Non-State Education in South Asia

Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

Artur Borkowski, Bindu Sunny and Juliana Zapata

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FOREWORD

Across the globe, non-state actors are playing an increasing role in shaping education service delivery. The private sector, international agencies, local, national and international non-governmental organizations and communities are all supporting, guiding and/or implementing education service delivery for children and young people. However, this growth has not been supported by sufficient evidence to ensure that all children and, importantly, the most vulnerable, are receiving a good-quality, equitable and safe education through non-state actor engagement in education.

The eight countries in South Asia – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – have the largest share of private education (32 per cent) of any region globally. Given the comparatively low levels of investment in education in the region and the need to ensure all children have access to education, the growth of non-state actor engagement in education delivery has supported these countries’ efforts towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) for inclusive, equitable and good-quality education. This growth has raised concerns about whether these types of schools can provide both good-quality and equitable outcomes. The quality of private schools is ambiguous, and the cost of private schooling across countries can put the most vulnerable families searching for equality of opportunity at an even higher risk as they strive to give their children a good education. The limited evidence and data on the safety of children in these settings is remarkable.

As countries continue efforts toward meeting SDG 4 by 2030, many will continue to seek partnerships with non-state actors to fill the current gaps in education provision at all levels. Countries and education stakeholders, such as UNICEF, will need evidence on how best to engage the sector and ensure that both government and non-state schools are delivering good-quality education, and are being held accountable for improving access and learning for all. Ultimately, governments working to secure every child’s right to a good-quality, equitable and safe education will need strong frameworks that can guide and support delivery for all.

This research provides insights on the current evidence on non-state actor engagement in education service delivery, and highlights the extent to which non-state actors are part of different types of education provision in South Asia. It is hoped that the findings will inform governments on what the role of non-state actors in education delivery can be, and help to ensure that they are held to the same standards as state schools.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on ensuring inclusive and equitable access to high-quality education has been slow in South Asia. Even before the Covid-19 crisis struck, 200 million children in the region were projected to still be out of school by 2030 (UNDESA, 2020). Furthermore, there are large inequities in access to education based on various household and child characteristics, such as socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, race and disability (UNDESA, 2020; UNESCO, 2020b). Even for children in school, learning remains out of reach: 58 per cent of children in South Asia (ranging from 15 per cent in Sri Lanka to 93 per cent in Afghanistan) cannot read and understand a simple story by age 10 (World Bank, 2019).

The causes of these poor learning outcomes and unequal access are complex and vary across (and within) countries. The rapid expansion of education aiming to achieve universal access at primary level has led to an under-resourced education system in the region that are ill-equipped to deliver good-quality, equitable and safe learning opportunities for all.1 For instance, the Incheon Declaration recommends countries spend 4–6 per cent of GDP on education, but the countries in South Asia are only spending an average of 2.8 per cent, with only three countries (Bhutan at 7 per cent, Nepal at 5 per cent and Maldives at 4 per cent) meeting or exceeding 4 per cent. Moreover, as populations grow and the demand for high-quality education increases, governments are under pressure to provide greater resources for education, and improve efficiency in their systems.

While the public sector remains the principal means of delivering education, the role of non-state actors (NSAs) in education is increasing globally, including in South Asia (UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2019; UNICEF & ADB, 2011). NSAs have a long history of addressing gaps in education provision, but the evolution of their involvement recently has changed our understanding of the best education models. While the political will to lead the education agenda is critical, so are effective partnerships between governments, civil society and the private sector (contributing to SDG 172), given the low resourcing of education in the region.

South Asia has high levels of non-state-school enrolment compared to other regions, with about 37 per cent of children attending some type of non-state-sector institution at primary level (compared to 14 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa, 21 per cent in Latin American and the Caribbean, and 11 per cent in East Asia and the Pacific) (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Despite the significant role of NSAs in education, their influence on quality, equity, safety and learning outcomes is at least ambiguous if not unclear (Akmal, Crawfurd & Hares, 2019; Aslam, Rawal & Sahar, 2017; Day Ashley et al., 2014; Srivastava, 2020; Wales, Aslam, Hine, Rawal & Wild, 2015).

NSAs in education can enjoy certain advantages in terms of cost-effectiveness and efficiency, and offer innovative ways of tackling challenges and finding alternative sources of funding to help more children

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1 Quality refers to the delivery of teaching and learning in the classroom that “enables all learners to realise the capabilities they require to become economically productive, to develop sustainable livelihoods, to contribute to peaceful and democratic societies, and to enhance wellbeing” (Tikly & Barrett, 2010, p. 1).

2 SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.
access education, particularly where state capacity or quality is weak and parental demand for non-state provision strong. On the other hand, non-state engagement in education has been controversial, with some arguing that the spread of for-profit actors is commercializing education (Draxler, 2012; Verger, 2012), and so potentially exacerbating inequalities, and risking the transfer of public-sector resources to the commercial private sector (ASPBAE, n.d.; Härmä & Adefisayo, 2013; Härmä & Rose, 2012; Rose, 2010; Srivastava, 2020; UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, 2019). It is therefore critical to understand the extent and effects of NSA involvement in public education systems, both to optimize their contribution and guard against negative impacts.

The Covid-19 pandemic has raised new questions about the role of NSAs in education. Many small private schools faced closure due to the disruption, yet NSAs are also very active in digital learning, a sector that is likely to expand, adding urgency to questions around the commercialization of education.

This report intends to help fill important gaps in the evidence and to provide an analysis to help guide more effective partnerships with NSAs in the future. Drawing on a comprehensive literature review and both primary and secondary data sources, this regional review explores education provision in eight countries in South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It identifies and assesses the ways in which NSAs engage and co-exist with the public sector in the delivery of pre-primary, primary and secondary education. The report highlights potential merits, challenges and risks of NSA engagement in terms of delivering high-quality, equitable and safe education services.

The report's meta-analysis of the evidence on learning outcomes in public and non-state schools takes into account the implications for quality, equity and safety of NSA involvement in education. While the findings provide meaningful insights on the overall effect, the review also uncovers gaps in evidence that need to be addressed to show what is really working, for whom, where and at what cost. These gaps include:

- lack of agreed definitions of NSAs that capture their diversity and the complexity of their engagement
- a need for consistent and comprehensive quality measures that extend beyond inputs
- data on equitable access and learning outcomes for children with disabilities and those from minority groups
- a dire need for more and better evidence on school safety and private tutoring
- lack of evidence on the establishment and enforcement of the regulation of NSAs.
KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of non-state actors in education across in South Asia

The growing spectrum of non-state actors is constantly changing, heterogeneous and complex to define, and in urgent need of standardized nomenclature and classifications, within and across countries. This report uses the term ‘non-state’ to denote a very wide diversity of actors as it is less ideologically charged than the looser term ‘private’ and more easily encompasses and acknowledges the wide range of actors involved in education. However, ‘non-state’ is still an umbrella term and there is a need for greater contextual specificity and the use of standardized – more detailed – nomenclature. This would ensure that stakeholders understand and interact with various non-state actors (NSAs) effectively, including religious institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), small firms and corporations. Along this spectrum, the forms, functions and involvement of NSAs in education provision are fluid, and may converge or diverge, depending on the context in which they operate. It is important that every country maps the different providers in education at the national and sub-national levels. In South Asia, non-state schools are sometimes not captured in education management information systems (EMIS) and monitoring systems, especially at the pre-primary level, and thus provision consequently falls under the radar (UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) 2019; UNICEF & UIS, 2016).

Education services are delivered by a range of different providers across a continuous, complex spectrum, ranging from those with low (or no) levels of private involvement, such as publicly funded and managed schools, to mid-level private engagement in public–private partnerships, and high levels of private engagement in elite private schools and among private tuition providers (see Chapter 1, Figure 1.4). The services they provide are equally varied: the full range of NSA involvement ranges from auxiliary support contracts in areas such as janitorial services, infrastructure, school feeding programmes and IT connectivity, through the provision of teaching resources, teacher training and development, and recruitment, all the way to full-scale, for-profit management and funding of schools.

NSAs are active in education service delivery to different extents across countries and education levels in the region. For instance, while in Bangladesh NSAs provide nearly all education at the lower (97 per cent) and upper secondary (91 per cent) levels, they provide just 20 per cent of education at the primary level and nearly 50 per cent at the pre-primary level. In contrast, only 2 per cent of secondary education in Maldives is provided by NSAs. Furthermore, there are large variations within countries, both at the state and provincial levels, and between urban and rural areas.

As shown in Chapter 6, evidence on the extent and effectiveness of private tutoring provided outside school is limited. Emerging empirical and anecdotal evidence indicates that it is widespread in less affluent South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. For example, in Bangladesh, 43 per cent of children at primary level receive private tutoring and in Nepal, this figure is over 50 per cent of secondary school students and around 68 per cent of grade 10 students (Ahmed, Nath & Yasmin 2005; Jayachandran 2014; Thapa 2011). Evidence is limited for Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives, although there are suggestions that it is also widespread in those countries. More research is needed on this critical area on NSA engagement, especially on the nature of private tuition and apparent inequities in access.

The Covid-19 pandemic and related closure of schools brought new challenges for existing NSAs involved in education service provision, and saw the emergence of multiple new ones. It has also created new opportunities and risks in terms of private sector engagement globally and locally. The rapid development of education resources that cater directly for the individual rather than schools through new technological approaches to learning delivery is a seismic shift that brings with it a whole
new set of implications. This burgeoning area requires the generation of additional evidence that is beyond the scope of this study.

Evidence of the ability of non-state actors to deliver equitable and safe education

Non-state schools, in some contexts, are outperforming their state counterparts, but evidence attributing learning gains to any one form of NSA provision is limited, due to the vast variation in implementation of programmes. In the bigger picture, however, there is an urgent need to strengthen the quality of education across the majority of schools in the region, irrespective of provider type. The necessary strengthening of education systems will include a need for governments to work within a whole-system approach, rather than allowing parallel (state and non-state) sectors to co-exist (see Chapter 2). There will be a need also to establish, monitor, enforce and report on minimum quality and safety benchmarks, including by setting standards for pedagogical practice, strengthening child protection and safeguarding, and instigating effective school management and monitoring frameworks. This should include inspection and quality assurance regimes. Regulatory and monitoring frameworks should go beyond current input-focused models, to become more process- and outcome-focused. It will be necessary to look at the overall social and cognitive development and well-being of the child, and to include performance in the competencies that are universally recognized as critical for life in the 21st century.

Though non-state schools may show comparable gains in learning, their ability to guarantee equitable education opportunities is more limited and varies by provider type. While a rapidly growing, diverse yet fragmented spectrum of NSA providers may usefully fill gaps in provision, our evidence shows that some forms of NSA engagement actually exacerbate inequities in access to education. This is especially the case for children in rural areas, girls and children with disabilities. For instance, in India, the non-state enrolment rate of urban and rural children varies dramatically at all levels, with 42 per cent of urban and 21 per cent of rural children enrolled in non-state schools at the primary level. The entry of fee-charging private schools and use of private tutors by families further exacerbate inequities and leave families who cannot afford these opportunities worse off.

Learning at the pre-primary level is a particularly significant area, since learning at this level enhances equity later in life and is a cost-effective way to offset vulnerabilities. Consequently, the exclusive and unregulated provision of non-state education at pre-primary level is likely to contribute to growing inequities, as the most marginalized are the least likely to be able to afford access, despite their need for a stronger start. Multiple disadvantages intersect to further marginalize disadvantaged children and widen inequalities. More state-funded provision of pre-primary education is needed, alongside monitoring and enforcement of the quality of provision and accountability measures of different providers to ensure that the most vulnerable children are not being left behind.

While safety from violence of any type in school is paramount for all children, school type is not a clear determinant of children’s safety. Child protection and safeguarding standards are not clear, monitored or enforced across all school types. South Asia has high levels of school-based violence generally. For example:

- 68 per cent of students in Nepal experienced violence in schools (Plan International & International Center for Research on Women, 2015)
- 90 per cent of children surveyed in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, in India, witnessed a teacher inflicting punishment in the classroom within the last week of being surveyed (Oganda Portella & Pells, 2015)
in Sri Lanka, 80 per cent of children reported at least one episode of corporal punishment in the previous school term (National Child Protection Authority, 2017)

in Bhutan, 64 per cent of children aged 13–17 experienced at least one incident of physical violence, and 13 per cent girls reported unwanted touching, with 2 per cent experiencing forced sexual intercourse (UNICEF, 2016).

Enforcing the safety of children from harm within and around schools is critical to ensuring that school choice, participation, engagement and learning are prioritized and not inhibited. Addressing any weakness in school safety benchmarks and support structures, and establishing social norms and classroom practices that promote a safe school environment are essential components of a safe learning environment in which children and young people can grow and excel. Again, more research is needed on this topic, including on the differences between school types.

As Chapter 6 indicates, private tutoring (PT) is widespread across South Asia, driven by the perceived poor quality of state schooling and social competition in the context of extremely competitive, high-stakes examinations. While PT can produce some learning gains for some students, the evidence suggests that socio-economic status is a key determinant in accessing PT. Even more serious is the observation that not only does PT drive inequity of opportunity, but also produces inefficiencies in the education system, as it may encourage teachers who are also private tutors to teach less during regular school hours, and favour their private pupils. Tutoring can also be a source of financial strain on households, which increases as children enter the higher grades, as well as a source of great mental pressure on children and young people to achieve. In Nepal, over 50 per cent of secondary school students and around 68 per cent of grade 10 students receive PT (Jayachandran, 2014; Thapa, 2011), and in Maldives, PT is more widespread among secondary students, due to the competitiveness of the examination system. Raising the quality of mainstream education and improving pay and working conditions for teachers, such that their need to supplement their income through PT is no longer necessary, would mitigate these perverse effects. Providing remedial education for all children in school, especially the most disadvantaged, will also ameliorate (though not eliminate) the challenges that PT presents to the system as a whole.

**Effect of system-level mechanisms on education service delivery**

Optimizing system-level policy levers to engage both state and non-state actors in delivering good-quality, equitable and safe education is a critical and strategic approach to achieving SDG 4, addressing the learning crisis, and responding to the educational needs of all children.

To achieve this, enhanced political commitment and capacity of leadership, at all levels, need to govern the effective delivery of both state and non-state education. As explored in Chapter 2, the parallel existence of two separate strands of education provision does not best serve families and children. This is why a whole-system approach that encompasses the staggering variety of provision and providers is needed, from strategic planning for education at national and sub-national levels, to the provision of good-quality, equitable and safe classroom teaching. This will mean forming strategic partnerships between government and NSAs, contingent on NSAs’:

- funding (public or private)
- status (non-profit or for-profit)
- willingness to be transparent and accountable in their dealings
ability to meet state-established benchmarks

- compliance with regulations, including registration where necessary
- capacity and competence to provide high-quality, equitable and safe education services for all.

A first step towards evidence around the quality and capacity of NSA education will be to build a reliable data system that can establish and monitor quality, equity and safety in all schools, with a universally understood definition that covers the diversity of providers identified in this report. This means that education management information systems (EMIS), teacher management information systems (TMIS) and examination assessment systems should cover all school types and be made available to policymakers (see Appendix 3 to Annex 2). Making data available will require NSA providers to share data and information, and to be transparent and accountable in their dealings with government and funding partners at national and local levels.

Among the several funding challenges identified in Chapter 1 is a discrepancy in funding allocations: for example, in Sri Lanka, the 95 per cent of schools attended by poor rural children receive 65 per cent of total general education spending, compared with the 5 per cent of schools attended by affluent urban children receiving 35 per cent of the education budget (Dundar et al., 2017). Securing diversified and equitably allocated funding from state and non-state sources to finance the education needs of all children, including the most vulnerable will be a priority.

In most of the eight countries we studied, regulations exist to establish the types of NSA that can participate in education and the forms of partnership that can exist. However, enforcement of regulations places additional burdens on the state in terms of monitoring and enforcing compliance, and regulations can also have a chilling effect on NSA provision due to the bureaucratic burden and expense they impose. By the same token, NSAs such as civil society organizations, teachers’ unions and advocacy groups have contributed to increasing accountability and enforcement of regulations: NSAs may be insufficiently regulated in some countries, but these same actors play an important role in shaping and encouraging better regulation.

The co-existence of state and non-state engagement in the creation of a good-quality, equitable and safe education system cannot be built by government and providers alone. Community engagement and involvement have been key to NSAs’ creation of safe environments for children. For example, Schools as Zones of Peace in Nepal was a successful community-based initiative to promote and enforce compliance with codes of conduct that protected schools from conflict. In Afghanistan, the presence of makeshift premises in community- and home-based schools was effective in reducing the tactical targeting of schools during times of conflict. In Pakistan, NGOs have successfully used play-based methods to shift social norms and reduce the incidence of peer-on-peer violence and corporal punishment in schools. These and other examples in the report show the beneficial influences of civil society on securing safe places for learning.

Equitable education can only be achieved by breaking down the barriers that prevent access to learning. The Right to Education Act (RTE Act) in India compelled non-state schools to reserve a quota of 25 per cent of places for children from disadvantaged groups. Going further, fee-charging non-state schools could be asked to provide scholarships for marginalized children. In both cases, care must be taken in implementation to ensure that the challenges faced by non-state schools are considered. For example, NSAs in India report problems in collecting reimbursement from government, which may
ultimately lead to rises in fees for paying students at private schools (see Chapter 4). There may be a case for fee caps, limited fees or vouchers (for girls), but the limitations on available research suggest that we have to understand the context better before selecting and implementing strategies for widening access.

**NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities are filling the gaps while governments build their capacity.** For example, in Pakistan, the Public–Private Partnership Authority Act 2016 has increased efforts to improve equity and quality within the education system by combining private-sector efficiency and public-sector funding in community-based education programmes (Sindh Education Foundation, 2017). In Bhutan, funding from UNICEF and Save the Children significantly supplements government spending for early childhood centres (UNICEF Bhutan, 2017). CSOs such as Pratham in India have been actively engaged in improving access to data to inform school performance and education policies, as well as pioneering the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), a volunteer-led household survey that has been adapted for use in Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. In Bangladesh also, CSOs such as the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) have played a key role as advocates for children and local communities, using research and policy dialogue to drive education reform and transparency and accountability efforts.

Having a **robust accountability system** is essential for increasing transparency and monitoring the involvement of NSAs in education. Bangladesh has an EMIS that captures the diversity of NSAs in education service delivery, and in Nepal, non-state schools are required to be registered as trusts or companies based on their profit motives (Bhutta & Budathoki, 2013). This distinguishes for-profit from non-profit NSA education services at the outset through financial and legal declaration of entities.

**Structure of the report**

The report presents findings to support cross-national learning on NSA engagement in education service delivery at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. It is structured in six chapters: The first chapter introduces the context of NSA involvement in education in South Asia. Chapter 2 contributes to the debate on private education by discussing the system-level levers of governance, funding, accountability and data systems that inform our understanding of the ways in which governments and NSAs engage, and suggests ways to improve this. Chapters 3 to 5 explore the evidence to assess the effectiveness of NSA engagement on three main outcomes: quality, equity and safety. Chapter 6 focuses on private tutoring, an important sector that runs parallel to mainstream education and has implications for it.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

**Chapter 1 in a nutshell**
Non-state actors (NSAs), such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious bodies, special interest groups, foundations and businesses have played an increasing role in the provision of education globally, including in South Asia. This has affected the quality, equity and safety of education to which children have access. This chapter:

- sets out the context of education in South Asia
- defines the diverse nature, range and growing extent of NSA engagement in education in the region
- establishes the importance of private-sector engagement in fulfilling children’s right to education
- considers the full range of NSA involvement, from auxiliary support to for-profit management and funding of schools, in order to understand how NSAs participate in the provision of children’s education.

**1.1 Non-state actor involvement in education in South Asia**

**1.1.1 Context of education provision**

Education is a basic human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Articles 28 (the right to education) and 29 (the objectives of the education system). The report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education (2019), the Abidjan Principles on the Right to Education (2019) and the Sustainable Development Goals support this right, emphasizing the role of governments in providing universal access to free, high-quality, inclusive public education. As governments work to improve universal access to high-quality, equitable education, they must try to achieve their objectives and meet rising public demand for education with limited resources and in the context of demographic changes and institutional constraints (ADB & UNICEF, 2011). This is, at times, necessitating hard choices on spending allocations.

Progress towards the inclusive and equitable delivery of high-quality education envisioned in SDG 4 has been slow. For instance, in 2018, 17 per cent of children aged 6–17 globally were still out of school, and large disparities remain between socio-economic groups and genders in primary completion rates (UNDESA, 2020; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). The picture in South Asia is equally worrying. The region has an estimated 36.1 million primary- and secondary-age students out of school, with rates as high as 37 per cent in Afghanistan (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Learning poverty rates or the share of children unable to read a simple text by age 10 range widely, from 15 per cent in Sri Lanka to 93 per cent in Afghanistan (see Figure 1.1). With 59 per cent of children in the region unable to read and understand a simple story by the end of primary school (World Bank, 2019), it is clear that there is more work to do and progress to be made.

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3 Target 4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.
Figure 1.1: Learning poverty, by country and region (most recent year available)

Learning Poverty Rate (Pre-Covid19 School Closures)

Notes. Learning poverty means being unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10. This indicator brings together schooling and learning indicators: it begins with the share of children who haven’t achieved minimum reading proficiency (as measured in schools) and is adjusted by the proportion of children who are out of school (and are assumed not able to read proficiently).

1.1.2 Drivers of the involvement of non-state actors in education

It is partly due to this context that governments have sought the involvement of NSAs with the capacity to supplement education. South Asia has the highest level of non-state education enrolment of any region, with about 32 per cent of children attending some type of non-state institution, albeit in a context of substantial variation across and within countries (see Figure 1.2). This compares with 14 per cent of children in Sub-Saharan Africa, 21 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 11 per cent in East Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019).
The expanding role of NSAs both in South Asia and internationally has been driven by policy reforms and demand (ADB-UNICEF, 2011), influenced the following factors:

1. **Funding challenges**: The impoverishment of the public education system is both a cause and a consequence of non-state provision. The scale of public resources required to fund education dictates a need for new funding sources. The Incheon Declaration recommends a spend of 4–6 per cent of GDP on education, but countries in South Asia are only spending an average of 2.8 per cent, with only three above or meeting this (Bhutan 7 per cent; Nepal 4 per cent; Maldives 4 per cent) (see Figure 1.3). There is also a need to ensure that funding is allocated more equitably: for example, in Sri Lanka, the 95 per cent of schools attended by poor rural children receive 65 per cent of total general education spending, compared with the 5 per cent of schools attended by affluent urban children receiving 35 per cent of the education budget (Dundar et al., 2017) (see Section 2.3.1).
2. **Perceptions of the quality of education**: Evidence across South Asia, particularly in Nepal and India, indicates that parents are opting out of public schools due to negative perceptions of the quality of state schools (see Chapter 3, Table 3.1 and Section 3.4).

3. **Declining numbers in state education**: The rising demand for private, fee-paying education means that numbers attending state schools are falling, leading to further neglect and higher running costs in state schools, as has happened in India. Those attending state schools are increasingly from disadvantaged and marginalized groups, making it difficult to discern the reasons for any differences in learning outcomes between state and private schools.

**Figure 1.3: Public investment in education**

Public investment in Education as a Percentage of National income (2016 or nearest year)

[Graph showing public investment in education as a percentage of GDP across different countries.

A rights perspective on private, fee-based education

While non-state involvement in education is not new – even pre-dating state education in many countries – the new brand of non-state schools, such as federated school chains or low-fee private schools run by ‘edupreneurs’, is very different from the religious institutions of the past. In the eyes of government, NSAs’ engagement is intended to contribute to the education system by reaching disadvantaged and isolated communities, raising enrolment rates, and providing better teaching and learning environments. However, the degree to which this is happening is unclear (Dahal & Nguyen,
2014; Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar, 2014). Similarly, while NSAs may be considered more innovative, efficient and flexible in the implementation of new teaching methods and policies, they may also be more ‘flexible’ in terms of teacher recruitment, qualifications and salaries, although the extent to which this is the case is again unclear.

Consequently, NSA participation in delivering a public service is controversial, most notably in countries with high levels of poverty, and/or low levels of sustainable public resources. Privatization has seen neo-liberalism extend into the education sector, with for-profit actors promoting education as a marketable commodity that is open to competition and relies on consumer choice (Macpherson, Robertson & Walford, 2014; Verger et al., 2016). However, the playing field is anything but level: NSAs participating in education provision are often subject to fewer regulations than state schools, and providers may even be left entirely unaccountable due to the limited capacity of governments to oversee and monitor provision (Srivastava, 2010). Moreover, questions around the affordability of private education, even with the introduction of low-fee schools and subsidized placements, may counter any positive outcomes (such as improved access) that the private sector achieves. Arguably, one of the most important implications of NSA participation in education service delivery is the risk that resources will be drawn away from the public sector.

Finally, from a human rights perspective, there is an apparent contradiction between the freedom and social equity espoused in Articles 13.1 and 13.2 of the ICESCR, whereby the right to education contravenes the right of individuals to establish private schools and the right of parents to choose a school for their offspring. Aubry and Dorsi (2018) lucidly argue that while the provision to allow private education respects parental choice, this cannot supersede the fulfillment of children’s right to free, inclusive education. The state has an obligation to uphold the right to education and to set regulatory frameworks that ensure the principles of inclusion and quality are met. This tension between the potential benefits of NSA provision and the risks it may pose to the quality, equity and safety of education for children is at the core of this report.

1.1.3 The complexity of non-state actor engagement in education

NSA participation in public education systems has added to an already complex and changing landscape (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020; Macpherson et al., 2014; Rose, 2009; Srivastava, 2020). On the one hand, public education systems have adopted approaches from the private sector, such as competition, outcomes-based management, performance-related pay and consumer choice, with the aim of having private and public schools vie for resources and in effect competing in order to raise the quality of education and learning outcomes. This reflects a change in the role of government from provider of schooling to financier, regulator and monitoring body (Verger, 2012; Verger et al., 2016). On the other hand, the private sector has entered the education sector in a dizzying variety of forms, all or any of which may be combined (see Figure 1.4):

- **independent schools** administered by NGOs (e.g. religious entity, private business), which may be for-profit, low-fee, community-based, philanthropic, etc.
- **public-private partnerships** (e.g. low-fee private schools)
- **service contracts** (e.g. for school meals, cleaning, technology, teacher training, etc.)
- **indirect services**, such as school voucher programmes, and scholarships, stipends and other subsidies

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4 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966
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- **donor- and aid-funded programmes**
- **social impact bonds**, which leverage private-sector funds for positive social outcomes, with the expectation that investors will also receive a return on their investment
- **after-school tutoring**, which has emerged as a shadow system, provided primarily by private, for-profit actors (see Chapter 6).

*Figure 1.4: Spectrum of state- and non-state actor involvement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public/ State actors: National, sub-national and local governments</th>
<th>Private/ Non-state actors: Community-based, not-for-profit, faith-based, corporate for-profit entities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publicly managed and funded</strong></td>
<td><strong>Privately managed and funded</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public schools</td>
<td>Private schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary or support service contracts (e.g. teacher training, curriculum design)</td>
<td>After-school tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipends</td>
<td>Low-cost for-profit schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious schools</td>
<td>Social impact bonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropic schools</td>
<td>Private finance initiatives (e.g. construction, maintenance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Contributions:** Funding, Management/Governance, Operations/Systems, Teaching/learning, Culture, ethos, values

*includes for-profit private schools, private schools with government subsidies and NGO supported schools*

**Classification of non-state actors**

The breadth of variety among NSAs involved in education needs to be acknowledged by researchers. Day Ashley (2013, p.210) notes that “inadequate recognition of this diversity in the existing literature may lead to preconceptions and often misconceptions about different forms of private education.” Nambissan (2012, p.53) similarly highlights how this lack of recognition of diversity “gives the impression that comparisons between [schools] can be easily made and generalised.” The reality is that there are many ways in which NSA schools differ, in addition to the broad categories outlined in Figure 1.4. For instance, private unaided schools may be formally recognized or unrecognized – a critical distinction, but unrecognized schools are often excluded from empirical work due to data constraints, meaning we know much less about them. The extent to which schools are for-profit or not is an important distinction, but is often not clear in the literature because many statistical analyses do not or cannot make this distinction (Kingdon, 2017; Woodhead, Frost & James, 2013). Some qualitative studies do address the distinction between for-profit and not-for-profit schools (e.g. Jones, 2018) and find differences between the composition of the student body and fees charged, both of which have equity implications and warrant further exploration (Fennell, 2014).
Day Ashley (2013) classifies private education as follows:

- fee structure
- children/parents targeted (e.g. specific socio-economic groups, parental demand for specific subjects)
- motivations of school providers (e.g. prestige, profit, philanthropy, religious motivation)
- type of management (e.g. individuals, NGOs, businesses)
- financial support (e.g. partial or total state support)
- government recognition and regulation.

In adopting Day Ashley’s categories, this report proposes a continuum of NSA engagement in education that represents its range. This provides the basis for a better understanding of the complexity of education systems in the region, and a way of analysing types of NSA engagement across the eight countries that are the subject of this study.

**1.1.4 Understanding non-state actors as part of a unified education system**

While school census data from Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan indicates that the expansion of privately managed schools can be traced to the latter third of the 20th century, the role of NSAs in education can be traced to the beginnings of formal education systems, when religious schools mostly catered to the male, elite or learned groups in society, for example through the monasteries of Bhutan, the viharas of Bangladesh and madrasas of Maldives.

**Box 1.1: Late emergence of state education – Maldives**

In Maldives, the earliest account of publicly funded education dates to 1927, when a private tutoring class of 40 students run by the Attorney General, Salaahudhheen, at his home from 1910 to 1927 was taken over by the government. This tutoring class was the precursor to the first state school in Maldives, which along with three privately run elementary schools or edhuruges operating out of teachers’ homes, was funded and managed by the government.

In many countries in South Asia, religious schools continue to play a role in education in the form of madrasas (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Maldives) or Buddhist schools (Sri Lanka, Bhutan) (see Appendix 2 to Annex 2).

**Trends in private enrolment**

Enrolment in private institutions has increased across the region, and now constitutes a large share of the education system, particularly in secondary education and urban areas (see Appendix 1 to Annex 1) (Dundar et al., 2014; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Pre-primary enrolment in private institutions is rising across most of the region: around one in three students are enrolled in private primary and secondary education, except in Maldives, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, where private sector provision is minimal (Dundar et al., 2014) (see Figure 1.5).
Within this overall picture, we find considerable variation. The most prominent forms of NSA engagement in education service delivery in India appear to be independent private schools that are fully funded and managed by the private sector. Community-based and NGO schools are more prevalent in Afghanistan, institutional schools (both for-profit and trust-managed) in Nepal, and a patchwork of community-based, NGO and madrasa schools, which are partially or fully state funded, are most common in Bangladesh. In Sri Lanka, where restrictions on the private sector limit the number of private schools post-pre-primary level to below 3 per cent, 75 per cent of primary-school pupils receive private tutoring (Dundar et al., 2014). Private provision is greatest at pre-primary levels, through private (62 per cent), NGO and religious entities (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Private tutoring is prevalent in other South Asian countries, except in Bhutan where tutoring is banned by law (Dahal & Nguyen, 2014; Dundar et al., 2014) (see Chapter 6 and Appendix 1 to Annex 5).

1.2 Conceptual framework

Building on the Abidjan Principles (2019), UNCRC, SDG 4 and children’s right to inclusive and equitable high-quality education, this research starts from the premise that education must meet, as a minimum, the following criteria (see Figure 1.6):

- **Quality** – the delivery of teaching and learning in the classroom that “enables all learners to realize the capabilities they require to become economically productive, to develop sustainable livelihoods, to contribute to peaceful and democratic societies, and to enhance wellbeing” (Tikly & Barrett, 2010, p.1)

- **Equitable access** – opportunities for all children to develop and reach their full potential in education, without discrimination of any kind, leading to a reduction in existing inequities in access and outcomes (UNICEF, 2015)
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Safety in school – every child in school should be protected from physical or psychological injury from the environment, community, teachers or peers, and their overall health and well-being secured (Butchart & Hillis, 2016).

To achieve this, enabling environments must be in place at the policy level and in the school, community and home (Tikly, 2010). Along with some key inputs and processes (Tikly & Barrett, 2010), these enabling environments are the basis of achieving high-quality, equitable and safe education.

Figure 1.6: Conceptual framework

1.3 Research objectives and methodology

The principle objective of this research was to identify and assess the role of NSAs in the education systems of South Asia from pre-primary to secondary level, and to understand the relationships between inputs, outputs and outcomes. By exploring the education systems of eight countries in the region, we examine the ways in which the complex variety of NSAs engage and co-exist with the public sector in the delivery of education services.

Our research questions were:

- What is the role of NSAs in education service delivery across the eight countries in South Asia?5
- How does NSA engagement in education service delivery most effectively promote high-quality, equitable and safe education outcomes for children?

5 Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
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What mechanisms are in place to enable or hinder NSAs in engaging with the public education sector, and how effective are these mechanisms in ensuring that NSAs contribute to high-quality, equitable and safe outcomes?

What transferable practices can strengthen the co-existence of non-state and public-sector engagement in the creation and delivery of high-quality, equitable and safe education?

1.3.1 Research methodology

In collaboration with the UNICEF Regional Office of South Asia (UNICEF-ROSA) and each UNICEF Country Office in the region, this project explored these questions through comprehensive desk-based reviews of literature and secondary data sources. The research team met with education stakeholders and experts, such as national and regional education ministry officials, local authorities and school actors, as part of a scoping exercise to better understand and complement our desk-based review with current information on interventions and engagements on the ground.6

Searches for the literature review were conducted via scholarly databases and grey literature, such as the Education Resource Information Centre (ERIC), EconPapers, JSTOR, Scopus, World Bank, United Nations organizations and Peri Global, using keywords to represent significant and relevant concepts in education (see Appendix 4 to Annex 1). The reference lists in the selected articles were also searched for articles that may have been overlooked in the keyword search. Experts in the field of private education and country experts were consulted to verify that no articles had been overlooked. The eligibility criteria for inclusion in the study were: publication date, relevance, geography, language, quality and repetition.

An in-depth, desk-based data review was conducted to identify critical secondary data sources. All eight UNICEF Country Offices completed a brief survey about initiatives undertaken with NSAs. They also provided access to government data, which fed into a secondary data analysis to establish the effectiveness of NSAs in terms of quality, equity and safety in each of the eight countries. These analyses are presented alongside other evidence throughout the chapters of this report.

1.3.2 Covid-19

Following the World Health Organization (WHO) announcement of the Covid-19 pandemic on 11 March 2020, all eight countries in South Asia enacted school closures (World Health Organization, 2020), affecting over 400 million children (UNESCO, 2020a). These closures are likely to have substantial long-term effects, not least in fragmenting education provision and reducing assurances on quality, inclusion, safety and equitable access, despite efforts to mitigate learning loss through the introduction of various forms of remote learning.

This report looks at some of the potential implications of school closure for NSAs, as well as the role they can play in alleviating the aftermath of the crisis. A creative response to school closures may prove a game-changer in how learning is accessed and provided in the future, and represents an opportunity for the non-state sector to expand its participation in education.

6 Ethical review was not sought as the research relied on secondary data analysis. The field trips and meeting with stakeholders were not intended as primary research but as fact-finding missions.
CHAPTER 2: A WHOLE-SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

Chapter 2 in a nutshell

This chapter examines current policies of the various education systems in South Asia. It seeks to understand how system-level mechanisms, including regulation and policy, ensure that the right to education for all children is secured, including through the involvement of NSAs. Our findings suggest that:

- governance systems are fragmented: including NSAs in regulatory frameworks is essential to achieving system-wide improvements
- few mechanisms for transparency and accountability exist to ensure the correct use of funding and the quality, equity and safety of NSA provision; education budgets directed towards NSAs need to be more sensitive to standards of equity and inclusion
- gearing fiscal policy towards education provision and improving the efficiency and targeting of tax collection are priorities for supporting education systems across the region
- comprehensive standards of accountability, quality, equity and safety are needed to ensure that stakeholders comply with them, and are held to account for progress made

2.1 Introduction

Governments have an obligation to ensure all children have their right to education met, and to hold NSAs accountable for education service delivery, as stated in each country’s constitution and legislation (see Table A1.1.1 in Appendix 1 to Annex 1). These values are enshrined in the UNCRC and the Abidjan Principles, which focus on the “human rights obligations of States to provide public education and to regulate private involvement in education” (Abidjan Principles, 2019). Across South Asia, NSAs have increasingly played an important role in meeting these obligations, changing the landscape of education provision in the process.

2.1.1 A systems approach to education provision

With their differing objectives and forms of provision, NSAs have contributed to increased access and quality, and in some cases have addressed inequities and provided opportunities for innovation and advocacy, albeit with different degrees of success. However, policy and practice around NSAs often remain limited by the existence of two separate education systems: one that is public/government and one that is private/non-state. A systems approach can address this divide, by framing the engagement of public and NSA providers within a single, integrated education system. This requires a strategic analysis of the mechanisms that govern, fund and hold all stakeholders to account for a high-quality, equitable and safe education system (see Box 2.1).
Box 2.1: A systems approach

A systems approach is based on social systems that have four characteristics (Göttelmann-Duret & Bahr, 2012, p.18):

**Adaptation:** Social systems are open systems...[that] interact with their environment for the definition of general system goals, gathering resources from the environment, provision, and redistribution of material and immaterial social benefits.

**Goal attainment:** To attain its goals, a social system has to set operational objectives and organise actions in order to reach them.

**Integration:** To make all players of the system work towards the set goals and objectives, the values and norms guiding them have to converge and be sufficiently embraced by all.

**Latency/maintenance:** For social systems to fulfil the above-mentioned functions, they need to build on elements or mechanisms that are integrative over time (values, religion, etc.).

It is necessary to build these characteristics to improve the system, specifically through addressing the challenges of governance, funding, accountability and evidence. These are the observable and concrete components that feed into the characteristics.

A systems approach, which includes top-down management (e.g. regulation), and where work is structured linearly rather than as a dynamic ‘feedback loop’, has the potential to address the downsides of a situation where two parallel systems exist. This could cover aspects including:

- regulation and monitoring of all education provision, including any provided through the involvement of NSAs to fill gaps
- safeguards to ensure that all funding for education, both public and non-state, is effective and reaches all children
- the creation of accountability mechanisms that prioritize the most vulnerable and marginalized
- the use of data, information and evidence to inform and guide all education stakeholders in overcoming learning poverty and achieving good outcomes, equity and inclusion for all children.

Initially, governments may be reluctant to discuss NSA involvement and their integration with a national education system. This may be for political reasons, or due to a perception that private education does not exist to any real extent in the country. Analysis suggests that this perception may stem from a limited definition of non-state education: for example, NSA involvement can fluctuate from large-scale, long-term operational infrastructure contracting to one-to-one private tutoring. These different forms of engagement may lead to de-facto privatization, where NSAs increasingly fill gaps left by the state. Privatization may also be promoted by global actors, such as corporations or philanthropic foundations, and may be largely unregulated (e.g. in India, Pakistan and Nepal). Later, there may be a deliberate scaling up (e.g. India and Pakistan) or locking down (e.g. Bangladesh and Nepal) of private provision in response to market conditions (Srivastava, 2016; Verger, Fontdevila & Zancajo, 2016).

In the following sections, we examine four system-wide levers: governance, funding, accountability, and data systems, to see how these enable (or hinder) the ability of a country’s education system to engage both sides in improving education provision across South Asia.
2.2 Governance

Education systems around the world have become more complex: South Asia is no exception. The growing diversity of actors responsible for education provision presents both an opportunity to deliver high-quality, equitable and safe education for all, and a challenge for the governance structures and mechanisms through which the different players interact. Ethical, effective governance is clearly vital in elevating the performance of all schools. NSAs have increasing influence in the governance of education systems (Canadian Council for International Co-operation, 2020), and while this may support a more inclusive approach, there is limited evidence on how this is shaping policy (see Box 2.2).

**Box 2.2: Growing role of non-state actors in influencing governance mechanisms**

A report compiling the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) from the UN High-Level Political Forum found that 38 of the 47 countries submitting VNRs had identified governance as the vital mechanism for delivering the 2030 SDG agenda. Whether it be through working committees seeking to advance technical issues or their participation in high-level governance mechanisms that steer the implementation of SDGs, NSAs (academics, civil society and the private sector) are playing an increasingly influential role in policy development and implementation (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). This may presage a move towards a more unified education system, although this will depend on the openness of governments towards a mainstream, semi-autonomous civil society.

2.2.1 Governance structures

A review of 140 countries found that the regulation of NSAs in education was “non-existent, outdated or insufficient” and referred to the majority role of the state in ensuring compliance with minimal standards for establishing and operating schools (Ron Balsera et al., 2016, p.981). This analysis found that the implementation of legislation and policies that include NSAs in education service delivery varied depending on the stage of education covered, and the extent to which legislation guides policy implementation (see Appendix 1 to Annex 2). In the case of most countries, education is overseen by a number of different state institutions, and limited coordination among them hinders governments’ capacity to supervise the education system, implement policy and regulate NSAs engaged in education:

- In Afghanistan, coordination could have been challenging because until 2021 at least four ministries have been involved in the oversight of education, in addition to NGOs and the private sector. While the Ministry of Education (MoE) was the coordinating agency, and coordination has improved, there were still challenges. For instance, the community-based education (CBE) programme, which benefited from significant civil society support, has seen different standards and costs implemented depending on the partners involved (Burde, Middleton & Wahl, 2015; Ministry of Education of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2016; World Bank, 2018).

- In India, around 43 government departments reported education expenditure in 2013–14, which spans early childhood education (Ministry of Women and Child Development) to vocational education (Ministry of Labour and Employment and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship) (Oxfam India, 2019).
Coordination among education actors and the programmes for which they are responsible is needed to bolster their capacity to comply with regulations, monitor implementation and carry out system-wide improvement. Currently, governance structures use a variety of methods to monitor NSAs, including through:

- departments within MoEs being responsible for overseeing some non-state schools, such as private unaided schools in India. In Bangladesh, private kindergartens and low-cost private schools are out of the jurisdiction of the MoE altogether (World Bank, 2016a)
- different ministries/departments being responsible for some forms of NSA provision. In India, the MoE provides grant-in-aid to madrasas, conditional on government oversight and leading to some madrasas being regulated by NSA education boards (e.g. the Muslim Waqf Board), and others being unregulated (Central Waqf Council, 2019; Centre for Civil Society, 2019; Ministry of Education India, 2017; Ward, 2011)
- business regulation, for example in Sri Lanka, where private actors register schools as businesses, which may obstruct coordination with state education authorities (Dundar et al., 2017; Ministry of Education, n.d., 2008, 2013; Ministry of Education Pirivena Branch, n.d.; World Bank, 2014)
- provincial MoEs, as in Pakistan, where Partnerships for Management (PfM) may manage schools through memoranda of understanding (MoUs), although these do not always confer legal rights or obligations, as for example in the case of Punjab and, until recently, Sindh (Malik, 2015; Malik & Naveed, 2015).

**Devolution and autonomy**

While governance of education in most countries is centralized, some (Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal) are seeing growing devolution of power to provincial, regional and local education stakeholders (see Appendix 1 to Annex 2). Others (India and Pakistan) have federalist structures, suggesting that provincial structures have greater autonomy to lead on financing and provision of education services, albeit based on central government policies. In Pakistan, education service delivery depends on provincial and district education departments as they contract with private providers. For example, in Sindh and Punjab, regional and local government actors have responded differently to the implementation of the Public–Private Partnership (PPP) Authority Act (Malik, 2015; Malik & Naveed, 2015). Despite the existence of national guidance and PPP frameworks, both lack the capacity to identify and leverage resources to address the needs of the most vulnerable through these PPP models (ibid.).

Decentralized models have resulted in greater autonomy at the local level of school management. If not implemented well, autonomy within schools can undermine the quality of education, equity and safety. In Pakistan, school management committees (SMCs) and schools were given sufficient autonomy to make decisions on funding, books, extra-curricular activities, science laboratories and teacher recruitment, but the evidence indicates that this autonomy has not been exercised (Malik, 2015; Malik & Naveed, 2015). To add to this complexity, some NSAs and multilateral organizations are playing an increasingly important role in policymaking. National and international NGOs influence education service delivery as advisers, funders and advocates. In Bangladesh, UNICEF, UNESCO, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank have all been providing financial and technical support since the first Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP), now on its fourth iteration. Civil society organizations (CSOs) have similarly played a key role in PEDPs as advocates for children and local communities, using research and policy dialogue to drive reform and transparency and accountability efforts, such as the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Increasingly, international coalitions engage various actors to strengthen education systems and advocate for NSA engagement in
education service delivery. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE; formerly the Fast-Track Initiative) was created in 2002 as a global fund dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries. Preconditions for GPE support include the completion of a sector analysis and the development of an evidence-based sector plan that addresses equity issues. GPE membership also requires the establishment of governance mechanisms within member states, including a local education group (LEG) composed of key stakeholders. However, the engagement of CSOs and the private sector varies significantly from country to country (Global Partnership for Education, 2012, 2019, 2020a). A recent study by Menashy (2017, p.256) finds an “absence of dialogue” and “strategic avoidance” of the topic of funding for private education (see Section 2.3.2). This ‘avoidance’ risks a lack of the evidence-based dialogue needed to improve policymaking processes and system-wide reform.

The combination of complex governance structures, decentralization and the wider involvement of a broad variety of NSAs in education makes regulating education systems challenging. However, ensuring that these structures are as clear as possible to the relevant stakeholders, especially NSA actors, is critical.

### 2.2.2. Regulatory frameworks and their enforcement

In most countries in South Asia, regulations exist to establish the types of NSA that can participate in education and the forms of PPPs that can take place (Bhatta & Pherali, 2017; Centre for Civil Society, 2014; Verger, Moschetti & Fontdevila, 2020). However, these regulations are often regarded as inefficient and inappropriate (Srivastava, 2010), with a focus on inputs and market entry, rather than outputs (Wales, Aslam, Hine, Rawal & Wild, 2015). Regulations relating to private schools may be disproportionate, requiring more from private schools than is found in state schools (e.g. in the required amount of outdoor space), placing further bureaucratic burdens on NSA schools. Notably, increasing regulation of NSA actors places an additional burden on the state in terms of monitoring and enforcement (Centre for Civil Society, 2014, 2015; Day Ashley et al., 2014a; Srivastava, 2010; Wales et al., 2015).

The fragile capacity of governments and stakeholders at all levels to implement regulations weakens regulatory and governance systems, which can lead to an increase in “unregulated, unmonitored, and low-quality private education services” (Baum, Cooper & Lusk-Stover, 2018, p.25). Globally, there has been some success in curriculum regulation and cooperation among philanthropic and religious schools, but overall state capacity and legitimacy remain important factors in regulating the involvement of NSAs in the education system. In India, for example, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act) was implemented to improve access and equitable outcomes across the country, including by setting quotas for the provision of school placements for disadvantaged students. However, Kingdon (2017) finds that high-fee private schools have failed to implement the 25 per cent quota because of inadequate reimbursement from government, and the fear of retaliation by government in the form of forced closures through the RTE Act (Iyer & Counihan, 2018; Sarin, Dongre & Wad, 2017). These factors may contribute to de-facto privatization of education, where the lack of government capacity to provide good-quality education and enforce regulations leads to increased NSA provision (Day Ashley et al., 2014a; Srivastava, 2010).

An important point in the enforcement of regulations is the presence of corruption at both bureaucratic and political levels. This can arise as a result of weak political commitment and lower allocation of resources, but other factors are budgetary decisions (e.g. imposing fees illegally for school admission or exams), nepotism in recruitment, and corrupt contracting for resources. There is also widespread evidence of corruption in the region on service delivery (OECD, 2015). For instance, in India, 22 per cent
of people who had used state schools in the previous 12 months had paid a bribe, with figures of 7 per cent (Nepal), 6 per cent (Bangladesh), 13 per cent (Sri Lanka) and 1 per cent (Maldives) (Transparency International, 2021). Capturing the full extent of corruption is difficult.

A final point is that, while state regulation has been inadequate in many countries, NSAs, such as CSOs, teachers’ unions and advocacy groups, have been crucial in increasing accountability and enforcement of regulations (Hossain, Hassan, Rahman, Ali & Islam, 2017): while NSAs may be insufficiently regulated in some countries, these same actors also help to shape and encourage better regulation.

2.3 Funding

Funding arrangements reflect the policy priorities and capacity of education to meet the needs of children, and the long-term objectives of human and social development. In South Asia, while some countries (e.g. Bhutan) have prioritized education, as indicated by share of GDP spent on it, others, such as Bangladesh, India and Maldives, have decreased expenditure on education (see Figure 2.1a and Figure 2.1b). As discussed in Chapter 1, demographic changes, limitations on funding for education and rising demand have combined to create an environment in which NSA participation is increasing, and a concomitant focus has been brought to bear on assurances of the effective use of public funds (World Bank, 2019).

Figure 2.1a: Public investment in education as % of GDP, 2000–2016 or nearest year

Public investment in Education as a Percentage of National income, change from 2000 to 2016 (or nearest year)
2.3.1 Domestic funding of state and private education

With the aim of improving education outcomes and efficiency, different mechanisms have been used to allocate public funding to NSAs for providing education. Some countries outsource specific auxiliary services to non-state providers: for example, in Sri Lanka, services such as security, catering and IT access are contracted out. Subsidies, voucher programmes and PPPs are also used (Verger, 2012) (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4). These latter generally rely on the government as funder and NSA as implementer, which makes even more pressing the need to establish NSA effectiveness, since ineffective non-state services may simply drain public funds for no benefit (Ron Balsera et al., 2016). In Pakistan, the government has encouraged PPPs based on subsidies and vouchers in order to increase enrolments, improve facilities and raise learning outcomes in Punjab (Malik & Naveed, 2015). However, some challenges remain, for example in reaching remote and deprived areas.

A critical point is whether funding is effectively spent, particularly within the context of limited public resources. There is little evidence on the cost-effectiveness of education service delivery by NSAs in both the global and regional literature (Wales et al., 2015). One of the few studies finds that, based on a cost-per-student achievement model, private schools in India are sometimes more efficient at producing outcomes, but the author suggests this is due to the very low cost of private education in Uttar Pradesh (Kingdon, 2017). Indeed, while private schools are able to demonstrate lower overheads due to lower teacher wages (which make up the bulk of education spending), it is unclear whether these cost savings translate into effective learning, much less safety and equity in education (Day Ashley et al., 2014a; Wales et al., 2015). Many studies face limitations in how they measure internal efficiency to produce outcomes, including the omission of monitoring and hidden costs (Wales et al., 2015), as well as critical yet hard-to-measure contextual factors (e.g. condensed curricula or financial support from NGOs, government and/or community) that might affect the costs of providing schooling (DeStefano, Moore, Balwanz & Hartwell, 2007).
Implications for equity, inclusion and transparency

The equity implications of public spending on education are critical. The concept of progressive universalism provides a useful framework to ensure that public spending is used in a way that addresses the education needs of all children (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, n.d.). It highlights the requirement to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable so that they “benefit before or at least at the same time as others in society (as well as receiving more support than other population segments” (Gentilini, 2018).

To examine the extent to which public spending targets and benefits the most disadvantaged in South Asia, Benefit Incidence Analyses (BIA) was conducted across education levels (see Appendix 2 to Annex 2). The findings show that the use of NSAs for education provision by wealthier quintiles has pro-poor consequences for public expenditure on education. More concretely, in six of the eight countries studied, non-state enrolment by wealth quintile (taken from household surveys) has an equalizing effect on the distribution of public spending. In other words, higher enrolment in non-state education by wealthier groups results in more evenly distributed and thus more pro-poor public spending. This suggests a complementary role for non-state education in many countries. However, further research is needed to explore the role of public funding of non-state schools, and the equity implications, as the BIA was unable to trace public spending on NSA schools themselves, which may undo some of the effects highlighted above.

The need for transparency in public funding is greater than ever. In India, the RTE Act of 2009 has increased public spending to non-state schools who fulfil the 25 per cent of enrolments reserved for children from the most disadvantaged groups. While making sure that funding to NSAs is effective is important, it is also important that when it does go to these schools, it does so reliably and consistently. Some scholars have found evidence of delays in reimbursements and litigation from private schools to get these reimbursements (Chudgar & Creed, 2016; Iyer & Counihan, 2018). There is anecdotal evidence of the impact of the RTE Act’s provisions suggesting that since government reimbursement is unreliable, the remaining 75 per cent of students may pay more than they otherwise would to compensate the school for delays and shortfalls (Chudgar & Creed, 2016; Das, 2020; Iyer & Counihan, 2018). This raises questions about whether state funding of NSA schools is an equitable use of public finance.

The regulation of non-state education provision, especially through better monitoring and transparency, may determine the effectiveness of funding (Ron Balsera et al., 2016). However, a review of public funding to 37 non-state-school chains across South Asia (conducted through their websites and other available documents) found that only one had funding data (see Table 2.2). This suggests poor accountability and monitoring of public funding among NSAs. Where public funding is provided to NSAs, whether through vouchers, subsidies or other mechanisms, these schools should be held to the same, if not better, standards of scrutiny as public schools, but they are often not monitored or assessed, and evidence on how to best implement monitoring is limited (Aslam, 2017; Aslam, Rawal & Sahar, 2017; World Bank, 2016b). Funding must be considered in the context of delivering high-quality, equitable and safe education: this is critical in determining whether public funds are being drained or used effectively, yet is often poorly captured, especially by school type (see Section 2.4). A data-driven approach would be in line with the best practice identified by the World Bank (2016a) and improve accountability.

7 The only cases where this is not the case are Sri Lanka (where the distribution is very even, if not equitable, to begin with) and Maldives (where we do not have data on private enrolment by quintile). Note that this data was not found for the pre-primary and tertiary levels for any country and, given that private enrolment can be quite high at these levels, great caution is needed in interpreting results at these levels.
# Table 2.1: Funding models and partners of NSA engagement in education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Chain</th>
<th>Annual budget (earning/income)</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Govt</th>
<th>Donations</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Gyan Shala (1,269 schools, 1–10, Fees: Rs. 2,500–6,000)</td>
<td>113,394 Ind</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>93.10%</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nalanda Foundation, SBI Foundation, E&amp;H Foundation, GRUH Finance, Shroff Foundation, Bajaj Auto, Tata Trusts, Macarthur Foundation, Delhi Project IC, Pushpawati Kantilal Trust, Navin Fluorine CSR, Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, Ekilaya Education Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge International Academies</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>IFC (10 million), DFID ( £3.5m), CDC, NEA, Novostar Ventures, Learn Capital, Khosla Ventures, Omidyar Network, PanAfrican Investment Co LLC, Rethink Education, Chan Zuckerberg initiative, Bill Gates Investments, Pershing Square Foundation, LGT Impact Ventures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippocampus (174 schools, K-10)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unitus Seed Foundation, Caspian, ADV, UBS, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Asha For Education, Khosla Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akanksha</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>76.60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AGS Health, Alitco Capital India Pvt Ltd, Arsiag Partners, AMEX, Bajaj Finance Ltd, DSP Merrill Lynch Ltd, exl Services.com, Fractal Analytics, Franklin Templeton Asset Management (India) Pvt Ltd, Give India, HT Parekh Foundation, IREP, J P Morgan, Kids in Need of Education (KINOE), MasterCard, Morgan, Mphasis, NICE Foundation, Novartis, Oracle, Rusi &amp; Purviz Shroff Foundation, Saint Gobain India Foundation, Sequoia Capital, Societe Generale, Standard Chartered Bank, Sudhanshu Vats, TMF Capital, Tata Power Community Development Trust, UTI Asset Management Company Ltd, United Way Mumbai, VFS, Viacom 18, Vijay Santhanam &amp; Kainaz Guzder, Viraj Sawhney, Warburg Pincus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead (700 schools)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elevar Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peepul (3 schools)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ark, Millennium Alliance, Maitri Trust, Bharat Petroleum, Blue Dart, Mercer, The British School New Delhi, Sud-chemie, Gartner, FII Foundations, SBU Foundation, The World Bank, Charities Aid Foundation, Cipla Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Education Foundation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charities Aid Foundation India, Bakshi Sansar Chand Chhibber Memorial Trust, Wipro Foundation, Sarta Holding Pvt. Limited (Pathways World School), Powerparts Pvt. Ltd., Mountain Valley Springs India, Pvt Ltd (Forest Essentials), Sona Blw Precision Forgings Ltd, Ahbi Enterprises Pvt. Ltd, Boston Consulting Group (India) Pvt Ltd, Anamika Sugar Mills Pvt Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>StreetChild</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNICEF, USA Embassy Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20.50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Aid, UK Aid, Chevron, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Global Fund, UNICEF, BRAC-USA, EACI (Qatar), The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, DFAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>StreetChild (20 schools)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>UNICEF, DFID, British and Foreign Schools Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.2 International funding for education

To meet the demand for, and needs of, the education sector, countries in South Asia receive official development assistance (ODA) from multi- and bilateral organizations (see Table 2.2). However, the extent to which external aid is used for education service delivery by NSAs is unclear, largely because disbursement figures for education are difficult to obtain. Some countries, including Afghanistan (Strand, 2015) and Bangladesh and Pakistan (Dundar et al., 2014) have received (or still do receive) ODA for education, and currently, ODA makes up sizeable parts of central government expenditure in these countries and in Bhutan and Nepal also, but education does not consume a significant part of it. Nevertheless, funding from multi- and bilateral donors plays an important role in the education sector in these countries, at least in terms of the discursive promotion of NSAs (Draxler, 2012; Verger et al., 2016).

Table 2.2: ODA to education, by country, 2018 or nearest year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>3,859.8</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>116.3</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>5,106.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>5,691.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>138.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1,629.8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>765.6</td>
<td>-1.713</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2,480.2</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Financial arrangements are a critical part of the “soft but influential mechanisms” of governance that international actors use to support the international education agenda (Solesin, 2020, p.7). For example, the conditionalities inherent in ODA give donors a strong influence over national economic policymaking and ultimately government expenditure (Morrissey, 2004; Tan, 2010). As a result, funding mechanisms affect the structure and nature of education systems (Mundy & Menashy, 2014; Mundy & Verger, 2015). One example in South Asia is the recently proposed USD 500 million World Bank loan for the Strengthening Teaching–Learning and Results for States (STARS) programme in India, which includes the creation of a multi-donor trust fund to secure more funding from private sources. While efforts to mobilize resources to address important education issues are noteworthy, the initiative has been criticised for:

- spending taxpayers’ money on partnerships with NSAs where evidence of their effectiveness is weak, equity implications unclear, and similar models have failed
- an excessive focus on standardized testing (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2)
- lack of capacity-building and stakeholder consultation (Oxfam India, 2020; World Bank, 2020).

The STARS programme’s strong focus on the inclusion of NSAs in education shows that funders can influence education policy and systems through their funding activities; in other words, the role of
NSAs can be expanded via the involvement of other NSAs – in this case, the World Bank – but for-profit corporations or other NSAs could and do also play this role.

In this light, the recent move away from funding for-profit schools by several international organizations is significant. A World Bank directive has stated that funding (pending review) will no longer be allocated to for-profit education (US House Committee on Financial Services, 2020). This builds on a similar moves by the Global Partnership for Education (Edwards, 2019; Global Partnership for Education, 2020b) in 2020 and the European Union (EU) Parliament in 2018 (European Parliament, 2018; Right to Education, 2018). However, given that there are cases in India where schools may be required to be non-profit under the RTE Act, but “operating structures allow for-profit parent companies to extract profit” (LEK, 2019, p.24), the role of the national context in establishing the definition of a ‘for-profit school’ is critical in determining how and which NSAs receive funding and deliver education services. These resolutions send a strong normative message to for-profit NSAs and governments that education should not be a profit-making enterprise. However, this also raises questions about how these funds will be redirected so that countries can continue to provide high-quality, equitable and safe education for all.

2.3.3 Non-state funding for education

Education systems across South Asia also receive funding from several other sources, but the dearth of information is a challenge to understanding both how funds from NSAs are being used, and which agendas are being advanced. Sources of non-state funding include:

- **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** funding, for example in India, where firms listed on the stock exchange invest in the education sector (Vikash Jha, 2017)
- **corporate investment**, for example through Pearson’s Affordable Learning Fund, a growing trend in the sector (Srivastava, 2016; Tooley & Dixon, 2006; Verger, Steiner-Khamsi & Lubienski, 2017)
- **NGO funding**, for example in Pakistan for community-based education programmes, some of which are part of the PPP Act (Ali, 2012; CARE Pakistan, 2018; Sindh Education Foundation, 2017; The Government of Pakistan, 2017), and in Bhutan, which received 42 per cent of funds via UNICEF and 45 per cent via Save the Children for the government’s early childhood centre provision (UNICEF Bhutan, 2017)
- **development impact bonds**, which have only recently been extended to education: recent examples include UBS with Educate Girls, and the multi-partner Quality Education India DIB, with a total combined budget of USD 10 million (Boggild-Jones & Gustafsson-Wright, 2019; British Asian Trust, 2020; Government Outcomes Lab, 2019; Kitzmuller, McManus, Shah & Sturla, 2018)
- **household expenditure**, for which data is difficult to capture, though household surveys show that (in some cases) education is not free at any level for any school type (Rao, 2014) (see Chapter 4).

*Household expenditure on education*

Given that NSAs are in some cases emerging through a bottom-up process, demand-side factors are important in identifying the sources of funding for education (Verger, 2018). There are large differences in the extent and nature of expenditure on education as a share of overall household expenditure. In
Nepal, household expenditure on education was larger than government expenditure in 2015, at 4.5 per cent of GDP and 3.9 per cent of GDP respectively (Government of Nepal, UNESCO & UNESCO-IIEP: International Institute for Education Planning, 2016). In Pakistan, household expenditure on education ranges from less than 1 per cent of household expenditure to as much as 7 per cent and is higher for richer and urban groups (though both show a decrease since 2013–14) (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2014, 2019b).

Analysis of the National Sample Survey (NSS 74th round) in India shows that these costs vary between school types, with households with children in unaided NSA schools spending between three and four times more than those with children in state schools, and those with children in private schools spending between two and a half and three times more than those with children in state schools (National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 2017). This is consistent with data from Nepal, where the gap between NSA and government school expenditure was between four- and six fold (Acharya & Leon-Gonzalez, 2018; Government of Nepal et al., 2016). In India and Pakistan, school fees make up the bulk of expenditure for those households with children in NSA (aided and unaided) schools (NSSO, 2017; Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2019a). This same analysis suggests that private tuition costs in India make up between 10 and 67 per cent of household expenditure on education, with the percentage being higher for richer households and households with children in state schools (where expenditure on fees is non-existent) (NSSO, 2017).

**Sustainability of non-state funding**

While it is clear that funding does come in various forms from NSAs into education, the scale and impact it has on the design of education provision, especially outside ODA, are poorly understood. To understand the potential impact of NSA funding (including that of households), a clearer picture of who is spending or giving, and how much, is a critical first step.

There are also questions to answer regarding the financial sustainability of NSA schools, particularly in the light of the extent to which NSAs can help to fill gaps and ensure learning outcomes for children. The current literature on this is limited (Day Ashley et al., 2014a; Härmä & Rose, 2012; Wales et al., 2015), although some evidence points to low-fee private schools (LFPS) being at higher risk of closure. The Covid-19 pandemic, which enforced temporary school closures across the sector, has made this more evident (see Box 2.3). In Pakistan, LFPS are found to have unreliable funding sources since they may be financed through personal savings or informal borrowing from their owners and may be in severe financial distress as a result of the pandemic or other factors. In addition, there is weak capacity to address funding needs such as poor management services and lack of financial records (ILM IDEAS, 2014; Srivastava, 2016). In India, current concerns around sustainability are linked to the RTE Act’s provision that unrecognized schools must gain official recognition or face closure, which in either case affects their financial sustainability (Chudgar & Creed, 2016; Ministry of Law and Justice, 2009). While these concerns may be overstated, given the recent rise in NSA schools and LFPS in particular, it is nonetheless of consequence that their reliance on external funding (from government in the case of aided NSA schools, and from household expenditure in the case of fee-paying schools) does leave these schools vulnerable to crises. Given all the factors currently affecting the tolerance of NSA schools to financial pressures, there is a pressing need to understand how sustainable these schools are, who is going to fund them, and how they can maintain funding in the long term without government or other support.
Box 2.3: Covid-19 and NSA school finances

Concerns around financial sustainability, especially during prolonged school closures such as those necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, highlight the importance not just of the cost-efficiency of non-state schools, but also of their funding models. These concerns are visible in India and elsewhere, as schools worry that parents will not pay fees during closures (Gibbons, 2020; Weale, 2020). This may be compounded in some states, such as Haryana’s Education Department, which has directed all private schools not to collect fees during the lockdown period (Livemint, 2020). This raises concerns about what may happen when/if these schools are unable to meet their expenses and so shut down, especially in South Asia (and outside India), where small, family-run private schools make up the majority of private education providers and are most vulnerable to loss of income (Crawfurd & Hares, 2019). Beyond this, there is very little information available on how the bulk of non-state schools have responded to the pandemic.

There are also concerns post-crisis, as government budgets shrink due to cost-saving and hard choices have to be made about funding allocations, meaning that NSA schools with PPP arrangements may see their budgets cut. Further, an additional 100–420 million people are projected to fall below the USD 1.90 poverty line as a result of the crisis (Mahler, Lakner, Aguilar & Wu, 2020; Sumner, Ortiz-Juarez & Hoy, 2020) and food security is likely to worsen (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020). NSA schools that rely on households to finance their operations may therefore face financial hardship, as household income falls and savings are depleted, and families prioritize expenditure on essentials such as food and health (Bansak, Chezum & Giri, 2015; Bari, 2018; ILM IDEAS, 2014).

A final challenge post-crisis may be getting children back to school. The longer children are out of school, the more likely it is that they will not return (Azevedo, Hasan, Goldemberg, Aroob & Koen Geven, 2020). The short-term effective out-of-school rate has jumped dramatically: in 2018, there were 258.4 million children out of school globally, while at the peak of the pandemic, 1.597 million children were out of school, a six-fold increase (UNESCO, 2019, 2020). Further, an estimated 24 million children and adolescents are likely to drop out or not have access to schooling in the next year due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 alone (United Nations, 2020). While it is likely to be the poorest and most vulnerable that drop out of school, this will also have an impact on children who attend NSA schools. For example, for LFPS that rely on fees, student drop-out will likely affect their financial sustainability (Niazi & Doorly, 2020).

2.4 Accountability

A strong accountability system has processes and mechanisms in place to support education stakeholders as they measure progress, identify problem areas and take steps towards achieving their goal of a high-quality, equitable and safe education system through evidence-driven reform (UNESCO, 2018). Accountability systems are needed in which all interested parties understand their roles, as well as the standards and expectations of delivering and monitoring education services. Governments and NSAs need both guidance and capacity to ensure implementation of these mechanisms to achieve system-wide change. This can also mean bringing communities, parents and students into the discussion to support efforts to improve perceptions of schooling (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6). Strengthening accountability measures could lead to stronger systems where clear frameworks can...
hold all schools accountable at all decision-making levels, in particular within a context of increasing decentralization and school autonomy (Kingdon et al., 2014; Magrath, Aslam & Johnson, 2019).

2.4.1 Purpose and efficacy of accountability mechanisms

While state and NSA schools may have different regulatory and accountability mechanisms, the purpose of such mechanisms share common features. First, it is necessary that regulation distinguishes for-profit from non-profit NSA education services at the outset through the legal declaration of entities: non-state schools, particularly for-profit schools, respond to market-led, incentives (e.g. profit, financial sustainability, growing market share, growing student body), which may differ from the motivations of government schools. By responding to these incentives, NSAs may find it difficult or be reluctant to be accountable in the ways governments require them. Thus, differentiating between for-profit and non-profit NSA schools is fundamental, with all schools providing information on their finances and publishing audited accounts to confirm their status.

Accountability is also achieved through the adoption of quality assurance mechanisms, such as performance-based management, and the involvement of pressure groups such as parent–teacher associations (PTAs), school management committees (SMCs), teacher unions and the media, although the extent to which PTAs and SMCs are active and engaged in NSA schools is uncertain. Linking financial disbursements to school performance, such as through school improvement plans or school inspections, is another approach to increasing accountability between the state and schools and has the potential to improve monitoring, accountability and progress tracking of schools over time (Bhatta & Budathoki, 2013; Centre for Civil Society, 2019; Department of Education, 2010, 2012; Roy & Miah, 2017).

Accreditation, through the formal registration and recognition of schools, is a third means for securing accountability, for example through the widespread recognition of examination results and certification (Harma, 2009, p.152). Accreditation and recognition of achievement affect students’ long-term outcomes, hence concerns over the growing number of unrecognized schools across the region. Pal and Kingdon (2010) note that many private unaided schools in India, especially at primary level, are unrecognized because of the expense of meeting the government’s criteria, which can include, for example, pupil–teacher ratios and the provision of facilities such as a playground, library books and computers (Iyer & Counihan, 2018, p.367). Antony (2014) states that the process of recognition can be cumbersome and bureaucratic. The new NEP 2020 mandates the registration, regulation and accreditation of all schools at the point of establishment and progression, and schools that are unable to meet the benchmarking thresholds are at risk of having their contracts terminated. NSAs have adopted various strategies to meet the requirements of registration that also affect accountability, for example by setting performance targets, implementing time limits on registration decisions, or setting up a centralized body to coordinate and facilitate the registration process (Baum et al., 2018). Streamlining the recognition processes, improving communication and setting up support systems to encourage NSAs to register and adhere to the regulations will enable more NSA schools to progress towards recognition.

Clear, well-thought-out accountability mechanisms can hold both public and private schools to account through published school performance measures, based on state-established minimum standards. In India, for example, NEP 2020 empowers the State Schools Standards Authority (SSSSA) to publish school performance data and make available a grievance redressal mechanism that will allow greater public oversight of all providers of education services (Ministry of Education India, 2020). However, in
some cases, different rules apply to state and non-state schools: in Nepal, for example, all schools must take part in the school inspection process, but only community (government) schools must prepare five-year school improvement plans, while independent private schools are not required to do so (Department of Education, 2010, 2012).

Clarity in roles, responsibilities and processes drives accountability mechanisms, particularly through strengthening leadership and management. With schools being the smallest unit of governance, accountability need to be established from the bottom up, via SMCs, school federations, district-level authorities of state, up to institutional governance frameworks (Bhatta & Budathoki, 2013; Centre for Civil Society, 2019; Roy & Miah, 2017). In an effort to increase accountability and diminish conflicts of interest, NEP 2020 advocates for the roles of policymaking, operationalization and regulation of schools previously undertaken by the Department of State Education to be delineated and each of these three remits to be conducted by an independent agency (Ministry of Education India, 2020).

2.5 Data systems

Across education systems in South Asia, countries need to ensure that data systems provide appropriate, reliable and accessible information to all stakeholders. Good-quality data and education management information systems (EMIS) support the strengthening of education systems across the board, including their governance and funding structures, accountability mechanisms and performance, for example by mapping pedagogical issues and supporting the development of policies and reforms. It is critical that the information collected should be made useful for schools and those collecting it. However, a review of the various data sources across South Asia found that the quantity and quality of information varied substantially by country (see Appendix 3 to Annex 2). Generally, data is difficult to access and not consistently disaggregated by school type in official reports.8

Creating avenues for social participation is critical, and the collection of information is often the first stage in this process. Nuanced data should be available to parents and children, who are expected to exercise choice and have thus far done so based on their perceptions rather than their assessment of reliable information. That said, where information has been provided (such as in the provision of school reports in India and Pakistan), the impacts have been mixed (see Chapter 3, Box. 3.5). The application of right to information laws with clear procedures for obtaining information, especially in Rajasthan and Karnataka, is a promising trend in this respect. However, for these laws to be effective, there needs to be a greater awareness of them among the general population (Hallak & Poisson, 2006). As things stand, the effects of these laws are not yet clear.

The type of information collected reflects government and funder priorities, and Solesin (2020, p.8) notes that the production of data and monitoring indicators establishes ‘what counts’ in education and puts pressure on “whoever is being monitored to conform to the agreed model.” However, many important factors for the provision of high-quality, equitable and safe education cannot be discussed due to the absence of data and information. Establishing which types of data are available, what will be collected, and how it will be used are necessary steps in understanding what improvements can be achieved through the intelligent use of data and metrics. The role of NSAs in collecting data is significant (see Box 2.4). Our findings suggest that data collected in the region does not cover the full range of actors or educational outcomes.

8 This does not mean that raw data should be made available beyond researchers and research institutions. Distributing raw data on school performance with all stakeholders has downsides. By contrast, sharing processed data that shows a fair comparison (e.g. by accounting for social composition), and not ‘naming and shaming’ schools is a valuable activity for the sector’s development (see also Chapter 3, Section 3.1).
Non-State Education in South Asia:
Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

Box 2.4: Data collection and use among non-state actors

NSAs have been actively engaged in improving access to data to inform school performance and education policies across the region. The People’s Action for Learning (PAL) network brings together NSAs to carry out citizen-led household surveys on education access and children’s learning competencies, across and beyond the region. Pratham in India, for example, pioneered the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), based on a volunteer-led household survey in rural India which has now been adapted in Pakistan, and through pilot surveys in Nepal and in Bangladesh (PAL Network, 2020e, 2020b, 2020a, 2020d, 2020c). In Bangladesh, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) publishes Education Watch Reports annually, and in Maldives, the Community Systems Foundation has collaborated with the Ministry of Education to revamp the EMIS to provide real-time data on student, teacher and school performance. This includes the generation of student report cards, which identifies potential drop-outs through an early warning system, tracks out-of-school children, and monitors student and teacher attendance (Community Systems Foundation, 2020).

2.5.1 Gaps in data: causes, implications and solutions

The extent, quality and reliability of the data collected, especially with regard to NSAs, are questionable. Generally, data on non-state education is not collected systematically and is usually limited to school enrolment, number of schools, locations, and in some cases a few teacher characteristics. UDISE data from India, for example, shows that the vast majority of data collected on teacher working hours from unaided schools was missing or incorrect. This casts doubt on the reliability of the data already collected on these non-state schools, and highlights the need for data verification procedures.

In particular, there is insufficient data on the three key outcomes of quality, equity and safety. This is matched by inadequate evidence on the resources invested by parents, NGOs or other stakeholders in private education, which is required in order to determine the financial and social implications of learning outcomes on the life chances of children and young people. In India, for example, there is no official data collected from private schools on fee levels. Education expenditure information was collected in the 71st (2014–15) and 75th (2018) rounds of the NSS, but data access is not straightforward.

Distinguishing for-profit from non-profit NSA education services using clear, standardized nomenclature could strengthen data systems and make it more feasible to include the many types of NSA in data-collection processes and systems. At present, few countries in the region have data to ensure the accountability of all types of schools. For example, the literature on India acknowledges the diversity in provider types, but does not clearly distinguish between the various NSAs, such as LFPS, NGO schools and elite private schools, which are all currently categorized as ‘private unaided’ schools (Chudgar & Quin, 2012; Kingdon, 2017). In particular, data from unrecognized schools is missing, exacerbated by the absence of unrecognized schools from national education census estimates (Kelly, Krishna & Bhabha, 2016; Woodhead, Frost & James, 2013) and a failure to distinguish between recognized and unrecognized school in some datasets, such as ASER (Alcott & Rose, 2015; Chudgar & Creed, 2016; National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, n.d.). Given that some scholars note that unrecognized private schools may be as numerous as their recognized counterparts (Kingdon, 2017; Tooley & Rangaraju, 2014), and that Goyal and Pandey (2012) find that unrecognized
schools do better than recognized schools, there is a need explore this distinction further through the collection of accurate data.

However, there are instances of better and improving practices in the region. Bangladesh’s EMIS captures all 25 types of school, which enables better identification of the trends and issues that particular parts of the education system face (Directorate of Secondary & Higher Education (DSHE), 2020). Maldives has also been redesigning its EMIS and building the capacity of school management to improve real-time collection, monitoring and availability of data on all schools, irrespective of provider type (see Box 2.4).

The absence of a clear definition of the various forms of non-state provision could lead to difficulties in the comparability of data and therefore the capacity to learn from it. For example, the data review for this report identified differences in data collected in UIS and school census reports for education systems in Sri Lanka and Maldives (Asian Development Bank, 2017; Ministry of Education, 2018; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019) and internationally (Srivastava, 2020). Acknowledging this diversity and beginning to distinguish between the different actors could support system-wide improvements, including better accountability and data systems.

2.6 Priorities for action

While countries in South Asia aim to improve their education systems, system-wide improvement requires a broad approach. This means securing both economic growth and improved government fiscal and human capacity (Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar, 2014). This research has recommendations in five key areas:

- **Governance:** Ensuring that NSAs in education are part of the regulatory framework will see all schools, irrespective of type, as part of system-wide improvements. There needs to be a clear framing of the education system and guidance on the role of all NSAs in it. There are welcome signs of steps in this direction, but more collaborative and consultative processes are needed.

- **Funding:** Increasingly diversified funding will be needed for education, especially in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the predicted economic recessions. Simultaneously, it will be necessary to deploy funds to fulfill the right of all children, especially the most vulnerable, to a high-quality education. With the exception of Bhutan, education expenditure in South Asia is generally low, and this, combined with a lack of accountability and corruption and leakage of monies, will prove challenging to realizing improvements.

- **Fiscal policy:** Increasing tax income through improved collection of revenues and reduction of exemptions could provide better long-term, sustainable funding for education, notwithstanding the considerable challenge of post-Covid-19 austerity. Increasing the sensitivity of education budgets, for example through ringfencing tax revenues and by paying greater attention to equity and inclusion, especially among NSAs, could also contribute towards whole-system improvement.

- **Accountability:** Accountability and monitoring systems should be put in place to improve transparency, and to ensure that standards are met, state funds are correctly tracked, and all stakeholders are held to the highest standards. To do so requires non-profit and for-profit schools to be distinguished, and support for unrecognized schools to become part of the education system, for example by using transfer certificates that can only be granted by registered schools, although bribery and other implementation issues are barriers that will need to be overcome.
Data: Better definitions of the NSA role in education will be important to strengthening current data at both international and national levels. It will be increasingly important to gather relevant data systematically and comparably across the region to inform decisions and provide secure evidence for policies and programming.

The following chapters will focus on four specific aspects of NSA education in South Asia: quality, equity, safety and private tutoring. We outline the current state of research on these aspects and provide insights into the role NSAs perform for each. The four aspects of education systems discussed here – governance, funding, accountability and information – will continue to be referred to, in order to demonstrate how system-level improvements in these four areas are crucial for our understanding of the impact of NSA engagement in education provision, and the ultimate improvement of NSAs’ contribution to children’s learning outcomes and future life chances.
CHAPTER 3: QUALITY

Chapter 3 in a nutshell

It is imperative that we have a shared and clear understanding of what constitutes quality in education, so that children can be engaged and learning in school, and families can make informed choices. In this chapter, results from the analysis suggest that:

- A persistent NSA advantage remains in learning outcomes after controlling for household characteristics, but the reasons for this are difficult to uncover due to data limitations.
- Cost-efficiency within non-state schools comes at the expense of lower wages, poor working conditions and job stability, and poor enforcement of regulations to ensure quality assurance.
- Minimum standards for all school types are imperative for providing high-quality education for all children.
- Training, pastoral support, adequate remuneration and a safe teaching environment are critical to attract and retain motivated and committed teachers, and to combat problems such as teacher absenteeism and corruption that hinder efficiency and growth in the system.
- High-quality EMIS that collect data on all schools and allow comparisons across different variables, including infrastructure, materials, pupil–teacher ratios, teacher qualifications and learning outcomes, are crucial to whole-system improvement.

3.1 Introduction

This report takes high-quality education to mean one that “enables all children to thrive and learn in preparation for a meaningful, contributing life” (Brinkman, 2017). The rise of NSA involvement in education in South Asia has implications for the quality of provision, but it is unclear whether and how different types of NSA contribute to this. Quality has traditionally been measured in terms of learning outcomes and environment (Saito & Cappelle, 2009), with specific examples including:

- A school effectiveness framework for assessing quality, consisting of different components (e.g. assessment of learning; school and classroom leadership; student engagement; curriculum, teaching and learning; pathway planning and programming; and home, school and community partnerships (Ministry of Education Ontario, 2013)).
- A contextual model, which highlights the three-way interaction between an enabling policy environment, and the home, community and school environments, with particular interest in high-quality inputs, such as training, learning resources, infrastructure, and health and well-being inputs (Tikly, 2010; Tikly & Barrett, 2010).

Building on Tikly’s model, this chapter looks at the role, training and remuneration of teachers, school leadership, infrastructure, resources, curriculum and accountability.

While moderately better learning outcomes are found in non-state schools overall, it is not clear why this is the case due to lack of evidence, and any other advantages of non-state schools are unclear. Some research has shown that non-state schooling delivers better quality outcomes at lower cost (Pedró, Leroux & Watanabe, 2015; Baum & Riley, 2019), whereas other scholars have demonstrated that...
these improvements have been achieved at the cost of exacerbating inequities and social disparities in education ((Smith, Hardman & Tooley, 2005; Tooley & Rangaraju, 2014; Verger, Moschetti & Fontdevila, 2020). The neo-liberal argument is that market-based approaches promote competition and incentivize enhanced performance across all schools, regardless of type. This logic implies that parents and students see weaker schools as less desirable, forcing the schools to either improve or cease functioning. Yet there are questions for equity of access to good-quality education under such a framework if viable, affordable alternatives to poorly performing schools do not exist. Some have argued that private schools for the poor are an appropriate alternative (Tooley, 2005; Angrabi, Das & Khwaja, 2006), but this is highly contested. While school improvement is a worthy goal, there are also constraints in terms of the information parents and students need in order to make reliable choices. This information is not easily determined, available or equally accessible.

For most families, choosing a school is based on several factors including: school performance, proximity to home, school reputation, language of instruction, cost quality of facilities, quality of teaching, existence of peer groups, and socio-cultural compatibility (Carneiro, Das & Reis, 2016; Damera, 2018). Parents who send their children to non-state, unaided schools often do so due to the perceived poor quality of government schools or the opportunity for upward social mobility through enrolment in English-medium NSA schools (Crawfurd, Patel & Sandefur, 2019; Day Ashley et al., 2014a; Galab, Vennam, Komanduri, Benny & Georgiadis, 2013; Härma, 2009; Härma, 2011; Singh & Bangay, 2014; Singh & Sarkar, 2015). These perceptions are linked to learning outcomes. In India, the percentage of parents who perceived government schools to be of poor quality was higher on average in states that scored lower in the bottom tercile in the national assessments (Ministry of Statistics and Programmes, 2018) (see Table 3.1). For schools, markers of school performance may be used to improve operations, but these may benefit certain types of school over others. For instance, in India and Pakistan, school report cards appear not to have made government schools more competitive, but they do improve non-state-school performance, which in turn can encourage such schools to increase their fees (Afridi, Barooh & Somanathan, 2017; Andrabi, Das & Khwaja, 2017).

Table 3.1: Reasons for changing school, by National Achievement Survey (NAS) score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAS rank</th>
<th>Government-aided</th>
<th>Non-state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Nearby (44.7)</td>
<td>Poor quality of government schools (31.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Nearby (31.9)</td>
<td>Poor quality of government schools (29.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Poor quality of government schools (33.2)</td>
<td>Poor quality of government schools (44.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: NAS ranking is divided into terciles by mean state score: Low <= 51.6; Medium = 51.7–58.7; High >= 58.7

Fee rises make non-state schooling less equitable: the cost of schooling is a key determinant of school choice and a perceived marker of quality, especially among wealthier parents (Damera, 2018). In an environment where school report cards enable for-profit private schools to raise their fees according to performance, poorly performing non-state and state schools are left as a last resort for the poorest and most marginalized communities (Afridi et al., 2017; Andrabi et al., 2017; Vasavi, 2003). As a result, it is not clear whether even if non-state schools are delivering good-quality education, it can be done equitably. To explore these concerns and the links between quality and access, this section examines indicators of school quality, such as:

- learning outcomes
- teachers’ qualifications and experience
school learning environments, including facilities and infrastructure
- leadership and management
- EMIS and accurate information to drive accountability and school management.

Box 3.1: Turning the tide on private enrolments through education reform

The surge in English-medium non-state schools and the subsequent dwindling student headcount in government schools in Kerala in the south of India resulted in the roll-out of the General Education Protection Campaign in 2017. Increased public spending and an overhaul of school infrastructure, including improved resources and facilities such as internet connectivity and sports and arts centres, combined with the introduction of English-medium in state schools, saw a return of students from non-state to state schools. While not without issues such as the recruitment and training of qualified English teachers, this is a concrete example of how governments can turn around education provision in government schools (Government of Kerala, 2016; The Hindu Business Line, 2020; The New Indian Express, 2018; Thomas, 2018).

3.2 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes, based on standardized test scores, have long been used as an indicator of school quality and performance. However, critics have opposed the culture of standardized testing (Verger, Parcerisa & Fontdevila, 2019) as it is thought to encourage ‘teaching to the test’, over-emphasizing rote learning and promoting ‘cream-skimming’ instead of improving the overall quality of schooling for all (Bhatta & Pherali, 2017). The use of more comprehensive indicators of school quality that go beyond merely measuring inputs and learning outcomes could help build up a wider and more comprehensive evidence-base on learning outcomes. This holistic approach to assessments could include measuring the acquisition of digital and transferable skills. However, on balance, while test scores should not be the only measure of school quality, they can provide an indicative, concrete and comparable measure of the extent of learning (Aslam, 2003; Muralidaran & Sundararaman, 2015; Srivastava, 2013; Verger et al., 2019). The collection of performance data on literacy and numeracy is particularly important for gauging the effectiveness of a school in imparting foundational knowledge and skills.

3.2.1 A meta-analysis of learning outcomes, by broad school type

Current measures of learning outcomes are not standardized across different countries and do not adequately differentiate between types of NSA provider, or account for individual or household factors, though within-country learning levels among children show an interesting pattern (see Figure 3.1). With the exception of Bangladesh, where the performance of state schools is at least equal to that of non-state schools, children enrolled in non-state schools outperform those in state schools in reading and mathematics, sometimes by large margins. As these comparisons do not control for socio-economic status, or other factors beyond the broad school type that may explain the differences, we synthesize the literature evaluating the effects of non-state schooling after controlling for household variables, using a meta-analysis approach.

9 Bangladesh is something of an out-rider, as over 90 per cent of children attend some form of non-state school, most of which are run by NGOs and funded by the state, making them different in kind from low-fee, for-profit schools elsewhere.
Based on the best available studies in the region, a persistent NSA advantage exists in learning outcomes.\textsuperscript{10} There is a moderately positive aggregate effect for non-state schools of 0.26 (95 per cent CI [0.09-0.43]) on learning outcomes, even after adjusting for individual and household factors (see Figure 3.2).\textsuperscript{8} The results suggest that the effect of non-state schools is larger for language (0.368 SD) than mathematics (0.267 SD), but there is limited evidence on the non-state-school effect on other outcomes, such as cognitive and social development, socio-emotional learning, creativity, social interaction and community engagement, which some claim are better achieved in state schools (Stromquist, 2018). There is also variation between groups based on location (urban or rural) and country (especially in language test scores). These findings fall within the range of findings from other regions (Baum & Riley (2019) in Kenya; McEwan (2001) in Chile), but there is insufficient evidence to show that any specific type of NSA provider consistently improves learning outcomes for children over time.

\textsuperscript{10} This is based on findings from 17 studies and 78 effect sizes, with the majority of these studies focusing on primary-age children (12 of 17 studies) and foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes (see Appendix 1 to Annex 3).
Non-State Education in South Asia:
Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

Figure 3.2: Outcomes: meta-analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SMD (95% CI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singh and Mukherjee, 2017</td>
<td>2.39 (0.69-4.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pal and Saha, 2016</td>
<td>0.71 (0.09-1.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooley, Bao, Dixon and Merrifield, 2011</td>
<td>0.66 (0.57-0.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thapa, 2015</td>
<td>0.65 (-0.23-1.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrera-Osorio et al, 2017</td>
<td>0.51 (0.43-0.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goyal and Pandey, 2009</td>
<td>0.58 (0.24-0.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azam, Kingdon and Wu, 2016</td>
<td>0.49 (0.40-0.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarrok, 2013</td>
<td>0.25 (0.19-0.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French and Kingston, 2010</td>
<td>0.18 (0.18-0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burde, Middleton, Wahl, 2015</td>
<td>0.15 (0.02-0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muralidharan and Sundararaman, 2015</td>
<td>0.14 (0.07-0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richards and Islam, 2018</td>
<td>0.13 (-2.01-2.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh, 2015</td>
<td>0.08 (-0.03-0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chudgar and Quin, 2012</td>
<td>0.05 (-0.03-0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javaid, Musaddiq and Sultan, 2012</td>
<td>0.04 (0.02-0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford, Patel and Sandefur, 2019</td>
<td>-0.11 (-0.31-0.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangeni, 2014</td>
<td>-0.12 (-0.20-0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall effect</td>
<td>0.26 (0.09-0.43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limitations on the findings of the meta-analysis

These findings should be interpreted with great caution since they conceal the variation in types of NSA provider (e.g. high-fee, low-fee, NGO, for-profit), and rely on a small and uneven number of cases. Except for two studies (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015; A. Singh, 2015) that showed contrasting effects on learning outcomes over time (one on school type and the other on school vouchers), all the studies included in the meta-analysis were cross-sectional, with very limited evidence of effects being causal or consistently positive over time. The necessary exclusion of unrecognized schools contributes to selection bias, and limits the general application of findings (Goyal & Pandey, 2012). Moreover, while studies account for household socio-economic circumstances, there may be unobserved household-, teacher- and school-specific characteristics that are not consistently accounted for and the effects of which cannot be observed. Similarly, student characteristics in different school types are likely to vary, and may explain, at least in part, the differences in outcomes between non-state and state schools (ASER Centre, 2019; Chudgar & Quin, 2012). All these factors make it difficult to say how, why or even which types of NSA provider models are outperforming state schools (Akmal, Crawfurd & Hares, 2019; Crawfurd & Hares, 2019; Romero, Sandefur & Romero, 2019).

This vast heterogeneity in provider type is acknowledged within research and surveys (Day Ashley et al., 2014b). While learning outcomes in non-state schools exceed those of state schools in Nepal, further drilling down showed that learning gains are driven by trust schools, which outperform commercial non-state schools in improving school quality and learning (Pal & Saha, 2016). Desai, Dubey, Vanneman & Banerji (2008) noted that in India, while a modest non-state-school advantage existed in reading and mathematics, inter-state variations showed state schools outperforming non-state schools in some states: the non-state-school advantage persisted in economically deprived states with poorly functioning systems and weak regulatory provision. A further study in India of high- and low-fee schools (Chudgar & Quin, 2012) found that high-fee schools outperform state schools to a greater extent than low-fee schools, except in the case of reading in urban areas, where there is a small difference the other way. There is a real need to understand the nuances of what (and which) providers are doing better, and why.
3.2.2 Learning outcomes over time

An analysis of ASER data from India and Pakistan suggests that the effect of non-state schooling varies over time and that there are large differences in learning by wealth quintile (see Figure 3.3a and Figure 3.3b). In India, for the poorest quintile, a higher percentage of both boys and girls in non-state schools are able to read, and this gap between state and non-state schools increased between 2011 and 2018. In Pakistan, while it remains true that non-state schools perform better than state schools, the gap has narrowed in recent years. In rural locations, there are large differences between quintiles in both school types. However, in India, non-state schools are better able to close the gap between poorer children and their wealthier peers, whereas in Pakistan this gap appears to be widening. This difference may be explained by a decline in non-state-school learning outcomes, but only for the poorest, in Pakistan; the exact opposite is the case for India (that is, non-state-school learning outcomes improve for poor students). The causes of these changes are currently unclear.

Figure 3.3a: India: percentage of children aged 10–12 who can read, by school type, quintile and gender

India: Percentage of Children (Ages 10-12) Who can Read by School Type, Quintile and Gender

Source: ASER Centre 2011-2018
So as not to lose sight of the bigger picture, it is important to state that in almost all the countries studied, children’s learning outcomes are still far below the expected level, regardless of school type:

- In Afghanistan, only 9 per cent of 6th-grade students reached proficiency in mathematics, and only 12 per cent in writing (Lumley, Mendelovits, Stanyon, Turner & Walker, 2015), and more than half of grade 4 students in CBE schools were performing below their grade level.

- In rural India, 60 per cent of grade 3 students in all schools are unable to read a grade 2 text (ASER, 2019). By grade 5, 35 per cent of non-state-school students still cannot read a grade 2 text, with equally dismal statistics on numeracy (see Table 3.3).

- These findings concur with marginal learning gains found among poor children in Pakistan (Alcott & Rose, 2015).

In sum, there is no clear evidence to show that any specific type of non-state provider consistently improves learning outcomes for children over time (Akmal et al., 2019; Day Ashley & Wales, 2015). This suggests that understanding the circumstances, contexts, experiences and modalities in which students experience learning gains is highly pertinent (Srivastava, 2013). The rest of this chapter explores the elements that differ between school types to investigate how these might account for the differences detected in learning outcomes.
Table 3.2: India: Outcomes over time, by type of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes over time by type of school</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 3 who could read a Class 2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>16.70%</td>
<td>20.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>33.80%</td>
<td>40.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 5 who could read a Class 2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>41.70%</td>
<td>44.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>61.20%</td>
<td>65.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 8 who could read a Class 2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>73.40%</td>
<td>69.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>84.20%</td>
<td>82.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 3 who can do at least subtraction</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>19.80%</td>
<td>20.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>43.40%</td>
<td>43.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 5 who can do division</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20.30%</td>
<td>22.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>37.80%</td>
<td>39.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of children in Class 8 who can do division</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>44.50%</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>57.10%</td>
<td>54.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ASER-India

3.3 Quality of teaching

Teachers form the critical core of any effective education system. Teacher quality may be determined by the provision of better training, but also by ensuring their continued presence, engagement and use of good pedagogical practice that monitors and improves students’ learning and well-being outcomes.

3.3.1 Teacher characteristics, qualifications and recruitment

Differences exist between teachers working in state versus non-state schools across the region. Overall, teachers in state schools are better trained, better qualified and better paid than their non-state-school counterparts (see Figure 3.4). For example, while around 80 per cent of early childhood development (ECD) centres in Sri Lanka are managed by NSAs (Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, 2016), only 39 per cent of all ECD teachers meet the minimum qualification to teach (World Bank, 2014). In Afghanistan, only 61 per cent of CBE teachers had completed pre-service training, compared to 83 per cent of state-school teachers (World Bank, 2018).

Non-state-school teachers are more often women, and are also younger, and more likely to be unqualified or unlicensed to teach, with fewer years of teaching experience (Aslam & Kingdon, 2011; Bhatta & Pherali, 2017; de Talancé, 2017; Goyal & Pandey, 2009) (see Figure 3.5). Yet non-state schools are often credited with having higher teacher activity (Tooley & Dixon, 2007), better accountability measures, teacher supervision and performance incentive mechanisms (Aslam & Kingdon, 2011), lower teacher absenteeism, increased student monitoring and lower pupil–teacher ratios (Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2006; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015; Tooley & Rangaraju, 2014).

There are also cultural differences: non-state-school teachers in Pakistan and Afghanistan are recruited from the community, which offers benefits in teachers’ commuting costs, and makes it more likely that teachers will share students’ language and cultural expectations (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014; World Bank, 2018).
Figure 3.4: Percentage of qualified primary-level teachers, by country

Percentage of Qualified Teachers (primary level), (2018 or nearest year)

In all cases where data is available, the percentage of teachers that is qualified is higher in government schools.

Source: Betell et al, 2020; Ministry of Education (Nepal), 2016; ASER Pakistan, 2018, SABER (Afghanistan), 2019
Recruitment practices

Low pay and the absence of mechanisms to monitor teacher recruitment and the quality of non-state training institutes contribute to the recruitment of unqualified teachers in non-state schools (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Severe teacher shortages across South Asia lead many non-state schools to recruit teachers without the minimum qualifications or teaching license (Stromquist, 2018; Subedi, Shrestha & Suvedi, 2014). Practice across the region varies, not least between non-state and state schools:

- In Bangladesh, eligibility to teach in a state school requires a Bachelor’s or equivalent degree, whereas non-state-school recruitment is decided by SMCs, although teachers in non-state secondary schools must pass an examination and be licensed by the Non-Government Teachers’ Registration and Certification Authority (NTRCA) (Asian Development Bank, 2017).
Teachers in India are required to satisfy the Central Teacher Eligibility Test, irrespective of type of school, with some states requiring additional criteria.

Teachers in Nepal must be registered and licensed through the Teacher Service Commission (TSC), though very few non-state schools comply with this, and teacher recruitment for non-state and community schools is made by SMCs (Asian Development Bank, 2017).

3.3.2 Teacher pay, incentives and working conditions

Teachers’ salaries and working conditions vary by level and school type across the region, with teachers in non-state schools generally receiving lower pay (see Figure 3.6). Teachers in state schools are classed as civil servants, and consequently their working conditions provide greater security in pay, benefits and promotion:

- Registered non-state primary school teachers in Bangladesh are paid half that of their state school counterparts (Financial Management Reform Programme (FMRP), 2006; World Bank, 2016a), and state secondary school teachers earn twice that of NGOs’ monthly payment order (MPO) and 3.8 times that of non-MPO teachers (CAMPE, 2019).

- Teachers in low-fee non-state schools in Pakistan are paid below the wage of a day labourer (Rs. 300) (Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014).

- While regulations in India require non-state schools to ensure teachers’ salaries are on a par with government pay scales, compliance among non-state schools is low (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2013b; A. Singh, 2015; Tooley, 2016) (see Appendix 1 to Annex 3).

- Salaries of non-state-school teachers in Nepal are required to be in line with government pay scales, though minimal regulation limits enforcement (World Bank, 2016b), and only 20 per cent of teachers meet the requirements of this pay scale due to the use of fixed-term contracts and few opportunities for training or progression (Stromquist, 2018; Subedi et al., 2014).

- A contrasting example comes from Bhutan, where the Fourth Pay Commission has almost doubled teachers’ basic pay and allowances, which – along with the prohibition of private tutoring and the provision of remedial classes in state schools – shows that reform is possible (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2012).

One consequence of these differences in teacher pay is that non-state-school teachers are more likely to have a second occupation, such as private tutoring, which adds to their workload and exacerbates inefficiencies in the education system (see Chapter 6).
Figure 3.6: Private–government-funded teacher salary ratios

Average Private to Government Teacher Salary Ratio by Country

Private school teacher salaries are far lower in all countries where data was found, but the range is large in India and Pakistan.

Box 3.2: Teachers’ unions in South Asia

Teachers’ unions are vital non-state actors in educational systems, representing and advocating for the interests and rights of teachers in state and non-state schools alike, and lobbying on issues such as pay, working conditions, recruitment and promotion (see Appendix 3 to Annex 3). Unions also play a role in protecting their members from acts of violence and in sanctioning perpetrators of violence, and in engaging in peace-building and social cohesion, and protecting teachers, especially in areas of conflict. Most of all, teachers’ unions are vital in raising the value and status of the profession and can be an effective conduit to building trust between communities, schools and government.

Teachers’ unions are prevalent in every country in South Asia: most countries have separate associations for non-state schools, while smaller countries such as Bhutan and Maldives have a single union to represent all teachers.

Teachers’ unions have considerable power in India, and are the only civil servants allowed to contest some types of election in some states. Their political influence may lead to patronage and imbalances of power between students and parents, and teachers (Mehrotra, 2006). There is also some evidence that teachers’ unions can have a negative effect on students’ achievement, while having a positive impact on teacher pay (Kingdon & Teal, 2010).

Although teachers’ unions efforts to raise teacher salaries and improve conditions could bring about improvements across the whole sector, such efforts also widen the cost–outcomes gap between state and non-state schools.
**Pupil–teacher ratios**

Pupil–teacher ratios (PTRs) and teacher working hours are indicators of teacher workloads, instructional time and overall teacher effectiveness (Evans & Yuan, 2018). In South Asia, large class sizes remain a common practice despite the decline in PTRs from 51 in 1980 to 45 in 2010 (Evans & Yuan, 2018). Teachers’ engagement in multi-grade teaching may mask the true picture and likely wide variations sub-nationally. PTRs vary by school type, with state schools having bigger classes (see Figure 3.7). These differences in class size may partially explain better learning outcomes in non-state schools, as teachers are able to spend more time with students.

**Figure 3.7: Pupil–teacher ratios, by school type and level (2018 or nearest)**

In the majority of cases, the STR is higher in government schools than private schools.

![Graph showing pupil-teacher ratios by school type and level](image)

**Teacher workload**

As part of the differences detected in working conditions, teachers in non-state schools are as a rule likely to work longer hours and have a heavier workload, although again there is significant variation across the region. In **Bangladesh**, for example, teachers in madrasas taught an average of 26 periods (16 hours a week), compared to teachers in state schools who taught an average of 21 periods a week (CAMPE, 2019). In addition to planning and preparation time, teachers also spend around 50 days a year on non-teaching tasks, such as election and census duties, invigilation and implementing vaccination drives (Luscheri & Chudgar, 2017; Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014), though how this varies by type of school is unclear.
In **India**, state-school teachers also work fewer hours than their non-state-school counterparts (see Figure 3.8). Lower pay, poorer working conditions, and a lack of training opportunities and career progression for teachers in non-state schools reflect the de-professionalization and undervaluing of all teachers, irrespective of type of school, with repercussions for the whole sector (Hossain, Hassan, Rahman, Ali & Islam, 2017; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2006; R. Singh & Sarkar, 2015).

**Figure 3.8: India: Number of hours teachers stay in school daily, by school type and level, (2017-18)**

Indian: Median number of hours teachers stay in school (per day) by school type and level, 2017/18

3.3.3 **Teacher effectiveness, classroom practice and teacher accountability**

Teacher effectiveness is a key determinant in improving performance (UNESCO, 2018), whereas conventional determinants, such as teacher age and qualifications, contract type and years of experience, are poor predictors of teacher effectiveness in improving learning outcomes in developing countries (Bau & Das, 2017). Because teachers in state schools are mostly recruited on permanent contracts, there are few material incentives to incentivize high performance, unlike non-state-school teachers on fixed-term or temporary contracts, whose continued employment relies on their performance (Barrera-Osorio & Raju, 2017). However, this picture may be changing: fixed-term contracts for new teachers in state school are now being used in Sindh, **Pakistan**, which are offered based on student exam performance and renewed based on teacher performance. A similar approach has been proposed for **India** (Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar, 2014; Pritchett & Pande, 2006).

While there are significant challenges in this system, especially in relation to exam construction and the role of the teacher in exam performance (Balch & Springer, 2015; Ballou, 2001; Ballou & Springer, 2015), performance-related pay may be effective in raising learning outcomes if implemented well (Loyalka, Sylvia, Liu, Chu & Shi, 2019; Mbiti, Romero & Schipper, 2019; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2011).

**Classroom practice**

The poor quality of teacher training in many countries means that training has limited application in the classroom (Jha & Shah, 2018), although combining it with effective classroom management practices and accountability mechanisms may improve overall teacher effectiveness. The World Bank (2018) found that although state-school teachers had higher levels of content knowledge, 90 per cent of CBE teachers in **Afghanistan** were exhibiting better classroom practice, despite having levels of education below the MoE standards. The high number of female teachers played a critical role in encouraging the enrolment and attendance of girls, showing that even less educated teachers can be effective if they possess the right characteristics and classroom practices (Jantzi, Lattimer, Jasim-Falher, Haroon & Iqbal, 2019).
More effective non-state schools in Pakistan recruit better qualified teachers who adopt classroom practices that involve peer interaction, close student monitoring and test-based assessments (Aslam & Kingdon, 2011). In India, 80 per cent of non-state-school teachers (compared to 36 per cent of state-school teachers) had better classroom practices and positive attitudes towards their school, making a significant impact on learning outcomes (R. Singh & Sarkar, 2015), whereas teachers’ years of experience and gender made no difference. However, LFPS in India are found to use teacher-driven instruction and rote learning (Smith, Hardman & Tooley, 2005), which is also commonly found in non-state pre-primary schools in India (ASER Centre, 2019). This reiterates the point that not all non-state schools are the same and the need for more evidence on the contexts of learning remains imperative.

In-service training

In-service training or continuing professional development (CPD) is an opportunity to build on-the-job teacher capacity, though the provision and quality of training for teachers in non-state schools seem low, with most ill-equipped to teach and obliged to improvise, due to limited CPD opportunities. Only 20 per cent of non-state-school teachers in Pakistan (compared to 57 per cent of state-school teachers) had received training in the previous five years of service (Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014). In Bangladesh, by contrast, pre-primary teachers in NGO schools receive similar levels of training as those in state schools (90 per cent and 96 per cent respectively; CAMPE, 2013).

Teacher accountability measures

Improving teacher quality also requires systemic levers of accountability, monitoring and quality assurance. In Bangladesh, the Non-Government Teachers’ Registration & Certification Authority (NTRCA) provides benchmarks for monitoring teacher quality in non-state schools, which has led to non-state secondary schools receiving more frequent feedback on teacher performance (based on lesson preparation and pastoral duties) than government schools (CAMPE, 2019). NCTE in India mandates minimum standards of teacher quality, although the extent to which this is enforced in non-state schools is unclear. In Sri Lanka, routine performance reviews of teachers in non-state schools are conducted by headteachers and provided to the school board to inform decisions on promotions. Where these standards are mandated nationally, however, enforcement is unclear, though school-based methods of performance review may ensure the quality of teachers’ skills in all school types.

There is evidence that teachers in non-state schools have lower absence rates, more per-student time, and fewer administrative duties (Kingdon & Banerji, 2009; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2008; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015). Lower absence rates may possibly be due to greater accountability and lower job security (Central Square Foundation, 2020), a finding that matches that for teachers on fixed-term contracts in state schools compared to those on permanent contracts (Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar et al., 2014; Goyal & Pandey, 2009; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015). There is a need to examine the mechanisms behind these outcomes and their long-term effects. Such mechanisms place the onus on teachers to perform, rather than adjusting the system so that it supports teachers in providing better and more consistent teaching. EMSIS with up-to-date, accurate data on a wide range of teacher characteristics would not only increase transparency and accountability, but also provide much-needed information for untangling these mechanisms and optimizing teacher deployment.
3.4 Leadership and management

Effective school leadership, management and administration are vital in securing teacher performance, accountability and the overall monitoring and management of the quality of education provided. Headteachers generally assess teacher performance on the basis of learning outcomes, but also through reviewing lesson plans, assessing teachers’ ability to maintain order in the classroom, and evaluating their performance in counselling and welfare duties to students. However, there are many small schools where there is only one teacher who fulfills all the administrative roles (in India, for example, a school must have at least five teachers to qualify for a formal headteacher post) and many schools have no headteacher at all, despite being large enough. Further, the heavy administrative burden of most headteachers in South Asia leaves no time for organizational leadership, such as managing staff, facilities, and budgets and resources, or communicating regularly with parents and SMCs (Beteille et al., 2020).

Headteachers are appointed on the basis of seniority and are responsible for providing professional support and guidance to teachers on their performance. In Nepal, headteachers of non-state schools monitor and make recommendations on teacher performance to the SMC, but headteachers are often not trained in school management or administration, with fewer non-state than state headteachers receiving training. The politicization of education systems has made the monitoring of schools, including non-state schools, a highly contentious and subjective process (Bhatta & Pherali, 2017; Khanal, 2013; Stromquist, 2018; Subedi et al., 2014), though efforts by NSAs are being made to improve school leadership in diverse contexts (see Box 3.4).
Box 3.3: School leadership training for state and non-state schools across India

Improving school leadership is the cornerstone of improving school management, accountability and the overall quality of teaching and learning (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 2011). In India, the National Centre of School Leadership has been launched, but it is unclear whether its remit extends to NSA schools. The Piramal School of Leadership Programme is running school leadership training programmes in 4,000 state schools across 14 states, with the aim of building the capacity of headteachers to lead and manage schools. Improvements in school leadership in the state of Rajasthan have seen improvements in learning, student retention and the return of over 6,000 students from non-state to state schools. The India School Leadership Institute (ISLI) also runs a two-year training programmes for principals, school trustees and SMC members of low-cost, non-state schools across the country.

Evaluation and inspection activities

Monitoring and accountability of schools together rely on effective school management systems and trained, motivated school leaders to establish and maintain school improvement plans that are aligned with established school quality benchmarks. In Pakistan, publicly funded non-state secondary schools are required to register with the school examination board for quality assurance, with school subsidies being conditional on school performance, as measured by student assessments and school inspections. Non-state schools in Bangladesh have regular school inspections, with rewards and sanctions applied based on adherence to benchmarks (e.g. exam results, and enrolment and attendance rates). Non-compliant schools are shut down or denied registration (World Bank, 2016a). Until recently, the District Education Office in Nepal was responsible for conducting monthly school inspections to assess performance for both state and NSA schools (World Bank, 2016b), but this has now been devolved to local government as part of decentralization. The extent to which this was done in non-state schools is unclear.

In Bhutan, self-evaluation procedures have been established so that non-state schools conduct regular self-assessment under the oversight of the MoE’s Non-state School Division (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2012). In addition, all schools are required to submit school improvement plans (SIPs) and audited financial reports, though these are not linked to government funding and are not enforced. Maldives applies a whole-school supervision model using the guidelines of the School Improvement Quality Assurance Accountability Framework (SIQAAF), which applies to all schools. In Sri Lanka, the quality of state schools is determined by the Management Quality Assurance Branch (MQAB), which is responsible for setting minimum standards and guidelines for the operation of schools. Performance on the MQAB is linked with school accreditation and ratings, which incentivizes schools to deliver good-quality services. However, information on the efforts to monitor the quality of non-state schools is sparse.

Parental and community engagement

Parental and community engagement through SMCs, school councils and PTAs provides alternative NSA-led accountability mechanisms that have proved more effective in state schools (Rahim, 2017).

11 See http://ncsl.niepa.ac.in
These accountability measures from parents and communities vary by NSA type, in pre-primary schools in **Bangladesh**, for example, parental engagement was higher in BRAC schools than in other non-state kindergartens or mosque schools (CAMPE, 2013). In **Bhutan**, non-state schools are required to establish school management boards (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2012), which are responsible for monitoring the operation, progress and performance of schools. SMCs in non-state and state-aided non-state schools in **Nepal** are responsible for the overall management of schools, including teacher salaries, recruitment and dismissal (World Bank, 2016b), though only 5 per cent of non-state schools have SMCs (Subedi et al., 2014).

### 3.5 School facilities and learning environments

#### 3.5.1 Infrastructure

There is evidence that the provision of good-quality school infrastructure promotes better conditions for learning and teaching, resulting in better learning outcomes and reduced drop-out rates (Teixeira, Amoroso & Gresham, 2017). For instance, research in Latin American schools shows that violence, discrimination and limited learning opportunities are associated with the absence of basic infrastructure, such as electricity, potable water, sanitation and waste disposal (Barret, Treves, Shmis, Ambasz & Ustinova, 2018). Furthermore, a 2006 survey of schools in Bangladesh, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Peru and Uganda found that teacher absenteeism fell as infrastructure (e.g. toilets, covered classrooms, library, electricity) improved (Chaudhury, Hammer, Kremer, Muralidharan & Rogers, 2006). Of course, infrastructure-based interventions do not always improve learning outcomes (David, Wijesundera & Sethunga, 2016), but a basic standard of infrastructure and facilities is an important part of a safe learning environment (see Chapter 5). The extent and quality of school facilities vary by country and across different types of school (see Figure 3.9).

In **Afghanistan**, the provision of non-state-school amenities consistently exceeded that of state schools, across all levels of education. However, facilities in CBE schools were of far worse quality compared to those in state schools (World Bank, 2018). In **Sri Lanka**, state provision of basic amenities (such as washing facilities and electricity) is mostly on a par with or exceeds that of non-state schools, though non-state schools are better equipped with computers and internet connectivity. Similar patterns are found in **India** with two exceptions: more non-state than state schools have electricity, and state schools have better provision for children with disabilities, with 70 per cent of state schools having ramps, compared with 40 per cent and 20 per cent for non-state unaided schools and unrecognized schools respectively (Ministry of Education India, 2018).

**Bangladesh** is the only country where state provision was on a par with or exceeded non-state provision for all amenities (where data was available) and across education levels. However, pre-primary facilities in **Bangladesh** are of poor quality, irrespective of provider type. Mosque schools had the poorest quality of provision – using verandas for teaching for example – while BRAC schools have better school facilities (CAMPE, 2013). **Nepal** was the only country where data on non-state provision of school amenities was unavailable. While the differences within countries were not as large as those between countries, they nevertheless show that national aggregates hide substantial inequalities (see Figure 3.10).
Figure 3.9: Percentage of schools with access to facilities, by type and level (2018 or nearest)

Percentage of schools that have access to... by school type and level, 2018 (or nearest year)
For the Maldives both Government and Private Schools are 100%.

Figure 3.10: Pakistan: Percentage of rural schools with access to facilities, by state, all levels (2018)

Pakistan: Percentage of (rural) schools that have... by state, all levels, 2018
While some states, such as Punjab, have very little difference between school types, other provinces show large differences between type.
3.5.2 Provision of resources

Most countries in South Asia use centralized production and distribution of textbooks, where copyright is owned primarily by the government. In India, distrust in the state certification procedures has pushed non-state pre-primary schools to rely on non-state publishers to provide textbooks (Prabha, Maithreyi, Sinha, Viknesh & Sriprakash, 2019). However, the cost of textbooks from commercial publishers can be 20 times higher (Smart & Jaganathan, 2018), which adds to the expenditure incurred by households. In Bangladesh, the National Curriculum Textbook Board (NCTB) is the largest state-owned publisher and distributor of school textbooks (Smart & Jaganathan, 2018), although until recently, there was a lack of an established curriculum at pre-primary level, with fewer materials being available in mosque schools and kindergartens, compared to state schools. In Sri Lanka, non-state schools receiving government aid rely on this support for salaries, textbooks and uniforms. In Bhutan, all non-state schools must follow the national curriculum and are entitled to free textbooks. Evidence on the extent and quality of non-state-school resources and the effects on equitable access is unclear; further research is needed.

3.6 School improvement, accountability and choice

Access to reliable, standardized data on quality is a necessary yet not sufficient condition for greater accountability of schools, to ensure compliance with regulations and quality standards. Making better data available can inform schools on how they can improve all aspects of education provision, and help families to make informed choices and to push for improvements. Data on school quality also informs and influences government policy, not least in respect of the allocation of resources. For all this to happen, the data needs to be reliable and available, which is too often not the case in the region, although efforts are being made to address this (see Box 3.5).

Box 3.4: Improving accountability and choice

Interventions to address information asymmetry in developing countries through the provision of school report cards have been conducted, with mixed results.

In Pakistan, the provision of report cards improved the performance of poorly performing schools and led to improved outcomes in non-state schools, but had no effect on parental choice or allocation of time for schooling (Andrabi et al., 2017). The intervention resulted in non-state schools reducing their fees by 17 per cent and non-state enrolments increasing by 5 per cent.

A similar study in Rajasthan in India delved deeper into the mechanisms of school choice by providing parents and schools with comparative results of standardized tests (Afridi et al., 2017). This increased competitiveness spurred student performance and school choice, but report cards led to improvement learning outcomes only in non-state schools, with further effects on increasing fees and rising demand for non-state schools.

Clearly, better information is important for greater transparency, but there is a need to contextualize the data and to make it widely available, so that people understand the comparisons.

Drawing parallels with market-driven, consumerist behaviour that relies on competitive pricing and brand loyalty, non-state schools will, on many occasions, respond to the over-reliance on perceptions by responding to parental demand rather than ensuring that standards are met. For example, non-state pre-primary schools in India, in response to parental demands, use teacher-led recitation, formal rote
and desk-based teaching, rather than age-appropriate play-based learning, with long-term implications on learning outcomes (Ahmed et al., 2005; Kaul et al., 2017; Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2013) (see Box 3.6).

**Box 3.5: Curriculum reform and language policy**

Both non-state and state schools have responded to parental demand by changing their policies and practices in order to attract more students. However, these demands are not necessarily in line with best practice or the well-being of children. For instance, in India, 98 per cent of the urban working poor whose children attend ‘affordable’ non-state schools equate school quality with children getting daily homework and being tested regularly (Ahmed et al., 2005). Schools in which English is the medium of instruction are perceived to be of higher quality (Damera, 2018; A. Singh, 2015) as they provide opportunities for upward social mobility, through higher wage gains and labour market returns (Aslam, Kingdon, De & Kumar, 2010; Azam, Chin & Prakash, 2013; Bakshi & Kapur, 2016) and enhanced social networks (Caddell, 2005; Munshi & Rosenzweig, 2006). However, these benefits may have deleterious effects on early cognitive and language development if introduced at an early age (Ahmed et al., 2005) or taught if by teachers who are not proficient in English (Nambissan, 2012).

In some cases, the practices of NSA schools have induced changes in the state curriculum. In Nepal, competition from non-state schools resulted in state schools emulating practices such as teaching English, introducing school uniform and providing remedial classes for high-stakes examinations (Joshi, 2014). The introduction of English-medium instruction in state schools in Haryana (Narwana, 2017) altered parental preference for state over non-state schools, resulting in lower demand for and subsequent closure of low-fee private schools. Disruptions in demand for non-state schools occurred, despite better offers on other quality indicators such as lower PTRs, co-located pre-primary facilities, provision of fee-based transport, level of discipline and location.

The National Education Policy in Pakistan recommended the use of English from class 1, in an effort to increase demand by mirroring non-state-school policies, though some provinces (such as Punjab) have since reversed the policy and emphasized the use of Urdu up to class 3 (Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014). Prioritizing overall improvements in school quality, rather than focusing on gains in test scores or English language skills, would be conducive to long-term learning and the holistic development of each child.

Similar findings were seen in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, with teachers unprepared and untrained to teach at pre-primary levels prioritizing the teaching of reading and writing at an early age in response to parental demand for ‘school readiness’ (CAMPE, 2013; World Bank, 2014). This has recently changed in Bangladesh, with pre-primary teachers from state primary schools now receiving a 15-day induction from Upazila Resource Centre and in-service training, but it is not clear whether this applies to NSA providers (Cambridge Education, 2016). Increasing providers’ accountability to regulations and quality standards as opposed to parental demands is an important role for the systems-level levers discussed in Chapter 2.

### 3.7 Priorities for action

While there is evidence that NSA schools are outperforming state schools in some cases, it is clear that overall, learning outcomes are falling short across the region. To address this, a whole-systems approach to accountability is needed, underpinned by high standards of data on performance. We
propose the following priority areas for action to improve the governance and accountability of both state and non-state actors, and the education system more broadly:

- **Put learning at the centre**: Learning should be at the centre of reform efforts, for all school types.

- **Strengthen regulatory frameworks**: Such frameworks need to establish minimum required standards for NSA providers that are involved in education provision, either directly (e.g. as schools) or indirectly (as providers of resources and training). Standards could cover, for example, pupil–teacher ratios, infrastructure and learning environment, learning resources and quality of teaching staff.

- **Increase accountability**: Non-state schools will, on many occasions, over-rely on parental perceptions and demand, rather than ensuring that quality standards are met. Increasing accountability for compliance with regulations and quality standards is an important role for the system-level levers to fulfill.

- **Improve the quality of teaching**: A new teacher standards framework is critical for benchmarking and monitoring minimum professional teaching standards.

- **Prioritize teacher recruitment and retention**: These need to be consistent across all school types, meeting minimum criteria for registration, recruitment and support. One way forward would be to explore the development of career pathways for teachers and support staff, and performance reviews based on objectively verifiable criteria that apply to teachers in all school types. Minimum salaries for teachers regardless of school type could also be explored, although there is a risk this could prove too onerous for many NSA schools. The provision of classroom assistants would help ensure that schools can cater for children with disabilities.

- **Use broad markers of school quality**: These would include measures of socio-emotional development (e.g. social competence or self-regulation) to show how schools contribute to improving children's overall development and well-being. Such markers could be used across the system, from school administrators to external supervisors and inspectors, and by researchers who are advising national governments.

- **Make data on individual providers publicly available**: This will improve monitoring and accountability. By collecting a range of information, including on location, facilities, fees, connectivity and socio-economic profiles of students, such data can be linked to overall policy on matters such as increasing access to education, and allow parents to make meaningful comparisons between schools.
CHAPTER 4: EQUITY

Chapter 4 in a nutshell

To achieve SDG 4 and ensure every child’s right to education, we need to understand the impact of NSAs in education on equity of access to high-quality education. In this chapter, the evidence shows that:

- while non-state providers may complement the role of government in providing educational opportunities, and fill gaps in provision, the involvement of different types of NSA in education can also lead to inequities in provision and quality, especially for the most vulnerable families
- tuition fees and other costs limit the affordability of NSA schools, and although some elite NSAs offer scholarships to poorer children, this does not compensate for widening inequity
- the intersection of multiple disadvantages, including socio-economic status, gender, disability, ethnicity and religion, makes many non-state schools inaccessible to the most vulnerable
- more research is required, disaggregated by NSA school type, to discover which types of NSA school are more effective in terms of addressing inequity in access and learning outcomes, in order to inform policy design.

4.1 Introduction

UNICEF defines equity as “all children having the same opportunities to survive, develop and attain their full potential” (UNICEF, 2016, p.7). This means that all children should be provided with a minimally acceptable level of education and achieve at least foundational learning outcomes, such as basic literacy and numeracy. More ambitiously, high-quality education (as discussed in Chapter 3) should be equally accessible to all. Policies, strategies and programmes need to contain targets for this. While the debate on private education and its effectiveness has centered on quality and achievement, there have also been efforts to understand the equity outcomes of NSA engagement in education service delivery (Akmal & Pritchett, 2019; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2006).

South Asian countries have large inequities in their education systems, particularly across socio-economic lines, but this is more pronounced in some than in others (see Figure 4.1). For example, differences between the richest and poorest in the rate of out-of-school children are very large across the region except in Nepal and Maldives (see Figure 4.2). Inequities also stem from characteristics such as location, socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, race, tribe and disability, and these often overlap. The result is that many poor and vulnerable children are not getting access to education.
Private education has traditionally led to inequitable outcomes, since it was originally provided for the wealthiest families. However, the recent rise of non-state education targeted at the middle and lower income households, such as by low-fee private schools, has challenged this. Nevertheless, potential drivers of inequity remain, such as the additional costs and uneven geographical spread of NSA education, and a lack of information about the quality of education provided. This chapter explores how private education and other types of NSA engagement support or hinder efforts towards achieving SDG
4 and securing access to good-quality education for all children.

Figure 4.2: Out-of-school rate, all levels, by country and quintile

Out of School Rates by Level of Education and Quintile, most recent year

4.2 Location-based inequities

There are well-recognized inequities in access to education between rural and urban areas, as well as across regions within countries, reflecting larger inequities in the education systems of many of the countries overall. For instance, in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, India and Maldives, the percentage of children who have never been to school is higher in rural than in urban areas (see Figure 4.3). Regional differences are striking, for example, in Afghanistan, 8 per cent of children in Kabul have never been to school compared to 77 per cent in the remote province of Urozgan. Such differences are equally, if not more pronounced when considering indicators such as primary and lower secondary completion rates (UNESCO, 2020b).
Across the region, non-state-school enrolment is higher in urban areas. In India, Kingdon (2017) shows differences in the private enrolment rate of urban and rural children at primary (42 per cent of urban and 21 per cent of rural), upper primary (41 per cent urban and 18 per cent rural) and secondary (36 per cent urban and 24 per cent rural) level. In Bangladesh, enrolment in non-state schools is also higher in urban (42 per cent) than rural (33 per cent) areas (UNICEF, 2020). Similar patterns are seen in Pakistan, where in fact NSA schools in rural areas are almost keeping pace with NSA schools in urban areas, yet for state schools, the gap between learning outcomes between rural and urban areas is significant (ASER Pakistan, 2018). Given the differences in learning outcomes between state and non-state schools (see Chapter 2), these differences in enrolment could lead to wider inequalities.

4.2.1 Regional disparities

There are also large disparities between regions within countries. For instance, there are large state-wide differences in the prevalence of non-state schools in India (Woodhead, Frost & James, 2013). UDISE data shows that in some states (Bihar and Jharkhand), less than 5 per cent of schools are private unaided, whereas in others (Rajasthan), they make up over 30 per cent. This can also be the case within rural areas: rural West Bengal has a rate of 7.9 per cent, while rural Manipur has one of 70.4 per cent (ASER Centre, 2018). This is also the case in Maldives, where private enrolment ranges from 0 to 25 per cent in Malé (Ministry of Education Maldives, 2017), and in Sri Lanka, from near 0 per cent in most of the country to 9 per cent in the more populous Western district (Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), 2018).12

This means that national policies have very different effects across states, and even districts (ASER Centre, 2018, pp.3–6).

12 These statistics hide tremendous sub-sector variations, e.g. ECE provision is more than 80 per cent private in some districts (see Appendix 1 to Annex 1).
4.3 Socio-economic disparities

Given the large inequities in learning outcomes by socio-economic status, it is crucial to see how NSAs contribute to or improve this situation. Across the wide range of NSA school types (e.g. low-fee, NGO or community-based schools), data is often limited, making it rarely possible to explore the costs of, and access to specific school types.

4.3.1 Costs of non-state schools

State schools often provide education free of charge or at minimal costs, and, as might be expected, non-state schools are more expensive for families across all levels of education. There is substantial variation in the fees of NSA schools depending on their funding and business model. For-profit schools that rely almost entirely on fees are more likely to charge higher fees than non-profit schools that have donor support (Bhatta & Pherali, 2017). However, data on these differences is limited, and there are differences between countries:

- In Bangladesh, expenditure on state pre-primary schools was three times that of NGO schools, but private kindergartens expenditure was nine times that of state schools (Roy, Nath, Rahman, Ahmed & Chowdhury, 2014).

- In Bhutan, though state schools are officially non-fee charging, recent reports suggest that these schools collect fees ranging from 1700–17000 Nu (USD 22–220) to cover running costs, which is, however, less than private school fees, which range from Nu 30,000–70,000 a year.13 At the pre-primary level, private ECD centres are more expensive than community ones (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2014).

- In India, the costs of non-state schools vary substantially by state, ranging from being four to ten times higher than the minimum within provider types. There are striking differences between rural and urban areas within and between states (Kingdon, 2017; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015).

- In Nepal, state schools are free at primary and secondary levels, but there is a monthly fee for students in grades 1–12. Fees for non-state schools are based on a hierarchical school grading system, with an upper ceiling on fees (see Appendix 1 to Annex 4).

Nepal, India and Pakistan have introduced regulations to cap fees at NSA schools, for example through the Private Schools Regulatory Authority in Pakistan, and as state-determined legislation in India (see Appendix 2 to Annex 4). However, there has been resistance by some civil society organizations to these moves, and it is not clear whether the caps will have the intended effects, or whether they will make some NSA schools unsustainable or produce a reduction in quality (Centre for Civil Society, 2014). Further research into the effects of fee caps on NSA schools is needed to demonstrate how effective this regulation could be (Nambissan, 2013).14

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14 A more indirect issue related to NSA school regulation is whether regulatory frameworks, especially in contexts of poor government capacity, can facilitate the growth of unofficial (or unrecognized) NSA markets (Baum, Cooper & Lusk-Stover, 2018), which may, in turn, have negative implications for quality. Current knowledge on the differences between NSA providers is too limited to draw any conclusions.
Non-state Education in South Asia: Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

Non-fee-charging non-state schools

However, not all non-state schools charge fees. Within the PPP model of publicly funded, privately managed schools in Pakistan, students are not required to pay fees, and schools receive a monthly per-student subsidy from the government to offset their operational costs. In Bangladesh and Pakistan, madrasas provide free education. State-aided schools in India are publicly funded but are run by private trusts that receive subsidies and grants to cover premises, salaries and non-salary expenses. However, there is evidence that learning outcomes are poor or that non-fee expenses may be high in these schools (Kingdon, 2017; Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017).

Non-tuition costs

Hidden, non-tuition costs, for books, uniforms, transport etc. are often quite high and burdensome for families. Children on scholarships in private schools, through the RTE Act in India, spent 8.7 times more than their peers in state schools (Srivastava & Noronha, 2016), with transport making up a large part of this difference. Transport costs form more than half the total expenditure of attending pre-school or an additional 4 per cent of household income per child (Ahmed, Karamchandani, Kohli & Jain, 2005). As a result, parents may opt to send children to a more local school, so future policy should find ways to fund these additional costs through scholarships, if this is to be successful in reducing inequities.

Another big cost is a one-off admission fee. In Nepal, for example, some schools ask families (40 per cent of the sample) to pay an admission fee of as much as Rs. 10,000. This has a bearing on school choice, because many families prefer pre-primary facilities that are attached to a larger school, so that they only have to pay the fee once (Ahmed et al., 2005). These hidden costs can make the difference between whether a private school is truly affordable for a family, while avoiding some of these costs may lead to families selecting schools that are lower in quality but closer to home.

4.3.2 Affordability

Determining whether private schools are affordable depends on the denominator scholars choose for comparison. Some scholars consider 10 per cent of household income to be a reasonable proportion to spend on education (Härmä & Rose, 2012; Lewin, 2011), while others use the minimum wage (Tooley & Dixon, 2007), state per-capita GDP, or government per-pupil expenditure (Kingdon, 2017) to benchmark school fees. It is unclear whether any of these capture the affordability of these schools for the poorest and most vulnerable, such as those whose parents work in the informal sector (90 per cent of the workforce in India) or in subsistence agriculture and who may not be earning the minimum wage (ILO, 2020; Mehrotra, 2019; Saget, 2006), or households with greater numbers of children.

The sustainability of affordability is also in question: James and Woodhead (2014) find that incremental and unexpected fee rises may force children to move schools, which may exclude the poorest from accessing higher education in later years. A study by FSG (2015) found that 72 per cent of the schools they surveyed in India raise their fee every year, which may exclude the poorest in the long run. Even when poor families are paying for private schooling, they may be extending themselves beyond their means in order to reap gains of upward social mobility (Vasavi, 2003). The fact that poor households are paying for private schooling does not necessarily imply that such schools are affordable.

15 This may far too high however, given that in Sierra Leone, even 3 per cent of household expenditure may be enough for households not to send children to school (World Bank, 2020).

16 However, given that there are various different minimum wages for different occupations in India, this may be somewhat misleading and difficult to generalise across states as minimum wages vary across states (Saget, 2006).
4.3.3 Access and outcomes by socio-economic status

These costs translate into uneven access to non-state schooling. In all eight countries, private enrolment is higher in the richest groups, with the biggest gaps in Nepal, India and Pakistan at primary level (see Figure 4.4). In India, Kaul et al. (2017) find that the difference between low- and high-income groups in private school attendance was at least 40 per cent, suggesting that costs are a limiting factor. An additional factor determining enrolment in private schools, at least in rural India and Pakistan, is parental education. However, even those parents in the richest quintile who have no schooling send their children to private school more often than those in the poorest quintile who have above-grade 8 education (see Figure 4.6 below).

Figure 4.4: Private enrolment, by country, level and quintile

Private enrolment by quintile (all levels), 2018
Patterns vary across countries but the poorest quintiles are always less likely to go to private schools that the richest. The gaps between poorer and rich schools in private enrolment are largest in India, Nepal and Pakistan and at the primary level.

Source: ASER Pakistan, 2018; ASER, 2018; MICS, 2019; Dandar et al., 2014; HES, 2016
Learning outcomes

Moving beyond access to learning outcomes, it is clear that regardless of school type, learning outcomes are worse for poorer children (Rose, 2020). In rural India, for example, there is a 20 percentage-point gap in rates of learning between poorer and wealthier children. There are further significant gaps within quintiles between those attending private and state schools, suggesting that once in these schools, poor children may be learning moderately more than their state school counterparts (see Figure 3.3a and Figure 3.3b). Causes of these differences in outcomes are unclear because factors such as parental education and support between the two types of schools are often not included (Alcott & Rose, 2015; A. Singh, 2015).

Finally, even when the poorest groups are accessing non-state schools, they are generally accessing different (and much cheaper) schools than richer groups (see Figure 4.5). Indeed, while over 80 per cent of the richest group are accessing high- to very high-fee schools, this is true of only approximately 20 per cent of the poorest. Given the evidence presented in Chapter 2 on the potential difference in the quality of schools with different fee levels, this has important implications for equity of outcomes (Chudgar & Quin, 2012), which have yet to be explored in detail in the literature.

Figure 4.5: Percentage of children going to low-fee private school, by fee status and quintile

Percentage of children going to low-fee private school by cost definition (in Rs. per month) and quintile

Source: NSS 75, 2018

Ultra-low (<180), Low (180-299), Moderate (300-499), High (500-1200), Very high (>1200)
Box 4.1: Affordable non-state schooling for all: India

The Right to Education Act (RTE Act) in India mandates that 25 per cent of private enrolments schools must be reserved for children from the most disadvantaged groups. The eligibility for what counts as a ‘poor and marginalized background’ varies by state, but generally includes those belonging to historically disadvantaged castes and tribes and those whose parents earn less than a minimum threshold (Jones, 2018). Some states (e.g. Delhi) have gone further and included children with special needs and/or disabilities in the definition of disadvantaged groups (Sucharita & Sujatha, 2019).

This highlights the potential role of regulation in making access to non-state schooling more equitable. However, critics have raised issues of mistargeting and unaffordability of non-tuition expenses, which are 1.3 times the school fees covered by the policy, and so exclude a sizable proportion of disadvantaged households from exercising school choice (Damera, 2018). Further, it is not clear whether allocations are applied consistently (Srivastava & Noronha, 2017). Combined with bureaucratic difficulties and the time required to apply, there remain challenges to access for the poorest and least educated parents (Sarin, Dongre & Wad, 2017; Sucharita & Sujatha, 2019). A final challenge is that schools are reluctant to accept disadvantaged children due to delayed reimbursement from governments (Iyer & Counihan, 2018; Sarin et al., 2017, p. 27).

4.4 Gender inequities

Both boys and girls face varying degrees of inequities in enrolment across the region, with a considerable amount of within-country variation. For example, boys tend to have significantly more favourable enrolment rates in Afghanistan and Pakistan, whereas primary gross enrolment is lower for boys than girls in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Tertiary gross enrolment in Sri Lanka and Maldives is also higher for girls than for boys (UNICEF-ROSA, 2020). While overall enrolment rates have been climbing, girls are less likely to complete upper secondary education in all countries in the region except Sri Lanka, and lower secondary completion rates are higher for girls in only three countries: Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka (UNESCO, 2020b; World Bank, 2019). The likelihood of girls’ enrolment is linked to several factors. Lloyd et al. (2005) studied patterns of school choice for girls in Pakistan and found that fathers’ occupation and mothers’ education play an important role. The availability or presence of public school within villages is also an important factor for girls’ enrolment, but not for boys.

4.4.1 Girls’ access to non-state schooling

The effect of private schooling on girls is ambiguous. It is clear that gender discrimination in access to private schools exists (see Figure 4.6). However, the girls who do access private schools may enjoy better conditions than their state-school counterparts (Kelly, Krishna & Bhabha, 2016; Tooley & Rangaraju, 2014; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015), although this has been disputed (Goyal and Pandey, 2012). These discrepancies may be explained by differences in location and the registration status of schools – as so often, greater disaggregation of data on the different types of NSA school is needed to properly assess this.
Variation in access to non-state schooling by girls exists within and between countries. In Pakistan, girls may be excluded from the education system due to a number of factors such as location, income, language and culture. Azam, Kingdon and Wu (2016) find that in urban Rajasthan, girls are significantly less likely to be enrolled in private school, though this was not true in rural areas or in Orissa. MICS and ASER data show that this is also the case in Bangladesh and Pakistan, and in Andhra Pradesh (R. Singh & Bangay, 2014).

Gender differentials also exist in the allocation of household expenditure. Aslam (2009) found a pro-male bias within households’ education expenditure in Punjab, and Sathar et al. (2014) showed that 10–14-year-old girls were excluded from non-state schools due to families’ limited resources in Pakistan. In India, Azam and Kingdon (2013) and Woodhead, Frost and James (2013) found bias in spending that favoured sons at upper-primary and middle-school level, particularly in rural areas, where sons are sent to private, fee-paying schools and daughter to free state schools.

4.4.2 Gender differences in learning outcomes

Studies in India show that being female is a negative predictor of reading and mathematics scores (Tabarrok, 2013). In Nepal, girls and boys did not have significant differences in reading level, but boys perform statistically better than girls in numeracy (MoEST, 2020, p12). A voucher programme, Access to Better Learning Experiences (ENABLE), run by the UK-based charity Absolute Return for Kids (ARK) and the Centre for Civil Society in India, allocated 800 vouchers covering all school costs as part of a
randomized controlled trial. Wolf, Egalite and Dixon (2015) find that the ENABLE programme had a bigger effect on girls than boys across English, mathematics and Hindi, suggesting that voucher schemes may help redress gender imbalances. More research is needed to identify whether and how much non-state schools can improve girls’ learning outcomes.

4.5 Inequities among disadvantaged groups

Government schools have mostly become schools for children of the most poor and the low-ranked caste groups, resulting in a ghettoization of schooling. Our recent study of selected schools in six states confirms this; on an average, about 74 per cent of children in the government schools are from scheduled caste and backward caste families, while private schools have mostly children from the middle and upper caste groups. (Vasavi, 2003, p.76)

Given the overlap between socio-economic status and caste, tribe and religion, the costs of private schooling may be unaffordable to the most disadvantaged of these groups (Härmä, 2011). These groups are already less likely to go to school (even after controlling for other household variables), and many suffer poor treatment when they do attend school (Drèze & Kingdon, 2001; Vasavi, 2003). Kelly, Krishna and Bhabha (2016) find that lower caste children were more likely to go to state schools, and Härmä (2009) finds that families from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Muslims were less likely to attend low-fee private schools (LFPS), and also that this was due to an inability to pay fees rather than on account of active discrimination by LFPS (Härmä 2011). This is further validated by U-DISE data from India, which shows inequalities in access to private institutions by socio-economic and parental education levels (see Figure 4.7). Jones (2018) finds that the social composition of state schools in a village in Rajasthan was increasingly moving towards Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) caste pupils. He also finds that an NGO-run private school had more ST pupils than other private, non-NGO schools. This suggests that the most disadvantaged groups are generally less likely to attend private schools, but more research is needed, again focusing on the differences between non-state-school types.

17 i.e., those belonging to Schedule Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Castes and Muslims. ‘Scheduled Castes’ and ‘Backward Castes’ are terms used by the Government of India to denote officially designated groups of people in India who are socially or educationally disadvantaged.
4.6 Access inequities for children with disabilities

A review of several policies on children with disabilities found that the lack of a standardized identification procedure for children with mild and low levels of disabilities had led to the education of these children being ‘largely left to the private special education schools or inclusive schools’ (Sawhney, 2015, p.890). Das and Kuttumuri (2010) also note that the majority of children with disabilities are educated in special schools, which are concentrated in urban areas. Some research suggests that attendance at a special school is associated with reduced life opportunities, but there is need for further research (Miles & Singal, 2010). Data on learning outcomes is limited, but evidence from Pakistan suggests that children with moderate to severe difficulties had lower levels of learning than their non-disabled peers (Singal, Sabates, Aslam & Saeed, 2018).

In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 stipulates that “all educational institutions funded or recognized by the government must provide inclusive education to children with disabilities and admit them without discrimination [and] provide reasonable accommodation…. necessary individualised support and… transportation facilities” (Oxfam India, 2020, pp.6–7). There is little evidence to suggest that this is implemented: many children with disabilities are either out of school or relying on home-based education (ibid.). The reasons for this vary, from insufficient resources in schools to a lack of staff training. The data currently only covers recognized schools, while it is known that unrecognized school are extremely numerous in some areas.
There is very little research on non-state schools and children with disabilities, but two articles stand out: Sawhney (2015) and Das & Kuttumuri (2010). Sawhney (2015) notes that the identification of children with mild disabilities is often done by teachers in schools and finds only a few differences between non-state and state schools – finding, in fact, more similarities, such as a lack of special needs educators, or support and infrastructure adaptations for disabled children. Our analysis of UDISE data for India shows that state schools are far more likely to have ramps than private schools (see Figure 4.8). Das & Kuttumuri (2010) state that the families of children with disabilities who attended ‘inclusive’ private schools in Mumbai were able to pay the monthly fee of approximately Rs. 1,000, a fee three times what many scholars consider the upper limit for low-fee schools, indicating that these families were in the upper income brackets. Since disabled people are over-represented in the poorest segments of society, it is clear that this would exclude many disabled children, who would either be obliged to attend state schools or to stay out of school completely (Miles & Singal, 2010).

Figure 4.8: India: Percentage of schools with access ramps, 2018

India: Percentage of School that have Ramp by School Type and Location (all levels), 2018

Here we see the opposite trend from learning outcomes and other infrastructure, with a larger percentage government schools having ramps and thus being more accessible for children with physical disabilities. This is especially true in rural areas.

4.7 Overlapping inequities

Policymakers and scholars must also pay heed to the overlapping inequities that exist, which lead to greater exclusion of marginalized groups (see Figure 4.9). Notable findings are that:

- over 80 per cent of the poorest quintile in rural areas go to state schools, compared with approximately 55 per cent of the poorest in urban areas
- the richest group in rural areas has a similar percentage of children attending private school as the poorest group in urban areas
- the potential for widening inequity as a result of unequal access to NSA schools is exacerbated by the effects of socio-economic status.

Inequities in access and outcomes generate further social segregation, in that richer and urban groups prefer non-state schools that perform marginally better, leaving state schools for those who cannot pay for education elsewhere (Bangay & Latham, 2013; Härmä, 2011; Nambissan, 2012). This perpetuates uneven outcomes. While these inequities are pervasive in the entire education systems of some countries of South Asia and require system-level reform (see Chapter 2), it is critical to recognize that NSA schools may exacerbate these and other inequities.
Figure 4.9: India: Percentage of all enrolments, by location, quintile and level (2018)

Percentage of enrolment by type, level, quintile and location
Enrolment in private providers is higher at all levels in urban that rural areas, and in the richest quintile compared to the poorest quintile.

Source: NSSO 75
Box 4.2: Covid-19 and the digital divide

School disruptions lead to learning losses for all children (Harris & Larsen, 2019; La Mattina, 2018), but children in low-income households are disproportionately affected (Brossard et al., 2020; Busso & Munoz, 2020). While the use of ICT for online learning has been the first response to Covid-19 restrictions in most countries in South Asia, this has exposed the need to close the digital divide between those children with access to the internet, and the most disadvantaged children, particularly in remote rural areas where connectivity is extremely limited (Dreesen et al., 2020; ICF, n.d.; ITU, 2020; Kaur, 2020). Some governments have adopted innovative solutions: teachers in Assam provide support via WhatsApp (Kalita, 2020), and in Delhi, the government plans to use SMS (text-messaging) facilities, Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and direct benefit transfers, so that students can access sufficient data to learn online (Government of NCT of Delhi Directorate of Education, 2020).

NSAs are also creating solutions. For instance, UNICEF India and Radio Mirchi broadcast daily radio schooling programmes for 3–12-year-olds (Kaiser, 2020), and UNICEF has partnered with Bihar Education Project Council and All India Radio (AIR) to bring radio programmes for children in grades 8–12 in Bihar (Megha, 2020) and Uttar Pradesh (Mullick, 2020). Resources such as TheTeacherApp provide short-term support for online teaching, and publishers Pratham and Kolibri provide free digital and physical learning resources. Finally, UNICEF and its partners have been providing psychosocial support to children and parents throughout the region (UNICEF-ROSA, 2020).

Table 4.1: ICT access by country

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<td>142.7</td>
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There is little information on the response of non-state schools to the crisis, but a Young Lives (2020) survey of headteachers in 183 schools in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in India found that most schools of all types were supporting students and families in learning and well-being, although support was higher among state schools. Our review of the websites of 13 NSA school chains in India found that all but one were using online learning. However, others have found that low-fee schools struggle with remote solutions due to lack of access among students (Niazi & Doorly, 2020). More headteachers at state schools (97%) than private schools (76%) identified access to ICT as a barrier for continued learning.
4.8 Priorities for action

Equity is a key measure of success for any education system if we are to achieve SDG 4. The engagement of non-state actors in education service delivery will need to be evaluated from an equity perspective. In the area of equity, this report has recommendations to:

- **Ensure that NSA provision does not exacerbate existing inequalities:** There is a need to understand how increased involvement of NSAs in education affects both access and the quality of education across the system, including any potential deleterious effects on state-school provision.

- **Address inequities of gender, disability, language and caste across the whole sector:** All schools should have policies to ensure inclusion, and the necessary materials and training to effect this, with targets to monitor compliance and performance.

- **Investigate the social impacts of greater NSA involvement:** The segmentation of schools (and wider society) that differential access creates is poorly documented, in part because of a lack of information on how different types of non-state school contribute to or mitigate these effects.

- **Increase research, disaggregated by NSA school type, on equity of access and outcomes:** Data gaps remain in:
  
  - equity of access, treatment and outcomes across school types, by disability status and ethnicity, race, tribe and caste
  - differential access to different non-state school types and the variable quality of school types
  - fees charged by different NSA school types, and what the fees cover
  - the effectiveness of regulation, such as the RTE Act in India, in making non-state schools more accessible to vulnerable segments of society
  - the effect of fee-capping regulations on the sustainability and quality of NSA schools
  - the influence of non-state schools on the demand for, and quality of state schools and the equity implications of these changes.
CHAPTER 5: SAFETY

Chapter 5 in a nutshell

Children across the world, in and out of school, experience violence in all forms. Violence in schools is high in South Asia, although evidence on its prevalence and forms is sparse, and there is very little data on its incidence in state versus non-state schools. Evidence shows that:

- school safety is a key determinant of parents’ perception of schools, and therefore choice, participation and persistence in school
- school type does not clearly determine children’s safety in school
- corporal punishment is endemic in schools across the region, and current data is insufficient to disaggregate this by school type
- schools’ ability to prevent and respond to all sources of harm remains imperative to sustain learning
- better data is needed to measure school safety in order to inform choice and safeguard children’s right to enrol, engage, perform and succeed in school
- establishing safety procedures, including effective response and redressal mechanisms so that children can report abuse and violent behaviour without fear, will allow schools to be held accountable
- safety benchmarks will help us better understand and challenge wider socio-cultural norms that otherwise reinforce negative behaviour towards children, and will also expedite the enforcement of legislation to prevent violence in schools
- building the capacity of school administrators, teachers and students to identify, monitor and address harmful behaviours in school will safeguard children’s learning
- there is little enforcement or monitoring of disaster preparedness plans in schools, leaving children at risk in situations of natural disaster, conflict and crisis.

5.1 Introduction

SDG 4 highlights the importance of providing safe and nonviolent environment for learning for all children. However, children are constantly confronted with threats to their safety, whether it is at home, school, within their neighbourhoods or wider society (UNICEF, 2020a). Evidence on NSA engagement has so far focused on issues of quality and equity, as discussed in the previous two chapters, but less is known about its effects on the safety of children in school. Understanding safety within the context of NSA delivery of education services is vital to ensuring that children’s dignity, protection and overall well-being do not conflict with the school choice of families, or children’s desire to be enrolled or engage in the learning process. This chapter explores:

- perceptions of parents and children of safety and how these influence school choices
- harmful behaviours and practices that directly affect children in the school environment (corporal punishment, bullying, physical harm, sexual abuse)
- the attributes and capacity of schools to respond to emergencies, conflict and natural disasters, which are closely linked to school choice and persistence.
Given the focus of this report, this chapter is restricted to issues of safety that pertain to school-based violence. Broader, implicit forms of violence against children that occur outside the school environment and that are rooted in societal norms and gendered structures of inequality and discrimination have been excluded from this analysis. This includes domestic violence, child marriage, corporal punishment at home, gang violence, hazardous forms of child labour, child trafficking, prostitution and sexual exploitation, sexual harassment in public places, and honour killing. While these are undoubtedly important determinants of school participation and influence the harm experienced by children in school, they are beyond the scope of this report.

5.2 Violence in schools

In South Asia, school-based violence is high (see Table 5.1). A study in Nepal revealed that corporal punishment was common, particularly in private schools and among primary school students (UNICEF ROSA, 2016, p31). Nine out of ten children surveyed in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in India had witnessed a teacher inflicting punishment in the classroom within the previous week (Oganda Portella & Pells, 2015), and a study of 3,163 children aged 5–18 found that 65 per cent of children were beaten in school (Kacker, 2007). In Afghanistan, around 44 per cent of boys and 35 per cent of girls reported experiencing corporal punishment in school, which was also associated with higher perpetration of peer victimization and violence (Corboz et al., 2019). In Sri Lanka, 80 per cent of all children reported at least one episode of corporal punishment in the last school term, almost half reported one episode of physical abuse and 75 per cent reported at least one episode of psychological abuse (National Child Protection Authority, 2017). In Bhutan, 64 per cent of children aged 13–17 had experienced at least one incident of physical violence in their lifetime in school, and three out of four children in day schools had experienced corporal punishment (UNICEF, 2016).

5.2.1 Sexual violence

Sexual violence is hidden and under-reported due to fear, shame, stigma and threats of retaliation. No country in the region has recently conducted a systematic assessment of the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) in and around schools, and there are no frameworks for measuring, monitoring and redressing GBV in schools (UNICEF-ROSA, 2016).

The available data indicates a widespread problem of sexual violence in and around schools in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan (IATWG, 2020; UNICEF-ROSA, 2020) (see Table 5.1). Although girls are at higher risk (UNICEF-ROSA, 2020), both boys and girls face risks of sexual abuse and violence, and female teachers are also at risk of sexual abuse and harassment by male colleagues and students.

Box 5.1: Child protection through NSA networks

The Global Schools Forum (GSF) is a membership-based organization that supports NSA schools to improve quality. It has 58 members comprising school and education services providers for non-state schools. The network supports over 17,000 schools in 32 low- and middle-income countries. GSF provides training on education, financing, and child protection and safeguarding. To date, around 87 per cent of GSF members have a child protection policy in place, with remaining members being trained to develop and institutionalize this in their schools.
Table 5.1: Prevalence of violence against children in school in South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>By teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th>By peers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corporal punishment in schools</td>
<td>Bullying (ages 13-15)</td>
<td>Physical fights (ages 13-15)</td>
<td>Sexual violence**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>33.8^2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan*</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1 UNESCO (2019) Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying; 2 Know Violence in Childhood: Global Report (2017); 3 Global School-based Health Survey (2014, 2016) 4 National level surveys on VAC 5 *Available for 2009 only **Median prevalence of students who experienced sexual violence in the last 30 days since undertaking the survey

NA: Not available

Efforts to establish and enforce regulations to protect children are progressing, but slowly (see Table 5.2). Four countries have bans on corporal punishment in place, but implementation is largely lacking. The high prevalence of school-based violence is mainly on account of an entrenched acceptance of socially sanctioned violence rooted in hierarchical and unequal power structures. This disadvantages those more likely to experience violence, especially those who are poorer, of a lower caste or belonging to linguistic, ethnic and religious minorities (Corboz et al., 2019, 2017; Khuwaja et al., 2018; Dehadray, 2019).

5.2.2 Online abuse

The increasing trend of mobile phone and computer usage raises the probability of children experiencing cyber-bullying, contact with online strangers, sexting and exposure to pornography (IPID, 2017). However, evidence on the effects of cyber-bullying disaggregated by school type is not available for the region.
Table 5.2: Legislation on corporal punishment, by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Legislation on Corporal Punishment in schools</th>
<th>Full or Partial Ban of CP</th>
<th>CP legislation ratified and applied to schools</th>
<th>Prohibited Sexual Violence In Schools</th>
<th>Prohibited Bullying in schools</th>
<th>Climate change and natural disaster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Yes: Corporal punishment is prohibited as per article 39 of the Education Act (2008) which confirms that all kinds of &quot;......physical and psychological punishment of students is prohibited even for their correction and chastisement. Violators shall be prosecuted in accordance with the legal provision.&quot;</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>No- Only ratified</td>
<td>Yes- Law on Elimination of Violence against Women, the Penal Code and Law on prohibition of harassment against women and children prohibits and penalises sexual harassment in all public places, including schools.</td>
<td>Yes- The Law on prohibition of harassment (including online) against women and children prohibits verbal, physical, written and visual harassments against women and children in schools. The Penal code also criminalises the use of technology to sexually abuse or exploit children.</td>
<td>Disaster Management Framework (2003), Afghanistan National Disaster Management Agency (ANDMA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Partial: Corporal punishment is unlawful in schools by way of a Supreme Court ruling in 2010 (Circular No. 37.031.004.02.00.134.2010, 8 August 2010, Regarding the Ending of Corporal Punishment on Students in Educational Institutions) which has also created laws to enforce disciplinary action against teachers as a form of misconduct in violation of this rule. The Ministry of Education issued a circular prohibiting corporal punishment in April 2011 although the ruling is yet to be confirmed through the enactment of legislation in Parliament which categorically prohibits the practice of corporal punishment in all education settings. This has been under discussion as part of the draft Education Act, but is yet to be enacted.</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Not ratified but MoE directive prohibits corporal punishment in schools</td>
<td>Partial- All forms of sexual abuse is penalised but sexual harassment of children (online) is not explicitly prohibited. The Children Act 2013 makes it a public offense for supervisors (teachers) to engage in child sexual exploitation with a punishment of upto 5 years imprisonment. The Penal code defines the age of consent as 14 for girls, though excludes boys.</td>
<td>No- There is no clear prohibition of emotional abuse of children. The Children Act 2013 addresses this but only to the extent that the abuse results in &quot;mental derangement&quot;. The Domestic Violence Act 2010 includes provision of protection order to address cases of harassment or humiliation but does not prohibit the act altogether.</td>
<td>NIRAPAD, Disaster Forum, Disaster Management and Information Center (DMIC), Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Based on the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children (2005), the Government made a commitment to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings. However, legislative reform has only been enforced in full in some cases. The Child Care and Protection Act 2011 Article 214 prohibits &quot;harsh or degrading correction or punishment&quot; in schools but does not cover all forms of corporal punishment. It states that &quot;any corrective measures shall be culturally appropriate and in accordance with rules framed for the discipline of children.&quot; While the government has endorsed a ban on corporal punishment in some cases, it has not been fully enforced in other cases. The Child Care and Protection Act 2011 Article 214 prohibits &quot;harsh or degrading correction or punishment&quot; in schools but does not cover all forms of corporal punishment. It states that &quot;any corrective measures shall be culturally appropriate and in accordance with rules framed for the discipline of children.&quot; While the government has endorsed a ban on corporal punishment in schools and monastic institutes, in the State Party Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, there is no legislative commitment to endorse full and complete prohibition by law.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Article 17 of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education (2009) prohibits corporal punishment in schools as &quot;(1) No child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment. (2) Whoever contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be liable to disciplinary action under the service rules applicable to such person.&quot; However, this applies only to children aged 6–14, does not include children in religious schools or children in Jammu and Kashmir. The Act was revised to exempt religious schools from the prohibition. The amendment in 2012 to Article 1(5) stated that &quot;Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to Madrasas, Vedic Pathshalsas and educational institutions primarily imparting religious instruction.&quot; State-specific legislative reform have ensured children are protected from corporal punishment, like in Goa (Goa Children's Act 2003, art. 41), Andhra Pradesh (Education Rules 1966, amended 2002, rule 122), Tamil Nadu (Education Rules, amended 2003, rule 51) and Telangana.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Risk Management Framework</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>All forms of child sexual abuse are penalized as part of the Indian Penal Code 1896 (though excludes rape of boys) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 though they are not explicitly prohibited. &quot;Sexual harassment&quot; includes uttering of verbal, physical, psychological harassment of sexual nature or intent. Sexual acts among children below age 18, are punishable, regardless of consent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>The Child Care and Protection Act prohibits child cruelty and unnecessary mental suffering by a parent or a caregiver, but not that meted by a peer or child-to-child. No explicit prohibition of bullying.</td>
<td>Disaster Management Information Systems (DMIS); National Core Group for Earthquake Risk Mitigation; Cyclone Mitigation Framework; Disaster Management Committees (District, sub-district, Division)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Maldives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law/Policy</th>
<th>Protection of Children from Corporal Punishment</th>
<th>Prohibition of Sexual Harassment</th>
<th>Prohibition of Domestic Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Rights Protection Act (2019)</td>
<td>Partial: The Child Rights Protection Act (2019) mentions protection of children from more &quot;severe&quot; forms of corporal punishment, but does not explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in schools. The Ministry of Education has issued directives advising against the use of corporal punishment in schools but this is not grounded in legislative reform. The Education Bill, developed in 2009 and submitted to Parliament in 2014, has proposed the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, but this is yet to be confirmed. Article 44 of the Penal Code 2014, which authorised the use of force by parents and others for the purpose of punishing children, was repealed in 2019.</td>
<td>Partial: Not ratified through legal prohibition but MoE directive prohibits corporal punishment in schools.</td>
<td>Yes: The Sexual Harassment Prevention Act of 2014 prohibits sexual harassment in educational institutions. The Penal Code 2014 prohibits sexual harassment, which is harassing, annoying, alarming another person in public by using abusive language, gesture or soliciting sexual contact. The legal age of consent for sexual conduct is age 18, except where the minor is married to the defendant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Nepal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law/Policy</th>
<th>Protection of Children from Corporal Punishment</th>
<th>Prohibition of Sexual Harassment</th>
<th>Prohibition of Domestic Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act relating to Children (2018)</td>
<td>Yes: The Act relating to Children (2018) prohibits all forms of corporal punishment of children (&lt;age 18) with a sanction of NR50,000 and up to 1 year imprisonment for violation of the act. This Act replaces the Children’s Act of 1992 which prohibits ‘cruel treatment’ of children, but allows parents, family members and teachers to beat a child lightly if it is for the purpose of correcting a behaviour.</td>
<td>Yes: The Act Relating to Children 2018 ensures children’s right to protection from all forms of physical, mental violence, including sexual abuse by teachers or any other persons. Penalties range from up to 3 years imprisonment (for sexual touching) to up to 7 years imprisonment (for ‘using’ a child for sexual abuse) though there is lack of clarity on the prohibited acts.</td>
<td>Yes: The Act Relating to Children 2018 does not explicitly define emotional abuse or bullying but prohibits any form of physical and psychological violence against children.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Committee on Natural Disasters; Safer Island Programme (SIP)
### Pakistan

Yes: Federal and ministerial directives instructing teachers to not use corporal punishment but does not prohibit its use in legislation (Balochistan), and where prohibited it applies only in government schools (Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), with exceptions on the form of punishment. The K-P Child Protection and Welfare Act of 2010 prohibits corporal punishment that results in a high degree of pain or discomfort. However, this is undermined by Penal Code 1860 which prohibits CP at home but not in school. While Pakistan's Criminal Procedure Code states that beating a child is illegal, discrepancies in legislation leave much to be desired in reforming the law. For example, Section 89 of the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 (No. XLV) empowers parents, teachers and other guardians to use moderate corporal punishment as a means to correct the behaviour of children under 12 years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>The Pakistan Penal Code 1860 penalises sexual harassment but only includes girls and excludes harm meted out to boys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>There is no clear prohibition or definition of emotional abuse or bullying in schools. The Balochistan Child Protection Act 2016 and the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act 2018 defines 'mental violence' to include all forms of mental harm meted out to children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), National Institute of Disaster Management, National Disaster Response Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sri Lanka

Yes: Ministerial directives through Circular No. 17/2005 and 12/2016 gives instructions that corporal punishment should not be used in government schools, and promote positive discipline measures by teachers, though this is yet to be enforced by law. Article 10 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka recognises everyone's right not to be subjected to torture or to other cruel, inhuman and/or degrading treatment or punishment. The Penal code (s82) and Children and Young Persons Ordinance (s71(6)) allows corporal punishment ‘within reason’. The National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2011-2016 has considered the enactment and enforcement of legislation to prohibit corporal punishment in schools, though this is yet to be confirmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Sexual harassment is an offence under the Penal Code. The Prohibition of Ragging and other forms of violence in the Educational Institutions Act prohibits sexual harassment in schools. Sexual harassment is the use of criminal force, words or actions to cause sexual harm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sexual harassment is an offence under the Penal Code. The Prohibition of Ragging and other forms of violence in the Educational Institutions Act prohibits sexual harassment in schools. Sexual harassment is the use of criminal force, words or actions to cause sexual harm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>The legal framework does not provide a clear definition of emotional or physical abuse of a child. Emotional abuse, which includes psychological or mental trauma, may be punishable under the Penal code but does not explicitly prohibit this in schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Management Center (DMC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While studies of school-based violence do exist, few have collected data by school type:

- The WHO–CDC Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020), which includes South Asia, measures 13–17-year-olds’ behavioural risks and protective factors, including aspects of violence, but although survey data is collected from state and non-state schools, limitations on sampling strategies mean that the data is not disaggregated by school type.

- The Children’s Worlds Survey (ISCWeB, 2020) covers 120,000 children from 35 low- and middle-income countries, including India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, and collects data on well-being, including self-reports of bullying and peer-on-peer violence, but access to data disaggregated by school type is restricted to specific cities in countries, which limits its generalizability and representativeness.

5.3 Safety in school

5.3.1 Perceptions of safety in school

Perceptions of safety are an important determinant of school choice and participation for parents and children. This includes tangible and non-tangible markers of school safety linked to the physical attributes of schools that are thought to reduce children’s vulnerability to physical, psychological, sexual and emotional harm in school.

Effective monitoring of students is an intangible characteristic that parents, particularly in urban areas, associate with non-state schools (Kidwai, 2017). Higher levels of scrutiny were also equated with a lower incidence of corporal punishment and abuse, but there is currently no evidence to support these perceptions, or to indicate whether other forms of punishment were used in school to subvert accountability pressures in non-state schools.

Gender and religious norms also influence perceptions of schools. In India, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, parents consider some types of non-state school (madrasas in India and Bangladesh and community-based schools in Afghanistan) to be safer for girls to attend due to their strict gender segregation rules, the presence of female teachers (Burde & Linden, 2012), and compliance with religious norms and values (USAID, 2006; Asadullah & Wahhaj, 2012). This is in contrast with madrasas in Pakistan, which are negatively perceived as recruitment sites for armed groups and thus posing a considerable security consideration when choosing a school (UNESCO, 2010). While negative perceptions of madrasas may be over-stated (Park & Niyozov, 2008; Boyle, 2016), the presence of pejorative and discriminatory content in madrasa curriculum in Pakistan remains a concern (Rahman, 2005; Hussain, Salim & Naveed, 2011).

Tangible characteristics that contribute to perceptions of safety include:

- in India, whether school gates were secured and the premises were in good repair (Ahmed et al., 2005; Kaul et al., 2017)

- nature of the neighbourhood or district where schools are located, and the distance pupils travelled, which was a particular factor where home- or community-based schools in Afghanistan were remote or located in areas of protracted conflict (Burde & Linden, 2012)
Non-State Education in South Asia: Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

- in Afghanistan, whether female mullahs were present in religious schools that their daughters attended (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007)
- recruitment of teachers from within the community in non-state schools in Afghanistan, which had a positive influence on parental perceptions and choice (Burde, Middleton & Wahl, 2015).

5.3.2 Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment (CP) is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.” CP interferes with the right to education as children may avoid enrollment or attendance due to the fear, real or perceived, of punishment. While proponents of CP consider it a benign, effective and indispensable tool to instil discipline, deter negative behaviour (Tiwari, 2019) and reinforce hierarchy between teachers and students, studies show that CP is the least effective method of disciplining children, and is often associated with declining school attendance, participation, and performance, leading to disaffection and drop-out (Batool, 2017). CP, whether at home or at school, manifests in other forms of violence, such as bullying and peer-on-peer abuse (Corboz et al., 2018) into adulthood, resulting in the risk of violence perpetuating in the long term.

There have been efforts to address violence in schools globally and across South Asia, including the INSPIRE framework developed by the WHO and UN agencies (2016). However, numerous drivers of its prevalence exist: work-related stress and teacher burnout, low levels of training and professional development, and a normative acceptance of CP among parents and teachers, among others (Burde, Middleton and Wahl, 2015; Malak, Sharma and Deppeler, 2015; Deb et al., 2016; Lakshman, 2018; Tiwari, 2019).

Prevalence of corporal punishment by school type

At first sight, the evidence on whether CP varies by school type tends to suggest that, generally, children in non-state schools are less likely to experience this form of violence in school (see Figure 5.1):

- a survey of 6,632 children across seven states in India showed that all children experienced some form of CP, with minimal variation by school type (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), 2012), and a study in Pakistan (Plan International and Institute of Social Sciences, 2013) had similar findings
- studies in other parts of India showed higher prevalence of CP in state schools compared with non-state schools, with boys experiencing harsher punishment than girls (Anand, 2014; Deb et al., 2016)
- in Sri Lanka, children in non-state schools reported significantly lower exposure to physical abuse from teachers than those in state schools (National Child Protection Authority, 2017)
- CP in state primary schools in the North-West Frontier of Pakistan was experienced by 43 per cent of children, compared with 16 per cent in equivalent non-state schools (Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment towards Children, 2005)
- in Bangladesh, children attending BRAC (non-state) schools were less likely to experience CP than their peers in state schools, while those in madrasa were more likely to experience CP despite a 2010 ban on CP, even after accounting for socio-economic factors (Nahar & Amin, 2017).
2013; Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment towards Children, 2020). This indicates that CP varies not only between private and public schools, but also between different types of non-state providers.

However, socio-economic factors have a strong bearing on whether a child experiences CP in school (see Figure 5.2). Data from the IHDS survey in India covering 42,153 households found that children in non-state schools were both more likely to be beaten and more likely to be praised by their teachers than those in state schools, with substantial variations by socio-economic group: 60 per cent of children from the poorest households were beaten by their teachers compared to less than 20 per cent of children from the wealthiest. The opposite was seen for levels of praise given by teachers, with only 20 per cent of children from the poorest households receiving praise compared to 70 per cent of children from the richest households. The highly contextualized realities of schooling largely determine children’s risk of experiencing harm.

Figure 5.1: India: Percentage of children beaten or pinched, by state, teacher and school type

Percentage of Children (Ages 8-11) Physically Beaten or Pinched by Teachers in last 30 days by School Type
Neither government nor private definition includes aided schools.

Source: Indian Human Development Survey, 2011/12
* indicate significance at 0.05; ** at 0.01; † NA, small sample sizes
Box 5.2: *Non-state interventions to address violence in schools*

Some interventions by non-state actors have proven effective in addressing violence in schools in South Asia (What Works to Prevent Violence & UK Aid, 2020). In Pakistan, the NGO Right to Play’s Positive Child and Youth Development Programme used play-based learning and enhanced curriculum reform to shift social norms and significantly reduce the experience and perpetration of peer violence and corporal punishment in schools (Karmaliani, McFarlane & Jewkes, 2018). The International Centre for Research on Women’s (ICRW) Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) project aimed at promoting gender equitable norms and attitudes among adolescents in schools in Jharkhand state in India and in 350 schools across Bangladesh. The intervention, which included 22 activity-based discussion sessions in classrooms, campaigned to address gender inequitable norms and attitudes through teacher-training workshops, school management orientation meetings, and parent and community outreach, yet saw no reduction in peer violence as a result of the intervention.

*Source: Indian Human Development Survey, 2011/12*

** indicate significance at 0.01; *** at 0.001
Peer-on-peer victimization

Bullying or peer-on-peer victimization is unwanted, repeated aggressive behaviour in school or online by a child (or several children) towards another child that inflicts physical, psychological or social harm (WHO, 2016). The Global School-based Health Survey shows a high prevalence of verbal or physical bullying among 13–15-year-olds in South Asia, with estimates ranging from 30 per cent in Bhutan to 64 per cent in Bangladesh, with more boys than girls experiencing bullying in school (UNICEF-ROSA, 2016).

Few studies have examine bullying by type of school, although data from the Children’s World Dataset (ISCWeB, 2020) on peer-on-peer violence, based on a small sample in Kolkata, showed that:

- girls were significantly less likely than boys to experience violent behaviour in both state and non-state schools
- children in non-state schools are just as likely to experience violence or exclusion as children in state schools (see Table 5.3)
- there was a significant difference between the proportion of rich and poor students who experienced peer violence in non-state schools, a factor largely explained by the gender distribution and socio-economic distribution of school attendance (poor girls, who were less subject to peer violence, were more likely to attend state schools, while poor boys, who were more subject to peer violence, were also more likely to attend non-state schools, with opposite trends for richer students (see Figure 5.3)
- attending a private school was positively associated with experiencing less unkind behaviour, but poor children in state schools were more satisfied with their classmates (p<0.001) than their counterparts in non-state schools (see Figure 5.4)
- there were no significant differences in peer exclusion between state and non-state schools.

The differences between school types are small, and this makes it difficult to draw broad generalizations from the data: more contextualized research is needed on peer-on-peer violence across different school types.
Figure 5.3 India: Percentage of children aged 10–12 experiencing peer-on-peer unwanted behaviour, by school type

Percentage of Children (10-12) in Kolkata Experiencing Unwanted Behaviour from Peers More than Once in Last Month by School Type, Income Group and Behaviour

Government school type includes private aided schools.

Figure 5.4 India: Percentage of children aged 10–12 unsatisfied by school type and income

Percentage of Children (10-12) in Kolkata Not Totally Satisfied with... by School Type, Income Group and Behaviour

Government school type includes private aided schools.
Table 5.3: Regression results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hit</th>
<th>Unkind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private School</td>
<td>1.10 (.11)</td>
<td>1.03 (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintile 1</td>
<td>1.53 (.16)**</td>
<td>1.39 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintile 2</td>
<td>1.60 (.16)**</td>
<td>1.56 (.16)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintile 3</td>
<td>1.32 (.15)</td>
<td>1.30 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintile 4</td>
<td>1.19 (.15)</td>
<td>1.18 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintile 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>.69 (.10)**</td>
<td>.70 (.10)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Mobile Phone</td>
<td>1.30 (.10)**</td>
<td>1.12 (.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Good Clothes</td>
<td>1.23 (.35)</td>
<td>1.55 (.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Shoes</td>
<td>.93 (.19)</td>
<td>.72 (.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: School Equipment</td>
<td>1.14 (.23)</td>
<td>1.89 (.24)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Money For School Trips</td>
<td>1.23 (.12)</td>
<td>83 (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Pocket Money</td>
<td>.82 (.11)</td>
<td>.95 (.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have: Sports Equipment</td>
<td>.67 (.15)**</td>
<td>.89 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private School and Quintile 1</td>
<td>2.15 (.40)</td>
<td>2.15 (.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.75 (.13)*</td>
<td>.77 (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1,781</td>
<td>1,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-1,213.78</td>
<td>-1,211.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>2,441.563</td>
<td>2,439.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **Significant at the 0.1 percent level.  
*Significant at the 1 percent level.  
**Significant at the 5 percent level.

5.4 Conflicts, natural disasters and emergencies

State fragility, defined as poor governance, weak capacity and failure to provide services, is an underlying consequence of conflict and produces a fall in school enrolment and participation (Shields & Paulson, 2015). The delegitimization and reduced capacity of the state lead to a proliferation of NSAs’ involvement in education service provision, in capacities and locations that the state cannot reach. Attacks on, and threats to schools have been a common form of violence, depriving certain populations (girls, ethnic groups, religious sects) from accessing education in areas of state fragility.18 As schools may be the only physical infrastructure available in times of conflict, especially in remote rural areas, they are used as a sanctuary for armed forces to shield themselves from counterattacks and provide a space to establish and run indoctrination camps to recruit teachers and students to their movement (Pherali, 2017).

There is no clear evidence to suggest that non-state schools are more prone to being targeted than their non-state counterparts during a conflict (UNESCO, 2010):

- During the 1996–2006 civil war in Nepal, there were targeted attacks on fee-charging, English-medium private schools and on state schools, although unregulated private schools were at greater risk as they are not included under initiatives as Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) (Caddell, 2006; Wessel & Hirtum, 2013)
- election-related violence in Bangladesh led to the bombing and destruction of a number of madrasas and state schools in the country (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), 2018)

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18 The Global Coalition to Protect Education under Attack defines six types of attack on education: physical attacks on schools; physical attacks on students or staff; military use of schools; recruitment of children at or enroute to school; sexual violence by armed personnel; and attacks on higher education
madrasas in parts of Pakistan were targeted to indoctrinate, abduct and recruit children, especially boys, to join terrorist groups (UNESCO, 2010).

Taliban-enforced closures of schools in Pakistan affected children in 500 state and 400 non-state schools: the ban was later modified to only affect children above grade 4 (UNESCO, 2010).

conversely, state schools in Afghanistan were more prone to attack than home- and community-based or NGO schools (CARE, 2009).

schools in Sri Lanka, irrespective of type, were used as military bases by armed groups, or as IDP camps, which in turn made them targets for armed militia groups and sources of enforced recruitment (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2008).

**Box 5.3: School violence and resilience in post-conflict settings**

Education interventions in post-conflict settings have been vital in fostering peace, stability and a sense of normalcy and safety for children in school. Peace education programmes run by Help the Afghan Children in Afghanistan have seen reductions in peer victimization and corporal punishment in schools, and improvements in students’ well-being (Corboz et al., 2019). The six-week programme used a comprehensive peace education curriculum for grades 7–12, complemented by outreach training and radio messaging on violence prevention and girls’ rights.

IRC’s Healing Classrooms programme in Afghanistan and Pakistan has been effective in improving children’s sense of security, by creating safe spaces for learning and using pedagogical techniques to promote well-being.

Community organizations play a critical role in mitigating potential conflict through negotiations with opposition groups on the re-opening and running of schools in post-conflict settings (CARE, 2009; Afghanistan Research And Evaluation Unit, 2016). The government-led, UNICEF-supported Schools as Zones of Peace campaign in Nepal was a successful community-based initiative to reduce the incidence of school closures due to political activities and conflict. In Afghanistan, the presence of makeshift premises in community- and home-based schools helped to reduce the tactical targeting of schools (Kirk & Winthrop, 2006). The establishment of school development and protection councils, and recruitment of night guards, local teachers and school patrols were also effective in mitigating attacks.

**5.4.1 Natural disasters and school safety**

The rising trend of natural disasters in the region has damaged countries’ social and physical infrastructure, with implications for the safety of children in schools (UN-ESCAP, 2019). The ability of schools of all types to invest in and undertake disaster preparedness has fundamental implications for children’s safety in school, and hence school safety measures are pertinent for all schools, irrespective of type. The ability of schools to adapt to disaster preparedness is limited by the resources they have. Non-state actors, such as those running religious schools, rely on charitable endowments from private donors, and their agility to respond to natural disasters and ensure learning continues is not disrupted in these situations. However, more often, minimum school safety standards in NSA schools are not mandated, and most schools are under-resourced and ill-equipped to ensure the safety of children. In Bhutan, NSA schools must carry out a school vulnerability assessment and put in place a disaster management plan, but to what extent NSA schools comply with these regulations is unknown (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2012).
Box 5.4: Floating schools of Bangladesh

Heavy monsoons and rising waters in the delta region of Bangladesh result in two-thirds of the country being flooded every year, disrupting access to school for many children. Floating schools, established by the NGO Shidduli Swanirvar Sangstha (SSS), have been operating a 111-vessel fleet service to ensure year-round access to schools for 1,700 children up to grade 4 in three districts. Each boat has a classroom for 30 children equipped with books, internet-linked computers and other electronic resources. Children are picked up by boat daily. Similar initiatives have been carried out through the NGO BRAC, which has 400 boat schools across 14 districts.

One model to address minimum safety standards in school is the Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Framework, an internationally endorsed strategic framework established in 2014 by the UN and international agencies to provide technical support and guidance on school safety standards, specific to disaster risk reduction (Paci-Green et al., 2017). The framework has been used in Nepal to replace school infrastructure so that it complies with school safety guidelines (Ministry of Education Nepal, 2016), and in Utter Pradesh in India, the CSS was used to integrate earthquake-resistant construction designs in 7,000 state schools, a model that could transfer to the NSA sector.

5.5 Priorities for action

Keeping children safe from harm within and outside school is critical to ensuring that school choice, participation, engagement and learning are not inhibited. Both state and non-state actors play a role in addressing and institutionalizing school safety benchmarks and support structures to ensure that social norms and classroom practices promote a safe learning environment for all children to grow and excel. While the evidence of differences in safety and security among state and non-state schools is very sparse, we can draw some general conclusions and identify the following priorities:

- **Expand the evidence-base on school-based violence, disaggregated by school type**: There is a dire need to fill the evidence gap on violence against children and to understand the root causes and contexts of all sources of harm. The heterogeneous nature of NSA provision, including the variations among different types of religious school, presents challenges in identifying contextualized solutions.

- **Cyber-bullying and online risks to children are under-researched**: The Covid-19 pandemic, and the related closure of schools, has made the need for data on these forms of violence more urgent.

- **Establish minimum school safety benchmarks for all schools**: Governments across the region should ensure that all schools establish, monitor and maintain a minimum threshold of school safety benchmarks, including adherence to safety regulations to ensure resilience during natural disasters and emergencies and better mechanisms for reporting abuse safely and confidentially.

- **Provide training and capacity-building for schools on child rights and safeguarding**: Leaders, teachers, children and school management committees need clear procedures and referral mechanisms to report cases of abuse, and specialised training is needed for teachers on handling behaviour and providing an inclusive curriculum that does not propagate division or violence.
- **Set up an independent, external school safety committee:** The remit of such a committee would be to identify, monitor and investigate instances where children are affected by violence at school. The establishment of a fully functional and well-resourced child protection system is critical to support victims of violence in schools.

- **Establish a community mobilization strategy:** Schools across the sector need to engage families and communities more widely in supporting and ensuring the safety of schools and the children who attend them, especially in times of conflict, natural disasters and emergencies.

- **Institutionalize school safety through legislation, regulations and policies:** Governments across the region are at various stages in the development and enforcement of legislation and policies to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence in and through schools. For example, the last two decades have seen great strides globally in ending corporal punishment, with 54 countries committing to its prohibition. South Asia is behind the curve. Nepal is the only country that has committed to complete prohibition of corporal punishment in any form, with the other seven countries only committing to reforming their legal provisions.

- **Prioritize efforts to address gaps in education service delivery:** There is a need for greater cooperation and coordination between government and non-state actors, especially in times of emergencies when state capacity may be compromised. National response plans should clearly outline and differentiate how NSAs may engage in service delivery in the interim and in the long-term until government capacity is reinstated. This would include planning and establishing quality assurance mechanisms for implementation, including child protection and safeguarding measures and monitoring mechanisms, at local, regional and national levels.
CHAPTER 6: PRIVATE TUTORING

Chapter 6 in a nutshell

Private tutoring (PT) is widespread across South Asia, driven by high demand among families, yet it may also be contributing to a decline in students’ interest in mainstream education due to the competitive nature of assessment and desire for upward social mobility. Our key findings in this chapter are:

- some forms of PT improves learning, but more research is needed to unravel its complexity and variety
- access to PT is determined by gender and socio-economic status
- the PT sector is largely unregulated, with a dearth of monitoring and regulation of provision
- increasing public spending on state and non-state education could reduce the costs of PT for households
- the assessment culture in mainstream education is holding back improvements in quality, particularly in the provision of remedial education in school
- regulation of PT provision should be tighter
- further collection of evidence on the extent and quality of PT would make it more visible and feed into national and local policies on education for all children.

6.1 Introduction

Private tutoring (PT), or “the third education sector” (Dang & Rogers, 2008), is the fee-based provision of academic-subject lessons to students outside school hours through one-to-one, online or group teaching in students’ and teachers’ homes, schools or coaching centres (Bray & Lykins, 2012). Fee-based PT is pervasive, with a global market expected to exceed USD 200 billion by 2027.ii The growing prevalence of PT in South Asia has seen an increase in inequities in access and learning outcomes and rises in out-of-pocket household expenditure (McVey, 2012). Proponents of PT argue that it complements the education offered by public and non-state schools, through providing an informal, flexible and individualized instruction to address the specific academic needs of children. Proponents also argue that there are social gains through the income generated for tutors, and that the type of support may be more affordable for families than sending children to private schools (Dang & Rogers, 2008). However, critics argue that PT exacerbates the differences between low- and high-income students, gives wealthier students an unfair advantage (Nath, 2007), and presides over excessive exam preparation, which overburdens students and household budgets, contributes to school disaffection, and encourages poor teaching through perverse incentives (Bhorkar & Bray, 2018; Gupta, 2018).

Three main types of PT have emerged in the South Asian context:

- shadow education (Bray, 2007), which is similar to (and often an extension of) the existing school curriculum, undertaken by children of all abilities and levels, particularly those requiring remedial and catch-up provision
coaching, which helps students prepare for high-stakes, competitive exams that aid entry to specialised career paths, such as the Joint Entrance Examinations (JEE) and National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for entry to prestigious engineering and medical colleges in India.

add-on or ‘ride-on’ PT, which is extra-curricular content that is not necessarily part of the school curriculum, but may contribute to learner development and enrichment, such as music or art.

6.1.1 Context

PT has been a common feature of the South Asian educational landscape for a long time and is widespread in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Though information on PT in Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives is scarce, there are indications that it is also prevalent in those countries (Dahal & Nguyen, 2014). The expansion of private schooling in South Asia leads us to believe that fee-based PT will grow in the region.

PT assumes a variety of forms, with many children taking PT immediately after the school day ends and on non-school days, including holidays (Hamid, Sussex & Khan, 2009). Lessons are usually conducted one-to-one or in small groups, on domestic premises such as the student’s or tutor’s home. Some provision takes place online (Cole, 2016). In Nepal, the typical format is group classes in the afternoon or evenings (Jayachandran, 2014), while in Sri Lanka, students in remote areas report studying with companies that provide video learning materials (Siyambalapitiya, 2005).

Students are more likely to take group PT with the same teachers they learn with during the school day, so PT includes delivery by both state- and non-state-school teachers, after their regular working hours. There are differences depending on school type: PT teachers from NSA schools tend to be from the same school as their students, whereas PT teachers from state schools tend to have students from other schools (Khan & Shaikh, 2013). In rural areas, PT is often provided by local teachers (Mahmud & Bray, 2017). Many PT teachers are employed from other institutions, including universities, and untrained graduates and students at higher grades also provide PT. Mathematics, science and English are the most popular subjects (Cole, 2016; Jayachandran, 2014; Suleman & Hussain, 2014), and demand for PT is higher before competitive exams (ASSOCHAM, 2013; Jayachandran, 2014; Pallegedara & Mottaleb, 2018).

6.2 Determinants of private tutoring

PT usually starts at the primary level (grades 1–5) and intensifies at the secondary level (Ministry of Education India, 2016; Pallegedara & Mottaleb, 2018). With the exception of Bangladesh, where almost a quarter of pre-primary school children access PT (CAMPE, 2013), there is limited evidence of pre-primary uptake of PT in the region. In rural Pakistan, PT is common across grades 1–10, with PT enrolment more common at higher grades and among children in non-state schools (ASER Pakistan, 2019a). In Nepal, over 50 per cent of secondary school students and around 68 per cent of grade 10 students receive PT (Jayachandran, 2014; Thapa, 2011). PT is also more widespread among students in secondary than primary school in Maldives, due to the competitiveness of the examination system (Abdulla, 2006; Mariya, 2012).
6.2.1 Urban and rural differences

With the exception of Sri Lanka, where PT in rural areas exceeds that in urban settings (Pallegedara, 2011), PT is more widespread in urban than in rural areas. For example, in Bangladesh, 80 per cent of secondary school students living in urban areas opt for PT compared to between 15 and 64 per cent (Mahmud & Bray, 2017; Nath, 2007) in rural areas. In Pakistan, 42 per cent of state-school students in urban areas take PT, compared to 18 per cent in rural areas, with smaller differences in demand between state and private students in urban areas than in rural areas (see Figure 6.1). In grade 5, for example, the public–private difference is one percentage point in urban areas, and 22 percentage points in rural areas (ASER Pakistan, 2019b).

Figure 6.1: Pakistan: Percentage of children taking PT, by location, grade and school type


6.2.2 Uptake by school type

Demand for PT also varies by type of school (Azam, 2016). In rural India, more than 50 per cent of students attending state schools take PT (see Figure 6.2). This is in stark contrast to PT uptake in rural Pakistan, where 28 per cent and 8 per cent students in non-state and state schools respectively enrol in PT (ASER Pakistan, 2019b). There is evidence that perceptions of school quality and the desire to achieve learning outcomes may be driving the demand for PT (Sujatha, 2014).
6.2.3 Socio-economic status of households as a determinant of PT uptake

Socio-economic status, along with parents’ level of education, are determinants of participation in PT. For example, in Bangladesh, while the prevalence of PT in urban and rural areas was similar, uptake increased with the education levels of parents: from 58 per cent among children of parents with no schooling to 71 per cent among parents with a university degree (Pallegedara, 2012). Similar trends were found elsewhere, although socio-economic differentials were far wider in Pakistan than in India, across ages (see Figure 6.3).

Households with higher purchasing power spend more on PT (Pallegedara & Mottaleb, 2018). Rural households spend less, but this is due in part to a lack of access to coaching centres as well as the lower costs of PT in these areas (Pallegedara & Mottaleb, 2018). This contrasted quite sharply with Sri Lanka, where PT uptake was indifferent to household socio-economic status: approximately 64 per cent of students take PT in Sri Lanka, with 60 per cent of the poorest households hiring private tutors compared to 68 per cent of families belonging to the wealthiest households (Pallegedara, 2012).
6.2.4 Gender differentials in access to private tutoring

In South Asia, boys are more likely to enrol in PT than girls, reflecting deeply entrenched socio-cultural norms that favour boys. Boys in India are 1.5 times more likely to receive tutoring than girls with this effect being higher (at 19 per cent) among those from more impoverished than wealthier households (at 11 per cent) (Ghosh & Bray, 2018). The opposite was found in Pakistan, where gender bias appears to increase with wealth (Aslam & Atherton, 2012). Although there were no significant differences between boys and girls in early grades in Bangladesh (Nath, 2007), the gap in access to PT increased when students reached secondary school. A possible explanation is household labour division and parents’ perception of gender differences regarding the returns of schooling in the South Asian context (Amin & Chandrashekhar, 2009).

6.3 Accountability and regulation

There are broadly four types of government responses to PT (Bray & Kwo, 2014; Silova & Bray, 2006) in terms of its regulation. In two cases, West Bengal in India and Bhutan, outright bans were imposed on PT, based on the understanding that it promotes social inequalities, although in the latter case, regulations to ease the provision of PT by private tutoring centres was introduced in 2013 (Bray & Kwo, 2014). The effectiveness of these bans is unclear.
A second response to PT is essentially to overlook its presence, sometimes because a government lacks the capacity and robust institutions to monitor PT provision. In South Asia, the lack of strong institutions and regulatory mechanisms, as seen in other low- and middle-income countries, has allowed PT to grow. In Nepal, for example, the practice of PT is legal if the government grants permission to PT centres, but the regulation does not address PT offered by individuals. Teachers are not allowed to provide tutoring services in their homes and tutoring enrolment needs to be facilitated through the schools they work in (Bray & Kwo, 2014; Jayachandran, 2014).

Active measures to control different aspects of PT directly and indirectly, such as prohibiting teachers from tutoring their students (Kwok, 2004), also exist. For instance, in Bangladesh, all teachers are prohibited from providing PT to students from their own schools or during school hours (Mahmud & Bray, 2017), and tutoring may only be facilitated through the school the teacher works in and cannot exceed a maximum of 10 students. Three monitoring committees have been established to ensure enforcement and there are sanctions for non-compliance, including the cancellation of monthly payment orders to inhibit teacher engagement. However, corruption, fragile state capacity and lack of jurisdiction over non-state schools may limit compliance (The Daily Star, 2019).

Finally, some governments actively encourage PT in order to meet children’s educational needs. The rationale for supporting PT is the recognition that PT may help students overcome academic barriers. Governments may encourage this by creating supportive policies and providing financial and technical incentives, such as training courses for tutors. However, this is not evident in the South Asian context.

6.4 Effects of private tutoring on outcomes and education systems

Despite evidence that PT is rising in many parts of the world, there are relatively few conclusive results on the impact of private tutoring on schooling and learning outcomes. According to Bray (2014), research on PT has advanced in recent years, but still struggles to define its scale, nature and implications. Understanding and further scrutinizing PT’s heterogeneity in format, delivery mechanisms, intensity, quality and student motivations would allow for a meaningful conclusion about its effectiveness. This section discusses the effects that we can discern, from the limited evidence, that PT has on learning outcomes, teachers, equity, and student motivation, safety and well-being.

6.4.1 Effects of PT on learning outcomes

Given the complexity in PT delivery (mechanism, content, fee, duration and modality) and variability of PT uptake (age, grade, socio-economic status and motivation), the effects of PT on learning outcomes are hard to establish (see Box 6.1). The studies reviewed in this study generally find that PT boosts academic performance (Dang & Rogers, 2008), but with caveats. In rural India, for example, PT had a positive and statistically significant impact on students’ mathematics and language scores in classes 1–8 that was equivalent to an additional year’s schooling (Dongre & Tewary, 2015). However, another study in poor urban areas of Delhi found that group tutoring sessions had no effect on learning outcomes (Berry & Mukherjee, 2019). Studies in Bangladesh suggest there are positive effects of coaching classes on English language learning in secondary education, from grades 6–12 (Shihab & Sultana, 2017; Sultana, 2017), but that only in Bengali were students’ scores significantly higher for PT students, and the effects diminished in later grades (Ruthbah, Rabbani, Hossain & Sarwar, 2016). Other studies demonstrated positive but weak links between PT participation and achievement in English (Hamid et al., 2009).
Box 6.1: Meta-analysis on private tutoring in South Asia

As part of the research, a meta-analysis of PT outcomes was explored. Twelve articles were found that matched the criteria. Of these, only five met all inclusion criteria (including a focus on learning outcomes and reporting sufficient error measures). These five covered Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, few surveys present data on the length, type and duration of PT and learning outcomes. Even where evidence is available, the information is insufficient to draw robust conclusions. Given these limitations, we opted for a narrative review, which highlights the issues around a lack of evidence for PT’s efficacy. Further evidence on the impact of PT, in particular by type and intensity of tutoring, is sorely needed.

These different outcomes may also stem from the length of time that PT is provided. In Sri Lanka, tutoring for fewer than five months may have no impact on student performance (Cole, 2016), though increasing the duration to 15–27 months produced a statistically significant effect on test scores (Aturupane, Glewwe & Wisniewski, 2013). Positive effects were seen in other studies in Sri Lanka (Damayanthi, 2018), though the net effect of PT on performance was reduced in magnitude once parental education and time spent on homework were factored in. Parenting behaviours and home learning environments (such as home supervision, family relationship and cultural capital) are more critical for academic achievement than PT participation (Damayanthi, 2018). This concurs with a study in Maldives to identify the factors influencing the 10th-grade students’ performance in mathematics, English and Divehi, which found that parents’ socio-economic status and assistance with homework had significant effects on children’s scores, particularly for mathematics (Yamada, Fujikawa & Pangeni, 2015).

6.4.2 Incentives to teacher engagement in private tutoring provision

In South Asia, the generally poor quality of schools, teaching conditions and poor teacher–student interactions may increase the demand for PT, especially at higher grades (Bray, 2013; Sujatha, 2014), yet perversely, PT can have a detrimental, spill-over effect on mainstream education. PT may perpetuate weaknesses and inefficiencies in the system, for example overburdened and poorly remunerated teachers. Teachers with non-permanent contracts earn much less than those with permanent contracts and as a result are more inclined to engage in PT (Aslam, 2003; Bau & Das, 2017; CAMPE, 2019). Teachers in LFPS in India, who are paid meagre salaries and provided with minimal benefits, resort to PT as a source of supplementary income, and in Bangladesh, poor salaries, low professional status and heavy workloads similarly encourage teachers to become private tutors (Beteille, Tognatta, Riboud, Nomura & Ghorpade, 2020; Evans & Yuan, 2018; Manzoor, 2013; Muhammad Azhar et al., 2014; Stromquist, 2018; Subedi, Shrestha & Suvedi, 2014). There are also positive drivers, such as teachers working in English-medium schools enjoying a higher value in the PT market and better status among parents (Chattopadhay & Roy, 2017), but for many teachers, becoming a private tutor is a second job, which increases an already burdensome workload (CAMPE, 2019; Toaha, 2015).

This parallel workstream leads to several challenges that can detract from the quality of mainstream
education, leading to deliberate poor instruction that perpetuates inefficiencies that in turn undermine investments in school (Bray & Kwok, 2003; Jayachandran, 2014; Mahmud & Bray, 2017; Toaha, 2015) and exacerbate the differences between private and state schools. A study in Bangladesh indicated that as many as 67 per cent of students in state schools found their teachers to be negligent and more interested in private coaching than classroom teaching. Only 22 per cent had the same problem in private schools (Toaha, 2015). Some teachers pressurize students to take PT, or offer extra benefits to their private students, including tips for the examinations (Mahmud & Bray, 2017). This was a reiterated concern in India (Ashok & Jangir, 2018), where accounts of teachers blatantly favouring their tutees by giving them an unfair advantage over other school students was evident. In Nepal, state-school teachers offering PT are less likely to teach for the whole period and limit the coverage of material during the school day in order to generate demand for their tutoring, compared to their counterparts in private schools (Jayachandran, 2014).

From a teacher’s point of view, PT provides much-needed financial and social rewards. Teachers who offer PT can supplement their meagre income and have more influence and control over how the curriculum is delivered by tailoring the lessons according to their tutees’ needs. Banning teachers from tutoring may not be feasible for low-income countries because of their inability to enforce regulations. Further, prohibiting teachers from making an extra income might produce undesirable effects, such as a failure to attract and retain teachers (Bray & Kwok, 2003). Banning tutoring centres would be equally difficult, given the vested interests of the companies and stakeholders involved. PT policies will have to be carefully tailored because PT is deemed ‘essential’ by parents and many teachers (see Box 6.2).

Box 6.2: Teacher and provider registration – Maldives

In Maldives, the Education Act 2020 requires all teachers, including private tutors, to register with the Ministry of Education and obtain a teaching licence. This both incentivises teachers to maintain their skills through licence renewal, and ensures that teachers providing PT are obliged to meet the same criteria as would be required of them in a school setting (Corporate Maldives, 2020; Hussain, 2019).

In addition, teachers cannot provide tutoring in students’ homes and are not allowed to tutor students in their grade nor tutor more than five students at their home. This ensure that teachers are focused on classroom instruction, but also requires significant enforcement capacity, which may not be viable for all countries in the region (Bray & Kwo, 2014).

6.4.3 School disaffection and low motivation among students

PT also affects student motivation and disaffection with school. In Bangladesh, students are more likely to take PT classes than pay attention to regular classroom studies (Sultana, 2017). A survey in Dhaka found that 59 per cent of teachers reported students losing interest in classroom learning when they take PT, possibly because teachers are more attentive in that context (Toaha, 2015). However, over 58 per cent of urban students and 55 per cent of rural students agreed that tutoring had helped them gain confidence in their class performance (Mahmud, 2019). Other studies also showed that PT among students in grade 2 improved school retention through to grade 5 (Ruthbah et al., 2016), although retention can be affected as PT is increased in response to the approach of exams. In Sri Lanka, for example, school attendance tends to drop a few months before final examinations due to increased PT sessions (Siyambalapitiya, 2005). In rural West Bengal in India, state-school teachers expressed concern
over the effect of PT on students’ attention in class as children believe that tutors would explain everything later at home (Chattopadhay & Roy, 2017). Similarly, in Maldives (Abdulla, 2006), when students did not understand something during regular classes, some sought help from their private tutors later, rather than their teachers. Finally, in Nepal, the existence of school-provided PT harms poor students most, because if their learning is neglected by their regular teachers in school, they do not have the benefit of enrolling in PT classes (Jayachandran, 2014). These findings question the cause and consequence of PT on teaching, learning outcomes and the quality and equity of education.

6.4.4 Inequities in household expenditure and their relationship with private tutoring

In some contexts, PT is considered a leveler and is associated with improvements in learning for low income children: studies in India and Pakistan show that the effects of PT were stronger on weaker students from disadvantaged backgrounds who were attending state schools, and those attending state schools without PT performed the worst (Alcott & Rose, 2015; M. Aslam & Atherton, 2012; Dongre & Tewary, 2015). In Pakistan (Khan & Shaikh, 2013), PT alone was insufficient to overcome wealth disparities among students, but the overall impact on learning outcomes for state-school students was positive, with the learning gap between state and non-state-school students remaining unchanged even after PT (Khan & Shaikh, 2013). However, access is key: in Nepal, children from disadvantaged communities in state schools are priced out of the PT market, further perpetuating learning disparities between private and public schools (Mottaleb et al., 2019).

Though public education is usually free, PT is often the most expensive item in a household’s education budget, ranging from 25 per cent in India (75th NSS, 2018), 29 per cent in Bangladesh (Bureau of Statistics, 2015) and 36 per cent in Sri Lanka (Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2016). This places significant financial strain on households, especially in low-income families, and raises issues of equity in household spending, resource allocation and access to education. The more a family spends on PT, the less it will spend on other essential items such as health, housing and food, all of which have an indirect effect on learning outcomes.

While more students in non-state than state schools attend PT, it is the proportion of household budget spent on PT that exposes the greatest inequities (see Figure 6.4a, Figure 64.b and Figure 6.4c). In rural India, non-state school students spend more as a proportion of household expenditure than state school students at all grades, with spending levels increasing at higher grades. In Sri Lanka, households of children attending state school spend one-third of their budgets on tuition fees (Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar et al., 2014). Where investment in public education is low, as in Nepal, PT accounts for 15–20 per cent of GDP per capita (Jayachandran, 2014). Households of children attending state schools spend NPR 500 less than households of children attending non-state schools, with PT uptake positively associated with household socio-economic status (Mottaleb et al., 2019). Greater willingness to pay among richer households perpetuates the widening divide in access to PT and learning in schools.
Figure 6.4a: India: Percentage of household education budget spent on tuition, by location
India: Percentage of household’s education budget spent on tuition by sector, 2018

Figure 6.4b: India: Percentage of household education budget spent on tuition, by religion
India: Percentage of household’s education budget spent on tuition by religion, 2018
6.4.5 Student safety and well-being

Evidence on the effects of PT on student safety and well-being is limited. This in itself is a cause for concern, as students who spend considerable time in PT may be placed under undue academic pressure, with negative implications for their mental health. In India, for example, children who attend PT spend on average nine hours a week in PT, which equates to 1.5 extra school days a week. In Pakistan (Punjab Province), students spend 12 hours a week in PT classes (Khan & Shaikh, 2013), while in Sri Lanka, 31 per cent of students take more than 6 hours’ PT a week (Cole, 2016).

Children may also experience harm on account of the learning environment. In Bangladesh, parents perceive PT as a risk for girls because of reports of sexual harassment in coaching centres in Dhaka (Toaha, 2015). There are also anecdotal accounts of children being sexually harassed by tutors (Dhaka Tribune, 2019; Mani, 2019). In Nepal, teachers have sometimes used offensive language and discriminatory behaviour to students in the classroom who were not tutored by them (K. R. Subedi, 2018). Similarly, in Bangladesh, 54 per cent of students faced discrimination by teachers in class for not attending PT, and 41 per cent reported being ‘mentally tortured’ during class (Toaha, 2015).

While negative practices regarding PT cannot be ignored, its potentially beneficial aspects, such as the provision of remedial education and learning support, need to be acknowledged. With that in mind, this report suggests that governments carefully consider PT practices, and tailor their policies in line with the significant influence PT has on the overall health of the education systems. If well-regulated and monitored, PT might help to narrow the learning gap and inequalities among students with different abilities and from different socio-economic backgrounds (see Box 6.3).
Box 6.3: In-school remedial education

Remedial education programmes are an effective approach to help children catch up and/or improve their learning outcomes (Snilstveit et al., 2016). Rampant growth of PT in Bhutan has led the government to consider providing free PT in its schools. Successful initiatives that started outside of the formal education system such as the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) initiative in India, help show how effective practices from NSA can benefit the formal education system. The TaRL approach pioneered by the NGO Pratham, groups children by ability rather than their grade to help accelerate learning in a short period of time (Abhijit Banerjee et al., 2016). The TaRL methodology, has been implemented through in or after-school remedial classes in state schools, has seen significant improvements in learning outcomes over the last two decades and is currently being adapted for schools across Africa (JPAL, 2019).

Recommendations from the draft National Education Policy 2019 suggests that engaging well-performing students and community volunteers in schools can support weaker students. Online instructional initiatives, such as Mindspark’s after-school centres’ supplementary programmes for children from low-income households, provide viable remedial education, especially for academically weaker students (Muralidharan, Singh & Ganimian, 2019), leading to improved learning outcomes.

6.5 Priorities for action

The rising phenomenon of PT reflects the gaps in education systems, including lapses in the quality of provision, as well as a culture of competitiveness and pressure to excel within resource-constrained settings. While PT may help to narrow improve learning outcomes for students who have access, it comes at a large cost of perpetuating inequities in access and learning outcomes that may be detrimental to the most disadvantaged. Countries need long-term strategic responses to develop and implement policies that prevent and reverse the negative effects of PT. Our recommendations in this field are to:

- **Increase public spending on education to reduce costs for households:** Greater and more equitable allocation of public spending on education has the potential to improve the quality of education in ways that benefit the most disadvantaged. The Covid-19 crisis will make any increases in spending difficult in years to come, so finding cost-effective ways to improve educational outcomes within existing resources will be needed.

- **Improve the quality of mainstream education:** Recruiting and deploying adequate numbers of teachers, with better pay and working conditions, and holding them accountable for their teaching performance are substantial but necessary changes. While there are financial challenges, some evidence suggests that the use of teachers on well-designed contracts can be a cost-effective way of improving teaching quality, and discourage early career teachers from supplementing their salaries with PT.

- **Challenge the assessment culture:** High-stakes exams exert considerable pressure on students and parents, and prioritize rote learning and ‘teaching to the test’, promoting heavy household expenditure on PT. The use of frequent, formative assessments rather than intense, high-stakes, summative assessments could help stem the demand for PT. Concrete suggestions also include the reintroduction of practical exams to increase students’ motivation and learning styles, and the introduction of continuous assessments in school.
Provide remedial education in school. While the evidence suggests that PT improves learning, extant socio-economic inequalities in access undermine this. Remedial education is a cost-effective way to improve learning outcomes across contexts. However, challenges in scaling up and integrating these programmes into the standard curriculum remain, and their practical administration, particularly in under-resourced settings, will need to be carefully considered.

Tighten the regulations of PT provision. As with other types of NSA involvement in education, better monitoring and regulation of PT would ensure better access and quality of provision. This includes enforcement of registration procedures conditional on meeting minimum standards, setting price ceilings, and ensuring that quality and safety benchmarks are adhered to. State capacity to monitor and enforce these regulations remains a challenge. There is also a role for consumer protection and empowerment, which could take the form of standardizing fees and class capacity, and making PT regulations and performance measures publicly available, to foster transparency and accountability for parents.

Strengthen the evidence on PT and make it more visible to inform policy-making. The limited data available on PT, and the evidence gaps in related topics such as on pre-primary PT, children’s safety, information on household expenditure, and the extent of PT among vulnerable populations make it difficult to develop informed policies and counter the negative impacts of PT. More research is needed to disentangle PT’s complexity, and uncover its characteristics, and their effects on specific groups of children, to better understand the policy implications and impacts on the overall education system.
ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: COUNTRY PROFILES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This annex relates to content provided in Chapter 1. It sets out an overview of all eight countries in South Asia, and contains more in-depth discussion of each country’s education system. This annex has five appendices:

Appendix 1: Country profiles
Appendix 2: Role of religious institutions in education provision
Appendix 3: Conceptual framework: supporting tables
Appendix 4: Literature review methodology
Appendix 5: Field visits and interviews
Appendix 1 to Annex 1: Country profiles

Table A1.1.1: Education systems in South Asia¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Afghanistan²</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
<th>Bhutan</th>
<th>India²</th>
<th>Maldives</th>
<th>Nepal³</th>
<th>Pakistan⁴</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-primary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official age of entry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration, years (age range)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official age of entry (years)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration (years)</td>
<td>6 (7–12y)</td>
<td>5 (6–10y)</td>
<td>7 (6–12y)</td>
<td>5 (6–10y)</td>
<td>7 (6–12y)</td>
<td>5 (5–9y)</td>
<td>5 (5–9y)</td>
<td>5 (5–9y)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification/terminal exam</td>
<td>Primary school completion</td>
<td>Primary school certificate (PSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower secondary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration, years (age range)</td>
<td>3 (13–15y)</td>
<td>3 (11–13y)</td>
<td>4 (13–16y)</td>
<td>3 (11–13y)</td>
<td>3 (13–15y)</td>
<td>3 (10–12y)</td>
<td>3 (10–12y)</td>
<td>4 (10–13y)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification/terminal exam</td>
<td>Lower secondary completion</td>
<td>Junior school certificate (JSC)</td>
<td>Bhutan secondary certificate exam (BSCE)</td>
<td>General certificate of education (GCE O-level)</td>
<td>Lower secondary exam</td>
<td>Secondary school certificate (SSC grade 10)</td>
<td>Lower secondary completion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper secondary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration, years (age range)</td>
<td>3 (16–18y)</td>
<td>4 (14–17y)</td>
<td>2 (17–18y)</td>
<td>2 (14–15y)</td>
<td>2 (16–17y)</td>
<td>4 (13–16y)</td>
<td>4 (13–16y)</td>
<td>4 (14–17y)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification/terminal Exam</td>
<td>High school certificate</td>
<td>Secondary school certificate (SSC)</td>
<td>Bhutan secondary certificate (BSC)</td>
<td>A-level</td>
<td>Secondary school leaving certificate (SLC)</td>
<td>Higher secondary school certificate (HSSC grade 12)</td>
<td>GCE O-level/A-level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory school age</td>
<td>6–10y</td>
<td>6–14y</td>
<td>5–16y</td>
<td>5–14y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ For consistency and comparability across countries, classification of education levels is based on ISCED’s (2011) internationally agreed terminology of ‘pre-primary’, ‘primary’, ‘lower secondary’ and ‘upper secondary’.

² Afghanistan: Religious education programmes (madrasa, darul hifaz and darul uloom) are for age 12 years (no levels specified) and run parallel to the standard education programmes.

³ India: The term ‘upper primary’ is used instead of ‘lower secondary’. Age of entry varies by state: age 6 in 12 states, age 5 in 23 states/union territories. We have used age 6 as the compulsory age of schooling mandated by the Right to Education Act.

⁴ Nepal: Age of entry into pre-primary education is 3 years (2-year programmes in community-based ECD centres) or 4 years (1-year school-based pre-primary class or PPC) with no requirement for completing ECD prior to enrolling in PPC.

⁵ Pakistan: Three tier-education system comprises elementary (primary and middle school (grades 1–8), secondary (grades 9 & 10) and higher secondary (grades 11 & 12). Compulsory age of education based on the 18th Amendment of the Constitution.

AFGHANISTAN

Introduction

Non-State actors have played an important role in providing education in Afghanistan after years of conflict which disrupted the government’s ability to provide public services. By investing in primary and secondary education at grassroots and in places where there was unmet demand, NGOs have generated an appetite for formal learning.

However, several challenges need to be overcome. First, despite years of assistance from the private sector, and multilateral system state institutions remain limited in their capacity to absorb community schools into the state system. There is continued dependence on non-state institutions to meet demand. Second, there is little systematic effort by the state to engage in partnerships with the non-state sector. Most partnerships have come through NGOs’ efforts, or as a result of ad-hoc demands for education in communities without a state presence.

Context

Situated between South and Central Asia, Afghanistan has negotiated extreme poverty, war and internal strife, and bleak economic and political prospects for decades. In 2018, Afghanistan’s Human Development Index (HDI) ranking was 168, with a life expectancy of 64 years, an unemployment rate of 49.5 per cent, and expected years of schooling of just 10.4 years. Large-scale internal displacement has created huge challenges for the delivery of public services, and increased competition for access to both resources and economic opportunities.

Education system

Non-state education in Afghanistan is provided by four kinds of school: privately funded ‘for-fee’ schools; privately funded ‘no-fee’ (religious) schools; and community- and home-based schools. These are run by private actors, non-profit organizations and religious institutions. Alongside its long tradition of religious schooling, community- and home-based schools have emerged in Afghanistan in the last 30 years. Total pre-tertiary enrolment (primary, secondary and upper secondary) in 2014 was 8,583,706 students, out of which 98 per cent were in public schools. In the same year, there were 15,701 government schools and 883 registered private schools, along with 7,397 classrooms operating as community-based schools (see Table A.1.1.2). No data was found for pre-primary education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Upper secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>NSA</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>6,003</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>3,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>5,885,646</td>
<td>152,107</td>
<td>1,564,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender split</td>
<td>Boys 3,481,683</td>
<td>Girls 2,403,963</td>
<td>Boys 104,671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are variations between provinces (see Figure A1.1.1). Only three provinces have enrolment in NSA schools over 5 per cent at primary level. Kabul City has the highest NSA enrolment, followed by Hirat and Nimroz.
Figure A1.1.1: Afghanistan: Percentage of children enrolled in NSA education, by level and province (2014)

Afghanistan: Percentage of general education enrolment in non-state schools by level and province, 2014

Governance, funding and accountability

Education in Afghanistan is a constitutional right, guaranteed and provided free up to undergraduate level. As of the time of the drafting of this report in early 2021, three ministries were responsible for the education sector:

- Ministry of Education (MoE) – general and non-formal education, technical and vocational education, teacher training and literacy
- Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) – public, private and community tertiary colleges
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled Persons – pre-school education and vocational training.
The Directorate of Non-Governmental Organizations within the Ministry of Economy leads the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of NGOs and oversees the non-state education they provide.

Article 30 of the MoE’s Education Law 2008 rules that a unified curriculum should apply in all public and NSA educational and training institutions. The government issued policy guidelines for community-based education in February 2012. These stipulate the criteria for establishing community-based schools:

- local demand
- minimum distance from nearest public school
- presence of a minimum of 10 school-aged children
- community commitment and participation.

Legislation, policies and regulations

The legal framework affecting not-for-profit organizations in Afghanistan is primarily based on two laws: the law on associations (2013) and the law on NGOs (2005). The following laws are also relevant to the operations of non-profit organizations in Afghanistan:

- Law on Non-Governmental Organizations (2005), Official Gazette no. 857
- Law on Associations (2013), Official Gazette no. 1114
- Amendments to Law on Associations (2017), Official Gazette no. 1275
- Regulation on Procedure of Establishment and Registration of Associations, Official Gazette no. 1138.
BANGLADESH

Introduction

Bangladesh is close to achieving universal primary education, with improved access and completion at all levels, and gender equity. However, socio-economic inequities remain, with the poorest groups much less likely to complete education at every level (The World Bank, 2013; UNESCO, 2020; UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2019). Bangladesh’s education system is defined by a plethora of different NSAs: religious groups, NGOs and for-profit providers. BANBEIS, the agency responsible for national education statistics, collects information on over 25 types of school. Approximately one-quarter of enrolment is in private education (see Table A.1.1.3). Non-state provision of education is particularly dominant at the pre-primary and secondary levels.

Context

Bangladesh has a population of 161 million, with annual growth of 1.1 per cent. Its GDP per capita is 4,760 (Current International $), putting it in the middle for the region. In spite of this, government expenditure on education was 9.3 per cent of total government expenditure and 1.3 per cent of GDP, the lowest in the region, and a decrease since the year 2000 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2019; World Bank, 2019). Its Human Development Index (HDI) has been steadily increasing, but its ranking in 2019 was 133, and it has high levels of multidimensional poverty (UNDP, 2020). It is a predominantly Muslim country (around 87 per cent of the population), and Islam plays an important role in people’s daily and political lives (Devine & White, 2009). The primary language is Bangla (Bengali), which is the first language of the majority of the population. It has eight administrative divisions, and the capital is Dhaka.

19 The government most directly supports primary education through free direct provision and a per-child stipend, although in practice it does not reach all children. Most secondary and tertiary education is private, fee-based and more expensive. Although the government provides tuition waivers, stipends and subsidies at these levels which, on a per-student basis, are higher than at the primary level, these are not enough to offset the overall higher costs.
Table A1.1.3: Bangladesh: population context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>161,356,039</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population, ages 0–14 (% of total)</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population (% of total population)</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth (annual)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of out-of-school children of primary school age, both sexes (%)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of out-of-school youth of upper secondary school age, both sexes (%)</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality rate, under 5 (per 1,000 live births)</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of stunting, height for age (% of children under 5)</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, pre-primary (% gross)</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, primary (% gross)</td>
<td>116.47</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, secondary (% gross)</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, pre-primary in private institutions (%)</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, primary, private (% of total primary)</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, secondary, private (% of total secondary)</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of private lower secondary enrolment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, upper secondary, private institutions (%)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning poverty: Share of children at the end-of-primary age below minimum reading proficiency adjusted by out-of-school children (%)</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population)</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini per capita, PPP (Current international $)</td>
<td>4,760</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual %)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government expenditure as % of GDP (%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on education as % of total government expenditure (%)</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education system

Non-state education in Bangladesh has grown and a process of nationalization has occurred in primary schools. A share of private schools, defined as newly nationalized primary schools (NNPS), were taken over by the government as a result of the Primary Education (Taking Over) Act 1974 (Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, 1974). Many non-state schools are non-state by management, since much of the financing comes from the government, which provides ‘substantial subsidies (subventions) in the form of monthly pay orders to nongovernment schools that satisfy a set of criteria for recognition in terms of physical facilities, minimum number and qualification of teachers, etc.’ (ADB, 2015, p.3).

At the pre-primary level, the Government of Bangladesh introduced one-year pre-primary education at all state primary schools in 2010. By 2017, 100 per cent of state schools and 99 per cent of NNPS were offering this, and three times as many children were enrolled in pre-primary at age 5 than in 2010 (Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2017a). At the primary level, there are 26 different types of
provider, monitored by various ministries. Concerningly, completion rates differ dramatically between poor and rich households, with 70 per cent of the poorest completing primary, compared with 92 per cent of the richest group (UNESCO, 2020). Furthermore, learning levels are low in all school types and all levels (The World Bank, 2013; UNICEF, 2020b).

There are three streams of secondary education: general, technical–vocational (TVET) and madrasa (BANBEIS 2013). For general education, the secondary level lasts seven years and is divided into three levels (lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary). The secondary education subsector in Bangladesh is dominated by NSAs: 98.8 per cent of all secondary schools are owned and managed by NSAs. Completion rates at both lower and upper secondary levels vary dramatically between the poorest and richest groups (UNESCO, 2020).

A parallel system of formal Islamic education is offered through madrasas, which can be state-aided or independent at the primary and secondary levels. Aliyah madrasas are the more secular forms of religious schools, operating under the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board,20 and are mostly financed by the government (paying 80 per cent of teachers’ basic salary). In contrast, Quomi madrasas are privately funded, traditional madrasas that have developed outside the regulatory framework (and are thus unrecognized). These are seeing significant reform in the replacement of Urdu with Bangla and English and the integration of social sciences into the curriculum (Asian Development Bank, 2008; Park & Niyozov, 2008).

The structure of madrasa education in Bangladesh follows that of the general education system:

- **Ebtedayee** (equivalent to primary): 5 years
- **Dakhil** (equivalent to junior secondary): 5 years
- **Alim** (equivalent to higher secondary): 2 years
- **Fazil** (Bachelor’s degree level, grades 13–14)

There are 134,147 primary schools, 20,465 secondary schools (grades 6–10), 6,865 TVET institutions, 439 polytechnics, 4,495 colleges and 106,852 institutions offering pre-primary education. NSAs are involved at all levels, particularly secondary levels (see Figure A1.1.2).
However, with up to 26 different types of school in operation, and many state-aided NSA schools in operation, it is difficult to gain a clear picture of NSA involvement, particularly at primary level (see Table 1.1.4).
Table A.1.1.4: Bangladesh: primary enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type (Banbeis, 2018)</th>
<th>Government agency responsible</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>% of total primary enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>51.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNPS</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>23.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNGPS</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRNGPS</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (CS)</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSC school</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shishu Kallyan (SK)</td>
<td>MoPME/DPE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Madrasha Attached Ebtedayee (HMAEb)</td>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Attached Primary (HSAP)</td>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebtedayee (EbM)</td>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KG</td>
<td>MoC</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>7.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea-Garden</td>
<td>MoC</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Based LC</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare based (MoSW)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf &amp; Dumb (MoSW)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque Based LC</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School for blind</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail attached</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHTs schools</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other types</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quami</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO school</td>
<td>NGO Bureau</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>NGO Bureau</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NGO LCs</td>
<td>NGO Bureau</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Governance, funding and accountability

Bangladesh’s centralized education system is governed by two ministries. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) covers pre-primary provision, which was provided by until the Government introduced one-year pre-primary education at all state primary schools in 2010. Early childhood care services are provided by the Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs, the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

MoPME oversees eight types of school: government primary schools (GPS), NNPS, registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS), non-registered non-government primary school (NRNGPS), PTI experimental schools, community schools, Shishu Kallyan (Trust) and Ananda schools (Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2017a).
Non-formal education is under the purview of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) within MoPME.

The MoE is responsible for secondary education (grade 6–10) and higher secondary education (grades 11–12), tertiary education and TVET. Lower secondary education is not part of primary education, but forms the first stage of secondary education under the MoE.

The Directorate of Madrasa Education (DME) under the MoE oversees madrasa schools and other religious schools through a separate division.

**Legislation, policies and regulations**

- Registration of Private Schools Ordinance 1962
- Primary Education (Taking Over) Act 1974
- Recognized Non-Government Secondary School Teachers (Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Dhaka) Terms and Conditions of Service Regulations 1979
- Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990, committing to free, formal and compulsory education up to grade 5
- Education for All National Plan of Action 2003–2015
- National Education Policy 2010
- Sixth Five-Year Plan (SFYP; 2011–2016) proposes extension of compulsory primary education to grade 8
- Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, School-1, Section S.R.O. No. 263-Law/2011, Section 4 (15, 16 (1)) 18 August 18 2011
- Early Childhood Development Policy 2013.
Non-State Education in South Asia:
Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

BHUTAN

Introduction

Bhutan is close to achieving universal primary education, although demand has increased the strain on state resources. This is manifested most strongly in secondary and vocational institutions. As a result, the government has eased its privatization policy to expand access to education at all levels above secondary. While the non-state sector has responded, the effect of its engagement has been felt mostly in urban areas, which has exacerbated the disparities in access to education between urban and rural areas. Partnership between the public and private sectors is hampered by weak coordination and monitoring mechanisms, and the problem of untrained teachers is affecting learning outcomes.

Context

The Kingdom of Bhutan has a population of 81 million and an annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent. Bhutan has three regions with 20 districts, and 22 cities, the largest being Thimphu. It is estimated there are between 19 and 24 languages, with Dzongkha being the official language.

Government expenditure on education is high, with 24 per cent of total government expenditure earmarked for education. Per-pupil expenditure (PPE) in primary education as a percentage of GDP per capita is 14 per cent, higher than the median PPE for lower middle-income countries.

Non-state schools had been established in Bhutan for Nepali immigrants in the late 1940s to the 1960s. Public schools were introduced in 1960s, and modelled on the British system. English was used along with Dzongkha as the languages of instruction. Before that, formal schooling was run through Buddhist monasteries. In 1961, Bhutan introduced its first Five-Year Development Plan, increased the number of schools and established a Department of Education.

Education system

The provision of private education in Bhutan is growing quickly, especially at upper secondary level (see Table A1.1.5). Private providers are perceived as offering a better quality of education than state schools. The state is actively encouraging the private sector to share costs and play a role in satisfying the rise in demand for schooling.

Table A1.1.5: Bhutan: Overview of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of pupils</td>
<td>28,483</td>
<td>101,310</td>
<td>86,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of pupils</td>
<td>4–5 years</td>
<td>6–12 years</td>
<td>13–18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of education</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross enrolment ratio</td>
<td>25.45%</td>
<td>92.58%</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of schools by sector</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Governance, funding and accountability

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is Bhutan’s educational administrative unit and is headed by a minister and secretariat, with a director for each department and division. Private schools are separate from the MoE, and it is therefore unclear who is operating in the space and how they are funded. Nor is it clear from the literature how exactly the state governs the engagement of the private sector, except for its oversight role mentioned in the National Education Policy (2011).

The private sector absorbs approximately 18 per cent of the students at upper secondary level. The state is collaborating with the non-state sector in financing, innovation, provision of teaching materials, professional development, school meals, transport and supplies.

Legislation, policies and regulations

The state’s education framework is designed to support planning and management to strengthen its educational priorities. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2011 emphasizes free, compulsory education and outlines the government’s oversight of non-state providers of education.
INDIA

Introduction

A wide variety of actors are involved in private education in India, from single-teacher schools run in the back of a teacher’s house to NGO-run schools and large corporate actors. Private education is widely perceived as being better than state education. The main issues surrounding private education are concerns around equity of access and whether better learning outcomes are a result of the private schools themselves or other factors such as household income, selection bias or parental education. Private schools cater to parental expectations of English-medium schooling using formal rote and desk-based teaching. Access by girls, and some disadvantaged groups (including members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) is lower in private schools. Private schools are more cost-effective, due to lower teacher salaries.

Context

India is the world’s second most populous nation, with a population of 1.34 billion, comprising many ethnicities, tribes, castes, religions and languages. The World Bank classes India as a lower-middle income country, but its fast-growing economy has seen GDP growth above 6 per cent since 2003, except in 2008 and 2012.

India’s is a young population, with 46 per cent aged up to 24 years. Over a quarter of the total are aged under 14, and 18 per cent are aged 15–24. Consequently, the education of young people and children is particularly important.

Historically, access to education was highly unequal as formal education was limited to males in high-caste groups. This did not improve much during the colonial period, as although the British colonial state encouraged the study of English, it neglected mass education: only 14 per cent of the population were literate by the time of Indian independence in 1947. The motivation to provide universal primary education (UPE) can be traced back to Mahatma Gandhi, who presented the idea in 1937, which was then taken up by India’s first president, Dr Zakir Hussain. The resolve to achieve UPE was strengthened by the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992). These efforts, along with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All) in the early 2000s, have been successful, and India now sees gross primary enrolment rates of over 100 per cent (see Endnote xv for explanation). Secondary enrolment has been targeted in the Rastriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan programme (2009) and the Twelfth Plan (2012).

Education system

There are 1,072,836 schools serving 111,310,953 students in the state sector, and 347,412 private schools serving 73,152,801 students in the private sector (see Table A.1.1). Private schools have mushroomed in India over the last 10 years, largely in response to parental demand. Attendance at private preschools increases with age, is higher in urban areas and varies significantly by social group (disadvantaged groups are less likely to participate in private education), and income status (richer groups are more likely to participate in private education).

India also has 45,432 madrasa schools serving 5,423,261 students.
Table A1.1.6: India: Overview of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Upper primary</th>
<th>Lower secondary</th>
<th>Upper secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of pupils</strong></td>
<td>73,789,502</td>
<td>126,929,449</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age of pupils at entry</strong></td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>16 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrolments (2016-17)</strong></td>
<td>75.37%</td>
<td>33.42%</td>
<td>42.05%</td>
<td>59.18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Governance, funding and accountability**

Education is federally mandated but provided by states, which receive funding for this. The Ministry of Human Resource Development is the responsible national body for education. It has two departments: the Department of School Education and Literacy, which focuses on pre-primary, primary and secondary education, and the Department of Higher Education.

The large numbers of private actors come in several guises: as ‘edupreneurs’ who have just one school, as corporate entities running multiple schools for profit, as not-for-profit entities with one or more schools, and there are also advocacy networks made up of some or all of these. While these actors and networks are not part of the official structure, their role in shaping policy and influencing legislation makes them an important force in the regulation of private education.

In 2011, the private sector exceeded government spending on education by nearly half, reaching USD$43 billion. This indicates a strong demand for higher quality education (perceived or actual) than that provided by the majority of state schools, which is both of poor quality and perceived as such.

The state governs the engagement of the private sector through key legislation. Under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE 2009), the state reimburses private schools for per-child expenditure. The RTE 2009 reserves 25 per cent of private-school places for children from poor and marginalized backgrounds. Also, under the Companies Act 2013, the state mandates that 2 per cent of the average net profit of companies be spent on corporate social responsibility, which may include provision of education.

**Legislation, policies and regulations**

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All) is the flagship elementary education project, focused on universalizing access to primary education (grade 1–8, ages 6–4).
- RTE 2009 focuses on children aged 6–14 and is the main piece of legislation guiding education policy.
- Section 11 of RTE 2009 states that the government may make ‘necessary arrangements for providing free pre-school education’ to children aged 3–6 years.
- The Twelfth Five-Year Plan says that ‘private players would be encouraged to set up more schools’ if they are committed to providing high-quality education and that ‘private provision in secondary education should be fostered wherever feasible’.
- The Companies Act 2013 Section 135 (5).
MALDIVES

Introduction

There is limited engagement of the private sector in providing education in Maldives, and what there is focuses on pre-primary education. Despite high enrolment rates, learning outcomes are poor. There are serious systemic challenges, including inadequate teacher training, sub-national and school-type variations in the quality of education, and sexual abuse of girls in schools.

Context

Maldives is an archipelago nation of 1,190 islands, out of which 199 are inhabited with a total population of 436,300 (2017). A third of the population is aged under 17 years, due to rapid population growth between the 1970s and the 1990s. The capital city is Malé and the primary language is Dhivehi. The state religion is Sunni Islam. Maldives is a presidential democracy whose president is elected every five years. Its economy has grown around 7 per cent since 2010, and it relies heavily on tourism and fishing. In 2017, it had a GDP in PPP$ (constant 2011) of 6.6 million and a per-capita GDP of 15,168.60. In 2014, 31.4 per cent of its population were pursuing some form of education.

Education system

Traditionally, the school system had three types of self-financing institutions:

- **edhuruge** – home-based learning providing Qur’anic studies, and literacy and numeracy
- **makthab** – offering a similar curriculum, but with a more formal structure
- **madhrasa** – offering a wider curriculum.

Western education was introduced in the 1960s in Malé and spread from there to less populated regions slowly. For example, in 1961, a Montessori pre-school was introduced in Malé, which in 1971 was replaced by pre-school kindergartens. However, the atolls continued with the traditional system until in 1978, policy shifted to universalize primary education and a national curriculum was developed.

While evidence for the role of NSAs in education is somewhat lacking, most private schools operate at the pre-primary level (see Table A.1.1.7). One third of private schools are located in Malé. Private tuition is relatively prevalent, with over 30 per cent of students taking at least three hours of tuition at all levels and for all subjects.

Table A1.1.7: Maldives: Overview of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Lower secondary</th>
<th>Upper secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>Public 194</td>
<td>Private 70</td>
<td>Public 205 3</td>
<td>Public 201 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of pupils</td>
<td>23,083</td>
<td>46,202</td>
<td>27,595</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of pupils at entry</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of schooling</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil: teacher ratio</td>
<td>53: 15</td>
<td>16: 10</td>
<td>8: 1</td>
<td>8: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of private enrolments</td>
<td>52.22%</td>
<td>7.38%</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Governance, funding and accountability

Maldives follows a 5+2+3+2 system of education (Mohamed & Ahmed, 1995). The medium of instruction is English. The government guarantees 14 years of free, compulsory education from age 3, thus covering education from pre-primary through to upper secondary. The MoE is responsible for education, and has several departments, including those for examinations, curriculum and teacher development, and research and early childhood development. Private schools are separate from this structure, and it is unclear who is operating in the space and how they are funded.

Legislation, policies and regulations

- Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2018–2023 provides that all schools will uphold values of Islam and prevent violence and extremism.
- Pre-School Administration Act 2011 lays down policies regarding the expansion of pre-school education, the regulatory framework for local councils, and provision of equality of opportunity (UNICEF Maldives, 2011, p.7), including by setting minimum standards to be met by all schools.

---

21 That is, five years of primary schooling, two years in middle school, three years in lower secondary and two years in higher secondary school (Mohamed & Ahmed, 1995).
NEPAL

Introduction

Over the last 20 years, Nepal has made significant progress in education. The net enrolment rate in primary schools has risen to 97 per cent. However, the country still has many challenges to tackle. Issues that persist in education include poor quality and inequity in access, geographical remoteness, gender, and socioeconomic and ethnic differences. Key barriers to enrolment and attendance include poverty, social exclusion, disability, migration, child labour, social norms and gender bias.

Context

Nepal is a landlocked country bordering Tibet in the north, India in the south, east and west, and flanked by Bangladesh in the south east. With a population of 28 million people, it has an annual population growth rate of 1.7 per cent and a per-capita GDP of $3332, making it the second poorest country in the region after Afghanistan. In 2018, government expenditure on education was 14.1 per cent of total government expenditure and 5.1% of GDP, which is among the highest in the region (see Table A1.1.8).

In 1996, the Nepalese Civil War resulted in the death of over 12,000 people and displacement of over 100,000, bringing a prolonged period of social unrest and disruption. The signing of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) brought an end to the decade-long war, paving an end to the 239-year-old constitutional monarchy towards an era of multiparty democracy.

Protracted periods of conflict, political disruption, widespread destruction and protracted recovery from the 2015 earthquakes have been the cause of economic fragility, though the 2015 promulgation of the Constitution and efforts to move to federalism have progressed Nepal. It is now a federal parliamentary republic comprising seven provinces, with each composed of districts, municipalities and wards. Nepal is home to 125 distinct ethnic groups, with 81 per cent of the population being Hindus. Social stratification is embodied within its caste system.
Table A1.1.8: Nepal: Population context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>28.1m</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population, ages 0–14 (% of total)</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population (% of total population)</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth (annual)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population)</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of out-of-school children of primary school age, both sexes (%)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of out-of-school youth of upper secondary school age, both sexes (%)</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality rate, under 5 (per 1,000 live births)</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of stunting, height for age (% of children under 5)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, pre-primary (% gross)</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, primary (% gross)</td>
<td>142.14</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, secondary (% gross)</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, pre-primary in private institutions (%)</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, primary, private (% of total primary)</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, secondary, private (% of total secondary)</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of private lower secondary enrolment</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enrolment, upper secondary, private institutions (%)</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning poverty: % of children who cannot read and understand a simple text by age 10</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning poverty: Share of children at end-of-primary age below minimum reading proficiency adjusted by out-of-school children (%)</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
<td>Data unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population)</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita, PPP (current international $)</td>
<td>3332</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth (annual %)</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government expenditure as % of GDP (%)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on education as % of total government expenditure (%)</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education system**

With the formal education system having been in operation for over 70 years, the role of NSAs, while critical, has evolved significantly from the early days. The earliest forms of non-state provision were mainly through Hindu temples and Buddhist viharas (monasteries) or gompas (places of worship). The prolonged rule of the oligarchic elite, who reinforced principles of hierarchy and social exclusion via the caste systems, has perpetuated inequality in the education systems, and which persists even today.
Schools are broadly categorized as i) community schools ii) institutional schools; or iii) religious schools. Community schools are further differentiated based on the extent to which they receive state funding, ranging from community-aided, community-managed to community-unaided schools. Institutional schools are classified based on their profit motives, with private for-profit schools being required to register under the Companies Act. Private schools are required to contribute 1 per cent of their income to improve community schools, although several private schools have raised objections to these rules, leading to low levels of compliance. Religious schools receive government grants conditional on complying with national curriculum policies. They are broadly categorized as: madrasas (Islamic education), vihara/gompa (Buddhist education) and ashram (monastery)/gurukuls (residential religious school) (Hindu education).

Figure A1.1.3 and Figure A1.1.4 show NSA enrolments by level and by province respectively.

**Figure A1.1.3: Nepal: enrolment in NSA institutions, by level (2000–2017)**
Non-state enrolment in school (%) by level of education, 2000-2017

At the provincial level, there is some variation between provinces in the percentage of children enrolled in NSA schools.
Governance, funding and accountability

Until 2009, Nepal traditionally followed a 12-year education cycle of primary (grades 1–5) and secondary (lower: grades 6–8, secondary: grades 9–10 and higher: grades 11–12) education. Since the roll-out of the School Sector Reform Plan 2009, the education system has been restructured into two cycles: basic (grades 1–8) and secondary (grades 9–12) schooling, with grades 1–8 being compulsory. State-based primary education is free, with costs towards admission, textbooks, tuition and examinations funded by the government. The medium of instruction up to secondary school is Nepalese, and the school year runs from April to March.

While national policies are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), local governments play an important role in the education of pre-primary, primary and secondary children. MEST has responsibility for primary, secondary and higher education, with technical and senior secondary vocational education being coordinated by the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT). The District Education Office (DEO) is responsible for providing permissions for establishing, registering and monitoring non-state schools. Private schools are members of the private schools networks, such as the Private and Boarding Schools Organization Nepal (PABSON), which represents private school interests to government.
Legislation, policies and regulations

In the 1980s, with Nepal’s entry into a neo-liberal economic regime and multi-party democracy, the prominence of non-state schools was extensively promoted through the Education Regulation 1981, which allowed private, boarding and overseas schools to set up and operate in Nepal. Regulatory mechanisms apply to both private and public schools to ensure common benchmarks for quality assurance, including for student assessment and minimum required qualifications for teachers. A small number of regulations apply exclusively to private schools, including the requirement for a teacher’s licence, the contribution of 1 per cent of income, and provision of scholarships to 10 per cent of all students.

Relevant legislation includes:

- Education Act and Rules, 2001/02
- Education Communication Strategy 2007
- Education Act 1971
- Eighth Plan (1992–1997), which emphasizes the role of NSAs in addressing education needs
- National Education Commission (1993), which allowed overseas educational institutions to set up and operate in the country
- Seventh Amendment 2001 to the Education Act 1971, which distinguishes two types of school: community (state-aided) and institutional (private, non-state-funded) schools, with the latter classified as either non-profit trusts or profit-making companies
- Education Regulations 2002
- Eighth Amendment of the Education Act 2004, which promoted the establishment of private schools
- School Sector Reform Plan 2009–2015, which guarantees free public primary education and aims to move to free public secondary provision, through subsidized provision of textbooks and school materials and greater reliance on private school providers
PAKISTAN

Introduction
Public education in Pakistan has encountered several challenges, including poor management, limited public resources and a growing population, which has resulted in supply gaps. The number of out-of-school children and disparities in access to education and the quality of education are seen across different provinces and between genders. Lack of access and the poor quality of education have resulted in a proliferation in private sector institutions: a 10-fold increase from 1980 to 2000. The Government of Pakistan has taken advantage of this private support to meet the task of achieving 100 per cent enrolment in primary education and to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Context
Pakistan is home to 197 million people, with annual GDP growth rate of 5.8 per cent. It has four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, including federally administered areas (FATA), and three territories (Islamabad Capital Territory, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Kashmir.

Pakistan has the sixth largest population globally. According to the population census in 2017, 63 per cent live in rural areas. The literacy rate for 15 year-olds and above is 57 per cent.

In 1959, a National Commission endorsed a nationalized education policy, which included public funding of education as a public good. Until 1972, this nationalization policy was operating in a context of public-sector education expansion and a negative stance towards privatization. During the 1990s, private schools expanded rapidly as a result of growing demand, and the Government of Pakistan formally acknowledged the role of the private sector in addressing educational challenges through public–private partnerships (PPPs). The national assembly passed the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2012, under which each provider must obtain a certificate of registration, and parents who refuse to send their children to school face penalties and/or prison. Under the 18th amendment, education is now solely a responsibility of provincial government, although national and provincial actors work together in practice.

Education system
The Government of Pakistan has introduced PPPs to encourage NSAs to open new schools and to facilitate their collaboration with poorly performing public schools. Currently, the private sector is engaged through fee-based elite private schools, privately funded community schools, religious schools funded by charities, and low-fee private schools that charge tuition (see Table A.1.1.9). State schools cater for 28.68 million children, and NSA institutions cater for 21.60 million, almost 43 per cent of the total number of students.

Table A1.1.9: Pakistan: Public and private enrolment in state and non-state schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% schools that are state run</th>
<th>% of total enrolments</th>
<th>% of schools that are private</th>
<th>% of total enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle secondary</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper secondary</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Governance, funding and accountability

The education system has three main categories: elementary, secondary and higher education. In 2010, Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan under the 18th Amendment made the state responsible for providing free and compulsory basic education for all children 5–16 years of age, where compulsory education lasts for 12 years. This Amendment made each province responsible for the design, delivery and implementation of primary and secondary education.

The majority of private schools are in practice fairly autonomous and free of government regulation, in terms of ownership, management and finance. However, the MoE does mandate the engagement of the private sector. For instance, private providers are liable to offer free, compulsory education to disadvantaged children in the neighborhood. There is, however, no mechanism for government to check the growth of private-sector providers or to regulate them.

Legislation, policies and regulations

- Punjab Private Institutions (Promotion and Regulation) Ordinance no. II (1984)
- Private School Registration and Regulation Bodies Act, Punjab (2015)
- North West Frontier Province Registration and Functions of Private Education Institutions Ordinance (2002)
- Private Educational Institute Registration and Regulation Authority Act, Balochistan (2015).
SRI LANKA

Introduction

Private education is the dominant form of education at pre-primary level in Sri Lanka, whereas at primary and secondary levels, state schools comprise the vast majority. This is due to the absence of state funding of pre-primary education, and has produced inequities in access by the poorest families.

Providers of non-state education fall into three categories: private schools, pirivena schools and international schools. Private schools and pirivena schools are aided generously by government, which provides textbooks as well as financing for teachers and maintenance. International schools, which have existed since the 1950s, are registered as business entities and so do not receive state funding. They are mostly located in Columbo and serve the wealthiest families.

The widespread nature of private tuition gives rise to some concerns. While the outcomes of tutoring appear to be positive in some cases, studies controlling for previous attainment find the effect to be null. Further, there are equity concerns: richer households that can afford more and better quality private tutoring are more likely to see positive outcomes than households that can only afford a few hours in a large-class format. Private tutoring is thus perpetuating inequality in outcomes, although this inequality is complex and nuanced.

Context

Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948. It is an island nation located south of the Indian subcontinent with a population of 20 million people (2011), 5 million of whom are 14 years of age or younger. Sri Lanka has four main ethnic groups: Sinhalese (75 per cent), Sri Lankan Tamils (11 per cent), Sri Lankan Moors (9 per cent), and Tamils of recent Indian origin (4 per cent. It has four main religions: Buddhism (70 per cent), Hindu (13 per cent), Islam (10 per cent) and Roman Catholic (6 per cent). A large majority (82 per cent) of the population live in rural areas (UNESCO Insitute for Statistics, 2019).

In 2016, Sri Lanka had a GDP PPP$275 billion and the second highest per-capita GDP in the South Asia region (PPP$11, 739 (US$3857.35) making it a lower middle-income country by World Bank standards.

Basic development indicators are high, with a life expectancy of 75 years, low poverty rates (below 5 per cent in 2016), and high literacy rates at 91 per cent (2017). These statistics bely the nearly 30-year civil war (1983–2009) between central government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which required significant defence spending by central government.

Pre-independence, the Roman Catholic Church had established schools at primary and secondary levels, and Britain laid the foundations of a mass education system using a mixed system of grant-in-aid and fully state-aided schools. The first Minister of Education (1939–1948), C. W. W. Kannangara, saw the inequalities of this system and introduced a bill for free education, proposing teaching in two vernacular languages, the removal of tuition fees from all English-medium schools, and a focus on equal access to education for all.

In 1948 the Government of Sri Lanka introduced free education from kindergarten to university level, followed by widespread nationalization of religious schools in 1960–1961. Various legislative and policy programmes followed that focused on curriculum and teacher development, culminating in the
establishment of the National Education Commission in 1991 to lead on education policy. Education became a shared function between the central government and the provincial government since the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1987, whereby provincial governments are responsible for management and administration of education services.

**Education system**

In Sri Lanka, compulsory education lasts 11 years from the ages of 5 to 16, covering the primary and lower secondary levels, plus two years of upper secondary education (see Table A1.1.10). Sri Lanka is one of the few countries where students receive free education up to their first degree at university. At primary and secondary levels, there are four main types of private school: private, special, *pirivena* and international schools. Private schools can be fee or no-fee, but in both cases, are managed by the private schools branch of the MoE.

There are also special schools that are state or non-state-run for children who are disabled or have learning difficulties. Private special schools receive some assistance from the state, for example in the provision of resources, teacher training and in some cases teacher salaries.

**Table A1.1.10: Sri Lanka: School categories, and student and teacher numbers (2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of schools</th>
<th>No. of students</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State schools</strong></td>
<td>10,194</td>
<td>4,165,964</td>
<td>241,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-state schools</strong></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>136,462</td>
<td>136,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pirivena</strong></td>
<td>753</td>
<td>62,871</td>
<td>6,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International schools</strong></td>
<td>265</td>
<td>56,919</td>
<td>4,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special schools</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2,496</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Governance, funding and accountability**

The MoE is in charge of education nationally. It has three departments: the Department of Educational Publications (responsible for textbooks, which are free of charge at all schools for grades 1–11); the National Institute of Education (responsible for curricula, teacher training and textbook accreditation); and the Department of Examinations. Private schools fall under the MoE’s private schools branch, and there are also branches for special schools and *pirivenas*.

Provincial ministries are responsible for the management and administration of schools, including implementing programmes and establishing provincial standards.

**Legislation, policies and regulations**

- The 13th Amendment to the Constitution 1987 introduced the provincial council (PC) system to devolve power to the north and east – PCs play a key role in managing and administering education.
- National Policy on Pre-School Education 2019 sets the long-term strategy for the pre-school sector, acknowledges the role of NSAs and encourages their ‘effective government oversight and regulation’ (National Education Commission Sri Lanka, 2019, p.18).
APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX 1: ROLE OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN EDUCATION PROVISION

Madrasas

Madrasas are religious schools or ‘mosque schools’ that provide and promote an Islam-based curriculum. They are prominent in Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Madrasas vary in type and include traditional schools that emphasize Qur’anic teaching through the recitation of religious text and the promotion of Islamic beliefs and practices, and secular schools that integrate religious teaching with modern subjects. In Pakistan, madrasas are affiliated with one of five governing boards with responsibility for establishing academic policies, although the curriculum and pedagogical practices are determined independently by individual madrasas (Hussain, Salim & Naveed, 2011). After repeated attempts to reform the madrasa education system, more recent nationalization of 30,000 madrasas in Pakistan is leaning towards madrasa education reform and addressing educational dualism and the need to integrate secular and scientific subjects into the religious curriculum.

In India, madrasas comprise 4 per cent of all privately funded schools and are mostly located in north India (Sachar et al., 2006). They provide a conduit for the transfer of religious teachings, traditional practices and values from one generation to another, and also bridge a gap in education services that secular state schools are less able to provide. Muslim children experienced degrees of exclusion in school, which was an extension of their experiences of socio-economic deprivation, discrimination and insecurity within society, and had an over-reliance on state education characterized by poor quality of teaching, learning content and facilities. This obliged communities to establish privately funded madrasa.

The forms of provision lie across a spectrum of traditional, single-room units within an existing community space (such as a mosque, community centre or public school) provided free of charge, to modern, full-time, English-medium Islamic high schools that are accessible to female students, with trained female teachers, and equipped with libraries and laboratories (Boyle, 2006). While some madrasas are unrecognized and unregistered within the formal schooling system, others have gained formal government accreditation for their courses. Most of these schools have formal, compulsory enrolment and grading systems, with more impersonal teaching methodologies, in contrast to the traditional madrasas providing highly personalised forms of education (Park & Niyozov, 2008).

Funding for madrasas ranges from state-sponsored funding to private, charitable endowments from the founding ruling elites, and community contributions. In Bangladesh, the Aliya madrasas are fall into the more secular form of religious school, and come under the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board, so are mostly financed by the government, which pays 80 per cent of teachers’ basic salary. In contrast, the Quomi madrasas are privately funded, traditional madrasas that are unrecognized. They are undergoing significant reform, with the replacement of Urdu with Bangla and English, and the integration of social sciences into the curriculum (Park & Niyozov, 2008). While a majority of madrasas are considered to be under-resourced and of low quality (Wales, Aslam, Hine, Rawal & Wild, 2015), they are more equitable, accessible and inclusive of traditional values and cultural norms – factors that are not necessarily addressed within the free state public school system.

Madrasas provide an accessible space for cultivating and preserving traditional Muslim values that are central to the Muslim identity. However, they are criticised for their over-reliance on rote learning,

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22 The five madrasa boards are: Wafaq-ul-madaris-ul-arabia (Deobandi sect); rabta-tul-madaris-ul-islamia (Jamat-e-Islami sect); Wafaq-ul-madaris Shia Pakistan (Shia sect); Wafaq-ul-madaris al-Salafia (ahl-e-Hadith sect); and tanzim-ul-madaris ahl Sunnah wa Jama’a (Barelvi sect).
endorsement of corporal punishment and limited scope of learning content prospects. Sanya et al.’s (2019) ethnographic study throws light on girls’ experiences of studying in madrasas in Uttar Pradesh in northern India, where girls’ enrolment in schools is low and the provision of education services to Muslim communities fragmented, and in many areas insufficient (Sachar et al., 2006). Although corporal punishment is not allowed, girls’ inability to recall religious teaching is met by rebuke and physical punishments, such as standing through the remainder of the class. This suggests that there may be safety concerns at some madrasas, and that, while they are important sources of education, more oversight of their practices may be needed.

**Buddhist monastic education**

**Bhutan**

In Bhutan, monastic education is the oldest part of the education system. It is administered by the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs and overseen by a Central Monastic Body. In 2018, there were 213 monastic education centres in Bhutan, with just over 10,000 students, compared with 155,000 in state schools (Ministry of Education Bhutan, 2018). There are two types of monastic school:

- **zhung dratshang** – government-supported monastic institutes that fall under the Central Monastic Body
- private monastic institutes that have been established and are managed by other religious leaders.

Students are distributed more or less evenly across these two types. The medium of instruction is Dzongkha and teaching focuses on Buddhist monastic methods of memorization and debate (Denman & Namgyel, 2008). Recently, basic English, mathematics and information technology have been taught.

As in madrasas, there are concerns around corporal punishment. The first Child Protection Programme Strategy and the Plan of Action for Children in Monastic Institutions (July 2017—June 2022) were launched to support and respond to child protection concerns in monastic institutes.

**Sri Lanka**

In Sri Lanka, in 2017, at primary and secondary levels, there were 10,194 government schools, 80 recognized private schools, 753 Buddhist centres (*pirivenas*) and 265 international schools (Ministry of Education, 2018). *Pirivenas* accounted for 1.4 per cent of enrolments in 2018, the largest after state schools. They are managed by the MoE Pirivena Branch and there are three types (Ministry of Education Pirivena Branch, n.d.; UNESCO-IBE, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2018):

- *mulika* pirivena (grades 1–5) 62 per cent of the total
- *maha* pirivena (grades 6–11) 29 per cent of the total
- *vidyayatana* pirivena (grade 10 to higher education) 9 per cent of the total.

*Pirivenas* are assisted by the state in many ways, including in the payment of teacher salaries and the provision of textbooks and uniforms (Asian Development Bank, 2017). They teach the normal school curriculum for lay students, with additional subjects for clergy (Dundar et al., 2017; Ministry of Education, 2013). They have a roughly even split between students training to become monks and ordinary people who attend the school for an education. They are thought to be pro-poor as they provide access to education for those who have dropped out of normal schooling, but we found little evidence to support this (Dundar et al., 2017; Ministry of Education, 2013).
### APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SUPPORTING TABLE

Table A3.1.1 shows the conceptual framework used for this study. It gives details of the various inputs (e.g. teachers), processes (e.g. implementation and enforcement of laws) and the connections between them.

**Table A3.1.1: Conceptual framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher development and training</td>
<td>Engagement of community in decision-making</td>
<td>School-based professional development</td>
<td>Parental literacy and education</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>Local support for schools</td>
<td>School infrastructure</td>
<td>Parental support for and engagement with learning</td>
<td>Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant, inclusive and appropriate curriculum</td>
<td>Norms and perceptions</td>
<td>Appropriate pedagogy</td>
<td>Books in the home</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook procurement and distribution</td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>A place to study</td>
<td>A place to study</td>
<td>Disability status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate financial resources</td>
<td>Qualified and engaged management</td>
<td>Qualified leadership</td>
<td>Qualified and engaged management</td>
<td>Innate ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School meals and health</td>
<td>Qualified leadership</td>
<td>Qualified leadership</td>
<td>Qualified leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation and enforcement of laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency preparedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Abidjan Principles, 2019; Brossard et al., 2020; Tikly, 2010; Tiwari, 2019; WHO; 2016
APPENDIX 4 TO ANNEX 1: LITERATURE REVIEW METHODOLOGY

Search strategy

The desk-based review does not claim to be a systematic review; nevertheless, it follows a comprehensive and in-depth search strategy. To conduct the search of the literature we followed the following steps:

- We created a list of databases and websites to search (see Table A1.4.1). These covered the main social sciences academic databases, as well as many resource centres, thinktanks, development agencies and other search engines.

- We agreed the key search terms (see Table A1.4.2). These focused on the type of non-state education, the different outcome types, as well as several other related terms.

- Used the search corpus and database list as a starting point to perform logged searches, recording a count of articles, then count reviewed, then count selected. We also counted how many duplicates had been removed or accepted.

- Once articles were selected (see below for the selection criteria), the references of these articles were also checked to find whether our searches had missed any articles.
### Table A1.4.1: Databases and websites consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Websites and institutes</th>
<th>Other (country specific)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scopus</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)</td>
<td>South Asia Forum for Education Development (SAFED)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSTOR</td>
<td>UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO/UNESDOC, IIEP)</td>
<td>CSR Centre Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Resource Information Center (ERIC)</td>
<td>Statistics on Public Expenditure for Economic Development (SPEED)</td>
<td>Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)</td>
<td>Campbell collaboration</td>
<td>Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), in Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)</td>
<td>Centre for International Education</td>
<td>Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), in Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Sussex (CIE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Scholar</td>
<td>Centre for Global Development</td>
<td>Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EconLit</td>
<td>Government funders (DFID, USAID, AUSAID, CIDA, JPIC etc.)</td>
<td>South Asia Forum on Responsible Business (SAFoRB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EconPapers</td>
<td>PERI Global</td>
<td>Fast Track Initiative (FTI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Direct</td>
<td>Foundations (Bill &amp; Melinda Gates, Aga Khan, CIFT, etc.)</td>
<td>Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinktanks (ODI, Brookings Institution, 3ie, Poverty Action Lab)</td>
<td>Leading Group for Innovative Financing for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Centre for Civil society, New Delhi</td>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open Society Foundation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oxfam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sciences Po Law School Clinic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right to Education Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education International</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A1.4.2 presents the corpus of search terms that were used. Each column represents a block of column in the syntax. The search proceeded from simple to complex syntax, string from one term from each of the first three columns, and then proceeded to include one term from one of the second block of three columns (e.g. Afghanistan AND private AND education AND governance, Afghanistan AND private AND education AND test scores), meaning that only four blocks were used in any given syntax.
Once the initial searches were complete, a further set was completed, using syntax where it was clear there were gaps (e.g. around safety).

**Table A1.4.2: Search terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Engagement type</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>education</td>
<td>outcomes</td>
<td>tutoring</td>
<td>governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>from private sources</td>
<td>household</td>
<td>test scores</td>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>expenditure</td>
<td>primary</td>
<td>access</td>
<td>public-private partnership*</td>
<td>accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>private*</td>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>finance</td>
<td>transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>fee*</td>
<td>pre-primary</td>
<td>quality</td>
<td>funding</td>
<td>management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>foundations</td>
<td>educational reform</td>
<td>safety</td>
<td>school voucher</td>
<td>Legal rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>schooling</td>
<td>equity</td>
<td>low-fe/ low-cost</td>
<td>manage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>for-profit</td>
<td>learning</td>
<td>equitable</td>
<td>public private partnership*</td>
<td>Aid stewardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSA</td>
<td>philanthropic</td>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>enrolment</td>
<td>LFP</td>
<td>policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>edupreneur</td>
<td>school*</td>
<td>attainment</td>
<td>tutor*</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>faith-based</td>
<td>teach*</td>
<td>completion</td>
<td>fund*</td>
<td>Diaspora bonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-governmental organizations</td>
<td>learn*</td>
<td>investment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madrasa</td>
<td>religious</td>
<td>bonds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>government</td>
<td></td>
<td>aid</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>public (e.g. “public schools”)</td>
<td></td>
<td>donor*</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>community-based</td>
<td></td>
<td>spending</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early childhood</td>
<td></td>
<td>government-dependent institutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>government-independent institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>social impact bonds</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>scholarship*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stipend*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>private financing initiatives</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>contract services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>operations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>partnership*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inclusion criteria

The next step was the creation of criteria for including or excluding literature on the basis of publication date, relevance and language (see Table A1.4.3), and quality criteria (see Table A1.4.4).

Table A1.4.3: Criteria for sorting literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication date</td>
<td>All publications from the year 2000 or later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Referring at least in part to the role of non-state actors in education. Also, articles that focused on the structure of the government system were included to ensure that a clear picture emerged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Publications on any of the countries within South Asia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality (see also Table A1.4.4)</td>
<td>Three quality criteria ensured that the documents selected were of a good scientific standard (with a fourth important but not required criterion):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Conceptual clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Appropriate methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Scientific validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Ethics (not required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplication</td>
<td>If there was repetition of articles, e.g. a working paper and an academic paper, in most cases the academic paper was used unless the team was unable to access that article.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A1.4.4: Quality criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Sub-categories</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Topic, purpose, and study rationale are clearly stated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>The relevant conceptual underpinnings of the issue are fully explained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>Research questions and/or hypotheses are well-defined and drawn from sound, evidence-based theoretical or conceptual framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>The research design and sampling are appropriate for the study. The study includes a well-articulated rationale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>Relevant data has been employed. Where survey data are used, the sample is well-described and clearly appropriate for the task at hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Analyses</td>
<td>The procedures and measures have been selected correctly and applied correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Results</td>
<td>The results of the statistical/empirical tests are fully and correctly interpreted. Basic statistical information, such as probability stats, sample sizes, etc., and coherent explanation of findings are included. The article avoids overstating the study’s importance and generalizability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ethical review</td>
<td>If the research involves primary data collection and/or the use of sensitive secondary data, ethical considerations are described in the study. For example, the article might include details of the procedures followed to ensure the ethical review of data, an indication that the study received the proper oversight from review board, or any mitigation strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX 1: FIELD VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

Introduction

In collaboration with UNICEF-ROSA, the education team at the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti (hereafter referred to as the Innocenti team) conducted field visits to South Asia. The first field visit was conducted in Nepal and Bangladesh in February 2019 for 7 days, with a second field visit to India and Maldives in July/August 2019 for a duration of approximately 12 days.

These field visits were scoping exercises with the aim of engaging and discussing with key stakeholders the role of NSAs in education service delivery. Discussions included a series of meetings and interactions with select education stakeholders, ranging from the MoEs and other relevant ministries; private sector actors, such as foundations and philanthropists; NGO leaders; officials from international organisations; school leaders; and teachers. Information from countries not included in the field visits was gathered through desk-based research and phone interviews with key stakeholders identified in collaboration with UNICEF Country Offices.

This scoping exercise centered on three main guiding questions:

- What is the stakeholder’s role and from their perspective, and how do they view the state of play of private education in their country?
- How does the country’s approach to private involvement in the delivery of education services relate to existing systems of education and public delivery mechanisms?
- Are there any interesting models of private education under way (preferably a mix of models covering urban and rural areas; pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels)? These may include:
  - innovative service delivery models
  - PPP models of engagement (financing, delivery, accountability)
  - provision of private auxiliary services to public schools
  - any models that have proven unsuccessful.
- What are the opportunities and challenge in private education (and more generally, private finance) in education service delivery for the effective promotion of high-quality, equitable and safe education for all children in their country?

Ethical guidelines for adults were followed and participants had the option of declining to be interviewed and not answer questions. The interviews were not recorded or transcribed as the purpose was a scoping one. For the purposes of confidentiality, no names or positions of informants are used in the report and information obtained during this process will not be identifiable to the source.

Outputs

Findings from the field visits and discussions/interviews are included throughout the report, and reflections from the discussions have informed its structure and findings. Information from these visits has also supported the types of initiatives that are highlighted in the boxes contained in each chapter.
ANNEX 2: WHOLE-SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

This annex relates to content provided in Chapter 2. It contains three appendices:

Appendix 1: Governance and regulation in the South Asia region
Appendix 2: Benefit incidence analysis for South Asia
Appendix 3: Data sources used
### APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX 2: GOVERNANCE AND REGULATION IN THE SOUTH ASIA REGION

Table A2.1.1: Governance and regulations in the education sector relevant to non-state actors in pre-primary, primary and secondary education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Governance structure</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Constitution</th>
<th>Pre-primary education</th>
<th>Primary and secondary education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>MoE oversees education (setting policy, standards and curriculum)</td>
<td>MoE Ministry of Women’s Affairs Ministry of Information and Technology Ministry of Public Health Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.</td>
<td>Right to Education 2004 (Article 22) Free education up to baccalaureate for all (Article 43)</td>
<td>Education Law from 2008 (MoE, 1387/2008): MoE responsible for pre-school provision (5-6 year-olds) with other ministries (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and the Disabled (MoLSAMD) 2013 draft pre-school policy</td>
<td>Policy exists to manage community- and home-based (CBS &amp; HBS) schools. MoE regulates operation of NGOs and establishes handover of CBS &amp; HBS between an NGO and the Afghan state. Education law (Decree 56) came into effect April 2008, which specifies: a) roles and responsibilities of public and NSAs b) process of establishing a CBS c) student enrolment and certification d) teacher recruitment, salaries, training, registration and accreditation e) handover process for CBS. Legal framework for not-for-profit organizations is primarily based on the law on associations (2013) and law on NGOs (2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Education policies allow for a relatively high degree of school-level autonomy in independent private and state-funded private schools.</td>
<td>Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and MoE oversee public and private recognized schools for primary and secondary education respectively. Madrassa Education Board (within MoE) oversees Aliya madrasas (primary and secondary). Education is free and compulsory</td>
<td>National Education Policy (2010) establishes guidelines and roles for government and civil society actors in scaling up a one-year pre-primary programme. Linked to: a) development of national pre-primary curriculum and training materials and additional assistant teacher posts b) School Learning Improvement Plan, which devolved decision-making and planning on pre-primary education to local level.</td>
<td>Private independent and state-funded private schools pay operating fees to the government (Rules and Regulations for Establishing, Starting and Approving Private Schools, Colleges and Madrassas (1997)). Section 4, Articles 2, 5 and 7 describe the process for inspections and supervision of independent private and state-funded private schools. Registration of Private Schools Ordinance 1962 Article 4-C say schools must set adequate tuition fees; Section 4(2b) states that schools have authority to set teacher salary levels; Sections 2e–2f say that all types of private school may choose a curriculum, but it must be approved by local authorities. School-1, Section SRO No. 263-Law/2011, Section 4 (15, 16 (1)) (18 August 2011), Bangladesh Gazette by MoPME says government determines maximum class size and every non-state primary school must have average PTR of 30:1. Article 3-1, Bangladesh Gazette, Part VI (6 December 1979) says private independent and state-funded private schools retain principal authority to appoint, deploy and dismiss teachers. Rules and Regulations for Establishing, Starting and Approving Private Schools, Colleges and Madrassas (1997), Section 9, Table 1 (1–13) regulates registration criteria for non-state schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Education Policy</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bhutan</strong></td>
<td>MoE is the educational administrative unit for early childhood and care development (ECCD), nutrition and feeding &amp; private schools. Royal Education Council (REC) established 2007 to devise curriculum and pedagogy (Gordon, 2013). Bhutan Board of Examination (BBE) responsible for organizing and monitoring national examinations. Performance Management System (PMS) introduced 2010 to improve outcomes and provision. English is the medium of instruction Assessment through continuous formative Assessment (CFA), continuous Summative Assessment (CSA), mid-term exams, and Annual Examinations (Kirkpatrick &amp; Gyem, 2012). Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs Central Monastic Body (monastic education) Free education from pre-primary to grade 10 (Article 9, Clauses 15 and 16 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan)</td>
<td>Under 11th Five Year Plan (2014–2018) MoE proposed ECCD policy (with support of UNICEF and Save the Children) Five-Year Development Plan increased the number of schools and established a Department of Education in 1961. Bhutan Education Blueprint (BEBP 2014–2024) encourages scale-up of private sector and international partnership in education The School Privatization Policy eased the admission pressure in the public high schools. Nationwide education reform initiative, Educating for Gross National Happiness, 2010.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>India</strong></td>
<td>Constitutional mandate supporting decentralization. States responsible for their own education system.</td>
<td>Free and compulsory education for 6–14-yaer-olds (Article 21A of Constitution; Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009)</td>
<td>Fully private, unaided schools have complete autonomy in terms of management, hiring and pedagogy (De et al., 2002) Operating for-profit schools is illegal (Unnikrishnan vs the State of Andhra Pradesh, Supreme Court of India, 1993) although not always the case in practice (Srivastava, 2007, p.172).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nepal</strong></td>
<td>After the establishment of the Constitution Act 2015 and the federal government structure, the local level government is responsible for the operation and management of basic and secondary education through community schools (Chikanbanjar, 2017).</td>
<td>Free and compulsory elementary and secondary education (Article 25 A of the Pakistani Constitution)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pakistan</strong></td>
<td>Constitutional mandate supporting decentralization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Information is unavailable for Sri Lanka and the Maldives.
APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX 2: BENEFIT INCIDENCE ANALYSIS FOR SOUTH ASIA

Introduction

Benefit incidence analysis (BIA) disaggregates public spending on a social policy area (e.g. education) to show the distribution of public spending and how much of the total education spend benefits different income groups. In the context of progressive universalism and the right to education, where the goal is for spending to decrease disparities and be pro-poor (Davoodi, Tiôngson & Asawanuchit, 2003; Dundar, Béteille, Riboud & Deolalikar, 2014; Mitra, 2015), the ideal scenario would be for a larger share of spending to go to the poorest. Building on previous BIAs in education for some South Asian countries, we undertook a BIA to establish the extent of equitable public spending on education in the region, given the growing prevalence of private providers there.

Previous BIAs treated private enrolment as evenly distributed across quintiles (e.g. 22 per cent in every quintile). Using private enrolment by quintile highlights how the existence of private schools and their use by upper quintiles actually makes public expenditure on education more evenly distributed and thus more pro-poor.23 For example, in India, if private education is assumed to be the same across quintiles, the richest receive 34 per cent of public expenditure on education, and the poorest 10.2 per cent, a very unequal distribution. When using household survey data that has information on private enrolment by quintile, this changes dramatically to 12.7 per cent and 16.6 per cent respectively. Similarly, in Pakistan, these numbers are 40.8 per cent and 6.7 per cent for richest and poorest with an even distribution, and 23.2 per cent and 11.2 per cent with uneven quintile distributions. This is an important finding for framing the role of private providers in education and for discussing private enrolment by income or consumption group, to understand system-wide improvement of the education sector (see Chapter 2).

Compared to findings in the previous literature, some countries have become more pro-poor with this analysis (see Table A2.2.1). Bangladesh has become more equal by a considerable margin (spending on the poorest quintile has increased 7.5 percentage points), and Nepal spends 9.4 more percentage points on the poorest, and has seen an even greater change for the richest in the opposite direction. On the other hand, Pakistan has become less equal, with a 1.5 percentage point decrease in public expenditure on the poorest since 2007/08, and nearly 8 percentage points since 2004/05, thus reverting towards the 1991 level (Filmer, 2003), although spending on the richest quintile has decreased by 23 percentage points as a proportion of total spending.

Table A2.2.1: Distributions found in earlier studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study and source24</th>
<th>Country/region</th>
<th>Year of Data</th>
<th>Poorest (%)</th>
<th>Richest (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Davoodi et al., 2003</td>
<td>Asia and Pacific</td>
<td>1990–1999</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmer, 2003</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmer, 2003</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glinskaya, 2005</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawaz Hakro &amp; Akram, 2007</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2004/5</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asghar &amp; Zahra, 201225</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2007/8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 Results at the pre-primary and tertiary levels should be interpreted with caution.
24 We do not present Mitra (2015) below due to the focus on higher education, which is not relevant here.
25 Asghar and Zahra use deciles instead of quintiles: the number presented here is the sum of the bottom 2 and top 2 deciles for the bottom and top quintiles respectively.
There is a noticeable difference, especially in the percentage of public expenditure on the top quintile, in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan (see Figure A2.2.1). The analysis used concentration coefficients instead of distribution to further demonstrate the powerful effect the use of private enrolment data can have on understanding the distribution of public funding. This is because the richest quintile use the private system more, so public spending ends up benefiting the poorest groups more than if the assumption was that the richest and poorest quintiles use the private system to exactly the same extent.

**Methods**

To conduct a BIA, data is needed in three areas: government (public) spending on the service; public use of the service; and the socio-economic characteristics of the users of the service (Davoodi et al., 2003). This data was collected and compiled from a variety of sources (see Table A2.2.2). This data was then used in three broad steps:

1. Calculate spending per student by level of education using enrollment data
2. Use household survey data and estimate the distribution of enrolments by population group (e.g., by income, gender or geographic location)\(^{26}\)
3. Add the public spending that accrues to each population group for all education levels and calculate each group’s share of the total public spending on education (Lassibille & Tan, 2007, p.2).\(^{27}\)

These results were then used to generate Lorenz Curves and Gini Coefficients to show variations in public spending on education across quintiles and education levels.

There are some limitations in the methodology:

- BIA ‘makes a strong assumption that the costs of provision are a good approximation to the benefit that users attach to government services’ (Davoodi et al., 2003, p.15), which may not be the case, given that low-cost private schools in South Asia may provide a (debatably) great benefit (e.g. learning outcomes) for a lower cost (Kingdon, 2017)
- this conceptual model does not specific the underlying behaviour of households or the government, and so cannot illuminate why households choose to engage with the state sector (Davoodi et al., 2003)
- data on pre-primary education is absent for all countries, and given the high private enrolment rates for pre-primary education and the large impact that uneven enrolment across quintiles can have, any discussion at the pre-primary level would be unreliable and has therefore been omitted.

\(^{26}\) In steps 1 and 2, it is important to remove those students who do not benefit from the public system but instead use private education, to ensure that a clear picture the beneficiaries of public spending emerges. However, the definition of private actors varies across countries and is not always clear in household surveys.

\(^{27}\) Davoodi, Tiongson & Asawanuchit (2003, p.21) find that both the method of defining quintiles (household or individual) and unit of expenditure (whether per capita or per adult) can make a difference to the results: A more pro-poor incidence of social spending can result, for example, when quintiles are defined by households rather than by individuals.'
Table A2.2.2: Data sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Enrolment and spending</th>
<th>Completion and transition rates by quintile28</th>
<th>Private enrolment by quintile by level29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>UIS 2014</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 201429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>UIS 2017</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>UIS 2015</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>UIS 2014</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>UIS 2004</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>UIS 2013</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>UIS 2010</td>
<td>WIDE Database</td>
<td>Dundar et al., 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A2.2.1: Distribution of public expenditure by quintile: comparing two sources of private enrolment by quintile data

Distribution of public expenditure on education by quintile.
Black dashed line indicates the line of equality for poorest quintile, red for richest quintile.

---

28 Note that the UIS database relies on national submission of data, and the WIDE database only compiles data from household surveys conducted in-country with the government. All data is at the national level.

29 Dundar et al. (2014) use private enrolment by quintile for the richest (q5) and poorest (q1) quintiles. This analysis inputs quintiles 2, 3 and 4 using a formula \((q2=q1*(1+z))\) that increases as the quintiles increase.

30 We do not have data on private enrolment by quintile for Maldives and the NA from UIS is used for all quintiles. Given the relatively low average private enrolment at all levels (except pre-primary, which is excluded), the effect of assuming an even distribution across quintiles is expected to be small (in the order of magnitude of Sri Lanka, for example).
APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX 2: DATA SOURCES USED

Introduction

A data review process was conducted for each of the countries in South Asia to establish the different data sources used in this report, as well to understand the indicators collected on non-state actors and the methodology adopted by each source used (see Table A2.3.1).

The process of finding primary and secondary data sources on private education in South Asian countries comprised several steps:

- Initial general data exploration was conducted by the UNICEF team, which yielded several potentially informative governmental and non-governmental data sources.
- An in-depth investigation of country-specific government websites was carried out, including ministries and departments of education and those for families and welfare (or the equivalent).
- Local organizations, international funders, foundations and research institutes were reviewed.
- Google/Google Scholar, Academia and Research Gate were searched using key words and terms. This step included a systematic and comprehensive literature review of academic, peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature.31
- Country Office (CO) surveys were used to gather information about data sources for each country. In addition to providing data, COS informed the team about country-specific policies related to the private education sector.
- Fields visits were also carried out in Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Maldives to complement and supplement the work of the research team.

Table A2.3.1: Summary of data sources, by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Education surveys</th>
<th>Household-level surveys</th>
<th>International surveys (UNICEF MICS, UIS and OECD)</th>
<th>Other data/policy reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 The search was limited to the first ten Google hits, or to a reasonable point of saturation, determined by the quality and redundancy of the results, and all data sources were generated after the year 2000.
AFGHANISTAN

Data on education in Afghanistan comes from two sources: the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Aiddata, which has collated data on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in the country. Unsurprisingly for a fragile state, data collection capabilities are not at the level of some other South Asian countries, but data on school numbers and enrolment is good and improving over time. More data on outcomes, especially in achievement, are needed to assess whether those attending school are learning and whether the type of school influences this.

Description of the data source

For this report, two main sources of data were used:

1. Afghanistan’s EMIS began in 2005 (1384), but was readily available from 2008 (1387) to 2014 (1393) (with 2009 and 2011 missing) in aggregate MS Excel form. There is data up to 2018 (1397), but this is only on the website in Dari. This has data on enrolment, number of schools and some infrastructure. There were plans to collect and use GIS information in the last years, which is a welcome addition, but it unclear to what extent this data will be available to the public.

2. Aiddata is a research lab at William & Mary’s Global Research Institute that holds data on ODA. This dataset includes all external assistance projects in Afghanistan’s Development Assistance Database (DAD). It tracks $16,141,437,372.91 in commitments and $1,156,716,739.33 in disbursements for 1,561 projects across 7,168 locations between 2001 and 2014 (AidData, 2016). We focus on the projects on education in this dataset.

Quality of data

This data is of decent and improving quality with decent disaggregation potential:

1. EMIS is partly complete and consistent over time, but reporting of certain aspects such as closed schools or teachers is less consistent. Data can be disaggregated by province, gender, level and type, making it valuable for the study of different school types. The most recent data that can be accessed with the appropriate account appears to be for 2018, so reporting is timely. The data captured by EMIS is broadly comparable to other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh), especially in the latter years.

2. Aiddata can be disaggregated by type of ODA, location and project type. It uses official sources for identifying ODA and includes ODA from non-DAC donors such as China, thus providing fairly comprehensive coverage. It has not been updated since 2014, so data on disbursements even on the projects included is out of date, but as this is not an annual survey and does not come from a government source, annual updates are not expected. The variables it provides are valuable; however, there are few other comparable sources of information on the rest of South Asia. This is not necessarily problematic, as most other South Asian countries are likely to receive far less in the way of ODA.
Use of data to inform policy and programming

The extent to which data is used by policymakers and researchers is unclear. However, the data does give some indication of outcomes on equity and safety, and should be useful for policymaking and research:

1. EMIS data could be used to expand the education system and target areas that have poorer infrastructure or higher pupil–teacher ratios. Given the rapid expansion of the education system in Afghanistan since 2001, and the initiation of the EMIS in 2005 (http://emis.af; Lahire, 2018), there is plenty of potential for the data to be used by policymakers. Given the significant challenges facing the education system and the heavy involvement of donors in the sector, it is likely that this data is being used to improve the quality and reach of the education system (Lahire, 2018).

2. Also unclear is the extent to which Aiddata has been used by policymakers, though it would provide a valuable source of information for avoiding project duplication and more effective targeting. A search of Aiddata’s website reveals no publications that use this dataset for research, and the general public are unlikely to access this information as it is not published in an easily accessible form, and cannot be used to understand education outcomes in quality, equity or safety in a clear way.
BANGLADESH

The primary sources of data on education in Bangladesh are the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Annual Sector Performance Report. The MoE’s EMIS collects information on over 25 types of schools and runs various surveys on primary schools and learning outcomes for primary aged children.

Description of the data source

For this report, four sources of data were used:

1. The Annual Primary School Census (APSC) is compiled by the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), which, under the MoE, is responsible for the collection, compilation and dissemination of educational statistics through its EMIS and the APSC. These have been running since 2005 and are the main source of information on the primary education system (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2020).

2. The Annual Sector Performance Report (ASPR) reports comprehensively on the status of primary education in Bangladesh, with inputs from a variety of different relevant sources and aggregates them into one place to provide an annual report. (Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2017a).

3. National Student Assessment (NSA) began in 2006 under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) to assess primary education through testing significant numbers of children (over 50,000 in 2017) in grades 3 and 5 in Bangla and mathematics, across many different school types (e.g. state primary, BRAC, madrasa) (Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2017b).

4. The Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS6) was also used (see below for details).

Quality of data

All of the data sources suffer from difficulty of access, since neither reports nor data are clearly available in one centralized location, and the point of contact for them is unclear.

1. APSC has data on school location, management, rural or urban, enrolment, teacher numbers and qualifications, and children with disabilities. It collects data on enrolment, attendance, repetition and teachers’ qualifications, and information on the SMC, water and sanitation, physical infrastructure, school improvement plans, and the availability of teaching resources. The data is statistically sound, although access is challenging with only three years’ worth of reports available, and data access protocols unclear.

2. ASPR is comparable across time, and can generally be disaggregated by state, district, region, subject, level of education, gender and school type. It has information on the number of schools, enrolment, infrastructure, teachers and school management, as well as learning outcomes, access and participation, effectiveness and efficiency.
3. NSA is run annually, so it is possible to compare changes over time (although changes were introduced in 2017). The results are reported disaggregated by gender, school type, region, band of achievement and domain. However, overlapping categories (e.g. region and school type) are not reported (possibly due to sample size limitations), with the exception of band of achievement. This means that only national comparisons between school types are possible, without access to the raw data. Since the tests are aligned to the national curriculum and test grade-specific performance, the learning cannot strictly be compared with that in other countries without undergoing a standardizing process such as harmonized learning outcomes (Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2017b; Patrinos & Angrist, 2018). Nevertheless, this alignment makes them more valuable assessments of progress against the curriculum.

Use of data to inform policy and programming

In general, the data can be used to understand some quality, equity and safety outcomes. As with other countries, the extent to which the data is accessible to the general public is unclear. Most research taking place is policy oriented and concentrated in the MoE and the Asian Development Bank, though academic articles, especially on madrasas, are also present. The data sources presented are all government sources and monitor the progress of all school types towards the SDGs. Going further, some provide concrete policy suggestions. Uptake of these suggestions is, as always, hard to show, but improvements to the system have been made, which is encouraging.
BHUTAN

The main sources of data for education in Bhutan are from the MoE and Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment (BCSEA). The EMIS covers all types of schools found in the country (including private), but quality outcomes are only measured at secondary level. There is good coverage of enrolment and access for pre-primary across the country, but nothing on learning or safety. Overall, data quality and coverage are good, but outcomes at private schools and more detailed information for pre-primary would be welcome.

Description of the data source

For this report, two main sources of data were used:

1. Annual Education Statistics Reports (AESRs) are available from 2002–2018. These are put together by the Policy and Planning Division of the MoE. Data is collected through EMIS, with responsibility shared among schools and dzongkhag (district) and thromde (administrative division) education offices. Schools upload information on their students (e.g. enrolment, gender), staff (e.g. numbers, qualifications) and infrastructure (e.g. electricity, landline, road access) directly to the EMIS. It covers all level of education from pre-primary onwards and includes both state and private schools.

2. Pupil Performance Reports (PPRs) are available annually from 2013–2019 (with the exception of 2016). The data for these is collected by BCSEA, which is an autonomous assessment body. The purpose of data collection is to assess learning in a wide range of subjects at grades 6, 10 and 12.

Quality of data

1. Given the full coverage of schools, the data is statistically sound, and publication is timely, with AESRs published four months after data collection (APR 2018). The data captured by School Statistics (SS) is broadly comparable to that of other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh and India).

2. PPRs are consistent over time and can be disaggregated by region, subject, gender and even school. While it is possible to derive school-type averages (private vs government) by linking to the AESR data (as both have school-level data), this is not done in the report. It tracks all students that sit the exams over time and so is a reliable measure of learning and uses subject testing. As with the AESR, reporting of results is timely. These results should be broadly comparable to other exam reports at similar grade levels in South Asia (e.g. the O-Level and A-Level exams in Sri Lanka).
Use of data to inform policy and programming

In general, the data can be used to understand the quality, equity and safety outcomes using the two datasets. The extent to which the data is access by the general public is un clear. That said, PPR does report individual school pass rates by subject, so it would be possible for parents to use this for school choice and to hold schools to account. Largely, the use of data seems to be focused in the policymaking and research space.

1. AESR is intended to help manage the education system. Dzongkhags, thromdes and schools have direct access and rights to view and update their data. This should facilitate policymaking at the local level.

2. PPR usage is less clear. While obviously intended as a tool to identify schools that are not performing well, it is unclear how much the reports are used to inform policy, especially as they are collected by an organization outside the MoE.
INDIA

Several data sources are available from government actors responsible for education, including the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT), Ministry of Women and Child Development, and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Most of the data available is of good quality and focuses on government and government-aided schools. There is some data available about the general number, enrolment and state of private schools, although little is available on outcomes (learning, equity, safety) in private schools, making it difficult to assess the impacts of the expansion of enrolment in these types of schools. Further, data on the pre-primary level is largely missing, with no source of data that covers the quality, equity and safety outcomes at this level.

Description of the data sources

For this report, five main sources of data were used:

1. National Achievement Survey (NAS) from NCERT for outcomes: This provides subject data on academic performance based on achievement tests in grades 3, 5 and 8. In addition, pupil, teacher and school questionnaires are used to collect background variable information. This also gives teachers’ perspectives on school infrastructure, job satisfaction and parental involvement. NCERT documentation states that the NAS ‘checks the general health of the education system’. It collects and sometimes reports data for all types of schools, but largely focuses on the aggregate set of schools. NAS is collected on a three-year cycle, with a different grades each year for grades 3, 5 and 8, with grade 10 overlapping some of these. There have now been four cycles completed, so all grades have four time points. However, in 2017, there was a shift to collect data for grades 3, 5 and 8 all at once to provide a more consolidated picture. This new survey should be comparable to those done after cycle 3 but not to the two cycles before that, due to a change in analysis method. It collects and sometimes reports data for all types of schools, but largely focuses on the aggregate set of schools in reporting.

2. The Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) put together by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) for enrolment and school-level data: This is an integration of the District Information System for Education and the Secondary EMIS as a school-level management information system. It has data on school location, management, rural or urban, enrolment, building condition, equipment, teacher numbers and education, medium of instruction, children with disabilities, and examination pass rates. UDISE covers 2002–2017 for primary education and 2010–2017 for secondary. It is collected through schools self-reporting (forms can be found here) and has been historically released annually, but is moving to online real-time data. Given good implementation, this would allow policymakers to react more quickly to issues facing schools as data will be available immediately rather than with the current one-year lag.

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32 Grade 5, cycle 3 used Item Response Theory (IRT), and earlier cycles used Classical Test Theory (CTT).
33 See also http://www.ncert.nic.in/programmes/NAS/pdf/SRCX/18_Assam.pdf
3. The Rapid Survey on Children (RSOC) for pre-primary: This was run by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which is responsible for the largest part of government pre-primary programming, and covers a wide range of indicators. It is not focused on education but asks questions on pre-primary attendance. It is ‘intended to strengthen the data system on children and women, based on a nationwide household cum facility based survey’. RSOC was run in 2013-14 and covered 105,483 households and 5,630 anganwadi (state-run pre-primary) centres.

4. The 75th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS): This household survey was conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO) and Ministry of Statistics and Programmes between July 2017 and June 2018. Data was collected on 113,757 households. This research focused on the 3–18-year age group, with a final sample is 146,013 children.

5. Children's Worlds (CWS) International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB): This is a global survey on children's subjective well-being. The study collects representative data on ‘children's lives and daily activities, their time use and in particular their own perceptions and evaluations of their well-being’. The CWS for India surveyed a representative sample of 3,000 evenly divided into 8-, 10- and 12-year-olds in Kolkata.

**Quality of data**

In general, the quality of data collected by these sources is good, can be disaggregated, and has some comparability across time.

1. NAS is a complete, partly comparable source of data, both across time and across countries. It can be disaggregated by state and district, and trends can be tracked over time (though only every three years for grades 3, 5 and 8) from cycle 3 onwards. Changes over time to some sources prevent comparability across all time points, although it is possible for the newer cycles. Reporting is reliable and measures achievement by subject, which yields useful insights. Results may be comparable to some year-end examination results in other South Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, but NAS does not examine individual students. Further research would be required to determine the extent to which they are comparable.

2. UDISE is a standard EMIS that has had consistent reporting over a fairly long period, but data reporting is not timely, and more data is needed on quality and on private providers. It can be disaggregated to the district level on the platform, and to school level on the raw data. It has consistent data over time and collects data from all recognized schools in India, thus making it a nearly comprehensive sample. Reporting is moving to be more real time, but current practice means that data for 2018/19 is not available at time of writing, even though the 2019/20 and 2020/21 school years are finished, and the 2021/22 year has started. There are missed opportunities for analysis and policymaking as the situation may have already changed for any given district or set of schools (World Bank Group, 2014, p.17). Further, data on student performance is critical in evaluating the impacts of inputs on performance, and UDISE has a lot of gaps relating to pass rates. Additionally, pass rate are uniformly high, which is at odds with other sources on student learning (ASER Centre, 2019; Srivastava et al.,
Further, there is insufficient data on the types of private providers for a compelling analysis. UDISE relies on government categories (private aided, unaided, recognized, etc.) instead of more analytically useful categories (e.g. NGO-run, philanthropic, corporate, family-run; Day Ashley, 2012). However, in general, the data captures what needs to be measured. The data captured by UDISE is broadly comparable to other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh).

3. RSOC is a reliable one-time survey that can be disaggregated by state, although it is not regular enough and nor does it collect enough information to be the only source of information at pre-primary level. While it collects information on pre-primary education, more data is needed beyond enrolment to understand the trend in learning at pre-primary level. This data may be comparable to that in other household surveys on early childhood health and education.

4. NSS data can be disaggregated by state, district and school type, and can be used to compare across time (though at large intervals). It is a nationally representative survey that looks at enrolment and household expenditure on education, and provides information on the reasons for parents’ choice of school. This makes it a vital source of information on enrolment by school type and by socio-economic status, and on education spending and public perceptions of private and state schooling.

5. CWS includes items from The Student Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS, Huebner, 1991), Personal Well-being Index – School Children (PWI–SC, Cummins & Lau, 2005), The Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS, Seligson, Huebner & Valois, 2003) and the Russell’s Core Affect Scale (Russell, 2003). It cannot be compared over time in India as there are no other time points, but can be compared across countries. The instruments used are robust. However, the sample size is small (limited to Kolkata), and cannot be said to be representative of children everywhere in India. Private schools as distinguished by funding model (i.e. state school, part-funded or private), elaborated by the researcher rather than the participant. It is a useful snapshot of the situation of children in India in different school types, especially in relation to violence, as there are few other sources for this.

**Use of data to inform policy and programming**

Use of data to inform policy is difficult to gauge and varies by data source. In all cases, the extent to which the general public uses this data or is aware of its existence is unknown. Studies on parental choice have shown reliance on word of mouth, perception and analysis of local school markets (Srivastava, 2008), none of which is readily available from the sources presented here.

Furthermore, given that the achievement measures in the UDISE are not particularly helpful as indicators of quality, nor easily available by the individual school, it is unclear how helpful this would be to parents. NAS may fill this gap, but since school-level results are not reported, and not all schools are tested, this could not affect school choice. If policymakers want parents and communities to use this data for school choice, then some changes in data collection and presentation need to be undertaken.

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1. NAS should be used by policymakers to identify learning gaps and remedy them as the data is suitable for assessing outcomes of quality, equity and access in government and government-aided schools. NCERT seems to be actively involved in post-assessment interventions, such as capacity-building based on gaps identified through NAS. However, the data on private schools collected for NAS is under-reported: it is unclear why this is the case.

2. UDISE data has been used by different stakeholders in aggregate form. The extent to which policymakers are using the UDISE data is unclear, but it could be used to identify and improve specific schools that are not performing well on certain measures. Some researchers (Kingdon, 2017) have used this data to draw out trends in the public and private sectors. A list of publications using the data can be found on the UDISE website, but data access could be made easier and more reliable to facilitate further usage. The data has good potential to be used in targeting schools and districts that struggle with infrastructure or teacher numbers.

3. It is unclear whether RSOC has been used in a policy context, but given that it was run by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, it is likely that the results were used to improve programming. It is unclear whether this applies to the small pre-primary section of the survey, but the specific targeting of anganwadis suggests an intention to improve programming. More data at regular intervals (such as in the ASER Centre's Annual Reports) is needed at pre-primary level on equity, quality and safety in order to improve the usefulness of the data.

4. NSS has clear policy implications, in that it presents information on private enrolments by socio-economic status and reasons for enrolment. Given that these can be had at the state or district level, there are powerful policy implications for equity of access and for improving the image and competitiveness of state schools. Analysis on the latest round of the survey has, to date, not been presented anywhere, so there has not yet been time for the survey to have an effect on policy.

5. It is unclear whether CWS has been used to improve policy. The data for India only applies to Kolkata, so while there are policy lessons that can be drawn, they may not be more broadly applicable. More data on children's experiences is needed throughout the country, disaggregated by school type so that more informed policy decisions can be made.
MALDIVES

The main source for data on education is the MoE and its departments. Beyond this, the World Bank has assisted with the implementation of a recent assessment of learning outcomes. The data collected is of good quality and covers the entire country, all levels of education and all types of school providers. Given the larger role of private providers at the pre-primary level, more data on the quality, equity and safety impacts of this is needed.

Description of the data source

For this report, two main sources of data were used:

1. School Statistics (SS) developed by the MoE: These are available yearly from 2001 onwards in PDF format (excepting 2002, 2003 and 2005–2008). It has been running since at least 1998 (see Ministry of Education, 2001), though this data is not available online. This covers all school levels from pre-primary to higher secondary and gives information on school numbers and student enrolment by school type, gender, location and level, as well as teacher numbers (including training and origin) (see Ministry of Education, 2018).

2. National Assessments of Learning Outcomes (NALO) by the Quality Assurance Department (QAD) of the MoE: These are available online in PDF format from 2015 to 2017. In 2017, these individual assessments tested the learning outcomes of students in Dhivehi, English and mathematics at grades 4 and 7. These were supplemented with student and teacher questionnaires to determine demographics, learning habits (including time spent on private tuition) and classroom practices (to see how these affect learning). These were performed at a sample of school in all regions of the country and benefited from World Bank support (Quality Assurance Department, 2018). For 2017, 3,136 grade 4 students, 2,499 grade 7 students, 7,284 grade 4 teachers and 267 grade 7 teachers were selected for this assessment (Quality Assurance Department, 2018, p.10).

Quality of data

In general, the quality of data collected by these sources is good, can be disaggregated, and has some comparability across time.

1. SS is a typical EMIS and has good time-trend and disaggregation potential, but does not have data on outcomes before grade 10. SS can be disaggregated by location, gender and type of school, and is consistent enough to allow tracking of trends over time. Since it captures data on every school in the country, including all types of non-government schooling, it is sound. It also captures the relevant variables, though more data on levels of learning before the O-Level exams (remedied to some extent by the NALO) would help track learning over time. Reporting does not appear to lag more than one year behind, which is typical for EMIS-type reporting in South Asia. The data captured by SS is broadly comparable to other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh and India).

2. NALO has a more limited timeframe than SS, but can also be disaggregated by atoll, test subject and grade. NALO data should be broadly comparable to that for other exams administered in other countries to the same age group (i.e. National Assessment of Student

Use of data to inform policy and programming

Overall, there is very little academic research on the Maldives education system. Most research is policy oriented and concentrated in the MoE and the World Bank. The data sources used for the report are unlikely to be useful to the general public in choosing a school, but could be used as an indicator of the general quality of education in a given area. However, it is unclear whether it is used in such a way as there is no research on this.

1. SS is intended to track enrolment in schools and the availability of teachers in schools and can to some extent be used to understand equity outcomes by gender and location. The government has been responsive to data before, with the introduction of the cluster policy in 1999 and the introduction of the NALO (Ali, 2006; Quality Assurance Department, 2018). However, the extent to which the data is used to influence local policymaking is unclear.

2. NALO is clearly intended to be used to identify and improve the conditions and learning outcomes at schools. The MoE closely monitors O-Level and A-Level results and has been keen to improve these (Aturupane and Shojo, 2012; Mohamed, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2018). NALO is another step in trying to understand how to improve the education system but at lower levels, something that has been missing from the data until NALO’s implementation. However, the results are fairly new, and it is unclear whether any policies have been formulated on the back of NALO data.

35 NASA uses IRT to score tests, but it is unclear whether NALO does also, so caution should be taken in this comparison.
NEPAL

Description of the data source

The only sources of data for pre-primary education and above in Nepal come from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). These sources cover all types of schools found in Nepal, thus facilitating the comparison of government and private schools. Overall, data quality and coverage are good, but more detailed information about the outcomes of quality, equity and safety at the pre-primary level is missing. For this report, three main sources of data were used:

1. National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA): This has been conducted every two years since 2011 by the Education Review Office to grade 8 (ISCED 2) students in general education programmes in public and private schools (UNESCO, 2015). From 2012, there has been the equivalent for grades 3 and 5, and reports are available until 2018 (though 2014 and 2015 are not available online). The Education Review Office is part of the MoEST. NASA is based on a random sample of students and designed to support teachers, increase accountability, promote competition among schools, allow for the monitoring of learning outcomes at the sub-national level, and plan education policy reforms (UNESCO, 2015). In the 2018 version, 28,381 students, 1,400 teachers, and 1,400 headteachers from 1,400 schools participated (ERO, 2019).

2. The Education in Figures Reports (EFRs): These are put together by the Statistics, Policy and Research Section of MoEST and are available for 2008–2017. EFRs compile school and local information from pre-primary education onwards. Like other EMIS, it has information on student enrolment, school number, teachers and some achievement indicators from exams at grades 10, 11 and 12.

Quality of data

Overall, data quality is good and consistent over time, and can be disaggregated by many variables.

1. NASA data is comparable over time, can be disaggregated based on numerous variables, and should be comparable to other assessments in South Asia. The data is based on a random sample and repeated every two years, with consistent methods and questions. This makes it comparable over time. It disaggregates outcomes by gender, province, identity with geography, types of school, ethnicity, home language and socio-economic status (ERO, 2019). NASA data should be comparable to other South Asian assessments at a similar grade such as the National Assessment of Achievement (NAA) put together by the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre in Sri Lanka. However, NASA uses Item Response Theory (IRT) for its assessments and it is not clear whether NAA does. On the other hand, the National Achievement Survey (NAS) from the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT) in India does do so, meaning recent cycles so should be comparable.

2. EFRs are also comparable over time, can be disaggregated based on numerous variables (school type, gender, province and level) and are similar to other EMIS in South Asia. It is not particularly timely, as 2018 report has yet to be released even though 2021 is almost over. Data captured by the EFR is broadly comparable to other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh).
Use of data to inform policy and programming

1. NASA data is suitable for understanding education outcomes in terms of quality and equity. It is also designed to provide feedback to the MoEST to improve education programming. However, since it explicitly does not report on individual student performance, nor compare schools, it cannot be used by parents as a source of school choice (ERO, 2019, p.5).

2. EFR is also suitable to address some issues of equity and safety, but not at the individual school level. As with NASA, it is also not particularly suitable for school choice, but could be used by the general public to put pressure on local government to improve education in that area. It is not clear whether this has occurred.
PAKISTAN

For this report, two main sources of data were used:

1. National Education Management Information System (NEMIS): The Pakistan Education Statistics Report is the main report on education and is put together by Academy of Educational Planning and Management. It has information from pre-primary education onwards on student enrolment, school numbers and teachers, sometimes divided by school type, though not consistently (Shah, Amin, Kakli, Piracha & Zia, 2018). These annual reports are available online. NEMIS data is gathered by provincial administrations as part of devolution to provinces (Shah et al., 2018; The World Bank, 2019).

2. ASER Pakistan (see below).

Quality of data

1. The NEMIS report is available annually, but the data is difficult to access. The quality of the data depends on the data-gathering capacity of provincial administrations, which varies widely, as does public reporting and data availability. For example, in Balochistan, there is currently no distinction made between state- and non-state schools, and the annual school census using BEMIS only covers state schools. The Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF) is responsible for a census of non-state schools, but there is no integration between BEF and BEMIS data, and it is unclear whether the information is sufficiently up to date (The World Bank, 2019).

2. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the EMIS and the Independent Monitoring Unit both collect education data, but their data are not aligned or integrated (The World Bank, 2019). The questionnaire does not appear to ask about school type, but reports of private schools have been compiled. No reports of data could be found on government websites.

3. In Punjab, the annual school census is the responsibility of the Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU) (The World Bank, 2019). No publicly available information, either in report or data form, was found.

4. The Sindh EMIS only covers public schools. The most recent report available on the government website is for the 2013/14 school year.

Use of data to inform policy and programming

In general, the data can be used to understand some quality, equity and safety outcomes, but is fairly limited. As with other countries, the extent to which the data is accessible by the general public is unclear. Recent research carried out by The World Bank highlights key challenges on the use of this data to inform policy, focusing on capacity, availability and depth:
The district education administrations assist provincial education departments in the collection of schools’ data, but lack capacity to use this data for planning and monitoring purposes. Districts also lack the culture of data-based monitoring and feedback to schools. None of the sampled districts across the provinces has the capacity to carry-out pro-equity, needs-based sector planning using the available education data-sets’ (The World Bank, 2019, p.10).

and:

“The education department in each province should integrate all available data-sets and information sources (e.g. EMIS, monitoring unit data, assessment data and teacher’s information system) on one accessible portal. Besides integration at one platform, the depth and diversity of data should also be improved especially by regularly collecting data on quality indicators, social and economic inequities, disability profiles, etc. (The World Bank, 2019, p.85).
SRI LANKA

All sources of data for primary education and above in Sri Lanka come from the MoE. These cover all types of schools, meaning that trends in enrolment and differences between public and private can be teased out. At the pre-primary level, the MoE is involved in data collection, but does not report the results publicly. Overall, data quality and coverage are good, but reported data on outcomes at private schools and detailed information at the pre-primary level are unavailable.

Description of the data source

For this report, three main sources of data were used:

1. **The School Census (SC):** This is put together by the statistics branch of the MoE and are available for 2002–2017, except that 2004 and 2009–2014 are not posted online. The SC collects data on all schools from primary level upwards, on numbers, enrolment, infrastructure and teachers, and disaggregates by medium of instruction, gender, location, and sometimes type of school.

2. **The National Assessment of Achievement (NAA):** This is put together by the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre at the University of Colombo. These test different subjects such as mathematics, science and English and are available for the years 2006, 2009, and 2012–2016. They are intended to measure learning levels across the country at grades 4 and 8 in all school types.

3. **Annual Performance Report (APR):** These are put together by the MoE, available from 2012–2017. These focus on primary education and above, highlight the annual budget for education and discuss the changes that have taken place in the school system within that year, ranging from teachers trained to facilities built. They also present the national examination pass rates at grade 5 (scholarship exam), grade 10 (O-Levels) and grade 12 (A-Levels). The annexes APRs give time-trend data on numbers of schools, enrolment by type, medium of instruction, etc. (Ministry of Education, 2017).

These were supplemented by data from reports by the Asian Development Bank (2017) and the World Bank (2014) for pre-primary education as there are no other sources for this level. The World Bank report cites MoE (2012) *Education for All: Island-wide Information on ECCE Centers by Province*, but this could not be found. The ADB uses a survey from the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Affairs (MCDWA) (2010) called the National Survey on ECCD, but this could also not be located.

Very little information is available on either of these sources, so information on availability and methods is unavailable. However, the ADB report does suggest that the survey collects information on enrolment and teacher numbers in pre-primary by type of provider. The World Bank report does this as well but includes estimates of infrastructure and teacher quality through the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics, which suggests that these variables are not in the survey they used.
Quality of data

In general, data quality is good and can be disaggregated. However, while there is some trend data, it is either not reported annually or there are years for which no data is reported.

1. SC data is reported in many years with reasonably consistent data that can be disaggregated in numerous ways, but is reported with some delay. It is not reported for some years, especially for 2009–2014, but otherwise data is consistent over time. It can be disaggregated by regions, medium of instruction, type of school and gender, thus making it fairly complete, though links to quality and equity outcomes would be a worthwhile addition. As with other South Asian countries, reporting of data tends to lag at least one year behind, which is problematic for policymaking. SC data is broadly comparable to other EMIS in other South Asian countries (e.g. Bangladesh).

2. NAA does not have annual reporting, but is available for a number of years. It can also be disaggregated in numerous ways and should be comparable to achievement results in other countries. While NAA data is not available yearly, it has a fairly even spread over the last decade, with seemingly few changes to the methodology, meaning that some trends could be tracked over time. Results are disaggregated by region, school type and medium of instruction, so some equity outcomes can be traced across regions and time. Some subjects follow international standards such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and are thus likely to be measuring the intended learning outcomes. These results should be broadly comparable to other surveys of achievement in South Asia (e.g. the National Assessments of Learning Outcomes (NALO) by the Quality Assurance Department (QAD) of the Ministry of Education in Maldives). Further, the results in maths, when using TIMSS test items, should be broadly comparable to TIMSS data.

3. APR data is available over a short time period with roughly similar data, meaning trends can be tracked. Spending and test score data are disaggregated by type and province. Overall, the APR data is more about public spending, but does accurately reflect education spending across the country. Like SC data, it does lag behind in reporting by at least six months. Comparable data may be available for some countries in South Asia.

For pre-primary education, the quality of data is difficult to assess because information on the surveys used in the two reports is unavailable. However, the data in the reports is not consistent with international sources. For instance, UIS statistics appear to misrepresent the structure of education, placing private education as just over 3 per cent of enrolment (UIS, 2019), compared to the Asian Development Bank (2017) report, which finds that pre-primary education is mainly delivered by ‘the private sector, NGOs, religious organizations, and municipal councils through day care centers, Montessori schools, preschools, and crèches, among others’ (Asian Development Bank 2017, p.110). This is supported by the World Bank report (also using MoE statistics), which notes that around 84 per cent of pre-primary education is delivered by NSAs (The World Bank, 2014). In general, the data on pre-primary education has no trend data available, but some disaggregation is possible, at least by type of school and province.

Use of data to inform policy and programming

Overall, data from the MoE, which is published, is suitable for policymaking purposes as collectively it includes data on the quality, equity and safety of schools. However, there is little academic research on
Sri Lankan education, especially relating to any differential outcomes in quality, equity and safety between private, pirivena and state schools.

1. SC could be used to target schools that are falling behind and becoming overcrowded as it is intended to track enrolment in schools and the availability of teachers. It can also to some extent be used to understand equity outcomes by gender and location. Given the focus on infrastructure improvement and continued investment in the education system shown in the APR, it is likely that the data gathered here is used for this purpose (even though school-level data is not available to the public).

2. NAA could be used to target specific areas or groups that are underperforming in the exams and it is likely that this is exactly what it is used for.

3. APR data shows the policy response to the previously identified problems in the education system as it itemizes not only spending data but also specific interventions in specific areas. As such, it serves as a good tool to analyze whether the faults identified in the SC and NAA have been addressed. No research has yet looked at this.

For the pre-primary level, given the lack of availability of the data, the impact of the ADB and World Bank reports is unknown.
ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT (ASER)

Description of the data source

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) is an large annual household survey available for India and Pakistan. It covers rural areas in India, and both rural and urban areas in Pakistan. It surveys 3–16-year-olds, captures household and child characteristics, and information about their enrolment status (including the school type, e.g. private or government) and learning levels, measured through the ASER tests, in reading and mathematics (for children aged 5–16) (ASER Centre, 2019). These variables make it a valuable data source for exploring enrolment rates and for comparing the outcomes of students at private and public schools both within and across countries.

The ASER was started in India by the NGO Pratham, and the ASER Centre was established as an autonomous unit within the Pratham network in 2008. The network has affiliates in several countries including Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The objective of the survey is to use ‘rigorous methods to generate evidence on scale on the outcomes of social sector programs’ (ASER, 2019a). In 2018, it surveyed 546,527 children in India and 260,069 children in Pakistan.

The tools used for the surveys are design by ASER, but the survey itself is carried out by partner organizations (ASER, 2019c). In terms of sampling, both countries follow the same procedure: 30 villages are selected randomly using the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) technique from the village directory of the Census (1998 in Pakistan and 2011 in India). In each village, 20 randomly selected households are surveyed. Every year, 20 villages from the previous year are retained and 10 new villages are added (using the same PPS technique) making it a ‘rotating panel’ of villages. This sampling strategy can be used ‘when estimates are produced regularly over time’ (Lavrakas, 2008) and thus is useful for an annual repeated survey that focuses on aggregate estimations (see Steel & Mclaren, 2008; and Caldwell & Cantwell, 1996 for a discussion of the relative merits of rotating panel and fixed-panel designs).

Some differences exist across the two countries. In India, the ASER survey has been conducted yearly since 2005 in rural areas. In 2016, ASER in India changed from a yearly cycle to an alternate-year cycle, conducting the ‘basic’ ASER in one year and examining a specific issue (Beyond Basics in 2017 focused on children aged 14–18 , and in 2019, the survey focused on children aged 4–8) (ASER Centre, 2018; ASER, 2019b; ASER Centre, 2019). In Pakistan, it has been running since 2009 and is led by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) and ASER, who engage with many civil society partners and mobilizes 10,000 volunteers annually (ASER Pakistan, 2019) to administer the survey. ASER Pakistan covers 21 urban centers and 154 rural districts. In addition to the variables noted above, since 2014, ASER Pakistan also captures data on disability prevalence (ASER Pakistan, 2019).

Quality of data

ASER data is of good quality, is comparable over time and can be disaggregated by gender, province, school type, learning outcomes or household characteristics. ASER data collection in India has been consistent since 2005, with new variables being added periodically and many of the important variables

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40 In both countries, there is also a school survey, but this is limited to the largest primary government school in a village (ASER Centre, 2019).
41 In India, the 2011 Census was used from ASER 2016 onwards, and prior to that it used the 2001 Census (ASER Centre, 2013). In Pakistan, the 2018 report was draw from the provisional village directory of the 2017 Census, so it is likely that future years will use the 2017 Census (ASER Pakistan, 2019).
42 These procedure are well documented in the 2012 (ASER Centre, 2013) and 2018 (ASER Centre, 2019) reports.
available from 2009 onwards. (A table of the variables can be found in ASER Centre, 2019, pp.30–31). In Pakistan, the survey does not appear to have changed since its inception in 2009. The methods used for sampling (PPS and rotating panel) are in line with other household surveys and are statistically sound (see e.g. Republic of Albania, 2018, p.2 for Demographic and Health Survey Sampling methodology and PPS). Further, the survey measures what it needs to measure, even if the top level score in ASER is still relatively low compared to other standardized tests (Akmal & Pritchett, 2019), and data is released in a timely manner. Finally the data is comparable across the two countries and scholars have also compared ASER data with the NGO Uwezo’s data from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, which is very similar in nature to ASER data (Akmal & Pritchett, 2019).

ASER is an important long-term source of data on pre-primary enrolment, especially in India where there are no alternative sources. Indeed, the only other source on pre-primary data in India was a cross-sectional survey, the Rapid Survey on Children (RSOC), which had education as one of the several areas it explored and did not provide much beyond enrolment numbers. In this case, having ASER data for the pre-primary level provides both researchers and policymakers with insights that they would not be able to access elsewhere.

However, ASER data does have limitations. First, ASER India only includes rural areas in its sample. This means that it is not possible to generalize the results to the country as a whole as some research shows that there are important differences between rural and urban settings (see Chudgar & Quinn, 2012). Second, ASER’s method of finding out the type school is to ask the household. The surveyor does not confirm that the school the child attends is indeed private or public according to official definitions, which means that the definition of private schooling is left to individual households. This makes more nuanced analysis of the different types of private provider impossible. This is problematic because private-aided schools are more like government schools than other types of private schools (Kingdon & Mummazil, 2015).

Use of data to inform policy and programming

ASER data for both India and Pakistan has been used for many research studies on assessing the quality and equity outcomes at primary and secondary levels of education. These include: Tabarak (2013) on cream-skimming in India; French and Kingdon (2010) on the relative effectiveness of private and government schools in India; Alcott and Rose (2015) on equity of access and learning outcomes in India and Pakistan; Akmal and Pritchett (2019) on learning levels across five countries; and Javaid, Musaddiq and Sultan (2012) on learning outcomes in Pakistan. The uptake of these results by the policymaking community is less clear.

The ASER data could be used by policymakers to see the differential learning outcomes at different types of schools and in different areas of the countries. ASER’s engagement with civil society in both countries facilitates the use of the data to improve learning outcomes, but some policymakers have shown resistance to using ASER data. Finally, as with most other data sources, the extent to which the general public can or would use the data is unclear.
UNICEF MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEYS

UNICEF has been conducting its Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) since 1995. They are an internationally comparable source of data on women and children, including factors on health, education, attitude, labour and healthcare use. There have now been 338 surveys run in 116 countries. The most recent iteration of the survey (MICS6) has only just begun to come out and includes data on the type of school children attend, in addition to measuring literacy and numeracy outcomes. In the 2019 MICS6 in Bangladesh, there were 61,242 households interviewed with a total of 39,386 children between the ages of 5 and 17.

Quality of data

The MICS are comparable over time; however, the school type variable is new. It can be disaggregated by state, urban or rural location, and socio-economic status, making MICS a valuable source for exploring the equity impacts of private education sub-nationally. It has variables that allow for controls for many household factors, such as parental education, time use, disability and health status, which allows complete analysis of the factors driving learning and enrolment outcomes. Finally, it is comparable across countries and can be used to gauge how a country is doing relative to others.

MICS surveys have been used for both policy and academic research for many years and have strong potential to influence policymakers at both national and global levels.
ANNEX 3: QUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

This annex relates to content provided in Chapter 3, on the quality of education in each of the eight countries. It contains three appendices:

Appendix 1: Meta-analysis
Appendix 2: Quality regulations in India
Appendix 3: Unions, by country
Appendix 1 to Annex 3: Meta-analysis

Introduction

A meta-analysis can synthesize a large body of quantitative literature in an objective way and identify an overall effect size. Meta-analysis is commonly used to identify the overall effect of a specific type of intervention (Cavanaugh, Gillan, Kromrey, Hess & Blomeyer 2004; Martin, McNally & Kay, 2013; Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes, 2003; van der Sluis, van Praag & Vijverberg, 2005). While private schooling groups together a number of different interventions (such as different approaches to teaching, infrastructure, curriculum, etc.), it is nevertheless possible to conduct a meta-analysis to explore the difference between public and private school students on test scores. To date, no meta-analysis of the effects of private education has been conducted.

Literature eligibility and selection

The selection of articles for the meta-analysis follows from the search strategy for the literature review (see Appendix 4 to Annex 1). Given the narrower question of the meta-analysis, only 160 studies passed the abstract review for consideration. The meta-analysis only included studies that had used appropriate methods for comparing and reporting the test scores of public- and private-school students. Studies needed to report a statistical coefficient and either a standard error or a t-statistic to qualify for inclusion. To avoid as much as possible the ‘garbage in, garbage out’ criticism of meta-analysis, each study was carefully reviewed to ensure that the relevant control variables were included. This study included only those studies that controlled for effects at the individual, household, village or district level in order to account for as many of the variables as possible that might account for differences between the two groups of students.

Overview of selected studies

The selection produced 17 studies, with 78 effect sizes. In sum, 59 of the results from 15 studies observed a private-school advantage in learning, and 14 results from 8 studies observed learning losses from attending private school.

Most studies use a variation of OLS regression and include various household and child-level characteristics to control for selection bias. Where several regressions were reported in a study, (Azam & Kingdon, 2015; Chudgar & Quin, 2012; French & Kingdon, 2010), the models that the authors describe as their best estimate of the true effect were chosen. Generally, these are the most conservative estimates presented by the study and use household fixed effects to control for any selection bias. Where Propensity Score Matching is used in a study, that estimate of the effect size is used as it best minimizes selection bias. Sample sizes, and consequently the power of the studies, also vary widely, from 762 to 1,109,811.

Only four of the papers are intervention focused, while the rest rely on survey data not associated with any intervention. Of these four interventions, two take place in India (Crawfurd, Patel & Sandefur, 2019; Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015), one in Pakistan (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2017), and one in Afghanistan (Burde, Middleton & Wahl, 2015). In Afghanistan, Burde et al. (2015, p.73) examined a randomized control trial (RCT) carried out by Catholic Relief Services in remote villages to understand

43 The author also evaluated the models to see which is likely to capture the effect best, or the one including the most relevant control variables.
the effects of community-based schools (CBS) on maths and reading scores. The RCT picked 31 villages that had mosque schools, and then randomly assigned CBS to 13 villages in the first year (all 31 received the schools in the second year), focusing on children between the ages of 6 and 11 years. This is the only intervention aimed at supplementing existing provision in some way. The three other interventions were voucher schemes or contracting out to private schools. Barrera-Osorio et al. (2017) evaluate an RCT providing public per-student subsidies to local entrepreneurs to establish and operate tuition-free, coeducational, private primary schools in educationally underserved villages in Sindh province, Pakistan. This subsidy had two varieties, one that varied by gender (higher subsidy for girls) and one that did not, in order to attempt to remedy the gender disparity in enrolment. The final two cases in India are both voucher schemes, one in Delhi (Crawfurd et al., 2019) and the other in rural Andhra Pradesh (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2015). Crawfurd et al. (2019, p.1) evaluate an RCT of a ‘voucher lottery that provided roughly 800 children in low-income neighborhoods in East Delhi with tuition-free access to low-cost private schools of their choice for five years’. Muralidharan and Sundararaman (2015) evaluate a RCT-based school-choice experiment, whereby parents in selected villages could receive a voucher, which went directly to the chosen school and that covered all school fees (but not transport costs or midday meals). Finally, two studies (A. Singh, 2015; R. Singh & Mukherjee, 2017) use the longitudinal Young Lives dataset, which provides more variables for child and household control variables than the remaining studies. Table A3.1.1 contains more information on the studies used here including: the datasets used in the studies; the location of populations; sample sizes; type of test scores; and types of private school.

This paper uses all subjects that were reported, with several papers reporting outcomes for more than one test subject, location or age group. The papers selected report on a wide variety of subjects, such as maths (80 per cent of studies), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, language (English, Telugu, Urdu, etc.) (40 per cent of studies), and social sciences. Further, some papers create an achievement score that is a combination of test scores on two or more of the above subjects, usually reading and maths, which is the only measure they report (these are reported as ‘combo’). Based on this, we first aggregated all outcomes in a given study and grouped these into a single outcome and reported on this. In effect, this creates the aggregate achievement (combo) score that some of the papers reported, later discussing mathematics and language separately. The aggregate achievement score is based on 33 observations, while for maths there were 28 observations and for language, 20 observations. While these are all test scores, there are some differences in what these tests capture (see ASER Centre 2014 for an example of how test types differ). However, the reporting of standardized coefficients means that differences between groups can be compared across the exam formats.

In terms of the definition of private schooling, we find the following types of providers discussed in the studies included in the meta-analyses: aided (n=2), mosque schools (n=1), NGO (n=1), recognized (n=4), unrecognized (n=3), unaided (n=9) and unclear (n=13). Those labelled ‘unclear’ were any non-state schools for which no definition was provided, often because it was unclear from the data source (e.g. Young Lives and ASER). However, the meta-analysis cannot draw any firm conclusion based on type of school because there are only two groups with more than five observations.

Five countries are represented in the data with 10 of 17 studies (58 per cent) based on data from India, with the remaining studies from Pakistan and Nepal (12 per cent), Afghanistan and Bangladesh (one study each). The meta-analysis is therefore heavily weighted on studies from India: nothing (beyond the

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44 See also Akmal and Pritchett (2019) for a discussion on ASER’s comparability with other exam types.
results of the original study) can be inferred about any other country. There is also substantial variety on whether studies report on the rural or urban population separately, with some studies reporting on both and others collapsing them into one category. In cases where the studies did not distinguish between urban and rural population, they are labelled ‘both’ for the purposes of analysis. Finally, there are also disparities in the levels of education emphasized, with most studies (11) focused on primary education and fewer on secondary (5) or pre-primary (2).
### Table A3.1.1: Characteristics of the studies used in meta-analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Dataset</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Type Subject</th>
<th>Random</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Pre-primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Combo</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>PPVT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Acs, Kingson and Wu, 2016</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>WB Survey</td>
<td>OLS Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>5695</td>
<td>Unaudited</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bara, Casilla et al., 2017</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>SFRP</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>39064</td>
<td>Unaudited</td>
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<td>0 1 1 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Borde, Multi, Wali, 2015</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>CBS CIS</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>1638</td>
<td>Recognized</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Choudhury and Qua, 2012</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Human Development Survey</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>5545</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Crawford, Patel and Sanket, 2016</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Enteline Survey</td>
<td>Instrumental Variable</td>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>4065</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>French and Kondal, 2010</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>ASER</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>146941</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Gopali and Paudy, 2009</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>School Surveys</td>
<td>OLS Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>28215</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jarrid, Masud and Sabo, 2012</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>ASER</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Muzzaribhan and Sundraman, 2015</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>ASER</td>
<td>OLS Regression</td>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>19925</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pangon, 2014</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Mach Test and Survey</td>
<td>Multivariate</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<td>Unaudited</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Richards and Khan, 2018</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Nilphamari Household Survey</td>
<td>Multivariate</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Singh and Mulher, 2017</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Young Lives</td>
<td>Multivariate</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>3560</td>
<td>Unaudited</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Singh, 2015</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Young Lives</td>
<td>Linear Regression and Longitudinal Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>8973</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tattache, 2013</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>HDS and ASER</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<td>Unaudited</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Thiop, 2015</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>SLC Survey</td>
<td>OLS Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<td>Unaudited</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tooby, Bax, Bax and Mettfield, 2011</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Teacher Survey</td>
<td>OLS Regression</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>30913</td>
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</table>

**Note:**
- PPVT stands for Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Combo is the test subject an aggregate achievement outcomes was reported in lieu of a single subject test score.
## APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX 3: QUALITY REGULATIONS IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Remedial measures</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>a) Payment under section 12 has been conditioned on learning outcomes</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) SMC will do randomised testing of reading, writing, arithmetic and comprehension</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>SCERT shall design and implement a process of school quality assessment on a regular basis</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>SMC shall identify children and organise special training for them</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>SCERT shall design and implement a process of school quality assessment on a regular basis</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority, based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>Academic authority shall design and implement a process of school quality assessment on a regular basis</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Gujarat              | 1) Learning outcomes (LO) requirement in all schools through independent third-party assessments  
  a) Student LO (absolute): 30% 
  b) Student LO (improvement over past performance): 40% 
  c) Inputs (infra): 15% 
  d) Student non-academic LO: 15%  
  2) Avg performance of schools to be converted into a scale with min defined grade 
  3) Existing schools to meet the min grade to receive recognition | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority                      | a) State government to set up independent wing to undertake quality assessments and publish School Education Quality Status report  
 b) GCERT to design evaluations to be administered annually by teachers  
 c) Schools to be assessed by independent third-party assessments every fourth year. Schools performing poorly to be assessed more often. |
### Table: Non-State Education in South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Remedial measures</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Haryana           | a) Duty of teachers to ensure that every child attains the minimum levels of LO specified by the academic authority for each subject and to assess learning levels throughout the year  
                    b) Academic authority shall design and implement a process of holistic school quality assessment on a regular basis                                                                 | No mention                                                                         | Nil                          |
| Himachal Pradesh  | Academic authority shall design and implement a process of school quality assessment on a regular basis                                                                                                      | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Jharkhand         | No mention                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority                       | Nil                          |
| Karnataka         | No mention                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Kerala            | a) State government to conduct evaluation of LO in 5% of schools through external agency  
                    b) SMC to also measure learning outcomes                                                                                                           | No mention                                                                         | Nil                          |
| Madhya Pradesh    | SCERT to design and implement a process of holistic school quality assessment on a regular basis                                                                                                            | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Maharashtra       | a) Academic authority to design process of holistic school quality assessment  
                    b) Implementation of assessment by BEO etc  
                    c) Periodic evaluation of block, district and state institutions at least once every five years                                                                 | Special training for out-of-school children identified by local authority              | Nil                          |
<p>| Manipur           | SCERT to design and implement a process of holistic school quality assessment on a regular basis                                                                                                            | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Meghalaya         | Directorate of Educational Research and Training to design and implement a process of holistic school quality assessment                                                                                      | Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Mizoram           | SCERT to design and implement a process of holistic school quality assessment on a regular basis                                                                                                              | Special training for children identified by school management committee (SMC)/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |
| Nagaland          | No mention                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Special training for children identified by SMC or village education committee (VEC) based on periodical assessment of learning progress | Nil                          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Remedial measures</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC and local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Academic authority shall:</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Design and implement a process of school quality assessment on a regular basis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Undertake periodic performance appraisal of individuals and institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>a) SCERT to monitor levels of learning through third-party evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Designated authority to monitor learning levels through sample surveys and bring out block-wise annual reports on quality of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special training for both out-of-school (never enrolled/drop-out) and weak children based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Teachers shall be held accountable for acquisition of learning levels by weaker children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>a) Annual independent assessment conducted on a random sample for each block</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Biennial assessment by external agency. Detailed parameters provided.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special training for children identified by SMC/local authority based on periodical assessment of learning progress</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Special training for children identified by school authority with quarterly submission of the progress report to Disabled People’s Organization (DPO), Swayam Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Centre for Civil Society, n.d.)
ANNEX 4: EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

This annex relates to content provided in Chapter 4, on the equity of access to good-quality education in each of the eight countries. It contains two appendices:

Appendix 1: Fee regulations, by country
Appendix 2: Fee regulations, by state in India
### APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX 4: FEE REGULATIONS, BY COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
<th>Private school Fee structure (per year)</th>
<th>Other school costs</th>
<th>Rules on Regulations</th>
<th>Fee Regulatory Committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under Regulation</th>
<th>Source Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Nepal   | Education Regulations, 2059 (2002) | Fees are based on school quality classifications. Government fixes rates for C-grade schools. B-grade schools can hike fees up to 25% and A grade by 50% and D-grade would decrease fees by 25% of C-grade schools:  
  
  **Primary:**  
  A grade: Rs. 2013  
  B grade: Rs. 1675  
  C grade: Rs. 1,342  
  D grade: Rs 1074  
  
  **Lower Secondary:**  
  A grade: Rs 2287  
  B grade: Rs. 1907  
  C grade: Rs. 1525  
  D grade: Rs 1220 | Annual fees cannot exceed two month’s tuition fees. Deposit (Rs.100) and admission fees (Rs. 25) to not exceed one month’s fee. Private schools have to pay a 1% education tax in return for improvements in school facilities, equipment. | District Fee Fixation and Monitoring Committee (FFMC) is authorized to determine the fee structure for the schools in the districts | Fees can only be hiked conditional to approval by FFMC. Failure to do so will result in a fine of Rs. 25000 and a return of the hiked fees to parents | [http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/CountryReports/ EPS/SABER_EPS_NEPAL_2016.pdf](http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/CountryReports/ EPS/SABER_EPS_NEPAL_2016.pdf) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Other school costs</th>
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<th>Fee Regulatory Committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under Regulation</th>
<th>Source Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Regulation on the mandatory school fee and miscellaneous contributions</td>
<td>All the primary students, lower secondary students, middle secondary students and higher secondary students will be required to pay a sum of Nu 335, Nu 405 and Nu 500 respectively, irrespective of the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://thebhutanese.bt/how-thimphu-thromdes-government-schools-charged-such-high-fees/">https://thebhutanese.bt/how-thimphu-thromdes-government-schools-charged-such-high-fees/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Non-State Education in South Asia: Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
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<th>Other school costs</th>
<th>Rules on Regulations</th>
<th>Fee Regulatory Committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under Regulation</th>
<th>Source Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Right to Education Act 2009</td>
<td>These vary by state: E.g. Jharkhand Education Tribunal (Amendment) Act state that school fee hikes should not exceed 10% each year. In Tamil Nadu private unaided schools must have their fee structures approved by a government fee regulatory committee headed by a High Court Judge, based on factors such as location, available infrastructure, administration and maintenance expenses, reasonable surplus required for growth and development of the school, and student strength</td>
<td>For the RTE designated 25% from disadvantage groups the school «shall not collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardians to any screening procedure»</td>
<td>«The RTE Act 2009 requires private schools to fulfil certain norms and requirements to obtain a Certificate of Recognition. These schools cannot operate without this certification. Though the RTE Act 2009 does not mention restrictions on schools run-for-profit, its Model Rules require schools to be non-profit in order to qualify for recognition. According to Rule 11(1)(b), every school applying for recognition should submit a self-declaration showing that they are ‘not run for profit to any individual, group or association of individuals or any other persons.’ This restriction is replicated in several state RTE Rules.»</td>
<td>Variates State-wise: «11 states in India have stand-alone Acts that govern school fees. The Punjab Regulation of Fee of Unaided Educational Institutions Act 2016 is the only such Act that explicitly regulates profit-making by schools. It constitutes a Regulatory Body for regulating fees at the divisional level. Under Section 7, one of the functions of this Regulatory Body is to ‘check excessive hike in fee by an unaided educational institution with the motive to earn profit.’»</td>
<td><a href="https://ccs.in/restrictions-profit-education-india">https://ccs.in/restrictions-profit-education-india</a>; <a href="https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/RTI_Model_Rules.pdf">https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/RTI_Model_Rules.pdf</a></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX 4: FEE REGULATIONS, BY STATE IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
<th>Private school fee structure (per year)</th>
<th>Other school costs</th>
<th>Regulations</th>
<th>Fee regulatory committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Regulation of Fee Structure in Private Unaided School in the State 2009</td>
<td>GO MS91: Application fee: R100</td>
<td>Computer science fees (R1,270), books (R7,500), uniform (R900); mobile app (R700)</td>
<td>Fees are independently fixed by the governing body of the institution with clear instructions on how revenue needs to be spent: (i) 50% for salaries, (ii) 15% for development, (iii) 15% for rent and utilities, (iv) 15% as contribution to staff welfare, and (v) 5% for management</td>
<td>Fee regulatory committees to be established at district level, with any increments in fees to be approved prior to being implemented. Fee thresholds will be established based on school grading system, which is to be established.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh School Education Regulatory and Monitoring (APSERM) responsible for monitoring and conducting spot checks on private schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>The Arunachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions (Regulatory Commission) Act, 2017</td>
<td>GO No 42: Fee ceilings: Fees in urban areas are not to exceed R9–12,000 (Class 1–7, and Class 8–0, respectively); and in rural areas, R7,800–10,800 (Class 1–7 and Class 8–10 respectively), and should be inclusive of special, term and admission fees.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | | | |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
<th>Private school fee structure (per year)</th>
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<th>Regulations</th>
<th>Fee regulatory committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>Assam Non-Government Educational Institutions (Regulation of Fees) Bill, 2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bill to regulate fees of private schools, having a provision to penalise schools that overcharge through fines or withdrawal of registration. Fee Regulatory committees established to determine the fee structure for any standard or course of study in any non-government schools imparting education at primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary level.</td>
<td>Regulatory committee to establish fee thresholds that private schools can charge. This will be based on school location, infrastructure provided, student capacity and courses offered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>Bihar Private Schools (Fee Regulation) Act, 2019</td>
<td>Fees for admission, readmission, monthly tuition, and costs of books, teaching materials, uniform, transport etc. shall be determined by the private school. The school shall display the details of all types of fees of the previous and current year for the general public on its notice board and official website.</td>
<td>Schools are not allowed to increase their fees beyond 7% every year. Fees should be within the established thresholds and with prior approval by the Fee Regulatory Committee</td>
<td>School fee rises are to not exceed 7% each year. Any request for fee rises must be submitted to the Fee Regulatory Committee six months prior to implementation.</td>
<td>Registration of all private schools to be mandated with fee thresholds to be made publicly available on school websites. All complaints and redressals against private schools to be raised with the Regional Deputy Director of Education (RDDE)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chattisgarh</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dadar and</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>States</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>Private school fee structure (per year)</td>
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<td>Regulations</td>
<td>Fee regulatory committee</td>
<td>Accountability provisions under regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daman and Diu</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School fee rises must not exceed 10–15%</td>
<td>Fee rises will be subject to a detailed audit of school performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Gujarat Professional Technical Educational Colleges or Institutions (Regulation of Admission and Fixation of Fees) Act, 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The society/school shall not collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardians to any screening procedure.</td>
<td>Double regulatory mechanism of capping private school fees (R15,000–R27,000 per year) and setting Fee Regulatory Committees</td>
<td>School fee rises of 5% each year can be implemented without prior approval of Fee Regulatory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>The Haryana Private Educational Institutions (Taking Over of Management) Act, 1978</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions (Regulatory Commission) Act, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Commission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>Jharkhand Education Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School fee rises to not exceed 10% each year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>The Karnataka Private Aided Educational Institutions Employees (Regulation of Pay, Pension and Other Benefits) Act, 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Penalties for contravention of the policies will amount to R10,00,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Non-State Education in South Asia: Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Fee regulatory committee</th>
<th>Accountability provisions under regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Private School Fee Regulation Act; Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The society/school shall not collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardians to any screening procedure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>Maharashtra Educational Institutions (Regulation of Collection of Fee) Act, 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Schools are required to establish an Executive Committee with representatives of parents and teachers, to which the proposed fee structure needs to be submitted and approved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>Manipur Private School (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2017</td>
<td>Only states that fees to be charged may not be disproportionate to the facilities provided and do not exceed limits prescribed by rules under this Act, but does not specify what those fees might be.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puducherry</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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<th>Accountability provisions under regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Punjab Privately Managed Recognized Aided Schools Retirement Benefits Scheme, 2012</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>Rajasthan Schools (Regulation of Fees) Rules. 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PTA to receive information about tuition fees, term fees and fees for curricular activities as decided by the School Fee Committee: The following factors shall be considered while deciding the fee in addition to the factors specified in section 8 of the Act, namely:- a) facilities made available by the school under e-governance i.e. hardware and software facilities; b) strength of students; c) other facilities made available to students, such as swimming pool, horse riding, shooting, archery and performing arts etc.; d) supply of books, notebooks, etc. and other educational resources to students; e) provision of meals or snacks; and f) any other factor submitted by the management before the Executive Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

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<th>Accountability provisions under regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Schools (Regulation of Collection of Fee) Act, 2009; Tamil Nadu Recognised Private Schools (Regulation) Act, 1973</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Governs fees charged by government-aided and private schools. Private unaided schools must have their fee structures approved by a government fee regulatory committee headed by a high court judge, based on factors such as location, available infrastructure, administration and maintenance expenses. A reasonable surplus is required for growth and development of the school, and student strength</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No fee regulatory authority established</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>UP Self-Financed and Independent Schools Fee Regulation Act, 2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District Fee Regulation Committee (DFRC) monitors and regulates fees within the state</td>
<td>School Management and Parent-Teacher Committees to be engaged in decisions on fee thresholds for schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttaranchal</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 5: PRIVATE TUTORING

This annex relates to content provided in Chapter 6, on private tutoring. It contains one appendix:

Appendix 1: Regulations on private tutoring, by country
## APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX 5: REGULATIONS ON PRIVATE TUTORING, BY COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2012, the government introduced a policy to bar teachers from government and private schools from undertaking private tuition (PT) with students from their own schools or during school hours. PT may be provided on prior consent with the school's headteacher and cannot exceed a maximum of 10 students from other institutions a day. Teachers may provide remedial classes for students from their own school conditional on approval by the school's headteacher, and this can be facilitated by the school upon request by the child's guardian. Fee ceilings for in-school remedial class are set at Tk150–300 (upazila/metropolitan area) per subject every month, for a minimum of 12 classes per subject for a maximum class size of 40 students. Additional fee waivers may be made available to low-income students at the discretion of the headteacher. There are three monitoring committees to oversee PT. Severe sanctions, such as the cancellation of monthly payment orders (MPOs), are in place to monitor and inhibit teacher engagement in PT, but widespread corruption, low governmental capacity and lack of jurisdiction over non-state schools makes enforcement problematic (Source: <a href="https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/teachers-cannot-run-coaching-classes-1698811">https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/teachers-cannot-run-coaching-classes-1698811</a>).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers in regular schools are prohibited from undertaking supplementary PT. The regulation was issued in 2001 for teachers in public schools and extended in 2002 to teachers in private schools. In 2013, permission was granted to the business sector to open tutorial centres, but the ban on teachers undertaking private tutoring was maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>Bihar Coaching Institute (Control and Regulation) Bill</td>
<td>In 2010, Bihar became the first of India's 28 states to regulate coaching institutes. In the wake of violent protests by students, the State Assembly adopted the Bihar Coaching Institute (Control and Regulation) Bill. Coaching institutes serving 10 or more students were required to: register with the authorities for renewable three-year periods; publish their course structures, fees and tutor qualifications and experience; and provide buildings with adequate classrooms, first-aid facilities and toilets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-State Education in South Asia: Understanding the effect of non-state actors on the quality, equity and safety of education service delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Regulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>Code of Service Rules</td>
<td>In West Bengal, the Code of Service Rules for primary school teachers (West Bengal 2001: Article 5.5) state that ‘Every teacher shall refrain from accepting any remuneration for coaching or tutoring the students’; and in 2010, the prohibition was extended to all teachers. Subsequent regulations (West Bengal 2012: Article 10.20) state that every recognised school ‘shall ensure that none of the teachers of the School provide private tuition to any students of the said school or of any other school and shall provide in its service conditions that breach of such restriction shall result in termination of service’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers are prohibited from providing tutoring in their homes. They must secure permission from their schools before visiting students’ homes for tutoring, and teachers may not tutor students in their own grade or parallel class of the same grade. Teachers may not teach more than five students (Ministry of Education 2002 Guidelines for Teachers, cited in Mariya, 2012, p.164).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td></td>
<td>While teachers are allowed to provide tutoring services, they are not allowed to conduct this in their own homes and instead need to be facilitated by the schools that teachers work in (Pant, 2013).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://peira.gov.pk/policies/">https://peira.gov.pk/policies/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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ENDNOTES

ii While data on the amount of funding received by schools is sparse, the Accountability Initiative reviewed per-child budgetary allocation (for 2009/10) in several states in India. These ranged from Rs. 3,049 in Gujarat to Rs. 27,451 in Meghalaya (Centre for Civil Society, 2015), though it is unclear whether this reaches the schools. The RTE Act demonstrates how attempts to increase the equity of access of private schools through government funding can be a politically fraught process. The Act has been legally challenged by the Society for Unaided Private Schools, Rajasthan, which has claimed that it violated its constitutional rights to manage itself without government interference. While the Supreme Court ruled the Act constitutional a few years later, legal challenges continue in relation to payments (Walford, 2013).

iii For example, in Sri Lanka, external aid plays an important role in the education sector with major donors including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank as well as UNESCO, UNICEF, JICA, DFID, GIZ, SIDA and Save the Children (UNICEF Sri Lanka, 2013).

iv A review of ODA to South Asian countries was envisioned to understand spending by donor, but available data was limited and indicated only the overall amount of spending [see Table 2.3]. See also www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/aid-at-a-glance.htm.

v Rs. 20.42 billion in 2015–16, approximately USD 306 million (Exchange rate used is 66.6667 rupee per USD).

vi For pre-primary education the UIS statistics appear to misrepresent the structure of education, placing private education as just over 3 per cent of enrolment, which is at odds with an Asian Development Bank (2017) report that finds a large majority of children to be in private (non-state) schools. This report is based on government statistics on early childhood education (The National Survey on ECCD in Sri Lanka) and notes that pre-primary education is mainly delivered by ‘the private sector, NGOs, religious organizations, and municipal councils through day care centers, Montessori schools, preschools, and crèches, among others’ (Asian Development Bank, 2017, p. 110). This is supported by a World Bank report (2014; using the same survey and MoE statistics), which notes that around 84 per cent of pre-primary education is delivered by non-state actors. It is unclear why there is such a large difference between sources as the UIS database states that the data source used for this statistic is school census or surveys, though no specific information is available about Sri Lanka. Further the definitions of private education appear relatively similar. The UIS defines a private provider as an ‘institution that is controlled and managed by a non-governmental organization (e.g. a church, a trade union or a business enterprise, foreign or international agency), or its governing board consists mostly of members who have not been selected by a public agency’ (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019).

vii Comparing the pre-primary number to the UIS data shows a difference: while the government shows private at 35 per cent, UIS shows 52.2 per cent. If we add community schools to private schools we get a slightly different number of 52.8 per cent, suggesting that UIS may count community schools as private schools.

viii The number presented here aggregates all effect sizes found in the studies into one effect size per study (e.g. if rural and urban were presented separately, for the purpose of the number presented here they are aggregated into one effect size).

ix South Asia has the second largest teacher shortage globally, with 15 million more teachers required to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030 (Source: ‘The world needs 69 million more teachers to meet education goals’ UNESCO-UIS, 2016; https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246124).


xi The cost of a government 9th-grade English textbook is Rs 12 compared to a similar non-state-school English textbook ranging between Rs 200 and 250.


xiii There is also considerable variation in demand for PT across Indian states. For example, the top five highest percentages of students taking PT in grades 1–4 in no-fee government schools range from 64 per cent in Assam to 77 per cent in Gujarat. In grades 5–8, the percentages vary from 69 per cent in Sikkim and Telangana to 82 per cent in Chattisgarh. Although the percentages of students taking PT in fee-based non-state schools is much lower than in government schools, the states of Manipur and Punjab (in grades 1–4) and Manipur and Nagaland (in grades 5–8) have considerable percentages of non-state-school students taking PT.

xiv The proportion of government students who spend Rs 301 and above increases from 8 per cent (grades 1–4) to 16 per cent (grades 5–8). For non-state-school students, it increases from 25 per cent (grades 1–4) to 34 per cent (grades 5–8).

xv The size of the samples used to calculate this indicator for each quintile at each level is often small. To reduce the impact of potentially low reliability of estimates, the percentage of private education by quintile is estimated using the ratio for each quintile (e.g. q1) and the national average (NA) calculated in the household survey (e.g. r1=q1/NA) and applying it to the UIS average (which is often based on EMIS data and should be more reliable) (%private_q1=r1*UIS average) for that level. In some cases, there were large differences between the NA in the household survey and the UIS average. In a few of these cases (e.g. Bangladesh for lower and upper secondary, and India and Bhutan for upper secondary), this
procedure resulted in enrolment rates of over 100%. These were capped at 100%. The definition of private actors used may cause these discrepancies: the UIS definition is very broad: ‘institutions that are not operated by a public authority but controlled and managed, whether for profit or not, by a private body (e.g., NGO, religious body, special interest group, foundation or business enterprise)’ (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). The definition in Dundar et al. (2014) excludes religious schools and appears to be more restricted.

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This does not make the ASER survey a longitudinal survey but a repeated survey. The distinction lies in longitudinal surveys surveying an initial sample on multiple occasions, whereas a repeated survey such as rotating panel survey, the survey uses a ‘sample that is followed over time, but the focus is on estimates at aggregate levels’ (Steel & McLaren, 2008). In the case of ASER, the aggregates most reported are the district and state levels (ASER Centre, 2019).

Private-aided or even state schools may be classified as private by some households. On the other hand, child data may also capture children who attend unrecognized private schools, which are not captured by official statistics. The validation exercises run for this report find that the percentage of private schooling reported by ASER is roughly similar to that reported by UDISE if private-aided schools are taken into account, suggesting that the ASER survey does capture private enrolment somewhat reliably.

If a t-statistic was reported, the standard error (σ) was calculated using the following formula where $\sigma = \beta / t \sigma = \beta / t$.

where $\beta$ was the statistical coefficient, $\beta$ was the statistical coefficient. Standardized coefficients were used because these ensure comparability and can be treated as effect size (Nieminen, Lehtiniemi, Vähäkangas, Huusko & Rautio, 2013). Those studies that did not present standardized coefficients but provided the necessary data to y-standardize them were also used, where $\beta_s = \beta / SD_y, \beta_s = \beta / SD_y$. Those that did not provide the necessary data were discarded (specifically, Aslam, 2009; Desai, Dubey, Vanneman & Banerji, 2008; Goyal & Pandey, 2009; Goyat & Pandey, 2009; Schagen & Shamsan, 2007).

After this filtering process, there were some studies using the same datasets. For example, three studies (P. Singh, 2016; R. Singh & Mukherjee, 2017; R. Singh & Sarkar, 2015) had used the Young Lives dataset. We used the maths and language scores from A. Singh (2015) because they are disaggregated by age (even though the 2016 article has an extra data point), but we use the PPVT from P. Singh (2016), because these were not available in the 2015 article.

Others use village fixed effects. The importance of village fixed effects was shown by Pal and Kingdon (2010) who found that a higher government presence in a village increases the presence of private schools in that village.

This is the aggregated number due to multiple effect sizes (e.g. multiple languages per study). There are 35 inputs, as some studies report either multiple languages or outcomes for reading and writing separately. These are later disaggregated in subgroup analysis, but are used aggregated for the language score first.
for every child, answers