially recognised in the government policy framework, government officials have a negative image of NGO providers. She does note, however, that most officials recognise that variations exist within the NGO sector and identify so-called 'honourable exceptions' to these general rules. Rose's analysis of Pakistan mirrors her findings in Ghana and Ethiopia, in that the government is seen as willing to recognise non-state schools run by NGOs, with the expectation that these will rely on international funding (or other domestic non-government funding) and have strong backing from international donors.

The positive case study of Mumbai has already been set out above, but Rose (2008) notes the reverse situation in Bangladesh, where the government has determined not to engage with the NGO sector which is not mentioned in government education plans. Rose argues that this is at least in part due to the internal political incentives of the Directorate of Primary Education, which wishes to remain the sole arbiter of standards and decisions in the education system (including the placement of new schools, teacher recruitment, curriculum design, etc.). This position is not uniform, however, as she notes that the Bangladeshi Ministry of Education does have a specific unit for contracting NGOs, although it does not appear to have a remit to develop relations or recognise NGOs outside of a formal, subordinated contractual relationship. Rose (2008) argues that, in the case of Bangladesh, establishing a framework of co-operation between NGOs and government could be useful, but that neither side wants to take initiative to bring it about.

Evidence from Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) aligns with these findings, noting that **government agencies often enter into dialogue to build policy frameworks that include non-state schools only under pressure** and reluctantly, as it implies acknowledgement that they no longer have the monopoly of donor support for service-delivery. They note that negotiation and dialogue can be undermined by a lack of state capacity to lead and manage collaboration. In practice, attempts at national-level dialogue are often initiated not by government but by umbrella organizations of NGOs and FBOs that see the opportunity to pressurise governments to recognise their contribution. Given these constraints of capacity and will, formal engagement may not result in any practical change.

A few studies highlight variations within the state in terms of willingness and ability to engage with non-state providers of education. A wide-ranging medium-quality review of literature on service provision in fragile states conducted by OECD (2008) notes that the willingness of the state to engage with non-state providers of education varies significantly by level of government and from official to official. It cites a Nigerian case study, in which the willingness of provinces to support education was found to vary depending on the quality of state level commissioners, local governments and traditional leaders. Moreover, the national government was perceived not to be a source of co-ordination or support. Similar issues, although analysed as an issue of policy incoherence, are touched on by IDFC (2013), in a report into India's private sector education. This finds that, whilst government policies such as the Right to Education Act threaten NGO-run schools (in setting very stringent requirements for infrastructure, teacher qualifications etc.), other policies of the state, such as the Sarva Sikhsa Abhyaan (SSA), which provide non-formal education, have been more supportive.

A study by Verger (2012) notes that the problem may not be that governments lack the capacity to design effective policies, but that many educational programmes (such as public-private partnerships for education in low-income countries) are devised by influential transnational policy experts. Their discourse may be sound, but faces obstacles at the framing and implementation stages within national education systems (among other limitations discussed within the paper), thus limiting sustainability.

Assumption 14: State regulation of philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability
No. of studies = 10 Afghanistan (2) Bangladesh (4) Ghana (1) India (3) Pakistan (1) South Sudan (1) Uganda (1) Zambia (1) Range (non-specific) (1) ***POSITIVE* (8)** Neutral (0) Negative (4)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence for this assumption is of medium size and quality, with three high-quality studies. It is strong in terms of context, with evidence from 8 countries, and medium in terms of consistency, with eight studies reporting some positive evidence. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline findings: There is evidence that some forms of regulation can have a positive impact on philanthropic and religious provision of education, but its impacts on quality, equity and sustainability are not fully explored by the studies. Basic recognition of non-state schools is identified as a key precursor for developing more collaborative relationships and often enables smoother transitions for pupils to higher levels of education. There are successful examples of regulation helping to implement a broader and more coherent national curriculum, in some cases with the assistance of subsidies. Regulation may also function better when it is applied in a flexible manner. There is little evidence for the negative impact of regulation, although there is evidence that regulations focus overly on inputs and appear to be designed more to control market entry than to improve quality.

Supporting evidence

Several studies comment on **the positive impacts of regulation** in terms of providing recognition of non-state schools. It is important to distinguish here between two levels of recognition. The first involves basic acceptance by the state of the legality of the provider – usually contingent on the legality of the NGO and its schools meeting certain requirements in terms of input characteristics (teachers' qualifications, pay, size and quality of school buildings and furniture, distance from government schools etc.). The second relates to regulations enabling pupils taught in philanthropic and religious schools to undertake government-mandated exams, which can otherwise act as barriers to entry in secondary education. This second form of recognition is the main focus of the discussions in the literature on regulation below.

In their survey of 10 case studies, DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2010) identify **official state recognition of the education obtained by students in non-state schools as a key part of the institutional framework**. Official acknowledgement of learning in these schools ensures that it is transferable to the public sector even in instances where these programmes adopt different curricula than the state sector, allowing students who meet the criteria for entry into a particular grade to then transfer into government schools at the appropriate level. Similarly, where those who complete primary school in complementary settings are allowed to take the end-of-cycle exam, they are then able to obtain the appropriate educational certificate, which provides the opportunity to continue their post-primary schooling in the government system. For example, the authors note that 65 per cent of the students who were enrolled in the School for Life programme in northern Ghana were then able to be become integrated into the formal schooling system. This transferability is a key feature of successful non-state programmes. The authors note other instances where some form of government involvement enhances the quality of provision by non-state providers too. For example, in some of the 10 cases studied, the

government directly trained the teachers of non-state schools or used an NGO intermediary to do so.

As examined in detail in the discussion on A11, both Morpeth and Creed (2012) and Rose (2008) note examples from India of programmes and government co-operation within a framework of recognition that allow students in philanthropic schools to take government-approved exams, become certified and then attend largely state-provided secondary schools. This relates, however, only to a basic recognition rather than full regulation, and no evidence is provided for whether and how this encourages quality or equity. Kirk and Winthrop (2009) also note recognition mechanisms for students of community-based schools in Afghanistan, which allow them to graduate into government schools.

Several studies focus on **the ability of regulation to create a coherent national curriculum** and, particularly in the case of religious schools, to encourage a broad-based curriculum where otherwise education might be restricted to a narrower focus on religious studies. Echessa et al. (2009) note that in South Sudan, the government, in cooperation with international organisations, has successfully integrated a diverse range of non-state schools into a single national curriculum. This success comes despite the previous wide variety of teaching content and difficulties in establishing coordination. Similarly, both Asadullah and Chaudhry (2013) and Bano (2010) note that in Bangladesh the government has successfully widened the range of subjects taught by Aliyah madrasas to include more secular subjects. However they note that this was due at least in part to the state's provision of subsidies for these schools and that the effectiveness of similar programmes in India and Pakistan was much more mixed (these are discussed in detail under assumption 15).

Rose (2008) notes a trend for **governments to be motivated to engage with NGOs because of the resources NGOs can attract.** This is articulated in Pakistan, where the 'public private partnership' agenda is explicit in government policy and is strongly influenced by donors. However, the author notes that Bangladesh provides an example of how NGOs adapt themselves to a lack of recognition, pointing out that NGO provision is not mentioned in either the 1990s Education Act or recent education planning documents in spite of the prominence of locally developed NGO provision such as BRAC. Rose highlights that, without a framework of written rules, government officials may be able to exert dysfunctional control due to ambiguities. However, the absence of a framework for engagement can also constrain officials' ability to engage with NGOs without first gaining official approval from above, a process that can be cumbersome. Rose notes that, in many cases, contacts tend to be informal and may be disapproved of by the civil service hierarchy in some circumstances.

Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) note that, **where universal regulation is impracticable, more selective approaches may work.** One possibility is to reward non-state providers through incentive-based regulation providing recognition, special status or incentives to schools that meet certain standards. Another possibility is to delegate the regulatory role for example to NGOs (such as BRAC in Bangladesh) that effectively franchise schools that meet standards.

Counter-evidence

While the literature has highlighted many cases where governments lack capacity to implement regulatory frameworks or other policies (see A12 above), there is relatively little evidence of direct negative impacts arising from them.

Rose (2008) and Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) cite evidence that **the structure of regulations in many cases can act simply as a barrier to entry** for non-state providers. They explain that control of market entry is often highly bureaucratic and burdensome for both the regulator and the non-state provider, with the latter also having to face considerable expense. This is particularly the case where regulation focuses on monitoring inputs – requirements of teacher qualifications, equipment, dimensions of school building and distance from public schools – which are not directly related to quality, rather than on monitoring the quality of outputs. They argue that this form of command and control regulation appears to be used against the non-state sector to protect the government service and reduce competition for resources and users. Biziouras and Birger (2013) contend that regulations in Uganda surrounding the Universal Secondary Education policy implemented by President Museveni have had negative effects on the quality of education in certain Catholic schools. The authors argue that a requirement that schools admit more students has led to physical over-crowding and rising pupil-teacher ratios, which in turn have an impact on the quality of education they can provide. The IDFC (2013: 105) report also calls generally for more freedom, flexibility and facilitation of private partners rather than over-regulation in the Indian context. It also argues that government policies such as the Right To Education Act, which is commendable in that it aims to get all children into school and acquiring a quality education in India, may not be in the best interest of children as it may force non-state providers to close and hence undermine equity and compromise quality. It should be noted that whilst the Right to Education Act (and many other policies) may not be directly aimed at regulating non state actors, the clauses within them and the implications thereof can certainly affect these types of institutions.

Assumption 15: State subsidies, co-operation, partnerships, and contractual arrangements with philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability
No. of studies = 10 Bangladesh (5) Ghana (1) India (4) Pakistan (4) Uganda (1) Range (non-specific) (3) ***POSITIVE* (6)** Neutral (3) Negative (5)
Summary assessment of evidence: The size of the evidence base for this assumption is moderate and the overall quality is medium, with only three high-quality studies. It is strong in terms of context, with evidence from five countries, but the consistency of this evidence is weak, as fewer than half of the studies contain unambiguously positive evidence. Again, this is related to findings being highly context-specific. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline findings: There is mixed evidence for this assumption, which highlights that forms of state subsidies, collaboration and contracting with philanthropic and religious schools can improve sustainability and some aspects of equity and quality, but that this is highly dependent on context. It finds that collaborative arrangements may work best where they are implemented flexibly and build on strong informal relationships. Where state capacity is weak, however, and policy environments are unpredictable, this is much more challenging.

This section looks at impacts of state interaction with non-state education, with specific reference to the positive/negative impacts of three types of policy: (i) co-operation, collaboration and partnerships; (ii) subsidy; and (iii) contracting. It also draws on broader evidence reflecting on non-state provider strategies and the evolution of state capacity.

Supporting evidence

A range of positive evidence highlights that successful collaboration or partnerships between state and both philanthropic and religious providers can be effective when it evolves out of well-established informal relationships, which can help to improve the equity and reach of provision. This can result in productive forms of 'contracting out', especially to philanthropic providers. Subsidies have also been used successfully in some cases, for example to broaden the range of subjects taught in madrasa schools.

Cooperation and collaboration between the state and non-state providers, including informal relationships and more formal 'public-private partnerships', but excluding formal contracting arrangements, have been found to have positive impacts by a number of studies looking at both South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Rose (2010) finds that **successful formal collaborative relationships are often built on the foundation of informal relationships**. This, in turn, can potentially improve the quality of education received in the non-state sector, and can also enable non-state providers to advocate for improvements in state provision. This is supported by evidence on philanthropic providers. Rose (2008) examines DSS in Mumbai, India, where a long-term process of engagement with the state was built on the basis of informal links and investment in individual relationships with officials, which built trust and a strong reputation. The same study also examines ITA in Pakistan, where a Memorandum of Understanding provides the basis for relationships without being a formalised contract. The MoU was drafted by ITA but the philanthropic provider was able, at least for a time, to persuade the Ministry of Education that it was not encroaching on government prerogatives or to dictate priorities to them.

Bano's (2010) study finds that **state collaboration with religious providers can be can promote secular education in madrasas** in certain circumstances. Her analysis of evidence in three countries shows that madrasas are not inherently opposed to teaching their students secular subjects and that collaboration with the state, including financial incentives, the provision of teacher training and school resources, can facilitate a broadening of their curriculum. Even in Pakistan (the least positive case of collaboration) some larger madrasas provide students with secular education up to middle or secondary level. Smaller madrasas, with more limited resources, may want support in developing their capacity to teach secular subjects, but have difficulty in accessing the funding and are concerned about losing favour with the religious hierarchy if they succeed. However, it is crucial that the state views madrasas as partners in these reforms, and follows through with strong administrative and financial commitments needed for successful implementation.

Studies in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh by Batley and Rose (2010) find that **collaboration between the state and philanthropic providers can improve access** by providing education in difficult circumstances where local NGOs were commissioned to

improve government schools, to increase their accessibility, or to extend public provision where this was absent. They investigate the influence that collaboration in service delivery has on NGOs' freedom to pursue their own goals, including independent advocacy. They find that many NGOs adopt careful strategies to avoid financial dependence on any single funding source – whether of government or donors - in order to maintain their autonomy while also collaborating and gaining insider influence.

Evidence of **subsidies successfully improving quality can be identified for both philanthropic and religious schools, but these subsidies require careful management and governance.** In her examination of the potential of the governments of Bangladesh, Pakistan and India to partner with madrasas to meet Education for All goals, Bano (2010) agrees with Asadullah and Chaudhry (2013) that state funding of 90% of teachers' salaries was a major incentive for madrasas in Bangladesh to agree to reforms. She emphasises that the financial incentives in the Bangladesh case were particularly concrete and substantial, in comparison to India and Pakistan, where more limited incentives were offered. Rose (2010) similarly highlights the positive effects of state collaboration with, and subsidy of, religious providers; for example where there is a need to establish partnerships between madrasas and the state, despite equity concerns over state funding.

Positive results can arise from governments contracting out education provision, often to philanthropic providers. Batley (2011) looks at a range of different interactions between states and NGOs in terms of the provision of basic services in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. He provides a nuanced understanding of the contracting dynamics in different contexts, explored further below, but also provides a strong example of positive results arising from government contracting-out of education provision to NGOs in India. This involved a government sponsored non-formal education (NFE) scheme in India, whereby programmes for 'out-of-school' children were initiated, with funding from government and donors pooled and then allocated by state and local governments either to set up NGO-run centres or for NGOs to support government schools. By 2000, this had resulted in the setting up of more than 300,000 NFE centres.

Counter-evidence

State engagement and collaboration with non-state providers in general may be hamstrung by fluctuating policy-making environments. Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) note, specifically in the education context, that the creation of policy frameworks and policy-making for the sector can be very uncertain, especially in more fragile contexts and where many non-state actors are unrecognised, or unregistered. The authors note that in Nigeria, umbrella organisations of formal private schools engaged in government dialogue to represent their members, but that this excluded a much larger number of unregistered schools. They note that, particularly in low capacity environments, the involvement of non-state providers in policymaking dialogue is liable to be unrepresentative or dominated by larger NGOs or organisations. Rose (2008) notes an example from Bangladesh where BRAC was officially recognised by the government but did not pass information on this process to other NGOs or arrange for them to be included in the process too. This led to other NGOs not receiving government textbooks, as they did not have government approval, nor did they know how to seek it. Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) note that even where the process of dialogue is inclusive and representative, dialogue often does not

result in changes in practice. The study cites the conclusions of an earlier review (Rose, 2007) that there is little evidence that government engagement with non-state providers of education has resulted in the government accommodating the views of the sector.

Several review studies note the potentially negative impact on both equity and the development of the state education system that may result from an overly strong emphasis by external agencies on the development of partnerships that reinforce a **parallel non-state education sector**. These are themes that are returned to under Hypothesis 9. Verger (2012) argues that instead of reforming the public education system, the promoters of partnerships aim to bypass public employment and run parallel systems, which offer greater freedom in relation to recruitment, retention, incentives and penalties for underperformance. This parallel system may allow for hiring cheaper, non-unionised teachers and does not aim to reform the existing education system. Moreover, the author notes that the idea of public–private partnerships in education (ePPP) has a number of limitations – especially those relating to framing, credibility and feasibility. In particular, the author notes that the arguments supporting ePPPs are not always empirically credible or conclusive and whilst policy makers would like to argue that PPPs work, they are not always able to conclusively argue that they do.

As noted in the previous assumption (13), **contracting out arrangements in fragile states may be particularly weak, though it is in these situations that they are likely to be most needed** due to a lack of government provision**.** Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) highlight a range of factors that can undermine contracting out in fragile states, such as: a lack of state capacity for the contracting process and oversight; difficulties in determining a fair price for the service; a general lack of credibility in the fairness of the bidding process; unreliability of government payment commitments; uncertainty about the possible withdrawal of either side from the contract; and concerns about the potential for resources to be diverted away from other crucial areas. All of these aspects may mean that both sides will be reluctant to engage with formal contracts given the potential risks involved.

Contracting relationships can create dependency or allow for greater influence. Batley (2011) finds that when NGOs are largely financially dependent on government, the relationship tends to be hierarchical and more tense compared to when NGOs have alternative sources of finance. Similarly, Rose (2008) examines how contracts may have been used by the state to exert greater control over philanthropic providers in Mumbai. She cites the creation of a 'public partnership cell' in 2006, with a remit to manage and co-ordinate NGO interaction with government schools that had previously been informal and unorganised. This created fears among NGOs that the intention was for the government to exercise control and treat NGOs as a resource, rather than as autonomous and legitimate actors with considerable experience. NGOs responded by creating NGO networks and closer relationships with the public partnership cell, which in the long run resulted in more positive relations. This provides an example of strategies that can mitigate potential negative effects of formal contracting.

There is evidence that **state and non-state partnerships are subject to the same financial constraints that governments typically face and this may limit the sustainability of contracted non-state provision**. Biziouras and Birger (2013), for

example, note that delays and shortfalls in the distribution of public funds allocated to schools disrupt the ability of Catholic schools in Uganda to plan effectively and provide education.

Neutral evidence

Neutral evidence on this assumption largely relates to **the ability of philanthropic and religious providers to effectively seek out and adapt to state engagement**. Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) note that a long history of engagement between state and non-state actors can develop trust and understanding that benefits both parties. They cite evidence from Malawi where Catholic mission schools have a history of working closely with the government while retaining considerable autonomy.

Akyeampong (2009) examines three types of philanthropic provider that have aimed to provide basic education to children unable to access formal schooling in Ghana: School for Life programme (SFL), the Shepherd School Programme (SSP) and the School Feeder Programme (SFP). All have collaborated informally with the public sector to improve access for out-of-school children in Northern Ghana. The author suggests that these partnerships have improved both equity and quality of schooling in Ghana, by allowing philanthropic schools to target particularly marginalised groups. The successful mainstreaming of the graduates from some of these programmes is a notable achievement of the government and non-state provider partnership, but the author notes how the norms and requirements of public schools have sometimes created hindrances to the progress of graduates from these programmes. Perhaps most importantly, the author notes that the three programmes exemplify the problem of a lack of mechanisms for ensuring long-term financial security as part of their design. There was no attempt on the part of the providers to 'synchronise their management with the public sector in ways which could have protected their unique strategies and enhanced those of the public sector.' (p.147). This, the author notes, has resulted in these programmes being especially fragile and vulnerable to closure.

Rose (2008) concludes that formal contracting does not represent a major threat to the independence of philanthropic providers in the context of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan – based on the positive and negative evidence presented above. She argues that formal contracts do not generally comprise a significant proportion of the providers' funding and that these organisations retain autonomy over whether to enter into the contracts, depending on context. She also notes that there are cases where governments have had to make contracting processes more open and transparent in order to attract the interest of providers. However, limits to the ability of philanthropic providers to negotiate contractual terms are identified, including particularly power and political relationships. This evidence highlights how political the process of contracting is and that it leaves a considerable weight of power with the government.

Rose (2008) also argues that government attempts to cooperate and work with philanthropic providers **require both sides to have complementary interests** and that cooperation may fail if it does not fit the aims of the provider. The author sets out some of the strategies pursued by philanthropic providers to build cooperation, all of which began outside the formal sphere. These included investing time in building cooperative forms of engagement with government officials and avoiding confrontation to build a

strong reputation in the long run. The author notes that this is particularly important in the sphere of education provision, given that education is by its very nature long-term and ongoing. This highlights how, even where there are formal processes in place, other informal relationships and incentives are also important.

Assumption 16: International support effectively strengthens philanthropic and religious provision of education
No. of studies = 16 Afghanistan (2) Bangladesh (4) Democratic Republic of the Congo (2) Ghana (2) India (3) Liberia (1) Nepal (2) Pakistan (4) Sierra Leone (1) Somalia (1) Yemen (1) Zambia (1) Range (non-specific) (4) Positive (8) Neutral (2) ***NEGATIVE* (10)**
Summary assessment of evidence: The size of the evidence base is strong overall, but of medium quality, with only three high-quality case studies. The context is strong, with evidence from 12 specific countries, but the consistency of the evidence is weak overall, with a mix of positive and negative studies as well as several which both support and refute the assumption in different contexts. Overall, there is a focus on international support for NGO schools. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline findings: The evidence regarding international support for philanthropic and religious provision of education is very mixed. Findings are mostly negative, but context and the strategies and aims of both international donors and providers appear to be key elements affecting success. There is some evidence that international funders and organisations can effectively support philanthropic and religious schools by pushing for regulatory frameworks and by informally helping to broker and negotiate relationships. Much of the evidence focuses on philanthropic providers, with international funders including both donor agencies and international NGOs. At the same time, overall, it is seen as damaging if providers are reliant on external funding, as it can create incentives and funding cycles that are misaligned with national and local priorities. This can be a particular problem in fragile states. Some neutral evidence examines the specific strategies international organisations need to engage with religious providers, and studies emphasise the need not to adopt an either/or mentality when dealing with the state and non-state providers.

Supporting evidence

A number of studies highlight **the importance of international donors** in pushing for the creation of regulatory frameworks that recognise non-state providers, and that access to donor funds for philanthropic providers can spur government engagement with these providers. This is particularly highlighted by Rose (2008) in terms of the importance of donor resources, noting the example of Pakistan, and by Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) in terms of governments entering into dialogue and recognition reluctantly and as a result of outside pressures. As has been examined in previous sections, there is no guarantee that the results of recognition or dialogue will be positive, but recognition is often seen as the first step towards broader engagement.

Several studies highlight successful cases of international donor organisations improving access to education through the funding of philanthropic providers, and helping to **facilitate and negotiate the space for non-state schooling**. In a review of international education interventions in fragile states, Berry (2009) notes that UNICEF achieved particular success in Somalia in terms of co-ordinating donors and NGOs, facilitating information-sharing and negotiating a difficult political climate while minimising unintended consequences. It played a major role in training some 6,500 primary school teachers and in developing appropriate textbooks in Somali; these were enabling factors

for improving education in both state and non-state schools. UNICEF was also able to support the development and expansion of community-managed, government-aided primary schools that used a cost-sharing mechanism to mobilise community and government funding to pay teachers' salaries. It finds that these helped expand enrolment overall, despite equity concerns, although Berry also notes that short-term funding cycles limited the ability of UNICEF to support partners.

The **role of international NGOs** is noted in the literature too. Brannelly et al.'s (2009) study of different education programmes in conflict-affected areas by INGOs such as Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), suggests **they have the capacity, knowledge and credibility to effectively support local non-state education provision**. They emphasise the increased recognition and commitment by donors to provide education in conflict-affected and fragile states and how they have successfully advocated for policy and financial commitment to education in such situations (p.23). However, the authors note that the funding provided does not equate to needs within fragile states and that 'In terms of humanitarian aid, education remains one of the least-funded sectors.' (Ibid: p. 24). The importance of coordination among various stakeholders is also noted. For example, the authors show how IRC has led stakeholder discussions, demonstrating sensitivity to the needs of communities, and used different models of operation to allow the effective establishment of education programmes that have been scaled up. In particular, in certain programmes such as teacher training and mobilisation, it finds that the IRC worked very closely with the government and local partners. The authors of this study note that INGOs and donors can play an especially important role in providing services to the groups that governments find hard to reach, but that this should be achieved through long-term engagement so that funding gaps do not undermine efforts.

IRC's education programme in Afghanistan is discussed by Brannelly et al. (2009) as a best practice example and similar elements are highlighted in their programmes in the DRC by Bender (2010). They find that the knowledge and capacity of the INGOs to support education in fragile contexts were demonstrated by its strong focus on developing the capacity of the communities where they worked. However, these studies note a key limitation of INGOs such as the IRC or Save the Children in that length of engagement in a project is heavily contingent on funding and the security of operations (Bender, 2010; Brannelly et al., 2009). Rose (2011) argues that, in Ghana, the School-for-Life programme (funded by a Danish NGO) has achieved success by adopting flexible approaches. Supported by its funding model, it has been able to build collaborative and constructive relationships, and elements of its methodology have been integrated into national education planning to improve the government's own provision. Casely-Hayford and Hartwell (2010) also note the importance of DANIDA in initiating the programme and encouraging closer links between SfL and the Ghanaian government. This case is explored further under Assumption 17.

There is some evidence of the **role of international religious networks** too, with an emphasis placed on their interest in shaping the content of education along particular lines rather than expanding coverage or quality, as in other cases. Park and Niyozov (2008) analyse madrasa education in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. They argue that there has been a growth in regional and international stakeholders interested in the development of madrasa education since the 1970s, largely

due to its perceived potential to shape opinion within the Islamic world and promote certain political, religious and sectarian idea. They note that certain madrasas have aligned themselves with broader, global Islamic discourses which have enabled them to acquire funding from supportive Gulf States and Western countries (Park and Niyozov, 2009).

Counter-evidence

As was found for the previous assumption, there are **particular challenges related to coordination and fragmentation**. A case study of Liberia in Brannelly et al. (2009) finds that education financing practices in Liberia are mired in the different priorities of key stakeholder groups. While donors focus on security, INGOs (such as the IRC and Save the Children) focus on service delivery from a bottom-up perspective, while the government has its own priorities. These differing priorities are not seen as aligned, and the analysis identifies a key challenge arising from the low level of information-sharing between the different stakeholders, which can undermine efforts at collaboration.

In a review of literature on the International Rescue Committee and philanthropic and religious provision in the DRC, Bender (2010) notes particular challenges where **donor funding is short-term, project-based** and subject to 'rapid fatigue'. She notes that some of this is related to the ongoing fragile nature of the DRC and the potential for cycles of violence to deter long-term interventions, but reflects that a lack of innovation in programme design and a focus on a few stock interventions without planning for long-term improvements or capacity-building are also important. Berry (2010) and DeStefano and Schuh Moore (2010) highlights similar issues with a risk that NGOs and philanthropic providers can become over-reliant on external funding, leading to challenges for long term planning and the danger that they can only be sustained as long as it is in place, leading to fragmentation of the sector. Archer's (2010) analysis of Action Aid's work in education also highlights problems of sustainability and impact, and finds little evidence that the national policy of governments could be influenced meaningfully by a single international organisation.

Bano (2008b) finds examples where donor funding has proven unsustainable in Pakistan. The author reviews 20 prominent non-profit education providers in Pakistan, and identifies NGOs working under the patronage and funding of international donors as well as traditional voluntary organisations (TVOs), mostly reliant on domestic donations. Her study finds that donor funding results in unsustainable educational programmes and ones that are 'second best' compared to formal education programmes such as those provided through general schooling. The study also notes that donor aid leads to education provision that is different in nature to that created from domestic funding. TVOs, reliant on domestic funding, were found to exhibit better infrastructure than NGOs, and the transition to secondary school was also more ad hoc for NGO providers.

Bender (2010) also highlights the extent to which **external agencies lack information** in the DRC, particularly about the outcomes of their programmes. She notes that the IRC appears to be less vulnerable to these faults than most organisations, particularly in terms of information gathering and quantification of results, which can help to stabilise and cement donor commitment.

In their examination of non-state service provision in fragile states and non-fragile states which face issues with capacity and authority, Batley and Mcloughlin (2010: 147) develop a model of engagement between governments and non-state providers that emphases the increasingly high levels of capacity needed for governments to perform formal and in-depth interactions, and the concurrently rising levels of risk involved for both parties. They note that "there is no systematic evidence on how donor programmes have supported the development of governments' capacity to perform the indirect roles[32] in fragile situations". However, they also note that donor activity has not generally followed the logical progression of their model and has instead focused on a narrow range of engagement strategies that emphasise national-level processes and those that involve high levels of capacity (such as contracting and public-private partnerships), while neglecting local efforts and informal processes that build mutual understanding on a smaller scale.

A range of studies from a variety of contexts highlight the extent to which the involvement of international organisations may **reinforce the suspicions held by government officials** as to the motives of non-state education providers. These suspicions are noted extensively in Rose (2008) and are also examined by Berry (2010) (see discussion under A12). Berry (2010) also points out that while interventions by international donors may have positive impacts, they cannot easily change the nature of interactions between state and non-state providers. The author identifies the case of Nepal, where international organisations financed and aided provision, but national NGOs were unrepresented at education sector review meetings. Relations between the NGOs and government were seen as top-down, and the culture of contracting led to suspicions of NGO motives (seen as motivated by economic interests to win contracts). Berry notes arguments that international donors need to be more proactive in persuading governments to involve NGOs in education provision.

There is some specific evidence for community schools and madrasa schools. Regarding community schools, some evidence suggests that **internationally supported community schooling programmes can face difficulties in establishing themselves and cooperating with the state**. Baxter and Bethke (2009) find that efforts to establish community schools in Nepal have not been fully accepted within the government system and may be required to pay a 'registration fee' or may not receive government-supported teachers to which they are entitled. The same study also analyses experience in Sierra Leone, and finds that, while there were efforts to establish community schools (in the form of single classroom schools) in remote communities, these often did not receive the government support they were entitled to. The analysis notes a general challenge in that governments may want INGOs to continue to support schools' material requirements, teacher salaries and monitoring, theoretically during a transition period, as government's own resources are scarce, creating challenges for INGOs in developing exit strategies.

Finally, a study by Verger (2012) mentioned earlier focuses attention on the agenda-setting and dissemination elements of the policy process pertaining to PPPs and highlights the role and influence of transnational policy networks of education experts in influencing national policies towards co-operation and collaboration with philanthropic, religious and private actors. It finds that this external influence and promotion may in fact undermine

[32] Indirect roles defined as state supervision and regulation, as opposed to direct provision.

the likelihood that these policies are selected, retained and implemented in national education systems in the long run, due to a lack of rootedness in domestic practice communities and policy agendas. The study also makes a very important point regarding evidence on public–private partnerships in education (ePPP), arguing that empirical credibility supporting PPPs is limited yielding inconclusive evidence. In particular, policy makers tend to be 'selective' in their use of the evidence and are often '…trapped between two semiotic orders: the scientific one, governed by rigor, and the political one, ruled by incentives to innovate and to spread new policy ideas internationally.' (p.126). This, in turn, can inhibit both the adoption and the retention of certain PPPs within particular contexts. For example, the authors note how policy makers in particular contexts may be especially reluctant to adopt a practice that is not a 'guaranteed success' or too costly.

Neutral evidence

Some neutral evidence examines specific issues with international organisations that engage with religious providers. Bano's (2011) study indicates that partnerships between donors and religious providers share many of the dynamics and challenges as those involving secular institutions and can result in a multitude of combinations.

A broad review of literature on service delivery in fragile states conducted by OECD (2008) also emphasises the need for international organisations to avoid an either/or approach to engaging with the state, but rather to view it as a spectrum. The authors note that there is the potential for donors to circumvent the state system by using local government, market or voluntary initiatives (including non-state providers), but that these initiatives are unlikely to succeed without some degree of local ownership and political interest. Education cannot be viewed in isolation: stable governance and other public goods are essential in order to implement quality schooling. They note particularly the importance of basic security, health (including water and sanitation) and livelihoods to allow students and teachers to look beyond basic sustenance.

Hypothesis H9: Philanthropic and religious schools and education providers have positive effects on the overall education system

A single assumption is identified for this hypothesis – philanthropic and religious education provision complements or strengthens the state (A17). This encompasses both state provision of education and the capacity and legitimacy of the state itself.

Assumption 17: Philanthropic and religious education provision complements or strengthens the state
No. of studies = 15 Afghanistan (3) Bangladesh (1) Democratic Republic of the Congo (2) Ghana (1) India (2) Nepal (1) Pakistan (2) Somalia (1) South Sudan (1) Range (non-specific) (4) ***POSITIVE* (10)** Neutral (1) Negative (5)
Summary assessment of evidence: The evidence for this assumption is strong in terms of its size and of medium quality, with four high-quality studies. It is strong in terms of context, covering ten specific countries, but has only a medium level of consistency, with a significant minority of studies providing negative evidence. The evidence on complementing and strengthening state education provision is much stronger than that surrounding state capacity and legitimacy. ***Overall strength of evidence: MODERATE***
Headline findings: Overall, there is evidence suggesting that philanthropic and religious provision complements and strengthens state provision of education – providing models of effective education that can be applied in state schools, filling geographical gaps in state education provision (particularly in fragile state contexts) and reaching marginalised groups whose needs are not easily catered for by the state, in some cases improving their integration into the state education system. There are few examples of state and philanthropic providers competing for pupils, although there is a perception that they are competitors for resources, particularly international aid. There are also concerns over the potential negative effects of the development of parallel systems of provision, particularly for philanthropic provision supported by external funding. Evidence is more limited for religious providers and there is almost no direct evidence on the impact of non-state provision on state capacity or legitimacy.

Supporting evidence

A major strand of this literature focuses on **the ability of philanthropic providers to improve government capacity to deliver education services** by demonstrating the effectiveness of alternative models for provision that can raise enrolment rates and improve education quality. Blum (2009) notes that in India, a model of small, rural, multi-grade schools pioneered by the RIVER NGO has been highlighted by the government as an example of success in terms of significantly reducing drop-out rates, increasing enrolment in the upper age groups and leading to a higher percentage of students passing the Class 6 Government exam. This model has been acknowledged by government policy-makers at the national and state levels, and the state of Tamil Nadu has implemented it across all schools following a successful pilot that saw 75% of students in the programme tested within expected competencies for their age group, as opposed to only 25 % of their counterparts in government schools.

Kirk and Winthrop (2009) note that a model of home-based community schooling in Afghanistan, originally supported by the International Rescue Committee, has been integrated into Ministry of Education policy and programming to provide complementary education. The model extends access to education for students who might otherwise be excluded, due to the absence of safe schooling, and builds on the current government

policy of developing formal hub schools that support and oversee multiple community schools.

Casely-Hayford and Hartwell (2010) note the example of the School for Life programme in Ghana, which currently complements the public education system by improving the school-readiness of students. At the time of the study, the Government of Ghana examined the potential for integrating aspects of the programme into the state education system. The authors highlight, in particular, the government's interest in greater community awareness creation and involvement; the use of phonic/syllabic teaching methods for reading; small class sizes; and the use of vernacular or local dialect as the medium for instruction and in textbooks. The extent to which achieving all these aims and elements is plausible for government schools is uncertain, but it demonstrates the potential for philanthropic provision to provide inspiration for the improvement of state education.

A series of studies have noted instances **where philanthropic and religious providers appear to have expanded enrolment and provision of education, particularly in fragile states** and in post-conflict contexts. Many of these examples appear to be instigated or funded by international donors, although two studies examine religious schools in this context and argue that they have supplied largely complementary provision.

Echessa et al. (2009) note that during the conflict period in the late 1980s and early 1990s in northern and southern Sudan, INGOs assisted in the provision of education, largely through ad hoc basic education programmes organised by a variety of actors, including communities, NGOs and faith-based organisations (under the broad auspices of the UNICEF-led Operation Lifeline Sudan). The authors highlight the potential of non-state and international providers of education to play a useful role during the conflict and in the immediate post-conflict period.

Berry (2009) also notes the presence of community-managed schools in Somaliland that provide coverage where otherwise there would be none. As in the Sudan case, cost-sharing elements were key to the financing of these providers and local hiring and payment of teachers increased their supply. However, the author notes concerns regarding the equity impact of cost-sharing elements and that while the empowerment of local communities for teacher hiring was initially viewed as positive, issues of quality control arose in the medium-term.

In DRC, the IRC has provided support to religious schools that augment the state education system and expand coverage, with their assistance including 269 temporary classrooms, providing 35,104 children with school supplies and 683 teachers with teaching supplies as well as hosting literacy classes, catch-up classes and helping students prepare for end of year exams, with demonstrated success (Bender, 2010). However, Bender notes that the failing education system in the DRC has meant that donors have been reluctant to fund education projects over the longer term. On a larger scale in DRC, Leinweber (2013: 111-112) argues that the system of hybrid provision of schooling between the state and the Muslim community is not a case of religious providers simply 'filling the void' or acting as direct competitors with the state, but goes further than this, so that 'schools are hybrid institutions that are created, managed, regulated and financially supported by a partnership between the central state and FBOs'.

Rose (2008) also finds positive evidence that philanthropic providers can expand education provision to marginalised groups that state systems have difficulty in engaging with, citing the example of DSS reaching migrants and children from slums in Mumbai.

Complementarities may also exist in terms of **philanthropic providers integrating more marginalised students into more mainstream state education** and improving the extent of their school-readiness. There is a single medium-quality and largely qualitative analysis which indicates this in the context of Ghana. Casely-Hayford and Hartwell (2010: 532) assess the School for Life programme and note that it has been associated with improvements in gross primary enrolment rates in state schools in Northern Ghana. The estimates of this effect are substantial – raising gross enrolment rates by fourteen percentage points, from 69% to 83% – and there also seems to be a continuous impact with rates of completion and transition for graduates of the School for Life into Grade 3 standing at 70%, as compared to survival rates for state school students of 48% across Grade 1 to Grade 3. Government assessments of the programme note the extent to which it is an effective alternative to provision of three grade levels of primary schooling in deprived areas.

In the context of Pakistan, Nelson (2009: 597) notes that madrasas have generally not encouraged mass migrations away from the state sector. The author cites evidence that, although a small number of students are both enrolled full-time and resident in religious schools as an alternative to state systems (less than 1.5% of the total student population), the vast majority of those attending religious schools are enrolled in a secular state school during the normal school day and are then enrolled in a part-time or after-school madrasa or maktab that provides them with religious education, again emphasising their complementarity.

In Afghanistan it was found that where there was lack of provision the IRC was providing a medium-term transitional intervention rather than a parallel system until the government could provide sustained access to students (Kirk and Winthrop, 2009). One counter point is that in supporting non-state providers in post-conflict or other emergency settings, a parallel education system can be developed rather than a system which supports the state. Rose (2010) notes examples of this in Afghanistan, where particular NGOs provided education for girls in defiance of certain government restrictions.

Counter-evidence

Conceptual evidence and theorising exists regarding **state provision of education as part of state-building and nation-building processes.** Van de Walle and Scott (2011) provide a high-quality review of literature, which draws mainly on historical examples from Western Europe and emphasised three ways in which service provision, including education, contributes to these process: penetration (referring to establishing the presence, visibility and authority of the state); standardisation (establishing a single pattern or process of delivery that is applied to all of the polity, and is often accompanied by centralisation); and accommodation (meaning processes of reconciliation and settlement between elites). The study suggests that the dominance of non-state schooling in developing countries (whether private or not) may thus undermine these processes where the state is largely invisible, as its institutions (i.e. schools) do not penetrate through the state and are unable to implement standardisation and the creation of homogenous elements of culture

and the socialisation of citizens without effective regulation of non-state providers. However, limited empirical evidence is supplied for this.

The effects on accountability for provision are noted as well. OECD (2008), in an overview of evidence on service provision in fragile states, also note that while there are potential benefits for donors engaging with non-state providers, particularly where there are significant obstacles to external assistance within the government, an overly strong focus on non-government provision may undermine government accountability in the long run. However, no education-specific examples are provided, although education is discussed in general terms regarding these factors.

The **perceptions of state actors** also need to be taken into account. A series of studies provide evidence that government agencies in developing countries frequently view non-state providers, and particularly philanthropic providers, as potential competitors for both resources and legitimacy, with engagement strategies being associated with attempts to gain access to these resources. Rose (2008) notes this in the context of relationships between state and philanthropic providers in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, and similar issues are raised by Batley and Mcloughlin (2010: 134) in their review of evidence in across a range of fragile and non-fragile contexts. They argue in the context of the rivalries and mistrust document in many NGO-state relationships that: 'Underlying this is a struggle for the control of scarce resources, in which donor funding has often played a significant part'.

As discussed in the previous assumption, concerns are raised about establishing parallel systems that work outside of the state (Van de Walle and Scott, 2011; Berry, 2010). Bender (2010) notes that where there are examples of state failure, such as DRC, donors may be unwilling to invest and so gaps in education may persist (i.e. non-state provision does not always help to fill gaps).

Neutral evidence

Mcloughlin (2014) provides a medium-quality review of recent evidence on this question, focusing particularly on fragile and conflict affected states. She notes that **education is sometimes strongly singled out as an important service** in these contexts, as being able to generate social trust by covering values of equality and bringing together young people from a variety of different ethnic, religious and social groups. She notes that the dominant position in aid policy has been that non-state delivery of services, and particularly parallel structures, have undermined state legitimacy and reduced the visibility of the state as a provider. The author also notes evidence that shows the relationship between provision and attribution of a service is not straightforward. Studies have shown citizens may mistake who is actually delivering services, for example attributing government services to non-state actors in circumstances where a range of other actors were providing public services (e.g. NGOs, churches, donors). The author also notes that citizens may not be as focused on the point of service delivery as is often assumed, and so the state may improve its legitimacy and reinforce its dominance through a combination of oversight, regulation and facilitation without necessarily being involved at the point of delivery.

Caveats

There is almost no direct evidence on the impact of philanthropic or religious provision on overall state capacity or legitimacy and this is a major knowledge gap. It is likely that there is grey and policy literature on service delivery and state-building processes, including in terms of state legitimacy and capacity, but this has not been translated into rigorous scholarship with reference to specific relationships between these processes. There are some reflections on the role of education in generating trust and its particular prominence for state legitimation processes; and some evidence that non-state schooling can undermine state-building processes, but again this is not clearly documented in empirical analysis.

Hypothesis H10: Philanthropic and religious schools support social cohesion and peace-building

This hypothesis has two assumptions, first that philanthropic and religious provision does not increase tensions between different groups (A18), and second, that philanthropic and religious provision can help to support peace- building, especially in conflict-affected contexts (A19).

Assumption 18: Philanthropic and religious provision does not increase tensions between different groups
No. of studies = 4 India(2) Pakistan (1) Occupied Palestinian Territories (1) Positive (0) ***NEUTRAL* (3)** Negative (1)
Summary assessment of evidence: Evidence for this assumption comes from only four two studies (one of high quality), which focus mainly on Islamic schools and communities in a small number of countries and provide neutral evidence using qualitative empirical methodology. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline finding: *There is evidence from a single study that religious schools can fuel tensions (in this case those run by Hindu nationalists) and from another single study full-time students of madrasas are less likely to support equal rights for other religions and sects in comparison with students who have a 'mixed' education involving the state. However, the sources also note that the schools express their religious identity in many ways, much of which do not appear to be sectarian. The small number of studies and lack of evidence on causality makes it difficult to draw conclusions here.*

Counter Evidence

There is some evidence that **certain types of religious schools may contribute to tensions** between communities. Thachil (2009:485) notes that schools in India run by the RSS, a Hindu nationalist organisation, are "deeply politicized" and notes interviews with former students that suggest they have historically mobilised Hindus for attacks on Muslims, with games in the schools contributing to their knowledge of "how to riot".

Neutral Evidence

The strongest evidence on this hypothesis comes from a single high-quality study, which finds that **students who attend madrasas full-time may be less likely to support inclusion.** Nelson (2009) draws on evidence from almost 800 interviews conducted with a

cross-section of parents of school-age children across four provinces of Pakistan, as well as drawing on earlier academic research in this area. The author makes a distinction between students who attend madrasas full-time and those who attend part-time alongside attendance at state or secular schools. The former are small in number, but there is evidence that they are less likely to support equal rights for other religions and sects in comparison with students who have a 'mixed' education (see particularly Rahman, 2004[33]).

The study also finds that madrasas generally did not focus on or exploit differences between religions, but that sectarian differences within Islam were much more important. The author argues that the dominant parental preference for teaching is that it should not engage with or attempt to foster understanding of differences within Islam, but rather that it should ignore them and emphasise instead religious and doctrinal uniformity within Islam and teach only one set of beliefs in line with those of the majority, which the parents generally consider themselves to be part of. A significant minority also favoured teaching differences, but only in order to ensure that children could recognise and avoid behaviours that would express differences.

The author does not establish a link between sectarian education and sectarian conflicts, noting rather that, despite the undoubted existence of sectarian conflict, interviewees tended to dismiss the idea that there genuinely were sectarian tensions or religious and doctrinal differences between different Islamic sects. This failure to engage with difference therefore does not seem to have a proven link to sectarian conflict, but does seem unlikely to help resolve these issues or promote social cohesion.

Alam (2008) also notes that madrasas, in this case in India, generally do not highlight or emphasise differences between religions, but rather that they generally have a strong sectarian or 'maslaki' identity. The teaching in these schools reinforces particular doctrinal interpretations and results in students internalising this ideology. In contrast with the evidence of Nelson (2009), however, these schools seem to examine alternative interpretations, but mainly characterise them as misleading or simply incorrect. As with Nelson (2009), Alam (2008: 624) does not show a clear link between these teaching practices and sectarian conflict, but does note some examples of it resulting in sectarian propaganda – 'The expression of this internalized ideology is visible in various posters brought out by the students of Ashrafiya. In these posters, one finds vitriolic tirades against the Deobandis, warning Barelwis to be vigilant against the lies spread by the Deobandis'.

Høigilt (2013) notes that in the Occupied Palestinian Territories Islamic schools follow the curriculum used by state schools and that while they focus on conservative morals and knowledge of Islamic culture, there is little indication that they encourage sectarian religious divisions.

Caveats

Overall, there is limited evidence for this assumption. Where it exists, it is focused on madrasa schools, and does not look at other types of non-state provider. This represents a

[33] Tariq Rahman (2004) *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A study of education, inequality and polarization in Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.

significant gap in the research, especially considering the high numbers of other types of providers (such as NGO schools) known to operate in fragile states. As this research is limited and shows that some schools can reinforce differences, but without looking in depth at tensions with other groups, all that can be noted is that these relationships are complex, and that there is a lack of evidence of causality.

Assumption 19: Philanthropic and religious provision can help to support peace-building
No. of studies = 2 Democratic Republic of the Congo (1) Uganda (1) ***POSITIVE* (2)** Neutral (0) Negative (0)
Summary assessment of evidence: Evidence for this assumption comes from only two studies, both of them medium quality. They provide positive evidence from a small number of sub-Saharan African countries. Both studies also focus on schools founded or run by religious bodies. ***Overall strength of evidence: WEAK***
Headline finding: *The limited evidence in this area suggests that philanthropic and religious provision of education can help to support peace-building, specifically through supporting local level systems that maintain the social peace, and by assisting in the reintegration of conflict affected children in the case of smaller community-oriented schools. However, there appears to be a knowledge gap in this area and no firm conclusions can be drawn.*

Supporting evidence

Some evidence suggests that **philanthropic and religious provision can play a role in supporting local-level peace and maintaining systems even where the state is heavily compromised**. De Herdt, Titeca and Wagemakers (2012) note in the context of the DRC that 'conventionised schools' (those established by the Catholic Church but within the government system) play an important secondary role in reinforcing social contracts between different groups and enabling social peace to be maintained in an otherwise highly constrained environment. It finds that these schools can charge informal user fees to students,[34] a proportion of which is passed to higher levels of government, and can effectively pacify them; creating a set of incentives that 'reproduces a certain image of the state and a certain social peace within the state and between state and non-state actors' (De Herdt, Titeca and Wagemakers 2012: 693). Although this draws resources away from the education system, potentially lowering the quality of schooling, the author argues that this status in practice has allowed education systems to continue functioning even during periods when the state itself has been heavily compromised.

Other evidence points to the role of philanthropic and religious provision in **supporting reintegration following conflict**. Biziouras and Birger (2013) use a mixed methods approach to examine a range of state and non-state schools in Northern Uganda and draw conclusions regarding the relative ability of these schools to assist war-affected youth to reintegrate into peaceful society. The non-state schools are largely those founded by the Catholic Church (some of which did have a fee-charging element or selective entrance criteria). The authors argue that these schools can support peace-building through

[34] We recognise that charging of user fees may mean this example should be categorised as 'private', however these points were not highlighted in the private schools review, and there is a lack of clarity about how to categorise this arrangement, hence its inclusion here.

improving the reintegration of war-affected youth, but that the main difference lies in the school environment and approach to discipline. They note that the state schools they surveyed were largely over-crowded, with demoralised staff and a chaotic atmosphere, whereas some non-state schools took a more disciplinarian approach and others were more 'community-oriented'. They found that disciplinarian non-state schools had reasonable academic performances despite over-crowding, but that their effectiveness in terms of reintegration varied widely. In contrast, non-state schools providing individualised attention made the most significant progress. In particular, those non-state schools with a less punitive approach to discipline were found to make greater progress in re-integration. Although this suggests the potential for peace-building to be supported by these forms of schools, much may depend on how these schools are operated.

Caveats

The lack of evidence on this assumption may well relate to the search criteria used for this review, which did not include grey literature related to the humanitarian sector or internal NGO documents. Many peacebuilding education interventions are also one-off programmes, rather than school-like education providers, and so would not qualify for inclusion in this review.

5. Summary – Evidence maps for each assumption

This section sets out full evidence maps for each assumption, identifying assessments of each study/case.

	[H1] Philanthropic and religious schools are better quality than state schools		[H2] Philanthropic and religious schools provide education to disadvantaged children	
	(A1) Philanthropic and religious school pupils achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils	A2) Teaching is better in philanthropic and religious schools than in state schools	(A3) Philanthropic and religious schools geographically reach the poor and the marginalised	(A4) Philanthropic and religious schools are equally accessed by boys and girls
ASSESSMENT	**MODERATE (+)**	**STRONG (+)**	**STRONG (+)**	**MODERATE (+)**
Positive	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [29*, 31, 34, 40] Ghana [31, 34] India [9] Zambia [31]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [29*, 31, 33, 52, 58] Ghana [1, 31] India [9, 23, 53*] Uganda [22] Zambia [31]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [4*, 10, 26, 29*, 31, 40, 52] Ghana [1, 27, 31] India [2, 9, 23, 28, 36, 53*, 54] Pakistan [14, 54] Sierra Leone [59] South Asia [16*] Zambia [31]	Afghanistan [25*] Bangladesh [4*, 7, 29*, 34, 52, 58] Ghana [1] India [9] Sierra Leone [59]
Neutral	Bangladesh [5, 33] India [23]	Ethiopia [49] Kenya [43] Malawi [49] Pakistan [11]	Bangladesh [4*, 10] Democratic Republic of the Congo [8]	
Negative	Bangladesh [58]			Bangladesh [10, 52, 58] Pakistan [14]

* = Assessed as high quality (remaining are medium)

	[H3] Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective financially stable		[H4] Philanthropic and religious schools are affordable to the poor and poorest	[H5] Demand for philanthropic and religious schools is driven by a concern for quality and informed choice	
	(A5) Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective	(A6) Philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable	(A7) Philanthropic and religious schools are as affordable to users as state schools	(A8)Perceived quality of education is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools	(A9) Users make informed choices about the quality of education
ASSESSMENT	**MODERATE (+)**	**WEAK (0)**	**WEAK (0)**	**WEAK (0)**	**WEAK (0)**
Positive	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [29*, 31, 33, 52, 58] Ghana [27, 31] India [9] Zambia [31]	Bangladesh [52, 58] Pakistan [14]	India [53*]	India [9, 28]	
Neutral	Unspecified [49]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [31, 48*] Ethiopia [49] Ghana [31, 49] India [9, 28, 48*, 49] Pakistan [48*] Sierra Leone [44] Yemen [21] Zambia [31]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [4*, 10, 31, 33, 52] Ghana [31] India [2, 9, 28, 47] Occupied Palestinian Territories [35] Zambia [31]	Bangladesh [6*, 52] Occupied Palestinian Territories [35] Pakistan [16*]	Bangladesh [52] India [28]
Negative			Democratic Republic of the Congo [8]	Bangladesh [26] Pakistan [46]	Bangladesh [26]

* = Assessed as high quality (remaining are medium)

	[H6] Philanthropic and religious schools better respond to the needs, interests, beliefs and identities of particular social, cultural and religious groups		[H7] Philanthropic and religious schools are accountable to users
	(A10) Users' choices reflect their identities, beliefs or membership of particular social, cultural or religious groups	(A11) Philanthropic and religious schools provide education that is suited to the needs and interests of particular social, cultural or religious groups	(A12) Users actively participate in or influence operational decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools
ASSESSMENT	**MODERATE (+)**	**STRONG (+)**	**MODERATE (+)**
Positive	Bangladesh [6*, 52] Pakistan [14, 42*] South Asia [46]	Bangladesh [4*, 6*, 10, 52] India [2, 9, 47, 48*] Nigeria [57] Occupied Palestinian Territories [35] Pakistan [14]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [29*, 31, 33, 52] Ghana [31] India [9] Zambia [31]
Neutral		Pakistan [46]	
Negative	India [54] Pakistan [54]		Bangladesh [48*] India [48*] Unspecified [41]

* = Assessed as high quality (remaining are medium)

	[H8] Financing and regulation, whether from the state or international bodies, improves non- state school quality, equity and sustainability			
	(A13) States have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools	(A14) State regulation of philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability	(A15) State , subsidies, co-operation and partnerships, and contractual arrangements with philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability	(A16) International support effectively strengthens philanthropic and religious provision of education
ASSESSMENT	**WEAK (-)**	**MODERATE (+)**	**WEAK (+)**	**WEAK (-)**
Positive	Bangladesh [4, 12, 48*] India [40, 48*] Pakistan [48*] Range [50]	Afghanistan [31, 37] Bangladesh [4*, 12, 31, 48*] Ghana [31] India [40, 48*] Pakistan [48*] South Sudan [32] Zambia [31] Range [16*]	Bangladesh [4*, 12, 15, 17, 48*] India [12, 15, 17, 48*] Pakistan [12, 15, 17, 48*] Range [50]	Afghanistan [24] Bangladesh [46] Democratic Republic of the Congo [19, 24] Ghana [27] India [46] Pakistan [46, 48*] Somalia [20] Range [16*]
Neutral	Afghanistan [31, 37] Bangladesh [31, 48*, 49, 58] Ethiopia [49] Ghana [31, 49] India [36, 48*, 49] Nigeria [45] Pakistan [48*] Range [16*, 61]		Bangladesh [48*] Ghana [1] India [48*] Pakistan [48*] Range [16*]	Bangladesh [13] India [13] Pakistan [13] Range [45]
Negative	Bangladesh [10] Democratic Republic of the Congo [30, 55] India [48*, 54] Liberia [24] Nepal [21] Pakistan [14, 46, 54] South Sudan [32] South Asia [51] Range [16*]	Bangladesh [48*] India [36, 48*] Pakistan [48*] Uganda [22] Range [16*]	Bangladesh [15, 48*] India [15, 48*] Pakistan [15, 48*] Uganda [22] Range [16*, 61]	Afghanistan [31] Bangladesh [31, 48*] Democratic Republic of the Congo [19] Ghana [31] India [48*] Liberia [24] Nepal [18*, 21] Pakistan [11, 48*] Sierra Leone [18*] Yemen [21] Zambia [31] Range [3, 16*, 61]

* = Assessed as high quality (remaining are medium)

	[H9] Philanthropic and religious schools and education providers have positive effects on the overall education system	[H10] Philanthropic and religious schools support social cohesion and peace-building	
	(A17) Philanthropic and religious education provision complements or strengthens the state	(A18) Philanthropic and religious provision does not increase tensions between different groups	(A19) Philanthropic and religious provision can help to support peace-building
ASSESSMENT	**MODERATE (+)**	**WEAK (0)**	**WEAK (+)**
Positive	Afghanistan [37, 50] Democratic Republic of the Congo [19, 38] Ghana [27] India [23, 48*] Pakistan [42*] Somalia [20] South Sudan [32]		Democratic Republic of the Congo [30] Uganda [22]
Neutral	Range [39]	India [2] Occupied Palestinian Territories [35] Pakistan [42*]	
Negative	Afghanistan [21] Bangladesh [48*] India [48*] Nepal [21] Pakistan [48*] Yemen [21] Range [16*, 45, 60*]	India [54]	

* = Assessed as high quality (remaining are medium)

6. Synthesis of the evidence and gap analysis

6.1 Where is the evidence strongest and where is it weakest?

We set out below a synthesis of the evidence, presented by theme (supply, demand and enabling environment), and then by overall strength of evidence (strong, moderate and weak).

6.1.1 Supply

Strong evidence:

There is strong evidence that philanthropic providers tend to use more **innovative, child-centred pedagogies** and have curriculums and content that are adapted to the needs and abilities of their pupils (A2). Schooling structures are also found to be more flexible and the literature also identified benefits from locally-hired staff, community involvement, smaller class sizes and greater staff support and management. However, there is little evidence for religious schools.

There is strong evidence that philanthropic and religious schools can **geographically reach the poor and marginalised** (A3). Philanthropic schools often purposefully locate themselves in marginalised areas (e.g. slums) and adapt their practices to cater to the needs of these groups. There is also evidence that religious schools, and particularly madrasas, serve more marginalised areas and reach out to poor communities. Madrasas are also more concentrated in rural areas in certain countries, although there is not clear evidence as to whether they serve poor or marginalised groups in these areas. However, evidence is complicated by a lack of consistent or clearly defined measures of poverty by income level or degree of marginalisation, making it difficult to compare coverage across non-state schools or contexts. Moreover, these findings must be seen in the context of the heavy concentration of research in India and Bangladesh.

Moderate evidence:

There moderate evidence that **learning outcomes** (A1) for students in philanthropic schools are better than, or as good as, those in state schools. The evidence for religious schools is ambiguous with a mixture of negative and neutral findings. These findings must be treated with caution, as studies concentrated on a relatively small number of providers; there is a lack of direct empirical studies that compare learning outcomes for philanthropic and religious providers with state schools; and much of the literature does not take into account socio-economic factors or 'unobservables'.

There is moderate, but fragmented evidence for **gender parity** (A4). This finds that philanthropic provision can target female enrolment and achieve gender parity. However, the evidence on religious schools, mainly madrasas, is more mixed, with evidence from Bangladesh demonstrating rising female enrolment and gender parity for certain types of madrasa; while madrasas in other contexts continue to be dominated by male students.

There is moderate positive evidence that philanthropic schools are more **cost effective** than state schools (A5), although there is sparse evidence on religious providers. Most studies note that philanthropic schools have lower operating costs than state schools, with lower teacher wages and smaller input costs being widely noted. The few studies that examine cost-effectiveness directly find that philanthropic provision is more cost-effective than state provision. Precise estimates need to be treated with caution, however, due to low data availability in terms of monitoring costs and the hidden costs of donated resources and volunteer time.

Weak and inconclusive evidence:

There is a major gap in evidence in terms of the **financial sustainability** of philanthropic and religious schools (A6). The literature does identify some successful strategies and providers, but much of the evidence highlights the broad challenges of financial sustainability, particularly for philanthropic schools operated by NGOs. There are some examples where these schools have diversified their funding, including through government part-financing or individual or corporate contributions, enabling greater financial sustainability, but this has raised issues of organisational coherence in some cases.

6.1.2 Demand

Strong evidence:

There is strong, consistent evidence that indicates that some philanthropic and religious schools **adapt their teaching methodologies, curricula and structures** to users (A11). Madrasas will tailor the content of teaching to particular religious positions or preferences, while incorporating secular content and materials to meet community demand for both forms of education. Philanthropic provision, such as by NGO schools, can offer more adapted curricula and flexible forms of organisation, for instance to reach particular marginalised groups. These findings come with the caveat that few direct comparisons are made with government schools, and although the general tone of the literature suggests that state schools are less flexible and adaptive, there are examples of the state changing approaches.

Moderate evidence:

There is moderate but consistent evidence, largely focusing on madrasa schooling and South Asia, that parents choose these schools on the basis of **religious preference**, although other factors are identified as important too (A10). The paradigm of choice is complicated by the fact that the evidence also highlighted practices whereby a child may attend a madrasa with other children in the family attending other school types, such as private or government. This emphasises the extent to which choice reflects not just which school to choose, but which child to choose for which school type. This evidence is concerned with choices of madrasas over other types of school, rather than the choice of one particular madrasa school over another (as can be found in private-school choice). No evidence was found regarding users' choices and their identities and beliefs for philanthropic schools.

In terms of **accountability** there is moderate evidence that philanthropic schools provide opportunities for users to participate in, and influence, decision making through a variety of mechanisms (A12). However, these accountability relationships are generally not explored in detail and it is unclear how substantive this participation is and how effective these mechanisms are in practice.

Weak and inconclusive evidence:

The **affordability** of philanthropic and religious schools is a major evidence gap (A7). The evidence does suggest that many philanthropic providers absorb costs that would be shouldered by parents in government schools and that lower charges are a major cause of demand, but that these providers may also rely on in-kind contributions and so are not costless. Certain providers also charge fees, but the comparative expense is unclear, and low fees that are affordable may also be associated with under-resourcing. There is some suggestion that religious schools may be more expensive than state schools in some contexts and the provision of particular financial incentives by some madrasas suggests they are generally not affordable to students from poorer families. However, this is an area of weak evidence overall.

There is weak evidence regarding whether **perceived quality of education** is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools (A8). The evidence indicates that choice of philanthropic or religious school is based on multiple complex priorities, which may include quality, such as cost, distance, accessibility, safety of learning environment, perception of child's academic ability and religious factors. There is a very limited evidence base for assessing whether users make informed choices about the quality of education in these schools (A9).

6.1.3 Enabling Environment

Moderate evidence:

There is moderate, positive evidence regarding the impact of **state regulation** on philanthropic and religious providers, but the specific impacts of policies on quality, equity and sustainability are not fully explored (A14). Basic recognition of non-state schools is identified as a key precursor for developing more collaborative relationships and can enable smoother transitions for pupils to higher levels of education, although recognition itself is not sufficient to ensure this. There are also successful examples of regulation helping to implement a broader and more coherent national curriculum, in some cases with the assistance of subsidies. However, regulation also often focuses more on inputs than outputs, controlling and restricting market entry, and so appears less likely to have a positive influence on education quality. Overall, the current literature lacks in-depth examination of the specific impact of regulation on quality, equity and sustainability.

There is some moderate evidence that philanthropic provision, and NGO provision in particular, is **complementary to provision by the state** and that this is largely due to these organisations specifically targeting gaps in state provision and groups that state provision is too rigid to accommodate (A17). A range of evidence points to the ability of philanthropic providers to improve the capacity of state education systems, where state

schools adopt teaching methodologies and adapt curricula in line with models used in philanthropic schools. However, relatively little of this literature explores the extent to which these adaptations have had significant impacts on state-school teaching or student outcomes. Challenges are identified where the presence of philanthropic and religious providers undermines the visibility and penetration of the state, as well as the ability to create standardised education. However, often the available literature does not look at differing effects between different types of non-state provider; nor does it examine whether some types of provider or types of delivery arrangements may have more positive or negative impacts.

Weak and inconclusive evidence:

There is negative, but inconsistent evidence regarding whether states have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to effectively **implement policy frameworks** (A13) with findings being strongly conditioned by context. There is some high-quality evidence that suggests that, under some circumstances, governments are able to develop and implement effective policy frameworks for philanthropic and religious schooling of different types. However, overall the literature emphasises the inability of the state to engage with and regulate philanthropic and religious providers, due to a combination of low capacity, a lack of information, an inability to coordinate actors and an absence of skills cited. The issue of the willingness of the state to engage with philanthropic and religious providers is highlighted, with studies emphasising examples where national politicians may face few incentives to effectively incorporate these schools into policy frameworks and mutual mistrust between government officials and philanthropic providers, such as NGOs. Overlapping interests and the incentives for constructive engagement are necessary across politicians, bureaucrats and non-state providers**.**

The evidence on state **collaboration, partnership, subsidy and contracting** with philanthropic and religious schools (A15) is positive, but inconsistent, with findings being context- and provider-specific. A range of positive examples are found to improve sustainability, and some aspects of equity and quality, with emphasis placed on the need for overlapping interests between the state and non-state provider, and the nature of the informal relationships between state and non-state actors as a key factor. Issues are raised too as to whether entering into close relationships can undermine NGO independence, particularly in the case of formal contracting, and on strategies NGOs adopt in order to avoid this.

There is inconsistent evidence on the **role of international funders and organisations** (A16). The balance of findings is negative, but context and the strategies and aims of both international donors and providers appear to be key elements affecting success. There is some evidence that international funders and organisations can effectively support philanthropic and religious schools by pushing for regulatory frameworks and by informally helping to broker and negotiate relationships. Much of the evidence focuses on philanthropic providers, with international funders including both donor agencies and international NGOs. At the same time, overall, it is seen as damaging if providers are reliant on external funding, as it can create incentives and funding cycles that are misaligned with national and local priorities.

There is limited evidence regarding the extent to which philanthropic and religious provision can support or undermine **social cohesion** (A18) or **peace-building processes** (A19). Few studies explore different types of non-state providers in fragile settings, or their implications for these processes.

6.2 What are the key gaps in the evidence?

This review has highlighted a series of gaps and weaknesses in the evidence base regarding philanthropic and religious providers of education in developing countries.

First, the review highlights a series of **definitional issues**. A distinction needs to be drawn between non-state and non-formal education as, although many non-state providers are involved in the provision of non-formal education, this was not the focus of this review. In practice, few studies offered clear definitions or classifications, and sometimes the terms non-state and non-formal were used interchangeably. In some cases, non-state providers provide state-funded services. These are examined in this review in several cases, although they are arguably a hybrid mechanism for provision that is neither purely state nor non-state. This has not been clearly addressed in the literature identified. Moreover, the distinction between private, philanthropic and religious provision has also been problematic in some of the analysis. Many studies do not explicitly state whether or not the schools in question charge fees, while some, particularly religious schools, are mentioned as charging fees, but are included in this analysis to provide a more complete picture of the sector. These definitional issues are also found in the literature and elsewhere, particularly in review studies, as authors may refer to non-state providers generically or not give breakdowns of student results or enrolment beyond a binary private-public distinction. These issues mean that it is very difficult to generalise, either within or across different types of provider.

Second, the literature is **highly fragmented.** It is largely composed of individual case studies that examine the experiences of a particular provider or programme making it very difficult to draw conclusions as to the state of the sector. There are very few studies that compare different types of non-state school (e.g. religious, NGO, private) in the same country, and few that explore their performance against state schools or national benchmarks. Understanding how different providers relate to each other and how education systems operate as a whole is crucial to understanding how to design interventions and public policy, with analysis of different provider types and how they relate to each other being a key literature gap in that respect.

Third, there are clear concentrations of the literature on **certain countries and providers.** South Asia, and particularly India and Bangladesh, are the focus of a large concentration of studies, with the remainder of cases looking at a small number of sub-Saharan African states and fragile state contexts. There is also a considerable concentration of literature on particular providers (e.g. BRAC) and types of providers (e.g. NGO schools). The literature looking at religious providers and faith-based organisations also focuses heavily on madrasas, often limited to analysis from a small number of countries.

Fourth, there is a notable lack of high quality published empirical research comparing **learning outcomes** across different types of providers. There may be other sources of data

available, for example impact evaluations conducted for the internal purposes of donors or charities, but these do not seem to be reaching the arena of published research and it is notable that many of the measures currently used to track learning levels internationally (including PISA, ASER, Uwezo) do not systematically report outcomes for philanthropic and religious schools (these are often listed as 'other'). The need for better data collection, strong empirical analysis and publication of this analysis is clear.

Fifth, there is very little in-depth analysis **on user choice or preferences**, or relationships of **power and accountability** between parents, users, providers and policymakers, which is necessary in order to understand how these types of schooling can work for poor people and how to increase access to the most marginalised.

Finally, there is a lack of in-depth and high quality evidence regarding the **role of international organisations and funders**, which is surprising given how influential they are thought to be in some of the literature. There is a lack of evidence on the range of philanthropic and religious providers present in fragile contexts and their implications, including for aspects of peace-building. While there is grey literature available, this is limited in coverage and this is a particular gap given DFID's and other donors' investment in fragile states.

Box 1: Summary of evidence gaps

Major definitional issues

- Lack of agreed definitions and clarity in classifying cases
- Inconsistent reporting of school characteristics

Literature is highly fragmented and methodologically limited

- Emphasis on individual qualitative case study approaches
- Lack of rigorous quantitative and longitudinal research, particularly in terms of learning outcomes
- Lack of research that is comparative or looks at how providers relate to each other

Highly concentrated focus of literature

- South Asia, and particularly Bangladesh, have strong bodies of research, but there is comparatively little coverage of sub-Saharan Africa
- NGO providers are a major focus, but prominent individual providers (e.g. BRAC) make up the bulk of these. Madrasas are also the main focus of religious schools literature.

Number of key research gaps

- Lack of strong empirical evidence which compares learning outcomes across different types of schools or against national benchmarks
- Lack of a focus on user choice, preferences and affordability
- Lack of in-depth research on accountability relationships between parents, users, providers and policymakers
- Limited evidence on the role and impact of international donors and organisations

6.3 Where might future research focus?

Based on the findings synthesised above, further research in the following areas could strengthen the evidence base on the role and impact of philanthropic and religious schools in developing countries:

- **Supporting greater definitional clarity:** This could include greater mapping of the range of types of providers and schools available, in order to develop a more comprehensive and rigorous typology than was possible for this review.

- **Broadening the evidence base:** This should include expanding the evidence base on philanthropic and religious schools in sub-Saharan Africa, and examining a broader range of providers to go beyond the high profile cases that are already well documented.

- **Understanding learning outcomes:** Empirical analyses of learning outcomes for philanthropic and religious schools need to be strengthened, with more published quantitative analysis, a greater focus on longitudinal studies and increased efforts to account for student background and establish value added. More systematic inclusion and disaggregation of the non-state sector in major learning assessments (e.g. PISA, ASER and Uwezo) would improve the evidence base.

- **Choice, fees and accountability**: Greater mapping is needed of how and why parents and students choose schools, and how they move between them. Improved analysis of the accountability relationships between users, providers and policymakers would also improve our understanding of the system and how interventions might affect it. Better mapping of school fees and parental contributions would also be a useful resource here.

- **Moving to a systems approach:** There is a need for more research that goes beyond focusing on individual providers and provider types. This includes a need to empirically compare their relative performance across state, private, philanthropic and religious schools, but should also examine how parents and pupils navigate the system and move between providers, and how these providers interact with each other and state institutions.

- **The role of international actors:** Richer and more detailed analyses of how international organisations and funders can successfully engage with non-state providers and broker relationship with the state are needed, along with greater understanding of the long-term implications of this engagement. This is particularly the case in fragile contexts, where philanthropic and religious providers are considered to play an important role.

6.4 Conclusion: The effects of philanthropic and religious schools on education – an evidence-based theory of change

This review aims to objectively and rigorously examine the evidence regarding the role and impact of the range of philanthropic and religious providers in improving education for all. It accompanies a review of private schooling (Day Ashley et al. 2014), and the evidence from both will be drawn together in a final synthesis report.

Overall, as already highlighted, the evidence remains highly fragmented and this reflects the nature of the providers, which have a wide range of motivations and seek to respond to a wide variety of demands. Many of these providers are focused on reaching pockets of those that are hardest to reach or seen as removed from or excluded by state schooling (such as religious providers).

The evidence is highly clustered around a limited number of types of non-state provider (such as NGOs and madrasa schools), with a lack of evidence on the range of other providers known to exist. Moreover, much of this evidence does not currently lend itself to comparisons with state provision, as these are not of a similar type or order (and this is particularly the case where non-state provision is designed to 'fill gaps' or complement state provision).

These caveats must be borne in mind when revising the evidence-based theory of change produced as a result of this review. They mean that generalisations are challenging and that they only represent partial or indicative conclusions. Many more gaps are identified than conclusive findings and significant research gaps are highlighted. One particular challenge seems to be the lack of empirical research evidence rather than policy literature or self-assessments, which were not included in this review. This highlights the need to ensure that evidence is independently validated through published research too.

Figure 4 below therefore maps the key findings from the review of the evidence onto the initial theory of change to present an evidence-based theory. This allows us to visualise the strength of evidence that supports key assumptions, challenges them or is neutral, and to identify how these contribute to improving learning, access and equity, quality and efficiency or sustainability. As much as possible, this evidenced theory of change aims to convey some of the nuances and caveats made for the evidence presented. However, it is necessarily summarises and simplifies these findings, and this should be borne in mind when interpreting its presentation of findings. Because of the fragmented nature of the evidence, the evidence theory of change uses colour coding to highlight where evidence for a particular assumption drew heavily on one type of provision (philanthropic or religious); where an assumption is not colour coded, evidence was more evenly split between provider types.

Findings related to **education quality** are supported by strong evidence that philanthropic provision has advantages in terms of more **child-centric teaching methods that are adapted to local contexts** and the needs of students. However, while there is a consensus that students in these schools perform better than, or as well as, state school students, there is a **lack of rigorous empirical comparisons of learning outcomes** with state provision or national benchmarks, and these findings need to be understood in the context of persistently low levels of learning, regardless of type of provider. More evidence is also

needed regarding the potential 'added value' of different non-state provision that better takes into account socio-economic backgrounds of pupils.

With regard to **equity and access**, there is moderate evidence that philanthropic and religious providers can target and be responsive to poor and marginalised groups and that they can offer a more diverse curriculum, better suited to different religious and cultural preferences. However, factors that determine choice need to be unpacked and further explored. The evidence is unclear as to whether **quality** is a significant factor in shaping user choices and how well-informed users are on quality and there is a lack of evidence on accountability mechanisms.

The enabling environment and the nature of the relationship between the state and philanthropic and religious schools can, moreover, be very influential in determining whether both quality and equity gains are achieved. This is reflected in the concentration of evidence on the 'enabling environment', which is concerned with the policy frameworks and quality of this relationship, as well as regulatory and contractual arrangements. What emerges is that the effectiveness of arrangements is highly context-specific, with important factors including historical relationships, structures, incentives etc. Positive impacts can emerge from **recognition, regulation and collaborative arrangements,** leading to complementarities with state provision, as well as improvements in sustainability, equity and quality. However, a range of neutral and negative examples were also found, suggesting that these areas need to be explored in greater depth to determine how states can best engage with the non-state actors in different contexts. The breadth of the relationships between state and non-state actors, and the major enabling factors and risks documented in the literature, can be seen in Figure 5. Similarly ambiguous and varied findings are also found for **international support and funding** for philanthropic and religious providers.

There is, however, very limited evidence regarding issues of **financial sustainability** and the **affordability** of different types of philanthropic and religious providers.

Moreover, particular challenges for fragile states are identified throughout and are particularly relevant to **efficiency and sustainability**. Where policy frameworks are in flux, there is limited capacity, and potentially limited legitimacy, of either the state or of non-state actors; therefore, building effective policy frameworks, supporting complementarities and ensuring that provision reaches the most marginalised may be most difficult to achieve. This is particularly difficult, as the level of non-state provision may be high or higher in weak or fragile contexts.

Figure 4: 'Philanthropic and religious schools improve education for all': Evidence-based theory of change

INPUTS & OUTPUTS

Financial and policy support for philanthropic and religious schools (from government, donors, civil society, communities)

- Subsidies
- Materials & resources
- School management
- Policy frameworks
- Regulatory frameworks

School Type Key

Majority of evidence on assumption relates

Philanthropic Schools

Religious Schools

Note: Strength of evidence refers to the strength of the evidence base for the assumption, as judged according to its size, study quality, contextual breadth and consistency of findings.

EVIDENCE OF OUTCOMES

Strength of evidence = **STRONG** | **MODERATE** | **WEAK**

LINKED TO IMPROVED...

SUPPLY

QUALITY H1: Philanthropic and religious schools are better quality than state schools

EQUITY H2: Philanthropic and religious schools provide education to disadvantaged children

COST EFFECTIVENESS H3: Philanthropic and religious schools are cost effective and financially stable

DEMAND

AFFORDABLIITY H4: Philanthropic and religious schools are affordable to the poor and the poorest

CHOICE & QUALITY H5: Demand philanthropic and religious schools is driven by a concern for quality and informed choice

CHOICE & IDENTITY H6: Philanthropic and religious schools better respond to the needs, interests, beliefs and identities of particular social, cultural and religious groups

ACCOUNTABILITY H7: Philanthropic and religious schools are accountable to users

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIP H8: State and international collaboration, financing and regulation improves philanthropic and religious school quality, equity & sustainability

MARKET H9: Philanthropic and religious schools have positive effects on the overall education system

INCLUSION H10: Philanthropic and religious schools support social cohesion and peace building

A1: Learning outcomes for students at philanthropic schools are better than, or as good as, those of pupils at state schools +

A2: More locally adapted and child centred teaching +

A3: Philanthropic schools sited and adapted to reach marginalised, religious schools in rural areas and providing scholarships to poor. +

A4: Philanthropic schools target female enrolment. Madrasa gender gap persists +

A4: Philanthropic schools have lower costs than state schools and can be more cost-effective

A6: Sustainability depends heavily on strategies used 0

A7: Lack of detailed findings on affordability 0

A8: Perceived quality is one of several of priorities 0

A9: Few findings on parents access to information on

A10: Parental choice reflects religion but also other factors +

A11: Philanthropic and religious schools adapt to local needs and beliefs +

A12: Evidence on existence of mechanisms for user accountability, but not

A13: Highly contextual evidence on state capacity, legitimacy and knowledge 0

A14: Regulation and recognition can have positive impacts on provision +

A15: Highly contextual evidence on that co-operation, positive effects from flexibility and informal links 0

A16: Highly contextual on international support -

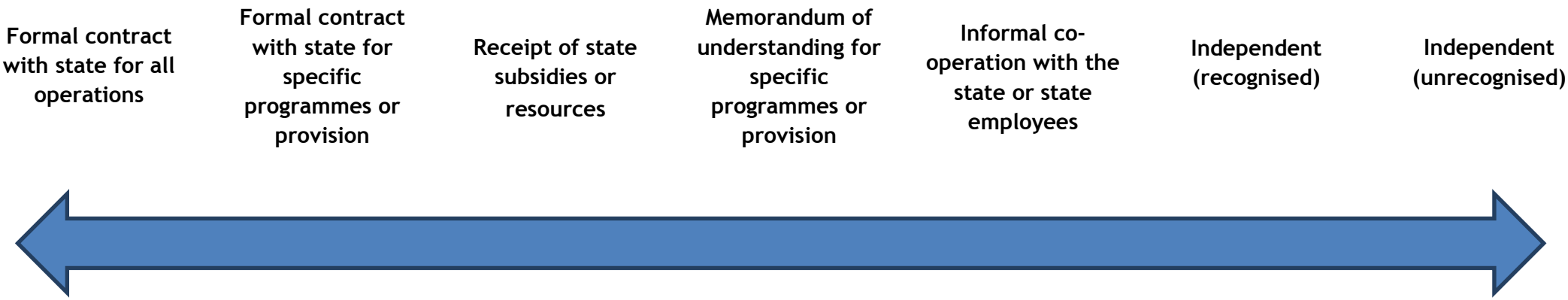
A17: Philanthropic and religious providers can complement state provision +

A18: Few findings on social tensions 0

A19: Some positive effects on peacebuilding +

- learning outcomes
- equity & access
- quality
- Efficiency & sustainability

Figure 5: Range of relationships between the state and non-state providers



Enabling Factors

- Gradual building from basic interactions and informal relationships and collaboration
- Overlapping incentives for both the state and non-state providers to engage
- Credible policy frameworks that enable collaboration
- State capacity to co-ordinate actors and implement policy
- Mutual credibility, legitimacy and trust between the state and non-state providers

Potential Risks

State

- Transfer of international donor resources and legitimacy away from the state
- Inability to monitor or enforce contracts
- Fragmentation of the education system
- Creation of parallel systems of provision

Non-state providers

- Fluctuating policy-making environments and policies
- Dominance of large or international NGOs in policy dialogue
- Inability to negotiate or enforce contracts
- Constraints to advocacy role
- Dependency on a small number of funding sources

Appendices

Appendix 1: Bibliography

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Rose, Pauline. (2011) 'Strategies for Engagement: Government and National Non-Government Education Providers in South Asia, *Public Administration and Development* 31: 294-305.

Rose, Pauline and Greeley, Martin. (2006) 'Education in Fragile States: Capturing Lessons and Identifying Good Practice'. Paper prepared for the DAC Fragile States Group. Brighton: Centre for International Education, Sussex University.

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Sommers, Christine. (2012) 'Primary Education in Rural Bangladesh: Degrees of Access, Choice, and Participation of the Poorest', CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity) Pathways to Access Research Monograph No. 75. Brighton: Centre for International Education, Sussex University.

Sud, Pamela. (2010) 'Can Non-Formal Education Keep Working Children in School? A Case Study from Punjab, India', *Journal of Education and Work* 23(1): 1-26.

Thachil, Tariq. (2009) 'Neoliberalism's Two Faces in Asia: Globalization, Educational Policies, and Religious Schooling in India, Pakistan, and Malaysia', *Comparative Politics* 41(4): 473-94.

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Titeca, Kristof, de Herdt, Tom and Wagemakers, Inge. (2013) 'God and Caesar in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Negotiating Church–State Relations through the Management of School Fees in Kinshasa's Catholic Schools', *Review of African Political Economy* 40(135): 116-31.

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Van de Walle, Steven, and Scott, Zoe. (2011) 'The political role of service delivery in statebuilding: Exploring the relevance of European history for developing countries', *Development Policy Review*, 29(1): 5-21.

Verger, Antoni. (2012) 'Framing and Selling Global Education Policy: The Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships for Education in Low-Income Contexts', *Journal of Education Policy* 27(1): 109-30.

Appendix 2: Studies included in the review

No. of studies = 61

Country contexts, Total = 18

ASIA	*AFRICA*	*MIDDLE EAST*
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan	*Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia*	*Occupied Palestinian Territories, Yemen*

References for individual studies

Key = Primary and Empirical **[P&E];** Secondary **[S];** Experimental **[EXP];** Systematic Review [**SR];** Observational **[OBS];** Other Review **[OR]**

No.	Author and date	Type	Full reference	Quality assessment
1	**Akyeampong (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Akyeampong, Kwame. (2009) 'Public–Private Partnership in the Provision of Basic Education in Ghana: Challenges and Choices, *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 39 (2): 135-49.	Medium
2	**Alam (2008)**	[P&E, OBS]	Alam, Arshad. (2008) 'The Enemy Within: Madrasa and Muslim Identity in North India', *Modern Asian Studies* 42(2-3): 605-27.	Medium
3	**Archer (2010)**	[TC]	Archer, David. (2010) 'The Evolution of NGO-Government Relations in Education: Action Aid 1972-2009', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 611-18.	Medium
4	**Asadullah and Chaudhury (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Asadullah, M. Niaz, and Chaudhury, Nazmul (2013) 'Peaceful Coexistence? The Role of Religious Schools and NGOs in the Growth of Female Secondary Schooling in Bangladesh, *Journal of Development Studies* 49(2): 223-37.	High
5	**Asadullah, Chaudhury and Dar (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Asadullah, M. Niaz, Chaudhury, Nazmul, and Dar, A. (2009) 'Assessing the Performance of Madrasas in Rural Bangladesh', in Felipe Barrera-Osorio, Harry Anthony Patrinos, and Quentin Wodon (eds.) *Emerging Evidence on Vouchers and Faith-based Providers*. Washington, DC: World Bank.	Medium
6	**Asadullah, Chakrabarti and Chaudhury (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Asadullah, M. Niaz, Chakrabarti, Rupa, and Chaudhury, Nazmul. (2013) 'What Determines Religious Schools Choice? Theory and Evidence from Rural Bangladesh', *Bulletin of Economic Research*.	High
7	**Asadullah and Wahhaj (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Asadullah, M. Niaz, and Wahhaj, Zaki. (2012) 'Going to School in Purdah: Female Schooling, Mobility Norms and Madrasas in Bangladesh'. IZA Discussion Papers 7059. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).	Medium

8	**Backiny-Yetna and Wodon (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Backiny-Yetna, Prospere, and Wodon, Quentin 'Comparing the Performance of Faith-Based and Government Schools in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Felipe Barrera-Osorio, Harry Anthony Patrinos, and Quentin Wodon (eds.). *Emerging evidence on Vouchers and Faith-based Providers* Washington, D. C.: World Bank.	Medium
9	**Bangay and Latham (2013)**	[S, OR]	Bangay, Colin, and Latham, Michael. (2013) 'State Providers Debate: Reflections and a Case Study from India', *International Journal of Educational Development* 33(3): 244-52.	Medium
10	**Bano (2008a)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bano, Masooda. (2008). 'Allowing for Diversity: State-Madrasa Relations in Bangladesh'. Religions and Development Working Paper 13. University of Birmingham: International Development Department.	Medium
11	**Bano (2008b)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bano, Masooda. (2008) 'Non-profit education providers vis-à-vis the private sector: comparative analysis of non-governmental organizations and traditional voluntary organizations in Pakistan', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 38(4) : 471-482	Medium
12	**Bano (2010)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bano, Masooda. (2010) 'Madrasas as Partners in Education Provision: The South Asian Experience', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 554-66.	Medium
13	**Bano (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bano, Masooda. (2011) 'Co-Producing with FBOs: Lessons from State–Madrasa Engagement in the Middle East and South Asia', *Third World Quarterly* 32(7): 1273-89.	Medium
14	**Bano (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bano, Masooda. (2012) *The Rational Believer: Choices and Decisions in the Madrasas of Pakistan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.	Medium
15	**Batley (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Batley, Richard. (2011) 'Structures and Strategies in Relationships between Non-Government Service Providers and Governments.' *Public Administration And Development* 31: 306-19.	Medium
16	**Batley and Mcloughlin (2010)**	[S, OR]	Batley, Richard, and Mcloughlin, Claire. (2010) 'Engagement with Non state Service Providers in Fragile States: Reconciling State-Building and Service Delivery', *Development Policy Review* 28 (2): 131-154	High
17	**Batley and Rose (2010)**	[P&E, OBS]	Batley, Richard, and Rose, Pauline. 'Collaboration in Delivering Education: Relations between Governments and NGOs in South Asia', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 579-585	Medium
18	**Baxter and Bethke (2009)**	[S, OR]	Baxter, Pamela, and Bethke, Lynne. (2009) 'Alternative Education: Filling the Gap in Emergency and Post-Conflict Situations.' Paris: UNESCO, IIEP, CfBT	High
19	**Bender (2010)**	[P&E, OBS]	Bender, Lisa. (2010) 'Innovations in Emergency Education: The IRC in the Democratic Republic of Congo."' Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011 'The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education'	Medium
20	**Berry (2009)**	[S, OR]	Berry, Chris. (2009) 'A Framework for Assessing the Effectiveness of the Delivery of Education Aid in Fragile States'. *Journal of Education for International Development* 4(1)	Medium

21	**Berry (2010)**	[S, OR]	Berry, Chris. (2010) 'Working Effectively with Non state Actors to Deliver Education in Fragile States', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 586-93.	Medium
22	**Biziouras and Birger (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Biziouras, Nikolaos, and Birger, Nicholas. (2013) 'Peacebuilding through Education in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda: The Importance of Placing War-Affected Youth in Community-Oriented Schools', *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review* 3(2): 47-68.	Medium
23	**Blum (2009)**	[P & E, OBS]	Blum, Nicole. (2009) 'Small Ngo Schools in India: Implications for Access and Innovation', *Compare* 39 (2): 235-48.	Medium
24	**Brannelly, Ndaruhutse and Rigaud (2009)**	[S, OR]	Brannelly, Laura, Ndaruhutse, Susy, and Rigaud, Carole. (2009) 'Donors' Engagement: Supporting Education in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States' Paris: UNESCO, IIEP, CfBT	Medium
25	**Burde and Linden (2013)**	[P & E, EXP]	Burde, Dana, and Linden, Leigh L. (2013) 'Bringing Education to Afghan Girls: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Village-Based Schools', *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 5(3): 27-40.	High
26	**Cameron (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Cameron, Stuart. (2011) 'Whether and Where to Enrol? Choosing a Primary School in the Slums of Urban Dhaka, Bangladesh', *International Journal of Educational Development* 31(4): 357-66.	Medium
27	**Casely-Hayford and Hartwell (2010)**	[P&E, OBS]	Casely-Hayford, Leslie, and Hartwell, Ash. (2010) 'Reaching the Underserved with Complementary Education: Lessons from Ghana's State and Non state Sectors', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 527-39.	Medium
28	**CfBT (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	CfBT Education Trust. (2011) 'Preliminary Study into Low Fee Private Schools and Education - Final Report', Reading, UK: CfBT Education Trust	Medium
29	**Dang, Sarr and Asadullah (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Dang, Hai-Anh, Sarr, Leopold, and Asadullah, Mohammad Niaz. (2011) 'School Access, Resources, and Learning Outcomes: Evidence from a Non-Formal School Program in Bangladesh', IZA Discussion Papers 5659. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).	High
30	**De Herdt, Titeca, and Wagemakers (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	De Herdt, Tom, Titeca, Kristof, and Wagemakers, Inge (2012). 'Make Schools, Not War? Donors' Rewriting of the Social Contract in the DRC'. *Development Policy Review* 30(6): 681-701.	Medium
31	**DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2010)**	[P & E, OBS]	DeStefano, Joseph, and Schuh-Moore, Audrey-Marie. (2010) 'The Roles of Non state Providers in Ten Complementary Education Programmes', *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 511-26.	Medium
32	**Echessa, Ayite and Wahome (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Echessa, Emily, Ayite, Margaret, and Wahome, Rose. (2009) 'No looking back: the creation of a new education system in Southern Sudan' in Susan Nicolai, (ed.), *Opportunities for Change: Education Innovation and Reform During and after Conflict*. Paris: UNESCO, IIEP	Medium
33	**Epstein and Yuthas (2012)**	[P & E, OBS]	Epstein, Marc J., and Yuthas, Kristi. (2012) 'Scaling Effective Education for the Poor in Developing Countries: A Report from the Field', *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 31(1): 102-14.	Medium

34	**Farrell and Hartwell (2008)**	[S, OR]	Farrell, Joseph, and Hartwell, Ash. (2008). '"Planning for Successful Alternative Schooling: A Possible Route to Education for All', Paris: UNESCO, IIEP	Medium
35	**Høigilt (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Høigilt, Jacob. 'Islamism and Education: The Nature and Aims of Islamic Schools in the Occupied Palestinian Territories'', *Middle East Critique* 22(1): 63-76.	Medium
36	**IDFC (2013)**	[S, OR]	IDFC Foundation. (2013) 'Indian Infrastructure Report 2012 - Private Sector in Education', India Infrastructure Report. New Delhi: Routledge.	Medium
37	**Kirk and Winthrop (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Kirk, Jackie, and Winthrop, Rebecca. 'Moving from innovation to policy: IRC's work with community based education in Afghanistan' in Susan Nicolai (ed.), *Opportunities for Change: Education Innovation and Reform During and after Conflict*. Paris: UNESCO, IIEP.	Medium
38	**Leinweber (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Leinweber, Ashley E. (2013) 'From Devastation to Mobilisation: The Muslim Community's Involvement in Social Welfare in Post-Conflict DRC', *Review of African Political Economy* 40(135): 98-115.	Medium
39	**Mcloughlin (2014)**	[S, OR]	Mcloughlin, Claire. (2014) 'When Does Service Delivery Improve the Legitimacy of a Fragile or Conflict-Affected State?' *Governance*.	Medium
40	**Morpeth and Creed (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Morpeth, Ros, and Creed, Charlotte. 'Reframing Basic Education to Deliver Education for All: Flexible Provision and Enabling Frameworks', *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning* 27(3): 201-14.	Medium
41	**Murtaza (2012)**	[S, OR]	Murtaza, Niaz. (2012) 'Putting the Lasts First: The Case for Community-Focused and Peer-Managed Ngo Accountability Mechanisms', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-profit Organizations* 23 (1): 109-25.	Medium
42	**Nelson (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Nelson, Matthew J. (2009) 'Dealing with Difference: Religious Education and the Challenge of Democracy in Pakistan', *Modern Asian Studies* 43(3): 591-618.	High
43	**Ngware, Oketch and Ezeh (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Ngware, Moses W., Oketch, Moses., and Ezeh, Alex C. (2011) 'Quality of Primary Education Inputs in Urban Schools: Evidence from Nairobi', *Education and Urban Society* 43(1): 91-116.	Medium
44	**Nishimuko (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Nishimuko, Mikako. (2009) 'The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations and Faith-Based Organisations in Achieving Education for All: The Case of Sierra Leone', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 39(2): 281-95.	Medium
45	**OECD (2008)**	[S, OR]	OECD. (2008) 'Service Delivery In Fragile Situations: Key Concepts, Findings And Lessons'. OECD/DAC Discussion Paper. *Journal on Development* 9(3): 7-60	Medium
46	**Park and Niyozov (2008)**	[S, OR]	Park, Jaddon, and Niyozov, Sarfaroz. (2008) 'Madrasa Education in South Asia and Southeast Asia: Current Issues and Debates', *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 28(4): 323-51.	Medium
47	**Rew and Bhatewara (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Rew, Martin, and Bhatewara, Zara. (2012) 'Pro-Poor? Class, Gender, Power, and Authority in Faith-Based Education in Maharashtra, India', *Development in Practice* 22(5-6): 851-66.	Medium

48	**Rose (2008)**	[P&E, OBS]	Rose, Pauline. (2008) 'Exploring relationships between non state providers and the state in South Asia: Comparison of education cases'. Discussion Paper 7. CITY: Centre for International Education, Sussex University.	High
49	**Rose (2009)**	[S, OR]	Rose, Pauline. (2009) 'NGO Provision of Basic Education: Alternative or Complementary Service Delivery to Support Access to the Excluded?' *Compare* 39(2): 219-33.	Medium
50	**Rose (2010)**	[TC]	Rose, Pauline. (2010) 'Achieving Education for All through Public—Private Partnerships?' *Development in Practice* 20(4-5): 473-83.	Medium
51	**Rose (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Rose, Pauline. (2011) 'Strategies for Engagement: Government and National Non-Government Education Providers in South Asia', *Public Administration and Development* 31: 294-305.	Medium
52	**Sommers (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Sommers, Christine. (2012) 'Primary Education in Rural Bangladesh: Degrees of Access, Choice, and Participation of the Poorest', CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity) Pathways to Access Research Monograph No. 75. Brighton: Centre for International Education, Sussex University	Medium
53	**Sud (2010)**	[P&E, OBS]	Sud, Pamela. (2010) 'Can Non-Formal Education Keep Working Children in School? A Case Study from Punjab, India', *Journal of Education and Work* 23(1): 1-26.	High
54	**Thachil (2009)**	[S, OR]	Thachil, Tariq. (2009) 'Neoliberalism's Two Faces in Asia: Globalization, Educational Policies, and Religious Schooling in India, Pakistan, and Malaysia', *Comparative Politics* 41(4): 473-94.	Medium
55	**Titeca and de Herdt (2011)**	[P&E, OBS]	Titeca, Kristof, and de Herdt, Tom. (2011) 'Real Governance Beyond the "Failed State": Negotiating Education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', *African Affairs* 110(439): 213-31.	Medium
56	**Titeca, de Herdt and Wagemakers (2013)**	[P&E, OBS]	Titeca, Kristof, De Herdt, Tom, and Wagemakers, Inge. (2013) 'God and Caesar in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Negotiating Church–State Relations through the Management of School Fees in Kinshasa's Catholic Schools', *Review of African Political Economy* 40(135): 116-31.	Medium
57	**Umar and Tahir (2009)**	[S, OR]	Umar, Abdurrahman, and Tahir, Gidado. (2009) 'The Telesis of Nigerian Nomadic Education' in Danaher, A., Kenny, M., and Leder, J. (eds.), *Traveller, Nomadic and Migrant Education*. London: Routledge.	Medium
58	**Us-Sabur and Ahmed (2010)**	[S, OR]	Us-Sabur, Zia, and Ahmed, Manzoor. (2010) 'Multiple Providers and Access to Primary Education: The Case of Bangladesh', [In English]. *Prospects* 40(3): 393-415.	Medium
59	**Wodon and Ying (2009)**	[P&E, OBS]	Wodon, Quentin, and Ying, Yvonne. (2009) 'Literacy and Numeracy in Faith-Based and Government Schools in Sierra Leone' in Felipe Barrera-Osorio, Harry Anthony Patrinos and Quentin Wodon (eds.), Emerging Evidence on Vouchers and Faith-based Providers. Washington, D.C.: World Bank	Medium
60	**Van de Walle and Scott (2011)**	[S, OR]	Van de Walle, Steven & Scott, Zoe. (2011) 'The political role of service delivery in statebuilding: Exploring the relevance of European history for developing countries', *Development Policy Review*, 29(1): 5-21	High

61	**Verger (2012)**	[P&E, OBS]	Verger, Antoni. (2012) 'Framing and Selling Global Education Policy: The Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships for Education in Low-Income Contexts', *Journal of Education Policy* 27(1): 109-30.	Medium

Appendix 3: Hypotheses (H) and Counter-Hypotheses (CH)

The following tables set out the key hypotheses underpinning the conceptual framework of the review alongside the counter-hypotheses and, underneath, the assumptions and counter- assumptions that underpin them.

Supply

H1: Philanthropic and religious schools are better quality than state schools	CH1: Philanthropic and religious schools are not better quality than state schools
• **Philanthropic and religious school pupils achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils** • **Teaching is better in philanthropic and religious schools than in state schools**	• Philanthropic and religious school pupils do not achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils • Teaching in philanthropic and religious schools is not better than in state schools

H2: Philanthropic and religious schools provide education to disadvantaged children	CH2: Philanthropic and religious schools do not provide education to disadvantaged children
• **Philanthropic and religious schools geographically reach the poor and the marginalised** • **Philanthropic and religious schools are equally accessed by boys and girls**	• Philanthropic and religious schools do not geographically reach the poorest or the most marginalised • Philanthropic and religious schools are not equally accessed by boys and girls

H3: Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective and financially stable	CH3: Philanthropic and religious schools are not cost-effective nor financially stable
• **Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective** •**Philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable**	• Philanthropic and religious schools are less, or no more, cost-effective than state schools • Philanthropic and religious schools lack sustainable, regular and reliable sources of funding

Demand

H4: Philanthropic and religious schools are affordable to the poor and the poorest	CH4: Philanthropic and religious schools are not affordable to the poor and the poorest
• **Philanthropic and religious schools are as affordable to users as state schools**	• The costs of fees or other contributions are not affordable for poor households. • The costs of fees or other contributions may lead to a redistribution of resources and inequity within households.

H5: Demand for philanthropic and religious schools is driven by a concern for quality and informed choice	CH5: Demand for philanthropic and religious schools is not driven by informed choice or a concern for quality
• Perceived quality of education is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools **• Users make informed choices about the quality of education**	• School choice is not based on quality, and reflects other factors • Users lack necessary information to judge quality meaningfully

H6: Philanthropic and religious schools better respond to the needs, interests, beliefs and identities of particular social, cultural and religious groups	CH6: Philanthropic and religious schools are no better at responding to particular social groups and identities than state schools
• Users' choices reflect their identities, beliefs or membership of particular social, cultural or religious groups **• Philanthropic and religious schools provide education that is suited to the needs and interests of particular social, cultural or religious groups**	• User' choices do not reflect their identities, beliefs or group membership, and are based on other factors • Philanthropic and religious schools do not provide more diverse or culturally appropriate curricula than state schools

H7: Philanthropic and religious schools are accountable to users	CH7: Philanthropic and religious schools are not accountable to users
• Users actively participate in or influence operational decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools	• Users do not actively participate in or influence decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools

Enabling Environment

H8: Financing and regulation, whether from the state or international bodies, improves philanthropic and religious school quality, equity and sustainability	CH8: Financing and regulation, whether from the state or international bodies, does not improve philanthropic and religious school quality, equity and sustainability
• States have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools **• State regulation of philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability** **• State , subsidies, co-operation, partnerships, and contractual arrangements with philanthropic and religious schools improve quality, equity and sustainability** **• International support effectively strengthens philanthropic and religious provision of education**	• States lack the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools • Regulation has been used to control philanthropic and religious schools or defend the state sector against competition, potentially stifling innovation and restricting flexibility. • Expectations that governments also collaborate with, subsidise and regulate philanthropic and religious schools diverts vital capacity from the state education sector. • International organisations lack the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to effectively support philanthropic and religious schools and education provision

H9: Philanthropic and religious schools and education providers have positive effects on the overall education system	CH9: Philanthropic and religious schools do not have positive effects on the overall education system
• **Philanthropic and religious education provision complements or strengthens the state**	• Philanthropic and religious schools have encouraged migrations away from the state sector • Philanthropic and religious provision splits potential political coalitions and undermines the capacity of communities to demand high-quality state provision of education • Philanthropic and religious schools can undermine sustainable state provision and set up parallel systems

H10: Philanthropic and religious schools support social cohesion and peace-building	CH10: Philanthropic and religious schools undermine social cohesion and do not support peace-building
• **Philanthropic and religious provision does not increase tensions between different groups** • **Philanthropic and religious provision can help to support peace-building.**	• Philanthropic and religious provision leads to self-segregation by communities that can undermine social cohesion and increase tensions • Philanthropic and religious provision does not support peace-building

Appendix 4: Search Terms

Table of search terms[35]

Key search terms	Synonyms
Educat*	school - tutor*- learn - teach -instruct - pegagog*- + provider/ provision
And	
Non state	- civil society -faith-based organisations (FBOs) - religious - informal/informal sector -madrasa/madrasah - non state provider (NSP) - international/national NGO - non-government- charity - community - volunt*- association - donor - philanthrop* - independent - philanthropy schools - Civil society organisation (CSO) - foundation - non-profit/non-profit organization - alternative - catch up - accelerated
+	
Supply	- effect - effective - cost -- quality - financ* - sustainab*- capacity - achieve* - attain*- outcome - standards - improvement - perform* - selection - technolog* - innovate* - evaluation - teacher - labour - deploy - access - equity - disadvantag* - marginal - poor/poverty - excluded/exclusion - girls - social justice/inclusion/inclusive/segregation/cohesion - remote - hard to reach - nomadic - conflict/post-conflict - underserved - humanitarian - emergency - disaster - disabled/disability - street children/child - mobile - out-of-school - refugee/refugee camp
Or	
Demand	- user - client - consumer - parent - choice/choose - decision/decide - inform* - bounded rationality - perception/perceive - opportunity pay - price - expenditure/expense - invest - afford - household - micro-finance - competition - migration/migrate - accountab* - culture - language - social cohesion
Or	
Enabling environment	- politic*- investment climate - market - econom* - legal rights/literacy - govern*- policy - state - public - policy - incentive - intervention - dynamic - relationship - interact/ interaction - collaborat*- partnership - PPP - right to education - socialisation - regulation/regulate - manage/management - plan/planning - voucher - subsidy/subsidies - grant - scholarship - bursar* - free place - reserve/reservation - corporate social responsibility /CSR - international organisation/company/ies /donor/aid stewardship - principal-agent - cooper* - co-oper*- autonomy - parallel - complement* - advocacy - recognition - incentive* - contract*- collective action - funding - contract*- recognition - co-production

[35] Search terms in black were also used in Day Ashley et al., (2014) to gather literature for the review of private education providers. Those in red were added specifically for this review. Search terms relating to private schools or schooling were also excluded.

Appendix 5: Sources

These sources were thoroughly checked for the production of the master bibliography.

RESEARCH INSTITUTES	KEY JOURNALS
• Centre for Global Development • Centre for International Education, University of Sussex (CIE) • Centre for Universal Education (Brookings) • Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) • CfBT Education Trust • Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) • Health and Education Advice and Resource Team (HEART) • Institute of International Education • Institute of Education, University of London • Research Consortium on Educational Outcomes and Poverty (RECOUP) • UNESCO International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) • UNESCO Global Monitoring Report	• Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education • Development Policy Review • Development and Change • Development in Practice • Economics of Education Review • Education Economics • Globalisation, Societies and Education • International Journal of Educational Development • International studies review • IDS Bulletin • Journal of Development Economics • Journal of International Development • *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* • Oxford Development Studies • Public Administration and Development • Review of African Political Economy • Third World Quarterly • World Development • World Bank Research Observer
CITATION INDEXES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES	**OTHER WEBSITES**
• EconPapers • EconLit • ERIC • JSTOR *(limited to the following databases: economics, education, psychology, public administration and sociology)* • Oxford University Press Journals *(limited to the subject of Social Sciences)* • Pro-Quest *(limited to the following subjects: Economics, Education, Psychology and Social Sciences)* • REPEC/IDEAS • SAGE Journals Online • Science Direct • UNESDOC (UNESCO) • Ingentaconnect	• All-party parliamentary Group on Education for Allhttp://www.appg-educationforall.org.uk/ • CODESRIA • Campbell Collaboration • Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI) • Eldis • Educational Quality Improvement Programme, USAID • Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC) • Google Scholar • PERI Global • Poverty Action Lab • 3ie • Research For Development (DFID) • UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report • UNDP Oslo Governance Centre • World Bank – Education • Results for Development Institute • Young Lives • Centre for Global Development • ASER (India and Pakistan) • Research Consortium on Educational Outcomes and Poverty (RECOUP) • The LEAPS project • The Centre for Researching Education and Labour, University of Witwatersrand • Centre for civil society, New Delhi • Enterprising schools

Appendix 6: Tools to Assess and Rate Individual Study Quality

Checklist for study quality

Principles of quality	Associated principles	YES/NO
Conceptual framing	Does the study acknowledge existing research?	
	Does the study construct a conceptual framework?	
	Does the study pose a research question?	
	Does the study outline a hypothesis?	
Openness and transparency	Does the study present or link to the raw data it analyses?	
	Does the author recognise limitations/weaknesses in their work?	
Appropriateness and rigour	Does the study identify a research design?	
	Does the study identify a research method?	
	Does the study demonstrate why the chosen design and method are good ways to explore the research question?	
Validity	Has the study demonstrated measurement validity?	
	Is the study internally valid?	
	Is the study externally valid?	
Reliability	Has the study demonstrated measurement reliability?	
	Has the study demonstrated that its selected analytical technique is reliable?	
Cogency	Does the author 'signpost' the reader throughout?	
	Are the conclusions clearly based on the study's results?	

(Source: DFID, 2013, *How To Note* on *Assessing the Strength of Evidence.*, p.14)

Guide for grading the quality of individual studies

Study quality	Abbreviation	Definition
High	↑	Demonstrates adherence to principles of appropriateness/rigour, validity and reliability; likely to demonstrate principles of conceptual framing, openness/ transparency and cogency
Moderate*	→	Some deficiencies in appropriateness/rigour, validity and/or reliability, or difficulty in determining these; may or may not demonstrate principles of conceptual framing, openness/transparency and cogency
Low	↓	Major and/or numerous deficiencies in appropriateness/rigour, validity and reliability; may/may not demonstrate principles of conceptual framing, openness/ transparency and cogency

(Source: DFID, 2013, *How To Note* on *Assessing the Strength of Evidence.*, p.15)

Appendix 7: Tools for Reviewing Individual Studies

Templates for extracting data and recording methodological information

Full reference of text:	
Hypothesis/es: *(State each hypothesis if paper refers to more than one. If paper is not relevant to any of the hypotheses do not continue the rest of the template.)*	
Type of study, design and method *(Refer to Table 1 for categories)*	
Assessment of quality: high/medium/low	
Describe the overall methodological weaknesses and limitations of the study identified by (i) the author, (ii) the reviewer.	
Country/ies	
School type(s): Religious (specify faith), Community, NGO, INGO, CSO, Mobile (specify provider), Other (please specify). *(Please include other details where available e.g. fee-charging status, specific target communities, contracted out by state, etc.)*	
Primary or secondary level (specify ages if possible)	
Geographic location: Urban, peri-urban or rural	
Describe key findings of the paper, particularly in relation to the hypotheses. State findings that: (i) support; (ii) counter; or (iii) are neutral regarding hypotheses.	
Which factors account for the findings in the author's view?	
Does the author identify unintended consequences? How are they described/ explained?	
Any other/related issues that may be relevant to the review or have implications for donors.	

Table for categorising research type, design and method

Research Type	Research Design
Primary & Empirical (P&E)	Experimental (EXP) + state method used
	Observational (OBS) + state method used
Secondary (S)	Systematic Review (SR)
	Other Review (OR)
Theoretical or Conceptual (TC)	N/A

(Source: DFID, 2013, *How To Note* on *Assessing the Strength of Evidence.*, p.9)

Appendix 8: Assessment of overall strength of body of evidence for each assumption

Hypotheses and assumptions	Quality	Size	Context	Consistency	Overall strength
[H1] QUALITY Philanthropic and religious schools are better quality than state schools					
(A1) Philanthropic and religious school pupils achieve better learning outcomes than state school pupils	**Medium** (8 medium; 1 high)	**Strong (9)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Zambia)*	**Medium** **Positive* (5) Neutral (3) Negative (1)	**MODERATE***
(A2) Teaching is better in philanthropic and religious schools than in state schools	**Medium** (11 medium; 2 high)	**Strong (13)**	**Strong** (*Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mali, Pakistan, Uganda , Zambia)*	**Strong****Positive* (10) Neutral (3) Negative (0)	**STRONG***
[H2] EQUITY Philanthropic and religious schools provide education to disadvantaged children					
(A3) Philanthropic and religious schools geographically reach the poor and the marginalised	**Medium** (17 medium; 4 high)	**Strong (21)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Zambia, South Asia)*	**Strong** **Positive* (19) Neutral (3) Negative (0)	**STRONG**
(A4) Philanthropic and religious schools are equally accessed by boys and girls	**Medium** (9 medium; 3 high)	**Strong (12)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Sierra Leone)*	**Medium** **Positive* (10) Neutral (0) Negative (4)	**MODERATE †**
[H3]COST EFFECTIVENESS Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective and financially stable					
(A5) Philanthropic and religious schools are cost-effective	**Medium** (7 medium; 1 high)	**Medium (8)**	**Strong** **(***Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Zambia)*	**Strong** **Positive* (7) Neutral (1) Negative (0)	**MODERATE***
(A6) Philanthropic and religious schools are financially sustainable	**Medium** (9 medium; 1 high)	**Medium (10)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Yemen, Zambia)*	**Weak** **Neutral* (7) Positive (3) Negative (0)	**WEAK**
[H4] AFFORDABLIITY Philanthropic and religious schools are affordable to the poor and the poorest					
(A7) Philanthropic and religious schools are as affordable to users as state schools	**Medium** (10 medium; 2 high)	**Strong (12)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Zambia)*	**Weak** **Neutral* (10) Positive (1) Negative (1)	**WEAK**

[H5] CHOICE & QUALTY Demand for philanthropic and religious schools is driven by a concern for quality and informed choice					
(A8) Perceived quality of education is a priority for users when choosing philanthropic and religious schools	**Medium** (6 medium; 2 high)	**Medium (8)**	**Medium** *(Bangladesh, India, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan)*	**Weak** **Neutral* (4) Positive (2) Negative (2)	**WEAK**
(A9) Users make informed choices about the quality of education	**Medium** (3 medium)	**Weak (3)**	**Weak** *(Bangladesh, India)*	**Weak** **Neutral* (2) Positive (0) Negative (1)	**WEAK**
[H6] CHOICE & IDENTITY Philanthropic and religious schools better respond to the needs, interests, beliefs and identities of particular social, cultural and religious groups					
(A10) Users' choices reflect their identities, beliefs or membership of particular social, cultural or religious groups	**Medium** (4 medium; 2 high)	**Medium (6)**	**Medium** *(Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, South Asia)*	**Strong** **Positive* (5) Neutral (0) Negative (1)	**MODERATE §**
(A11) Philanthropic and religious schools provide education that is suited to the needs and interests of particular social, cultural or religious groups	**Medium** (9 medium; 3 high)	**Strong (12)**	**Strong** *(Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan)*	**Strong** **Positive* (11) Neutral (1) Negative (0)	**STRONG**
[H7] ACCOUNTABILITY Philanthropic and religious schools are accountable to users					
(A12) Users actively participate in or influence operational decision-making in philanthropic and religious schools	**Medium** (5 medium; 2 high)	**Medium (7)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Zambia, Unspecified)*	**Medium** **Positive* (5) Neutral (0) Negative (2)	**MODERATE ‡**
[H8] FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIP Financing and regulation, whether from the state or international bodies, improves philanthropic and religious school quality, equity and sustainability					
(A13) States have the capacity, legitimacy and knowledge to implement effective policy frameworks for collaboration and regulation of philanthropic and religious schools	**Medium** (20 medium; 3 high)	**Strong (23)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, , Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Sudan, Zambia, South Asia, Range)*	**Weak** **Negative* (12) Positive (5) Neutral (9)	**WEAK**
(A14) State regulation of philanthropic and religious schools improves quality, equity and sustainability	**Medium** (7 medium; 3 high)	**Medium (10)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Pakistan, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Range)*	**Medium** **Positive* (8) Neutral (0) Negative (4)	**MODERATE**

(A15) State subsidies, co-operation, partnerships, and contractual arrangements with philanthropic and religious schools improve quality, equity and sustainability	**Medium** (7 medium; 3 high)	**Medium(10)**	**Strong** *(Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Pakistan, Uganda, Range)*	**Weak** **Positive* (6) Neutral (3) Negative (5)	**WEAK**
(A16) International support effectively strengthens philanthropic and religious provision of education	**Medium** (13 medium; 3 high)	**Strong (16)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Yemen, Range)*	**Weak** **Negative* (10) Positive (8) Neutral (2)	**WEAK***
[H9] MARKET Philanthropic and religious schools and education providers have positive effects on the overall education system					
(A17) Philanthropic and religious education provision complements or strengthens the state	**Medium** (11 medium; 4 high)	**Strong (15)**	**Strong** *(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Range)*	**Medium** **Positive* (10) Neutral (1) Negative (5)	**MODERATE***
[H10] Philanthropic and religious schools support social cohesion and peace-building					
(A18) Philanthropic and religious provision does not increase tensions between different groups	**Medium** (3 medium; 1 high)	**Weak (4)**	**Weak** *(India, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan)*	**Weak** **Neutral* (3) Positive (0) Negative (1)	**WEAK §**
(A19) Philanthropic and religious provision can help to support peace-building	**Medium** (2 medium)	**Weak (2)**	**Weak** *(Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda)*	**Strong** **Positive* (2) Neutral (0) Negative (0)	**WEAK**

Key: (+) Positive majority – more studies supporting assumption than refuting
(o) Neutral majority- more studies are ambiguous rather than supporting or refuting
(-) Negative majority– more studies refuting assumption than supporting
* = Little evidence for religious schools
† = Mixed evidence for religious schools
‡= No evidence for religious schools
§ = No evidence for philanthropic schools

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