Adamawa State Primary Education Research

Access, quality & outcomes, with specific reference to gender

CASE STUDY REPORTS

University of Sussex
Centre for International Education
Adamawa State Primary Education Research

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Máiréad Dunne, Sara Humphreys, Moses Dauda, Jiddere Kaibo, with Ayo Garuba

The full report, main report (excluding the case studies), and the executive summary are also available as separate documents. All formats of the report are also available online at:
www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie/projects/completed/asber

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This research report is an important milestone for educational development in Adamawa State. It marks the acknowledged need for educational policy and practice to be informed by research and evidence. Significantly, this refers to the need for understandings of the local conditions and perspectives of children, parents, carers, communities and administrators to supplement ongoing collection and analysis of high-quality statistical data on education. Through this, the multiple elements of educational service provision may be shaped and directed to ensure that all children, and especially girls, achieve their rights to education, which will enable them to participate in and contribute to the development of their communities, Adamawa State and Nigeria.

The conception of this research started back in 2010 and work began immediately in Adamawa State Basic Education Board (ADSUBEB) and the Centre for International Education (CIE), University of Sussex, UK, to bring together the resources and capacity to support it. Over time, from inception to completion, there have been several twists and turns but the determination and support of ADSUBEB has seen this research project through to completion. This symbolises the continued resolve among education leaders in Adamawa to improve access, quality and outcomes of basic education within the state.

This research comprises deep case study research in six primary schools and their communities selected from each of the three senatorial zones in Adamawa using statistical data at school, LGEA, SUBEB and national levels. It involved a team of five researchers from Adamawa and Sussex in multiple visits to the six case study schools and communities, 34 classroom observations, attendance at ADSUBEB meetings and workshops, as well as individual or group interviews with over 260 people concerned with education and schooling across the case study sites and the state. In addition, quantitative data were collected from schools, ADSUBEB and national data sets, including EMIS and NDHS. In the main report these are all brought together through thematic analyses to provide key findings and recommendations that are presented to motivate and focus effort to achieve even better educational experiences and outcomes for the children, and especially girls, in Adamawa.

This preliminary research was intensive, ambitious and wide-ranging. It was based on a conceptualisation of quality educational provision as a co-operative effort by educational administrators, schools and communities. The communications, processes, practices and power dynamics within and between these three stakeholder groups provided a central focus for the research and analysis. Alongside this, there was a research focus on girls that has been supported by theoretical understandings that go beyond individuals to refer to gender relations and how they are enacted in local contexts. This understanding has enabled an analysis that can elaborate how different policies and practices impinge on access to school, experiences in schools and outcomes for girls and for boys, as well as for female and male personnel within the wider systems of governance and practice. Beyond the substantive findings, research capacity development was a key element of the research. The work of the cross-national team in developing understandings of the context and in doing and writing research represents enormous learning and this research capital is an important resource for the state and a potential that should be further exploited in the near future.

As a preliminary study the research touched on a range of concerns and produced findings that have been used as the basis for recommendations. These are elaborated in the main study and guided by principles of equity and inclusion at all levels within the system, and in particular indicate the need for substantial, gender-sensitive capacity building within educational
administration, schools and communities such that access to good quality teaching and learning in schools is made available and taken up by all children, and especially girls. In order to achieve this overarching objective the first series of recommendations focused on governance issues and include: the need for high quality data and monitoring and evaluation procedures to inform and shape policy; transparent governance systems for teacher appointment, promotion deployment and pay; targeted and responsive continuing professional development for LGEA officers and head teachers for M&E, teacher support, teacher management and community liaison; linking education with pupil health and welfare; infrastructural development of schools, classrooms, furniture, toilets, water and secure school compounds; and improved distribution of teaching resources irrespective of pupil capacity to pay. With specific reference to teaching and learning, two issues were highlighted for immediate policy attention. The first was language use (Hausa, other first languages and English) and the production of resources and texts to support it. The second was development of a code of practice around discipline and training in the use of incremental non-violent, non-physical and non-disruptive sanctions to guide pupil and teacher behaviour.

For schools, head teachers and teachers there were a range of recommendations that included working with parents and communities in the development and upkeep of a rich learning environment that is safe for pupils. Teacher management, support for pedagogical practice, gender awareness, a disciplinary code with both sanctions and rewards, and career development were underlined as vital to the achievement of the highest professional standards and improvements in school quality. These were seen as crucial for widening access, and improving school retention and the completion of all pupils. Other recommendations to improve quality and accountability and strengthen future school planning include: a system of pupil representation; concerted efforts at collaboration and communications with the community; encouragement for parents and community members to participate in the school and the full operation of the SBMC and PTA.

Notwithstanding the extensive and interwoven sets of recommendations that have been suggested through this study, it is important to acknowledge this as part of a turnaround in the state. Over recent years in Adamawa renewed attention has been focused on education, which has provided the impetus for a number of significant physical, policy and practice developments. The commissioning of this research is part of this and of an innovative approach that envisages the processes of educational development being informed by evidence derived from high-quality research. As such, this research report is more of a beginning than an end – the findings outlined by the research are now presented to the concerned and dedicated educators in ADSUBEB as we address the multiple challenges facing us in providing the right to education for all children in Adamawa. In addition to initiatives in policy, practice, consultation, communication and training, this will undoubtedly involve additional, focused research so that these innovations will be used in a cyclical process to inform future resource allocation and educational developments.

Dr Halilu Hamma - Executive Chair, ADSUBEB
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of many different people to the research reported here. In particular we want to thank the pupils and teachers in the case study schools, who welcomed the research team into their schools, and also the parents, community members and LGA personnel, who willingly engaged with the research. Without them this research would not have been possible. In addition we wish to thank many people in ADSUWEB headquarters in Yola. The officers and the Research Steering Group, headed by Dr Salihu Bakari, were invaluable for facilitating, informing and shaping the research. Their extensive knowledge, frank discussions and critical engagement throughout the research process were vital. There are several others who deserve special mention. Aliu Ibn Garba was extremely helpful in providing the most up-to-date statistical data and in helping us to collate and interpret them. His efforts were most appreciated. In addition, thanks are due to Jimena Hernández-Fernández and Ricardo Sabates for statistical analysis of the EMIS data. We are also grateful to Heather Stanley for her good advice and efforts in the presentation of the study and to Julie Farlie who provided administrative assistance in the early stages of the research. We also need to thank Abu Bakhar who drove us up, down and around Adamawa and Yola, and Khairat Abdul-Razak who made sure we had enough food and drink. Finally we owe a big ‘thank you’ to Mustafa Ahmad. He was vital to communications between the Adamawa and Sussex researchers and when we were all in Adamawa together for workshops and field visits he was our right-hand man, who saw to our every need. In particular, he helped make the team members from Sussex feel comfortable and very welcome in Yola, Adamawa and Nigeria.
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<tr>
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APPENDIX I

CASE STUDY REPORTS

IA  Schools and Zones
IB  Kanti Primary School
IC  Domingo Primary School
ID  Metropolis Primary School
IE  Kilfi Primary School
IF  Doya Primary School
IG  Baobab Primary School
## Schools and Zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School name</th>
<th>Senatorial Zone</th>
<th>School location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kanti Primary School</td>
<td>Northern 1</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domingo Primary School</td>
<td>Northern 2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolis Primary School</td>
<td>Central 1</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilfi Primary School</td>
<td>Central 2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doya Primary School</td>
<td>Southern 1</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baobab Primary School</td>
<td>Southern 2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX IB

KANTI PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AIB1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE DATA
This is the case study report of Kanti Primary School within the context of the relevant LGEA and its local community. It is a rural school located in the Northern Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents
A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 18 adults and 30 children, as indicated in Table AIB1.1. Four group interviews were held with pupils (two male, two female), and group interviews were also held with LGEA officials, and with parents. Other respondents were interviewed individually. All respondents were Christians, reflecting the fact that the school intake and village community is wholly Christian. Just over a third of respondents were female.

Table AIB1.1 Kanti Primary School case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES,SS)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, informal interactions were held in and around the school and community, including with JSS pupils, prefects, and the teacher in charge of the school farm. Eight lesson observations were conducted.

AIB1.1. The LGA (LGEA)

**Socio-demographic context**
The LGA is close to both Cameroon and Borno State. As a result, the towns and communities within the area are major trading communities maintaining close commercial ties with the neighbouring state and country, predominantly in the wholesale and retail of essential goods, liquor and groceries. Easy access routes from the area to the rest of the state and to neighbouring states have contributed to the importance of trade to the area. Although trading is important, much of the LGA’s population is rural, making a living from subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. The main ethnic group is Higgi (Kamwe), the majority of which are Christian although there are some Muslim Higgis in the urban centres.

**Local education context**
See main report, Chapter 4.
**AIB1.2 The school community**

The school is a rural school; its catchment area comprises Kanti village itself and several surrounding communities, with some pupils walking as far as 8km to reach the school. Kanti village is small and possesses a church and a health centre.

Most families in the catchment area practise subsistence agriculture with some family members engaged in petty trading either within the village of further afield in the larger, more urban trading centres. The trading has affected school enrolment and the attendance of boys in particular who, according to LGEA and school staff, are often absent on market days and/or abandon school to move to these urban centres to work. Interviewees across the board agreed that family demands for agricultural labour before school and during the rainy season result in many children being late for school and/or missing many weeks of schooling. LGEA and school staff, including from the JSS, additionally noted that during the rains children from remote and mountain-dwelling communities struggle to reach the school, or arrive on time, because of the difficult terrain.

There is a close cultural affinity between the residents of Kanti village and its surrounding areas and Cameroon as communities in both locations are predominantly Higgi. These Higgi-dominated communities, however, are distinct since on the Cameroonian side, and in neighbouring Borno State, they are mainly Muslim whereas in Kanti village they are wholly Christian. The only private school within Kanti village is a private nursery school, with around 45 pupils, located within the premises of the village church.

**AIB1.3 The school**

**School description**

**Basic school information**

Kanti is one of the oldest schools in the LGEA, established in the mid-twentieth century. A small rural school, it lies in Kanti village, by the side of a small, unpaved road. Across the road, a small grocery store sells household items and alcohol on an off-licence basis, transforming into an informal bar with music most evenings and weekends.

Located in a fairly large and shady unfenced compound, Kanti Primary School shares its premises, including a sports field, with a JSS, for which it serves as a feeder school. The school is made up of three buildings that house ten classrooms, which are inadequate to accommodate all the classes and are predominantly in poor condition.

The school day usually runs from 7am to 1.30pm, with half-hourly assemblies on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The PTA levy is ₦50 per term, supplemented by one-off payments of ₦200 to fund particular projects.

**The staff**

There were 18 teachers in Kanti School, including the head teacher, and no non-teaching staff. The staff are predominantly male (72.2%), though 27.8% are female, demonstrating a higher percentage than the LGEA average of just over 20%. The staff comprise an even balance of qualified and unqualified teachers, as shown in Table AIB1.2 below. There are two male graduates, including the head teacher, but no female graduates. The percentage of qualified teachers (50%) is well below the LGEA average of over 95%; 11% are graduates.
### Table AIB1.2: Kanti Primary School teachers by qualification and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (11.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7 (38.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Grade Two Certificate (TC II)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes

#### Pupil enrolment

Over the last four years, enrolments have increased, from 624 in 2007–8 to 675 in 2010–11, as illustrated in Table AIB1.3, although numbers have fluctuated across the years. The numbers of both girls and boys enrolling in school have also increased overall and although there remain higher numbers of boys enrolled in school than girls the gender gap has narrowed. Female pupils accounted for 45.2% of enrolments in 2010–11, up from 42.3% in 2007–8. Conversely, male pupils represented 54.8% of enrolments, down from 57.7% in 2007–8. In addition, the intake has been wholly Christian over the last four years, which reflects the fact that the community is entirely Christian.

### Table AIB1.3 Kanti Primary School enrolments by gender and religion 2007–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–2008</td>
<td>264 (42.3%)</td>
<td>360 (57.7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>624 (100%)</td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>268 (44.2%)</td>
<td>338 (55.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>606 (100%)</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2010</td>
<td>315 (49.0%)</td>
<td>328 (51.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>643 (100%)</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>305 (45.2%)</td>
<td>370 (54.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>675 (100%)</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering gender-disaggregated enrolment figures by grade (see Table AIB1.4) no clear patterns are apparent in terms of progression through the grades other than the fact that the numbers of pupils in a particular grade that can be traced across three or four years generally decrease overall for both girls and boys. Some of the extreme ratios and dramatic changes in absolute numbers or ratios between girls and boys in particular grades of particular years indicate that some of the figures are unreliable. For example, in 2007–8, 65.4% of enrolments were boys in Primary 4, yet moving up through Primary 5 and 6 over the following two years, girls’ enrolments were said to comprise 64.5% and 60.2%, respectively. Such a reversal in gender ratio is highly unlikely, especially given the ratios in favour of boys is evident in most grades in all four years.
Overage pupils

Numbers of overage pupils (see Table AIB1.5 below) dipped from 2007–8 figures before increasing dramatically in 2010–11. In three of the four years there were more overage boys than girls and indeed a higher percentage of male enrolments than of female enrolments were overage. However, the most striking observation is that in 2010–11 270 overage pupils constituted 40% of school enrolments, well over double the percentage in any of the three previous years. There is no obvious explanation for this sudden increase and again the reliability of some of the figures is in doubt. A comparison of Tables AIB1.4 and AIB1.6 would lead to the unlikely/improbable conclusion that a cohort of 94 pupils in Primary 5 in 2009–10, 14.9% of which are overage, suddenly becomes a Primary 6 cohort of 91 in 2010–11 of which 51.6% are said to be overage. Even more implausible is the notion that 100% of girls in Primary 1 in 2008–9 were overage. This lack of reliability might also explain the lack of clear patterns of overage pupils across the grades.

Table AIB1.5 Kanti Primary School overage* pupils by gender and year 2007–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total numbers (%) of overage pupils by gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>40 (15.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>48 (17.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>38 (12.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>118 (38.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pupils three or more years over the official age for each year
Pupil attendance

Table AIB1.7 below illustrates the number of pupil days absent per term by gender. Male pupils have been absent from school for more days than female pupils, which is unsurprising given that more boys are enrolled in school. Since the qualitative data suggest that some pupils are absent for a whole term and the 2010 NEDS reported that the average number of days a child missed the month prior to the survey was 5.5, the figures below are likely to represent a major underestimation. Nor do they reflect any seasonal variation, in contrast to the qualitative data, which universally suggest that absenteeism is much higher during the rainy season either because pupils are unable to reach school, or because their labour is needed in the fields. Since figures refer to pupil days, they do not give any indication of the number of children who have been absent.

Table AIB1.7 Kanti Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2007–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F (M)</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F (M)</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 (15.3%)</td>
<td>21 (100%)</td>
<td>11 (15.9%)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>8 (17.8%)</td>
<td>19 (67.2%)</td>
<td>6 (15.8%)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>6 (11.8%)</td>
<td>15 (28.8%)</td>
<td>5 (15.1%)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>3 (8.1%)</td>
<td>9 (28.6%)</td>
<td>8 (28.3%)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>10 (21.7%)</td>
<td>23 (48.9%)</td>
<td>12 (25.1%)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>7 (17.5%)</td>
<td>18 (45.2%)</td>
<td>8 (20.5%)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40 (15.2%)</td>
<td>99 (46.4%)</td>
<td>48 (23.9%)</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil dropout

Dropout rates, shown in Table AIB1.8 below, are low and again and would seem not to include pupils that do not re-register year on year. Comparison with the pupil enrolments in Table AIB1.4 demonstrates that in the cases where fewer pupils enrol for the next grade the following year, the drop in numbers is greater than the number of dropouts recorded. For example, according to Table AIB1.8, seven female pupils are said to have dropped out in 2008–9 yet Table AIB1.4 indicates that in Primary 4 alone eight female pupils fewer are registered the following year in the next grade. Evidence from the qualitative data too indicates that these figures are considerable.
underestimations. That said, Table AIB1.8 suggests that both in absolute terms and as a percentage of enrolments, more boys than girls dropped out of Kanti between 2007–8 and 2009–10, which broadly coincides with what various respondents have suggested about boys missing and/or dropping out of school to trade.

Table AIB1.8 Kanti Primary School dropout rates by gender 2007–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female dropouts</th>
<th>Female dropout rate</th>
<th>Male dropouts</th>
<th>Male dropout rate</th>
<th>Total no of dropouts</th>
<th>Overall dropout rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–2008</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2010</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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Pupil performance
No performance data for the Primary 6 exam were available in the school.

AIB2. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

AIB2.1 The school

General school issues
School buildings and facilities
Located in a fairly large, neat and shady compound, Kanti Primary School shares its premises with a JSS, for which it serves as a feeder school. Significantly, the school is not fenced; however, mango trees have been planted recently to demarcate its boundary from the JSS and to improve the school’s appearance. The shady compound was kept neat and well swept with stones decorating the entrance to the classrooms. Although the primary school had no sports field of its own, it shared the JSS field at the back and the PTA thought that the school had enough land and space.

The school is made up of three buildings, which house ten classrooms, a small head teacher’s office and a small staff room lacking in furniture. The school was short of classrooms, with three primary one classes held under shade in the centre of the compound at the front of the school. The teachers of these classes have small chalkboards and pupils are seated on logs. The classrooms are in varying states of disrepair and furniture is lacking or is of very poor quality. Classrooms are arranged in ascending grade order, with the standard of classroom and furniture gradually improving as pupils move up the grades (see section on Classroom conditions and resources). A small head teacher’s office and staffroom are located in the central block though teachers prefer to sit outside under the shade. The staffroom was dirty and had one small table, covered in a heap of administrative records plus a cupboard for books and a stool. By the last visit a new PTA-sponsored building for two classrooms was underway. LGEA officials thought that lack of infrastructure was a problem typical of rural schools, where families are too poor to pay the PTA levy. They also recognised a more general need for more schools to be built.

The school has no electricity or water but there is a community hand pump across the road. School access to water from the pump is limited until around 10am as the issue is a source of friction between the school and some community members (see Section 2.2. on Community-school relations). Thereafter, pupils have no access to drinking water. The SS noted that lack of basic amenities such as drinking water constituted a major access issue in schools.
The school has no toilets as such but staff are allowed to use one of the JSS toilet blocks (one latrine for male teachers and another for female teachers) located behind the primary school, at the edge of the JSS playing field. Pupils are expected to use the bush. According to one LGEA official, as villagers and pupils are already used to defecating in the bush, lack of toilets would not be a cause of low enrolment or a major access issue in the area. The previous year the PTA had reportedly agreed to build latrines for the pupils but it had been postponed, according to one teacher, until more classrooms had been built.

The school also has a small farm about the size of two football pitches (see School management of pupils below) behind the Primary 6 classrooms towards the village. It is managed by the Agriculture teacher and cultivated by the pupils.

All school and community respondents agreed that the most urgent issues for school improvement related to infrastructure. The priority for the head teacher, teachers and parents was to build more and better equipped classrooms. For the SBMC and PTA members as well as one parent, fencing the compound was the top priority though the SBMC also highlighted the need to repair the leaking classroom roofs. Both the head teacher and pupils highlighted the school’s lack of a water source. Pupils complained that they got thirsty during class and needed water to perform better; as one pupil put it: “We drink from the river; we are always thirsty and any time we are thirsty, we don’t understand what our teachers are teaching us because of the thirst.”

**Security**

Since the area was unfenced, pupils could easily leave the school ground compound while unauthorised outsiders had easy access, though the duty teacher attempted to regulate comings and goings, shooing away nursery school pupils who wandered over during lessons, or beating pupils who tried to nip out to buy from the hawkers during lessons. On one occasion a man was seen sitting under a tree at the edge of the compound in the centre of a group of JSS girls, in close physical proximity. At other times youths were seen lurking in the area, some apparently drinking alcohol. During break, motorbikes were seen driving across the compound and female traders sold fruit, sugar cane and cakes by the roadside. Children also crossed the road to the shop to buy snacks and pencils. Although the shopkeeper said it was not allowed during lessons, occasionally pupils were spotted sneaking over to the shop in class time. At break some pupils were observed disappearing into the residential area behind to eat breakfast. Some older girls were seen returning late after break having gone home to do chores in the meantime.

The proximity to the road was also a safety issue as pupils reported that children had been knocked down by traffic. As a result, the SS had asked the community not to drive their vehicles along the road, and they reported that the community had complied although several motorbikes were seen driving along the road and even across the compound. Before the start of school, villagers were seen cutting through the school to reach their farms and some visitors walked through during school hours, sometimes greeting teachers. Prefects said that when there were major events across the road, such as political rallies and community burials, pupils run out of class to watch.

Pupils also reported that some villagers defecate in the classrooms and so the prefects occasionally come and shout at them, though the head teacher felt this issue was not as bad as before. Although the bar adjacent to the shop was not open during the day, following a request by the school, several respondents confirmed that the compound becomes an extension of the bar area in the evening; loud music is played, hawkers trade and many villagers, including primary and junior secondary pupils, mainly boys, can be found there, sometimes up until midnight. Pupils
were observed clearing up the remains of the partying, such as sugar cane stalks and groundnut shells, before school the next day.

School routines
A time-keeping prefect (there are two, both male) usually rings the bell for lessons, or failing that, the head boy or a teacher. The main break for breakfast was an hour long although the school also had two short five-minute intervals. Lessons were from 7.30am to 1.30pm, or until noon during the exam period.

Assemblies occurred on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, according to pupils (though the head said that they were daily unless the weather was cold), from 7 to 7.30am although on the day assembly was observed it began at 7.55am on account of the cold weather, which had caused pupils to be late, according to the head. For assembly pupils lined up according to class, each in two lines: one for boys and one for girls. In some classes the smaller pupils were at the front and the taller ones at the back; in others pupils were mixed. In the assembly area there was a fallen flagpole and no flag.

In the only assembly observed the duty teacher greeted pupils by saying: “Good morning pupils”, to which the pupils replied “Good morning Sirs” three times, bowing on each occasion. All pupils were asked to squat down while prayers were said and announcements made. On Mondays pupils are inspected (see School management of pupils below). Then the national anthem is sung and the national pledge recited. Pupils were seen to be struggling with the words. Pupils then march to class. After school has closed, pupils are made to squat under shade again, generally choosing to be in gender-specific groups, before being dismissed. Fewer pupils were evident than at morning assembly.

On Fridays there was general school cleaning organised by the male labour prefect. Duties were gendered: girls swept the compound while boys collected and disposed of the sweepings and picked up litter. Older pupils (Primary 3 to 6) also worked on the school farm (see School management of pupils below).

School management of staff
The head teacher pointed out that there were insufficient teachers in the school, causing classroom overcrowding (see Classroom conditions and resources below); in one case, three classes were split between two teachers.

In addition to teaching duties, staff had other responsibilities: male teachers were in charge of discipline, labour, games, counselling, health and the school farm; female teachers were in charge of debates, school houses and one was an assistant to the head teacher. The head teacher said he selected teachers who were capable, neat, sympathetic towards pupils and knowledgeable in the required area. For example the health teacher was the local chemist. The discipline teacher needed to be punctual and “active” but not necessarily male; a female could be appointed if qualified: “What men can do female can do even better, they are saying.” The school counsellor generally dealt with absentee pupils, whose parents are called to the school for a talk. The duty teacher rotated on a weekly basis.

On the whole, the head teacher thought teachers in the school were committed, saying that they were willing come to school during school holidays to do community work, debates and games. The school counsellor also voiced the view that the “notorious” teachers had been transferred. Nevertheless, teacher absenteeism, sometimes for the whole day, was a concern raised by PTA members, who said that it affected pupil learning: “Wadansu yara ma sai su zo su wuni babu
“malamai a ajinsu, sai su koma gida” [Some children come to stay for the whole day without teachers in their class so they go back home.] The head teacher also acknowledged that staff truancy and refusing to comply with the policy on not beating pupils were the main disciplinary issues. Teachers were seen signing an attendance register in the head teacher’s office before school.

Some teachers were seen sitting around during lesson time and SBMC members reported that if they saw teachers doing this, they encouraged them to go to class. When confronted with disciplinary issues, the head teacher said he first counselled teachers, explaining that pupils “are given to us to take care of. We need to help them grow”. If matters do not improve, the head said he reported teachers to the school supervisor and then to the ES. The head said the ES might transfer the teacher, stop their salaries or deduct pay from their salaries for the number of days they have been absent. Very serious offences were referred to the Board. However, the head teacher said that sometimes teachers harassed the head teacher when disciplined:

Affected teachers feel the impact. It never happened in my school, but in some schools they (teachers) harass the head teacher, by shouting at the head teacher that he causes this and that but they finally come to school to teach.

LGEA officials said that the main disciplinary issues regarding teachers related to absenteeism, drunkenness and misuse of loans. Cases of indiscipline were said to be more pronounced among (some) male teachers. The SBMC said that when members made unscheduled visits to the school, it called teachers to order by telling them not to sit about under trees but go to class. Indeed, on several visits, some teachers were seen sitting around outside during lesson time. However, one female parent said that teaching had improved since the arrival of the current head teacher.

School management of pupils
The LGEA said it did not approve of corporal punishment except in exceptional circumstances and cited a case of pupils breaking into the head teacher’s office to steal materials. In that instance parents were summoned and the culprits were publicly flogged in front of other pupils.

The head teacher confirmed that Kanti Primary School discipline policy was also one of no corporal punishment. Yet at the same time, he admitted that they sometimes caned pupils and that only female teachers were allowed to cane female pupils.

Head teacher: The school policy on discipline says the child who misbehaves or steals or fights for instance, must be investigated before he is disciplined. If a child steals we do cane him sometimes. We don’t allow male teachers to discipline girls but it depends on the offence committed. If it requires caning, we don’t allow male teachers to cane girls; we ask female teachers to cane girls.

Researcher: Do you have school policy on discipline?

Head teacher: Yes, normally, well, corporal punishment, we do it before but now we don’t give it. We substitute it with simple, simple discipline like asking the child to kneel down, fetch water to water flowers/trees, go round the classes and another by caning them.

Moreover, researcher observations and pupil interviews confirmed that the practice was widespread with teachers, prefects and monitors beating pupils. They were often seen carrying canes both at break and during lesson time. Pupils were beaten for latecoming, absenteeism, fighting, stealing, noise making, and missing class. According to the community leader, pupils without uniform, however, were allowed to come to school although the head teacher
recounted a case in which a parent had complained to him that their child had been excluded from school for wearing a “shabby” uniform.

Boys, pupils agreed, were beaten on the buttocks, generally by male teachers, and girls on the palm of the hand, or on the back of the leg, usually by female teachers. Other punishments, for both male and female pupils, included being made to pick up litter, fetching water, weeding, sweeping the compound and running round the classrooms. In addition, boys were made to frog-jump and kneel down. The head teacher said that girls were not made to kneel down because “we want to see that the condition given to males is different to the one given to the girls because of their nature.” However, pupil accounts suggest both girls and boys were punished by kneeling and both could be beaten on the buttocks. Girls were reportedly sent to clean the toilets. Pupils maintained that both male and female teachers flogged pupils, though some thought male teachers tended to beat pupils more, an impression that may partly be due to the fact that the school has almost three times more male teachers than females.

In one assembly, pupils were seen with their hands outstretched as teachers went round inspecting pupils’ nails, hair and general neatness – a weekly occurrence, according to the head teacher. One female teacher was witnessed caning almost all pupils across the fingers for being dirty until stopped by the head teacher.

According to one senior prefect, pupils with poor attendance, such as missing a whole term “are made to go and weed the [school] farm; they will not be taught in class; they will suffer in the farm for almost the whole day. They only mix with other pupils during break time.” The head teacher also explained that despite parental protests, some pupils with “poor attendance” are made to repeat the year. This particular year there were 14 boys and eight girls repeating within the school.

Although the male pupils interviewed thought that discipline was fair in the school, one girl thought it was unfair, explaining: “flogging makes pupils cry, [be] angry and annoyed” Moreover, both girls and boys thought that corporal punishment discouraged school enrolment and affected their concentration and emotional wellbeing. As one male pupil put it: “Flogging put my mind off school”. One group of male pupils also thought corporal punishment led to dropout.

Pupils were sent to either the discipline teacher or school counsellor, depending on the offence. The counsellor reported showing boys who urinated on classroom walls where to urinate, and explaining to dirty pupils how they could clean themselves up. He also called parents to talk to them about their sons if they are up late carousing in the compound:

If you come here in the evenings, you see them here, this man who operates music here, you see them dancing till 10 or so in the night. They are always sleeping in class.

Parents sometimes brought their own children to school to be disciplined. Two of the parents interviewed said that in particular they reported boys absenting themselves from school, and asked the head teacher to discipline them. He reportedly gave them four to five strokes of the cane.

Prefects and monitors were also selected to help manage and discipline pupils. Teachers and prefects agreed that prefects, including the head girl and boy, were appointed based on academic proficiency, punctuality, good attendance, and neat appearance. Pupils and teachers said that class monitors were selected on the basis of test performance. Pupils got to choose their monitor from a boy and girl nominated by the teacher. Monitors were in charge of the class in the absence of the teacher and were expected to report any wrongdoing to the teacher so
pupils could be punished although, as mentioned earlier, some took matters into their own hands.

The school had numerous prefects, a number of which were female:

They give girls prefects ranging from head girl, assistant head girl, office girl, and assistant office girl etc. The office girls are two in number who are grown up that started developing breasts. Their work is to call girls to go and fetch water (male prefect)

The two timekeepers who ring the school bell and two labour prefects were all male. Prefects were seen beating latecomers and pupils they did not think were applying themselves to sweeping the compound before school. Generally male prefects beat male pupils on the buttocks whereas female prefects tended to beat female pupils on the hand or on the back. At the same time JSS prefects, were seen disciplining latecoming JSS students, who were crossing the primary compound to get to school.

One of the labour prefects, in charge of school cleaning on Fridays, reported that girls swept the compound and classrooms while boys collected and disposed of the litter and moved the furniture in the classroom “because they’re stronger”. Before assembly pupils were seen in regimented lines moving across the school sweeping the compound with prefects beating any pupils they perceived to be lazy or who had not made a brush for the sweeping. Other examples of child labour in school included getting pupils to fetch sand and water for the construction work, which the school had initiated in response to the SBMC and PTA’s stated intention to build more classrooms. According to the PTA, the head teacher was arranging a timetable for pupils to fetch water. Girls also fetched water from the borehole to store in pots in the offices for teachers and pupils to drink, according to one villager. There was also a rota for pupils to weed the school farm during the rainy season on Fridays, which was the general labour day. The farm teacher, who also taught Social Studies and Agriculture, said that four to five times a year on Fridays pupils from Primary 3 to 6 weed the fields according to class group. Some hoes were provided by the school and others were brought from home. This teacher also allocated pupils to water the mango trees in the school compound.

Pupil lateness and absenteeism were considered the major disciplinary issues. Some SBMC members laid the blame on the school for persistent pupil lateness, maintaining that pupils came late because of a lack of school discipline. Various educational stakeholders emphasised that pupil lateness was heavily dependent on the leadership of the school administration. According to the head teacher, however, the teacher in charge of discipline was responsible for dealing with latecomers and absentees. The duty teacher was also in evidence before school during lesson and at break, for example disciplining (including beating) pupils or controlling hawkers. The discipline teacher said that he occasionally had to break up fights between boys at break.

SBMC members said that whenever they visited the school, they also encouraged teachers to discipline pupils seen outside when they should be in class. One female teacher thought flogging would improve pupil punctuality although another teacher pointed out that the head teacher gave rewards for punctuality. The head confirmed that he gave out outdated textbooks for those who turn up on the first day of term as an incentive to improve attendance. Teachers’ views on how to improve attendance varied from talking to parents to punishing pupils by making them wash the toilets.

According to one LGEA official:

Discipline is synonymous with punishment. Children should be corrected when they go wrong but this should depend on the level of the offence. In addition, consideration should be given to age, family background as well as to his academic performance when meting out punishment to pupils.
**Pupil–pupil relations**

At break the atmosphere was generally calm with pupils usually playing in age-related, gender-segregated groups: boys played football, wrestled with each other or made crafts while girls chatted, sang and played clapping or ball games. Some pupils, mainly boys, played on the JSS playing field. A school ball, prefects explained, was purchased from proceeds from the school farm and given alternately to boys then girls to play with.

Although pupils confirmed that in general they got on well, the school counsellor said that bullying was very common:

> When some grown-up pupils bully the younger ones, I used to bring them nearer to understand each other. These are some of the problems that are common in this school. Sometimes after advising them not to fight on the way, they will still fight and bully one another.

Moreover, on the way home from school some boys were seen kicking each other and girls shouting at each other. The prefects too admitted that both boys and girls fight, especially boys, though they simultaneously denied the existence of bullying and teasing. Teachers maintained that in general boys teased girls and the head teacher mentioned that overage boys sometimes bullied other pupils.

Young boys were also seen reporting cases of bullying by older boys to the duty teacher, who would go off in search of the bullies or have them called, in order to tell them to desist. Girls in particular were said to tease absentees with songs and by laughing at them on their return, which made them shy. As one girl admitted: *Muna yi masu dariya sai ta ji kunya. Wani lokachi muna zolayan su da waka*” [We laugh at absentees and they feel shy. Sometimes we use songs to tease them.] In contrast, one group of male pupils said they tried to encourage the absentees.

Several male prefects were seen wandering round, carrying sticks, including the school labour prefect, who said that other pupils would not do what he said unless he carried a stick. JSS pupils sometimes wandered over to the primary school area during break. At break some pupils were seen buying food from fellow pupil traders and some younger boys were also seen teasing young girls and touching them on the head.

**In the classroom**

**Classroom conditions and resources**

As highlighted earlier, Primary 1 classes were held under shade. In addition to the small chalkboard, teachers were also seen drawing in the earth as a means of teaching. Otherwise, conditions improved as pupils moved up the grade. Specifically, this meant that at one end of the scale, Primary 2 classes were held in a dark earth-floor room with termite mounds, filthy walls, piles of rubble and metal sheeting in the corner, as well as a collapsing roof, and an illegible board. Some pupils were seated on planks; others sat on the bare floor. In contrast, Primary 6 pupils learned in a lighter and brighter classroom which had been recently renovated by the state; it possessed a good cement floor, legible chalkboards and pupils were seated on proper benches with desks. The classrooms in between suffered variously from pot-holed floors, illegible boards, broken or insufficient furniture, termite mounds, broken doors or windows. Several let in insufficient light. In two observed lessons, the class was disrupted because poor light caused by rain forced pupils to crowd forward mid-lesson in order to be able to see the board. In another lesson a leaking roof forced pupils to move to another part of the classroom.

The state of the classrooms and lack of adequate furniture was a major concern for pupils, teachers, school management, parents and other community members. Parents were particularly upset that some pupils were still learning under trees and the community leader reported that pupils complained of pain in their buttocks from sitting on tree trunks. Teachers agreed that poor
classroom conditions adversely affected pupil learning, as did parents, who also highlighted poor chalkboards and overcrowded classrooms as major impediments to pupil learning. The PTA and SBMC thought that poor learning conditions affected girls in particular though did not elaborate. Pupils too emphasised the point that clean classrooms also helped them learn while bemoaning the fact that sometimes faeces were found in the classroom. Some also complained that the noise from passing traffic disturbed classroom learning as did the fact they were constantly thirsty (see School buildings and facilities above).

The head teacher also noted that villagers had frequently used the classrooms as toilets when he first came to the school. One teacher cited poor classroom conditions as the thing they most disliked about teaching.

In the eight classes observed most pupils had pencils and exercise books and in several classes some pupils had improvised school bags using plastic bags or grain sacks. One male teacher noted that teachers sometimes provided pens or pencils for poor pupils. Observations indicated that textbook provision varied. In two classes all pupils had textbooks; in two classes pupils shared textbooks and in the remaining four no textbooks were in evidence. Teachers, including the head teacher, complained of a shortage of teaching materials although the school supervisor commented that textbook provision had improved over the last few years:

A few years back there were no textbooks by the government. But this time now there are sufficient textbooks... Pupils will feel happy to get it because each and everyone has his own textbook.

Nevertheless, children were not allowed to take books home as they were needed for the next class, yet pupils felt that provision of free textbooks would help reduce dropout. A similar view was held by the community leader, who thought that provision of textbooks would motivate pupils to read and study at home and therefore improve exam performance.

In the observed classes teachers all had chalk though parents mentioned that sometimes chalk was not available and the school had to borrow from the junior secondary school. Prefects added that sometimes chalk was bought with the proceeds from the school farm.

**Seating arrangements**

In the eight observed lessons, class sizes ranged from 25–55 (11–20 girls; 14–36 boys) with more boys than girls in each class although in one class there was near gender parity. There was severe overcrowding on limited furniture, which teachers noted negatively affected pupils’ learning. In the worst class, out of 51 pupils, eight girls were seated on logs, five boys were on broken benches and the rest were on the floor. Where there were benches, they were in three columns with aisles in between and 2–4 rows, depending on availability of furniture. There was gender-segregated seating in six out of the eight classes, with more mixed seating in the other two classes. Generally boys enclosed the girls, notably by the windows and with the bigger boys, some of whom were overage, tending to be at the back. In one class where a girl was seated with three boys, she kept her distance from them on the bench.

Pupils were allowed to choose who they sat next to in general although the head teacher said he tried to encourage mixed seating between boys and girls, in part because “if you group girls in the same bench they will not pay attention to the teacher; they will be playing.” However, he admitted that once the teacher was out of the room the pupils tended to revert back to gender-segregated seating. Latecomers generally got the worse seating although prefects said that some boys and girls liked to tease other pupils by prodding or poking them or exchanging words and sometimes forced their way onto the benches.


*Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)*

The eight lessons observed exemplified traditional didactic learning with the teacher standing at the front of the class by the board. Five lessons consisted predominantly of teacher monologue; three classes were slightly more interactive with the teacher demanding more choral and individual responses from pupils and the teacher moved more freely round the room. Pupils were also asked to copy from the board in several classes. In the only lesson observed in which a textbook was used, the teacher read aloud from the textbook before asking selected pupils to read passages aloud, stopping for individual pupils to spell and pronounce particular words. “You don’t know how to read until you can spell and pronounce words,” the teacher told them. In a couple of Maths classes pupils were invited to the board to solve problems; in both classes only boys were selected. In one of the classes, neither of the two pupils was able to do the task. Teachers were generally supportive in their manner except for one older male teacher, who clearly intimidated the pupils. No teaching aids besides the chalkboard were used in any of the lessons.

Questions were generally closed and demanded choral response, and in some cases included the rhetorical “isn’t it?”, to which all pupils inevitably responded “yes”. But in some classes questions were more open; three classes involved more individual questioning and in one class the teacher even responded to questions initiated by pupils. In two classes pupils rarely responded to teacher questions; the other four classes offered slightly more pupil participation. The teacher was observed praising pupil contributions in two lessons.

Three lessons observed were conducted almost wholly in English and one was conducted almost exclusively in Hausa despite the fact that the teacher was a Higgi speaker and some pupils were struggling at times to understand Hausa. The others were conducted in a mix of English and Hausa, with some Higgi included in one lesson. The degree of pupil understanding was difficult to gauge, especially when the teacher predominantly lectured. Pupil and teacher views on the medium of instruction were mixed; some preferred learning in English, others in a local language but more preferred a mix of the two. Two of the teachers acknowledged that pupils often struggled to learn in English and there was recognition that this contributed to low levels of pupil participation in class but teachers maintained that pupils liked English. Although two male teachers said they liked and felt comfortable teaching in English, another female teacher admitted she found it difficult. One PTA member thought that teachers’ poor grasp of English was a barrier to pupil learning. The school supervisor too was adamant that pupils’ poor grasp of English constituted a major access issue: “Pupils are running away to hear [from hearing] English – they don’t want to hear. They want merely to be taught in Hausa, which is impossible. We don’t encourage them as a supervisor.” He advised teachers not to instruct in local languages except as a last resort. Indeed SBMC members were of the opinion that pupils’ learning would improve if teachers stopped using local languages in class.

Although pupil and teacher views were mixed about whether girls and boys participated equally in class, the majority, including both male and female respondents, thought that boys participated more, which most lesson observations confirmed although it should be reiterated that boys outnumbered girls substantially in most of the classes. Greater class participation by (some) boys was attributed by various individuals to girls’ shyness or inattentiveness and to boys feeling “freer”, talking a lot, and/or learning faster. One boy gave various reasons for greater participation by boys:

> Boys do better in class. Girls don’t speak in English. They don’t read at home. They always go out in the night to play. They do fail to come to school always, because of going to [the] farm. They don’t answer questions in class and if I answer questions in class they tell me that I am claiming – I am bragging.
Importantly, however, most teachers considered class participation to be low in general, which they variously ascribed to poor teaching methods, pupils' lack of English, shyness and lack of confidence.

Overage pupils were singled out; one group of girls felt that overage boys were slow, did not concentrate and “played a lot” and one girl said that overage girls “follow boys in the night so do not perform”. Pupils said that those who were often absent from class failed exams. The counselling teacher also organised “catch-up” classes after school for overage pupils.

All pupils interviewed initially responded that generally teaching was good in the school since the new head teacher had arrived though later some pupils offered the opinion that better teaching would encourage dropouts back into school:

Sai a dingo koyar ma yara abu. Idan a kwai wani a anguwansu ya iya karatu, to su ma zasu so wannan har su dawo makanansu su nemi gafara a wurin malamai.” [They should be teaching pupils very well. For instance, if one pupil in the neighbourhood knows how to read, this will attract dropouts to come back and ask teachers for forgiveness to allow them continue schooling.]

The community leader was of the view that there was a lack of proper teaching, a view shared by one male parent. Some teachers also thought that better teaching, including getting teachers to work harder would help reduce repetition rates, which they thought affected boys in particular. Female parents, however, thought that teaching had improved since the arrival of the current head teacher: “Gaskiya madam, tun da aka kawo headmastan nan, ana samun koyarwa; gaskiya.” [Truly, madam, since the coming of this new head teacher, pupils get teaching here, truly speaking].

One male pupil who had transferred from a school in Abuja bemoaned the lack of seriousness of teachers, and thought more class and homework, as well as computers would help pupils to learn better: “Aji dayawa idan an gina zai taimakemun; kuma ba a teaching mana computer.” [More classes will help us learn better but they don’t teach us computer.]

Most pupils thought that female and male teachers taught in the same way, though a couple of boys disagreed; one boy claimed that male teachers taught more subjects than female teachers and were more intelligent.

A kwai wani malla da an yi transfer nashi, yana koya muna subjek da yawa amma mache bata yin haka. Teacher na miji ya fi ilimi. A kwai wata madam a class five ta rubuta assignment wa kanna, question nata shine wane abu ne zaka yi kayi zufa?; sai mun rubuta idan ka zauna kusa da wuta, kayi gudu, idan ka chiabinchi zaka yi zufa; sai ta sa masu poor. Amma idan na miji ne zai duba sai ya ba yin a yi. [There was a teacher who has been transferred; he used to teach us many subjects but women teachers don't do that. Male teachers are more intelligent. There is a madam in class five, she gave assignment to my younger siblings her question was what makes people to sweat? We wrote that if you sit near fire, run, eat food you will sweat; but she put ‘poor’ for them. But if it were a male teacher, he would check the answers and give them ‘good’.]

Conversely, most teachers thought male and female teachers differed in teaching style though did not elaborate. The head teacher said he talked to teachers about approaches to learning urging them to vary their teaching styles if pupils did not understand.

The ES saw varied teaching methods as the way to encourage better pupil attendance: “Debates, quiz, debates, games and actual teaching influence pupils coming to school.”

**Pupil performance**

Pupil and teacher views were similarly mixed about gender trends in exam and test performance though more pupils thought that boys performed better than girls whereas more teachers
thought that girls in general did better than boys, including the head teacher, because of (some) boys’ lack of interest in school. No marksheets or hard evidence were produced to substantiate these claims. Conversely, the PTA thought that girls valued schooling more. The head teacher also attributed the poor performance of some boys to their attendance at the beer parlour:

If you come here in the evening till midnight you see them here listening to music from the beer parlour man selling cassettes. Even the JJS boys come here. The beer man says he opens only in the evening and that is his means of livelihood. It’s not easy; even the village head can not stop him selling in the evenings.

The community leader and the PTA thought that pupils that attended the community pre-school in the church generally did well in school.

SBMC and PTA members claimed that around 95% of pupils went on to JSS. The former, however, thought predominantly boys dropped out after primary, whereas the latter thought more girls did, in order to marry.

Discipline

No physical or harsh verbal disciplining was witnessed in six of the eight classes observed although pupils and teachers both confirmed that corporal punishment was widely practised in the school, and indeed was witnessed outside the classroom. Since it was not clear from interviews to what extent physical punishment was applied in the classroom, rather than for more general school offences, it was discussed in greater detail in School management of pupils, above. However, the majority of teachers interviewed said pupils received a warning before they were physically punished and one male teacher said that after a warning he usually sent the pupil to the (male) teacher in charge of school discipline.

Monitors and prefects were not identifiable in the lesson observations, perhaps because teachers were present, although one group of pupils confirmed that in the teacher’s absence monitors reported the name of pupils who misbehaved to the teacher for punishment.

Several verbal reprimands were witnessed, however. In one of the lessons almost entirely in English, a mixed group of girls and boys was told off for not participating in the class: “You on this side, what is wrong with you? You are not saying anything.” In one class two girls were made to stand because they were unable to read a passage of text aloud; in another a female pupil was verbally reprimanded for being distracted; in one a group of boys was verbally reprimanded for pushing and shoving each other; in another, a couple of boys were called to the board to solve a problem, seemingly as a disciplinary move because they were not paying attention. Other activities, such as a young girl counting money in the front row of one class, and a boy not in uniform playing with a torch were overlooked.

Pupil–pupil relations

In most of the classes pupils appeared to get on well and there was some cross-gender interaction and sharing of materials. In the class with the intimidating older male teacher, however, pupils sat in total silence, and in one class, girls tended to interact with girls, and boys with boys. Pupil views on the matter, however, differed markedly; while the boys interviewed thought all pupils got on well together, the girls did not and even the boys admitted that pupils preferred to sit in gender-segregated groups and that pupils teased each other in class, reported on each other and fought.

Mata suna zama stakaninsu suna sururtu. A break ma basu wasa da maza. [Girls sit on their own making noise. Even at break time girls don't play with boys.] (male pupil)
Bamu wasa tare, amma manyan yan maza sai su sa kafa wa yan mata kanana don su fadi. [We don't play together; only older boys put their legs in the way of younger girls so they can fall over] (male pupil)

Girls in particular said they preferred to sit away from boys because classmates would tease each other about being husband and wife but because of overcrowding they were often forced to sit together on the same bench. The teachers also agreed that boys tease girls and one male teacher said that sometimes boys needed to be separated in class.

**AIB2.2 Family and community**

**Socio-economic activities**
As stated earlier, the community was primarily a farming community with some villagers involved in petty trading. Pupils knew of children in the village who had never enrolled in school because of poverty and the need for children to earn money. All school and community interviewees agreed that the need for child labour either farming or trading were major causes of lateness, absenteeism – sometimes for as long as a term – and dropout, with trading affecting boys in particular. However, one PTA member also implied that once boys got a taste for earning money they could lose interest in school: “Idan sun fara sayan jeans, shikenan sai su manta da makaranta [Once they start buying jeans, they forget school].”

Pupils also confirmed that many children arrived late for school because they are sent to farm before school (which one male parent blamed on mothers). Boys in particular are also absent from school on the two main market days. Various community members confirmed that petty trading, often with family knowledge, is a major cause of irregular attendance and often leads to dropout among boys. Hawking was also mentioned by the SBMC as an impediment to girls’ learning and performance.

The ES confirmed that school attendance was poor in the rainy season across the LGA as children were needed to farm and look after animals. He reported that in the mountain villages (where some of the Kanti pupils originated from) many of the men went to Borno to trade, leaving the children as young as ten at home to fend for themselves while the mothers were out farming.

**Families (including religion, ethnicity and educational choice)**
In addition to engaging in economic activity outside the home, pupils said they all did household chores, which also made them late for school. One parent explained that girls cooked food, washed plates and fetched water while the boys fed the animals. Several adults noted that girls’ school attendance was more affected as they did more chores, and additionally were sometimes made to take care of siblings. Distance from school was also mentioned as a reason for latecoming as some pupils came from up to 8km away.

SBMC and PTA members, parents and the school supervisor confirmed that families were often unable to pay the PTA levy and/or provide the requisite school materials or uniform to enable children to attend school. The school supervisor also noted that some pupils’ earnings were used to pay the PTA levy.

All pupils interviewed said they had missed the odd day at school, citing ill health and bereavement in addition to the aforementioned economic reasons for absenteeism. Sickness and hunger were also highlighted by teachers and PTA members as causes of absenteeism. As one PTA member commented: “Idan yaro yazo makaranta du yunwa, ba zai iya yin karatu ba” [If a child comes to school hungry, they will not be able to learn.]. One parent said that if he met a pupil out of school because they were ill, he went to the chemist to buy them medicine.
A number of educational stakeholders interviewed thought that pupil non-enrolment, absenteeism or dropout was also due to lack of parental interest in education, or “the ignorance of parents”, as one put it. The head teacher, however, suggested otherwise, saying that most parents in the community felt that they had been cheated of the opportunity to go to school by their own parents so were keen for their children to benefit. The PTA also said that some parents were not at all interested in education. One male parent, however, pointed to the unemployment of school-leavers as a reason for doubting the value of schooling: “Those who finished school did not get jobs so what are they going to do in school?” Indeed among a group of older youths hanging around the school, apparently drinking alcohol, one said he had completed senior secondary school but with no money to pursue higher education he had returned to farming.

Pupils and parents acknowledged that pupils who had older siblings received help from them with schoolwork though some had nobody at home to assist.

Absence of parental supervision, especially during the rainy season, was also identified as a factor affecting children’s attendance and/or performance, according to some PTA and SBMC members and pupils. They also thought that some parents were unable to control (some) male children, who gave in to peer pressure and went and play with friends: I dan wani yaro bayà ji kusa da wani sai ya shafe shi ya fara bin abokanai suna rashin ji. [If a boy stays with another boy that is stubborn, he will influence him to follow friends to start misbehaving].

The SBMC reported that some parents sent their children to school but were unaware that they did not actually go to school. Pupils also pointed out that even when parents reported their son’s absence from school, the boys themselves would run away. Several respondent groups mentioned pupils, especially boys “absenting themselves” without offering an explanation. One person put it down to “stubbornness”.

Punctuality and attendance at schools in the area were also affected by environmental factors. As the school supervisor pointed out, since family homes had no electricity, children woke up with the light. However, during the rainy season and the months of the Harmattan (November/December), the skies remained dark and so the children woke up later. The school supervisor therefore urged school heads to adjust their school timetable accordingly though no evidence was given as to whether any had complied. In the LGA’s mountainous terrains, in particular, it was explained, access was sometimes impossible during the rains when the slopes become treacherous and the river valleys flooded.

Early marriage and/or pregnancy was cited as a reason by some pupils and teachers for some girls dropping out of school although the JSS teachers interviewed said that a number returned to school after getting divorced.

In addition, one senior LGEA official said that in mountain communities some Higgi parents did not allow their children to come to school because of a long-held belief that any kind of schooling was negatively associated with the conquering Fulani leader Hamman Yaji (Ruler of Madagali from 1912-1927) who had tried to convert villagers to Islam.

Several pupils said that the reason they went to the case study school was because their parents did not have enough money to send them to a better private school. Several respondents expressed the need for another school in the village. Although there was no pre-school in the village the church ran a nursery school. Both the community leader and a PTA member thought that it provided a good foundation for school, especially in spoken English.
Although all pupils and parents interviewed underlined the importance of a formal education for both girls and boys, gender-typed views on the relative value and/or reasons for schooling were expressed by several respondents that saw education as a means for girls to obtain better husbands or to help their husbands while allowing male pupils to be more successful family breadwinners, as the following comments illustrate:

Female pupils come to school to compete with men, help [their] future husband and male pupils meet the needs of the family. (male pupil)

Pupils are not in school for the same reason; boys are to take good care of their responsibility for keeping their families; even though girls have to be in school so that her life will not be somehow – i.e. getting married early. If a woman is not educated before thirty years [old] ‘she don go down now’ so that’s the reason why you see women struggling for education in order to get [a] better life in the future. (female teacher)

Mutanen mu sun fi son maza suyi makaranta fiye da yanmata sai su che ina ruwan su da yarinya, abun da zasu je su yi aure, me ya dame ni da ita. Amma wanda suka gane abu kam, zasu che wanene ba mutum ba? Duk wanda Allah ya taimake shi duk zasu taimake ni” [Our people here prefer their male children to go to school than female children. They will always say, what is their concern with female children, after all they will only marry; I have no concern with her. But those people that understand some things, they always say all children can be good, any one of them that God helps will assist us]. (community leader)

Makaranta yana da amfani ma duku mata da maza. Makaranta; duk wanda bai yi makaranta ba, yawo zai bashi wahala. Domin makaranta yana koya ma mutum ilimi, ko da baka sami aikin government ba, zai iya koya maka zama da jama’a da hakuri, kuma ya san irin zaman da zai yi da jama’a [Schooling is important to both female and male children. Schooling, anyone that did not go to school will find it difficult to travel. Schooling teaches people knowledge, even if you did not get [a] government job, you will know how to live with people.] (male parent)

Makaranta yafi anfanan na miji domin zai kula da gida da iyayenshi amma mata zasu yi aure kawai. [Schooling is more important to males because he will take care of his family and his parents but females will only go and marry.] (male parent)

Mata sun fi maza kula da iyaye ; wane namiji ne zai tashi yaje wajen mamansa yace; mama me yake damun ki? [Females take good care of parents more than males; which man will go to his mother and ask her: Mama what is disturbing you?] (female parent)

The head teacher acknowledged that “some ladies say that if they do not get a good education they will not get a good husband” but he was adamant that girls should be educated for their own sake and not just to secure a husband.

Community–school relations

Community–school relations were considered to be “cordial” by the community leader, and “good” by the head teacher. The community leader was formerly head of the PTA but now acted as an advisor to the PTA executive, meeting the head teacher and staff before meetings to help draw up the agenda. School–community communication occurred primarily through the PTA, and to a lesser extent the SBMC. Significantly the parents interviewed had never heard of the SBMC although that might have been because the committee had not been functioning. The head expected matters to improve now that the chair had been replaced and an action plan had been made. According to the community leader, the two executive boards held termly meetings, informing members by letter or phone call. Parents were informed about PTA-initiated community meetings through the ward heads. The SBMC executive had 19 members including four women. The head girl and boy were nominally included on the list but in practice never participated. The PTA executive had a membership of eight, two of whom were women.
Nevertheless, all six interviewees were men. The PTA said there was no CBO or NGO support for the school though the community leader said occasionally individual community members made donations of money or uniforms. The parents interviewed thought that in general the PTA represented their interests well.

The PTA levy was used to build and repair classrooms, as well as to provide furniture and chalk. Parents also provided labour for school construction and repair work. While acknowledging parents’ support for the school, teachers variously thought parents could additionally protect school property, discipline pupils, donate more money and/or provide more furniture and teachers.

In addition to the levy parents were expected to provide writing materials and school uniforms for their children except for Primary 1 girls, whose uniform was provided by the state. According to the community leader, the school complained to parents through the PTA about some boys and girls lacking school uniforms though parents responded that they did not have enough money. Various respondent groups, however, admitted that inability to pay the levy and/or provide school uniforms was a cause of pupil dropout.

Issues of concern voiced by the SBMC include pupil lateness, poor attendance and dropout. The executive said they called on selected community individuals to advise on such matters. Teachers and the SBMC emphasised the need for proper communication between the community and the school although both the SBMC and PTA said they talked to parents about pupils’ poor attendance and absenteeism. One male teacher wanted the guidance and counselling officer to counsel parents about pupil absenteeism. The church pastor said he tried to mobilise parents but one teacher thought the church should do more to mobilise parents to enrol children in school.

The main source of conflict between the school and some villagers related to the issue of land and water. Previously, the head teacher explained, the borehole had belonged to the school as it was drilled on what he claimed was school land, where the head teacher’s house was once located – itself a bone of contention: “Ba karamin battle mu ke yi da mutane a kan wannan abun ba” [We do have a serious battle with the people on this land issue]. However, the borehole got damaged. The school was unable to repair it but the community did and so now controlled the pump. The key to the pump was with a man who lived by the borehole and despite requests by the village head, he refused to give a key to the school, and access was denied after 10am.

The school farm, which was worked by pupils under supervision from the Agriculture teacher, was also a matter of tension between some parents and the school. According to one male parent, parents did not know where the farm profits went and yet even young pupils were made to work on the farm:

We don’t know where the proceeds go to. In the past, they process groundnut cakes and distribute to pupils, buy school materials for pupils, they organize [a] party for graduating students, all from the proceeds of the farm. They ask all pupils to bring hoes from their homes to weed the farm; they don’t care whether the children are small or big.

Previously, he said the school harvested and processed the groundnuts, distributing the resulting cakes to pupils, and using the proceeds to buy drugs for first aid and to pay for passing out parties for the pupils. Parents also suggested using the proceeds from the farm to buy books, pencils and pens to be kept in the office for pupils. Yet the prefects dismissed these concerns, ascribing them to jealousy (though the possible origin of the jealousy was not made clear): “Leave them, they are the jealous ones; they always talk like that.” The prefects said that the produce was still taken from the fields and food cooked for pupils while the head teacher, farm
teacher and prefects maintained that the proceeds from the surplus farm produce sold still went towards purchasing prizes, drugs for the first aid store, chalk and a school ball.

The PTA also said that some parents were not sending their children to Kanti because the school’s name did not reflect the name of the community (see also Section 2.3 LGEA–community relations).

AIB2.3 The LGEA

LGEA/LGA internal relations
There was disagreement within the LGEA staff as to whether difficult terrain (e.g. living on a mountain or across a river) was still posing an access problem for some communities within the LGA. While one officer thought it did, another maintained that the issue had been resolved within the LGA by locating new schools in mountainside villages and at river crossings.

There was agreement, however, that a standardised salary structure, improved infrastructure and office accommodation and instructional materials could help LGEA officials carry out their work more effectively. One officer also thought the LGEA office should be separated from the LGC Secretariat as they were often locked out by council staff during protests.

Questions were raised about the lack of transparency in the appointment of school supervisors. The view was that appointments should follow procedure and be based on exam performance but “political considerations override rules and procedures.” Some who reportedly did not even attend the interview were said to have been appointed in some LGAs.

A further issue raised was the fact that the LGEA had had to wait 12 weeks for a date to be set by government for the common entrance exam.

At the time of the research there was only an acting ES and LGEA members questioned why it was taking so long for one to be appointed.

School governance
The head teacher said that the ES and SS were supportive of the school and that the three of them met on a termly basis.

However, the ES said that the District Education Committee had ceased to function after 2004/2005 while the LGEC was waiting to be constituted now that nominations had been forwarded to the state. Nevertheless, he still thought both bodies were still relevant though he did not elaborate further.

Teachers complained about poor pay and promotion prospects, lack of materials and training as well as teacher shortages. The lack of teachers, and qualified teachers in particular, was also highlighted by the PTA and the head teacher and identified as a barrier to pupil learning and a possible cause of dropout. Although the head conceded that recently more teachers had been provided, he also pointed out that around half were still untrained. The lack of trained teachers was also one of the community leader’s concerns. Pupils said they were still lacking teachers for Maths, Hausa, English and Computing. The PTA said the LGEA had advised the PTA to build classrooms, merge classes or send pupils away.
The head teacher also recognised the improvement in textbook provision:

And we thank the present government that they have started improving because now since last term we have been receiving these textbooks. As of now I can go into a class and ask pupils to open a page and they can read it. There is an improvement.

Parents also recognised that the LGEA was providing books but, along with the teachers, thought that more could be supplied. Textbook provision by the LGEA was seen by various respondent groups as an important incentive for pupil enrolment and learning. The lack of teaching guides was seen by the ES as a major issue affecting teaching quality.

**School support**

Teachers also confirmed regular inspection visits to the school by both the ES and the SS, which included meetings with teachers. However, they still felt more support and training was needed. The ES recognised that incentives such as sponsorship for workshops or further studies or promotion were important, to boost teacher morale. Two male teachers from Kanti had recently been on in-service training to upgrade their qualifications. The head teacher said the ES had been counselling teachers that they must teach pupils to learn to read and write and characterised visits by the ES as follows:

Any time he [ES] sees pupils who are not able to perform he will not tolerate such a class teacher. He says he will terminate his service or take him to a place whereby he will feel it. No-one wants to see they have been punished or sacked out from service.

There was acknowledgement by various LGEA and school and community members that government was trying hard to improve school amenities and resources and that when disasters occurred in schools, such as the roof collapsing, the Board would provide roofing sheets and technical support by sending professionals to the school. The ES explained:

Some of the Board’s actions have had a positive impact on access. For instance, when the Board carried out renovations in Central Primary School – an urban school – the old roofing sheets were given to schools where pupils were still learning under the tree. This has motivated more parents to bring their children to school as they now consider school safer.

Nevertheless, all parties agreed that more government assistance was required.

Last term the LGEA had reportedly suggested the head teacher draw up a list of pupils who miss school regularly and the ES had said he would check up on them. These were generally overage boys; some had reportedly returned and were doing catch-up classes whereas others had not. The ES said he had also settled a matter regarding land for the head teacher’s house, which the previous owner had wanted back, and had caused a lot of friction between the community and the school, which the head teacher confirmed. The community had apparently not mentioned the issue again since the intervention by the ES.

**LGEA–community relations**

Communication between the community and the LGEA also appeared to occur primarily through the PTA. For example the community had channelled requests for more classrooms and school fencing and had asked for the school’s name to be changed, a request which had been forwarded to ADSUBEB. Parents said that although the PTA had meetings with the ES, parents did not meet directly with him.

The community leader and the PTA clearly had regular communication with the LGEA. For example, the community leader had been invited to an advocacy workshop on encouraging community members to enrol their pupils, and encouraging those who had dropped out of school to return. The PTA confirmed that both the ES and SS attended PTA meetings.
The ES was convinced that the way to combat school absenteeism in general was for the Departments of Social Mobilisation and School Services to work together with school supervisors and church and mosque leaders to talk to families with low attendance. In particular LGEA officials highlighted the importance of the PTA, saying that they ensured the LGEA sent a representative to every PTA meeting. The SS reportedly sometimes gathered parents together, called by the PTA executive, to tell them about the importance of education, and to persuade them that getting a formal education was more important than ever now because of the lack of availability of farmland to cultivate.

It was also suggested that Board members should interact with parents, especially during PTA meetings. Teachers seemed convinced that it was the LGEA’s responsibility to mobilise parents or as one teacher put it: “call parents to order”. Pupils and one teacher also thought government should subsidise the PTA levy to improve enrolment and retention.

AIB3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY & PUPIL OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY

AIB3.1 Infrastructure and security

- Lack of, or poor quality school infrastructure seriously affected the quality of pupils’ learning experience: e.g. shortage of, and poor quality classrooms and furniture and buildings with leaking roofs, damaged floors and illegible chalkboards.
- The PTA and SBMC thought that poor classroom conditions affected girls’ learning in particular.
- Parents were helping to improve the learning environment by building and renovating classrooms through the PTA levy and by providing labour.
- A lack of fencing round the compound made it difficult to control access to the school premises.
- Lack of permanent access to potable water (the borehole is shut off at 10am) had a detrimental effect on pupil learning.

AIB3.2 Teacher management

- Pupils’ access to the curriculum was affected by teacher shortages, teacher absenteeism and low teacher morale though the situation was said to be improving.
- There was some recognition, even by teachers, that teachers need further training and support and that improved teaching and more qualified teachers would help reduce pupil repetition and dropout.
- The main staff disciplinary issues within the school were thought to be absenteeism and non-compliance with the rule of no corporal punishment; more generally across the LGEA, they were identified as absenteeism, drunkenness and misuse of loans.

AIB3.3 Pupil management and pupil relations

- Pupils were generally made to repeat a year after long-term absences, boys generally more than girls.
- There was evidence of bullying and “teasing” of girls by other girls, and, more often, girls by (some) boys and bullying of younger boys by older boys and of returning absentee pupils by other pupils. However, no evidence was gathered of the impact of this on pupil learning or school attendance.
- Corporal punishment, which was widespread, was identified by some pupils as a cause of dropout, and as having an adverse effect on their learning.
• Other punishments for pupils often caused them to miss lessons, e.g. by being asked to sweep the compound, pick litter or weed the farm, and therefore reduced their learning opportunities.

**AIB3.4 Teaching and learning**

• Overage pupils were identified by other pupils as having learning problems.
• Views were mixed among pupils and teachers as to whether girls or boys generally did better in tests and exams though claims were not backed up with evidence.
• Free textbook provision by government, which was said to be improving but in need of further improvement, was seen as a major incentive for pupil enrolment and having a positive impact on pupil learning though textbooks, which were present in four observed lessons, were only used in one lesson.
• Almost all pupils had a very limited grasp of English. Thus, learning in English was a major obstacle to pupil learning although some teachers compensated by code-switching with Hausa, and also Higgi.
• Classroom observations indicated that teaching made limited cognitive demands on pupils: teachers predominantly lectured with occasional choral or individual questioning of pupils and questions were usually closed. In addition, pupils were sometimes required to copy from the board.
• There was very limited oral participation by pupils but in general more boys seemed to be selected to make oral contributions than girls.

**AIB3.5 Socio-economic and family issues**

• Poverty was the most widely cited reason by all respondents for non-enrolment, poor attendance and dropout related to families’ need for child labour and/or inability to pay school costs.
• Pupil ill health and hunger were also causes of pupil absenteeism.
• Child labour: boys and girls were needed for farming, trading and/or household chores resulting in lateness, absenteeism and dropout.
• Children farming before school and doing household chores were identified as major causes of lateness.
• Girls’ participation in school was particularly affected by household chores and looking after siblings.
• Pregnancy or early marriage was a cause of dropout for some girls.
• Petty trading, especially on the two main market days, was a major cause of absenteeism and ultimately dropout, particularly among boys, with hawking mentioned as affecting the learning of some girls.
• More frequent and long-term absenteeism occurred during the rainy season both on account of families’ need for additional farming labour, and more widely in the LGEA, because of the physical difficulty for some pupils from mountainous communities to reach school.
• Lack of parental supervision during the rainy season in particular affected pupil attendance, especially among boys.
• Some parents are unable to control (some) boys, who run away from school regardless of parental wishes, according to pupils.
• Parental “ignorance” or lack of interest in education was also seen as a barrier to pupil enrolment by some, but not by others.
• The school’s name, which does not reflect the community, is thought to deter some community members from enrolling their children in the school.
• The LGEA thought that their attendance at all PTA meetings was their most effective strategy with communities to increase school enrolments.
• Some boys’ learning was hampered by hanging round the bar that spilled onto the school compound late in the evening.
• The ₦200 annual PTA levy and expenditure on school uniforms and learning materials was a major barrier to pupil enrolment and/or completion of schooling.
• Pupils and parents thought government subsidies of PTA levies and free provision of uniforms and learning materials would improve enrolment, attendance and dropout.
• Pupils who attended the church nursery school were thought to do better at primary school.
• Most pupils were thought to progress to the adjacent JSS, with the higher PTA levy or poor exam performance the main reasons cited for non-progression.
• Gender-differentiated tasks were allocated to teachers, prefects and pupils which generally conferred greater status on the positions allocated to males, as well as gender-typed views on the relative merits of educating boys and girls. No evidence was gathered on the effect these gender messages might have on girls’ and boys’ opportunities for, and/or participation in, schooling.

**AIB3.6 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)**

• School–community relations were generally cordial but with the issue of access to and ownership of the water pump an important area of dispute, which the ES had tried to settle.
• The ES had also settled a related land dispute between the school and community.
• Women’s participation in school–community bodies such as the PTA and SBMC, and within the LGEA, was very limited.
• The PTA was active but the SBMC had yet to be reenergized following a change of leadership.
• The LGEA was heavily involved in trying to mobilise the community to improve school enrolment and attendance, primarily through the PTA and the district head though individual families of known absentee pupils had also been approached.
• It was difficult to tell whether the ordinary community voice was heard in school–community and/or community–LGEA communications.
• There seemed to be a lack of real engagement with the community, either by the LGEA or the school, beyond telling parents that they must send and keep their children in school.
• Both the LGEA and the school seemed to expect parents, through the PTA levy and their own labour, to provide classrooms and school furniture.
• Parents and pupils expected the LGEA to provide free education by subsidizing the PTA levy and by providing textbooks and learning materials.

**AIB3.7 Other**

• Dark skies during the rainy season and Harmattan could also cause pupils to be late.
APPENDIX IC

DOMINGO PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AIC1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

This is the case study report of Domingo Primary School in the context of the relevant LGEA and the school’s local community. It is an urban school located in the Northern Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents

A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 16 adults and 32 children, as indicated in Table 1.1. Same-gender group interviews were held with pupils (two female, three male), and group interviews were also held with parents and PTA committee members. Other respondents were interviewed individually. The majority of respondents were Christian and the number of male respondents was almost twice the number of female respondents. Female representation at the community and LGEA level was particularly low.

Table AIC1.1 Domingo Primary School case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES, SS)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, informal interactions were held with several prefects (including the head girl and head boy), an overage boy (aged 17), two monitors from lower classes (female and male), female hawkers and a counselling teacher. Seven classroom observations were conducted.

AIC1.1 The LGA (LGEA)

Socio-demographic context

The LGA comprises a large urban area though it is predominantly rural, with a population of around 130,000, according to the most recent census. It lies in the Northern Senatorial Zone, straddling the main tarred road between Yola and Maiduguri, the capitals of Adamawa and Borno States respectively, and within easy access of Cameroon. The flat, urban area is consequently a thriving commercial centre, and enjoys all the usual urban amenities and infrastructure: potable water and electricity, access to health facilities and to other essential goods and services. This is not the case in the more mountainous rural areas. The people within the LGEA are mostly non-migrant farmers, who from time to time send their school-age children to the farms to take care of livestock. Groundnuts are also grown as a cash crop. The LGEA contains both Christian and Muslim communities, though it is predominantly Muslim, with Gude the indigenous ethnic group. Margi and Higgi settlers are also present.
Local Educational Context
See main report, Chapter 4.

AIC1.2. The school community

Domingo Primary School is located in a low-income residential area on the outskirts of a major town, in a religiously and ethnically mixed community. The population of the local community is estimated at around 20,000, according to the head teacher, and there are several markets, places of worship and two medical facilities in the vicinity. Most parents are said to be farmers who require extra seasonal labour primarily between June and December, though a few parents are civil servants. The major ethnic groups in the locality are the Gude, Higgi, Hausa and Hausa-Fulani. Despite differences of opinion as to whether the Gude or Higgi comprised the majority ethnic group, there was consensus among respondents that the Gude are indigenous to the area. The main community languages are Higgi, Gude and Fulfulde, although the language of interaction within the community and in the school is Hausa. Pupils interviewed also mentioned the following languages used at home: Kilba, Tangale, Bura, Yoruba, Fali, Fulfulde and Margi.

AIC1.3. The school

School description
Basic school information

Domingo Primary School lies on the main road in a low-income residential area on the outskirts of a major urban centre. Founded in the 1970s, it was originally a rural school, but the rapid expansion of the nearby town and the resulting urbanisation of surrounding communities have made it urban. Domingo has an intake of just over 1,000 pupils. Most pupils come from within a radius of 2km from the school though some pupils reported taking up to an hour to reach school on foot. Female pupils account for 49.7% of enrolments whereas males account for 50.3%. Currently, 53.2% of the pupil intake is Muslim and 46.8% is Christian. An admission or re-admission fee of N200 was charged; in addition, each pupil paid a PTA levy of N50 per term. The levies were collected by the school and administered by the PTA executive.

The staff

Both the head and assistant head teacher are male and the head teacher had only recently taken over the headship. There are 36 other teaching staff. The distribution of the teachers (including the head and assistant head) by qualification, gender and religion is shown in Table AIC1.2 below. The majority of the 39 teachers are male (64.1%) and around three quarters are qualified (76.9%). The vast majority (69.2%) have NCE while three are degree holders (7.7%). Three other male non-teaching staff are employed by the school.

Table AIC1.2: Teachers, including head teacher, by qualification and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27 (69.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6 (15.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>39 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes**

**Pupil enrolment**

Over the last three years, enrolments have decreased slightly, from 1139 in 2008–9 to 1076 in 2010–11, peaking at 1156 in 2009–10, as illustrated in Table 1.3. Statistics were unavailable for 2007–8. In the first two years, there was a greater proportion of female enrolments (52.4% for both years) whereas in 2010–11 there was almost gender parity, with fractionally more boys than girls registered in the school (female 49.7%; male 50.3%). In terms of religious affiliation, the predominantly Christian intake (54.2%) of 2008–9 has gradually become a predominantly Muslim intake (53.2%) in 2010–11. The number of both Muslim girls and boys has increased steadily over three years. Conversely, the number of Christian pupils, and girls in particular, has dropped over the same period. It was suggested that they are gradually moving into private schools.

**Table AIC1.3 Domingo Primary School enrolments by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2010–11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>597 (52.4%)</td>
<td>542 (47.6%)</td>
<td>522 (45.8%)</td>
<td>617 (54.2%)</td>
<td>1139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>606 (52.4%)</td>
<td>550 (47.6%)</td>
<td>529 (45.8%)</td>
<td>627 (54.2%)</td>
<td>1156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>535 (49.7%)</td>
<td>541 (50.3%)</td>
<td>572 (53.2%)</td>
<td>504 (46.8%)</td>
<td>1076</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering enrolment figures by grade (see Tables AIC1.4 and AIC1.5) for the three-year period in question, figures have generally decreased over the grades in each year; more specifically figures for each year drop in Primary 2 and then increase for two to three grades before tapering off again. However, the reliability of some of the figures is in doubt. For example, the numbers for Muslim pupils per grade were exactly the same in four out of the six grades for both 2008–9 and 2009–10. Some of the dramatic changes in absolute numbers or ratios between girls and boys and/or Muslims and Christians in particular grades of particular years also raise concerns about some of the figures, especially when taken together with statistics on dropout. For example, following a cohort of pupils over three years from Primary 1 to 3 a group of 156 female pupils in 2008–9 dropped to 85 in Primary 2 in 2009–10 and then increased the following year to 103 in Primary 3. Similarly, a group of 149 Christian pupils in Primary 1 in 2008–9 dropped to 78 in Primary 2 but picked up to 90 in Primary 3 the following year. Alternatively, if these figures are accurate, they perhaps suggest a trend of pupils perhaps dropping out of school temporarily and rejoining later. Although this is not reflected in the dropout figures given (see Table AIC1.8 below), qualitative data suggest this may be the case, particularly with some boys who reportedly drop out to trade for a while.

**Table AIC1.4 Domingo Primary School enrolment by gender and grade 2008–9 to 2010–11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>156 (58.4%)</td>
<td>111 (41.6%)</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>80 (50.0%)</td>
<td>80 (50.0%)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>74 (42.3%)</td>
<td>101 (57.7%)</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>100 (52.1%)</td>
<td>92 (47.9%)</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>98 (57.3%)</td>
<td>73 (42.7%)</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>89 (51.0%)</td>
<td>85 (48.9%)</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>597 (52.4%)</td>
<td>542 (47.6%)</td>
<td>1139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table AIC1.5 Domingo Primary School enrolment by religion and grade 2008–9 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus</td>
<td>Chr</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.2%)</td>
<td>(55.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(36.3%)</td>
<td>(43.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(38.9%)</td>
<td>(61.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(49.5%)</td>
<td>(50.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.3%)</td>
<td>(56.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.3%)</td>
<td>(55.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>1139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(45.8%)</td>
<td>(54.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overage pupils

The number and percentage of overage pupils rose from 95 (8.3%) in 2008–9 to 113 (9.8%) in 2009–10 before declining to 91 (8.5%) in 2010–11 though the pattern was not uniform across social groups. The percentage of overage pupils relative to the year’s total enrolment increased slightly overall during the three-year period for female pupils and Christian pupils whereas it decreased slightly for male and Muslim pupils. The difference among social groups, however, was slight, irrespective of the year, with the percentage of overage pupils only ranging from 6.7% for female pupils in 2008–9 to 10.1% for male pupils in the same year.

Table AIC1.6 Domingo Primary School overage* pupils by gender and religion from 2008–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>40 (6.7%)</td>
<td>55 (10.1%)</td>
<td>51 (9.8%)</td>
<td>44 (7.1%)</td>
<td>95 (8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>60 (9.9%)</td>
<td>53 (9.6%)</td>
<td>52 (9.8%)</td>
<td>61 (9.7%)</td>
<td>113 (9.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>52 (9.7%)</td>
<td>39 (7.2%)</td>
<td>45 (7.9%)</td>
<td>46 (9.1%)</td>
<td>91 (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pupils three or more years older than the official age for each year

There are few discernible patterns when looking at the data by grade and social group (see Tables AIC1.6 and AIC1.7 below) except to say that the percentage of overage pupils is lowest in Primary 1 across all three year groups. Figures and percentages tend to increase for the next three grades before tailing off again in either Primary 5 or 6. However, given the concerns expressed above about the reliability of some of the enrolment figures, then these figures for overage pupils need to be interpreted with similar caution. Indeed the figures for overage pupils may themselves be unreliable. If we look at Table AIC1.8 and the cohort of Muslim pupils that moved from Primary 4 in 2008–9 up to Primary 6 in 2010–11, for example, we see 12 overage Muslim pupils (12.6%) out of group of 95 Muslim pupils dropped to 3 overage Muslim pupils from a group of 74 (4.1%) in Primary 5 the following year, which then increased back to a group of 12 overage Muslim pupils out of a group of 76 (15.8%) the year after. There are some similarly strange drops and subsequent hikes in numbers when considering the gender patterns in Table AIC1.7. Ten overage pupils in Primary 3 in 2008–9 almost doubled to 19 overage pupils in Primary
4 in 2009–10, albeit in a larger cohort of pupils, and then fell back to 11 the following year. However, as highlighted earlier, some of the qualitative data suggest that some overage male pupils drop out of school to trade or farm and then re-enrol.

**Table AIC1.7 Domingo Primary School overage pupils by gender and grade 2008–9 to 2010–11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>4 (2.6%)</td>
<td>7 (6.3%)</td>
<td>11 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>5 (6.3%)</td>
<td>11 (13.8%)</td>
<td>16 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>10 (15.3%)</td>
<td>8 (7.9%)</td>
<td>18 (10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>9 (9.0%)</td>
<td>12 (13.0%)</td>
<td>21 (11.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>6 (6.1%)</td>
<td>5 (6.8%)</td>
<td>11 (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>6 (6.7%)</td>
<td>12 (14.1%)</td>
<td>18 (10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40 (6.7%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>55 (10.1%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>95 (8.3%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table AIC1.8 Domingo Primary School overage pupils by religion and grade 2008–9 to 2010–11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus</td>
<td>Chr</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>5 (4.2%)</td>
<td>6 (4.0%)</td>
<td>11 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>8 (8.9%)</td>
<td>8 (11.4%)</td>
<td>16 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>9 (13.3%)</td>
<td>9 (8.4%)</td>
<td>18 (10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>12 (12.6%)</td>
<td>9 (9.3%)</td>
<td>21 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>7 (9.5%)</td>
<td>4 (4.1%)</td>
<td>11 (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>10 (13.0%)</td>
<td>8 (8.2%)</td>
<td>18 (10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>51 (9.8%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>44 (7.6%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>95 (8.3%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pupil attendance**

Table AIC1.9 below illustrates the number of pupil days absent per term by gender and Table AIC1.10 shows the number of pupil days by religion. Female pupils were absent from school for more days than male pupils for the first two years, a pattern that was reversed slightly in the third year, which is unsurprising given the gender ratios in enrolment in each year. However, since the qualitative data suggest that some pupils are absent for a whole term, the figures below are likely to represent a major underestimation since they would indicate that on average, across the years, each pupil is only absent for just over a day per year. Nor do the figures reflect any seasonal variation in contrast to the qualitative data, which universally suggest that absenteeism is much higher during the planting season because pupils' labour is needed in the fields. Since figures refer to pupil days, they do not give any indication of the number of children who have been absent.
Table AIC1.9 Domingo Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2008–9 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>2010–11</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1371 (F: 714; M: 657)</td>
<td>1590 (F: 814; M: 776)</td>
<td>1475 (F: 730; M: 745)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AIC1.10 Domingo Primary School number of days absent by term and by religion 2008–9 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1371 (Mu: 722 ;Ch:649)</td>
<td>1590 (Mu:796; Ch:794)</td>
<td>1475 (Mu:737; Ch:738)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pupil dropout**

Overall dropout rates rose slightly from 5.7% of enrolments in 2008–9 to 6.7% of enrolments in 2010–11, peaking at 7.7% in 2009–10. This general pattern was the same for female and male, Muslim and Christian pupils. However, figures would not seem not to include pupils that do not re-register year on year, as was mentioned in the section on enrolments, but they raise concerns about reliability. For example, according to Table AIC1.11 below the recorded number of female dropouts for 2009–10 stands at 40 yet female enrolments for the following year, according to Table AIC1.3, were 535, a drop of 71 on the previous year’s enrolment total of 606. This leaves a loss of 31 female pupils unaccounted for. Similarly, the number of Christian pupils enrolled in class in 2009–10 was said to be 606, but declined to 504 the following year. However, only 42 dropouts were recorded, leaving 103 Christian pupils unaccounted for.

Table 1.8 Domingo Primary School number of dropouts and dropout rate by gender and religion 2008–9 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total dropouts</th>
<th>Overall dropout Rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>35 (5.9%)</td>
<td>30 (5.5%)</td>
<td>35 (6.7%)</td>
<td>30 (4.9%)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>40 (6.6%)</td>
<td>49 (8.9%)</td>
<td>47 (8.9%)</td>
<td>42 (6.7%)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>35 (6.5%)</td>
<td>37 (6.8%)</td>
<td>39 (6.8%)</td>
<td>33 (6.5%)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of dropouts as a percentage of the number of enrolments for the year.

**Pupil performance**

According to performance data displayed in Table AIC1.12, for the two years 2008–9 and 2009–10 Primary 6 marks ranged from 0% to 96% across the social groups and even within social groups
the spread of marks was broad with no clear patterns of attainment. However, some of the very high marks seem unlikely given the fact that none of the Primary 6 pupils interviewed could communicate in English to any extent yet it is likely that they were some of the stronger pupils as they were selected for interview by the teacher.

Table AIC1.12 Domingo Primary School pupil performance by gender and religion 2008–9 and 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Overall range of marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIC2. QUALITATIVE DATA FINDINGS
AIC2.1. The school

General school issues
School buildings and facilities
Domingo Primary School is located in a large compound, which is shared with a junior secondary school and abuts the main road. There are twelve classrooms with cement floors, which are generally in good condition with functioning doors and windows, though these are sometimes vandalised (see section below on Security). There is also a head teacher’s office in the school (which JSS teachers sometimes use as a staff room) but no staff room so most teachers plan their lessons or socialise under the trees. Three large trees provide some shade though this is insufficient given the large school population.

LGEA, school and community respondents highlighted the lack of classrooms and benches and the impact on pupil learning, as well the fact that some classrooms were in need of renovation. The head teacher also noted that some of the furniture was vandalised and felt that parents should help with repairs. Although the LGEA noted that across the LGA classrooms and school facilities had generally improved and encouraged an increase in school enrolments, they acknowledged that more needed to be done. The PTA complained in particular about the inadequate seating (which observations confirmed): “Pupils sit on the floor and are always dirty.” This was seen as a major challenge to pupil learning, especially in the lower classes. Leaking roofs were also highlighted. One PTA member thought a solution would be to replace one classroom block with a two-storey building.

There was one block of dilapidated pit latrines (two for boys; two for girls) in very poor condition, which had resulted in people defecating in the surrounding area of the compound, close to the main gate. There were no toilets for teachers. The SBMC respondent listed toilet facilities as one of the committee’s major priorities. Aside from this, however, the compound was generally clean and tidy although one pupil group thought that if the compound were made nicer, it would help stem dropout.

The school has no potable water supply and electricity though the adjoining hotel, houses and other surrounding buildings are connected to the national grid. Even though there is provision for borehole and water storage, it is always dry and the only source of water is a dug well which only fills during the rainy season. Because of the lack of water, pupils left the compound when
they were thirsty. One of the hawkers interviewed says that pupils usually headed off in search of water after buying snacks from her even though teachers tried to stop them. One of the pupil groups wanted a water supply on the compound, which they believed would increase enrolment. However, one of the prefects interviewed explained that the head teacher bought water for pupils, which was kept outside the office with cups to drink from.

As well as operating a double shift with the junior secondary school, Domingo shares the compound with a senior secondary school. One teacher thought that using the same facilities as the JSS was a major problem for school: “Our pupils copy some immoral behaviour of the secondary school teachers and students”. He felt there was a need to talk to the school’s head and teaching staff.

**Security**

Although there is a wall separating the classroom blocks from the main road and a main gate, the compound was not totally fenced off. A footpath crosses the school premises to the hotel and residential buildings behind the school. Passers-by and members of the community used the path during school hours to access these areas. There was general agreement among school and community respondents that school security needed to improve. Pupil groups wanted the school to be properly fenced (with a wall) to stop cars and bikes from passing through the compound. One group thought this would help address absenteeism and dropout. Another pupil group complained about pupils being knocked down by vehicles while crossing the road on the way to and from school.

We cross the main road to go and look for drinking water; some pupils don't have uniforms they go to cross the main road. If a car hits them or knocks them there will be problem; even our teachers don't want us to cross the road.

They maintained that neither the government nor the school was concerned about the matter.

Parents felt that security was particularly necessary in the afternoon. As one female parent said: “Let there be strict supervision of school and teachers”. The SBMC representative said that they had employed a security man for the school but did not have resources to pay him. One parent also thought it was important to separate off the primary and secondary compounds.

The PTA pointed out that the lack of security also resulted in vandalism of school property by unknown persons and, according to some teachers and pupils, drug-using youths and other outsiders defecated on the compound and in the classrooms at night. Lack of security also meant that JSS pupils could roll up before their shift, which was observed, and were free to loiter round the classrooms. In addition, the discipline officer for the JSS could be seen moving round the school with a large horsewhip (*koboko*) and some pupils reported that they panicked whenever they saw him in case he tried to beat them.

At break, predominantly female vendors were allowed onto the school compound although some were sometimes even there during lesson time. When interviewed informally, one vendor said pupils bought from them at break. They also said that some pupils ran out during class to buy food when they were hungry, particularly girls. Some teachers were also said to send pupils to buy snacks for them. One vendor said: “Like today, teachers are not plenty in school if not, they would have bought all my *acara*.” The vendor also said prefects collected N5 from each vendor/hawker and took them to a male teacher, which prefects confirmed, but said: “We don’t know what he does with the money.”

Several older boys (JSS pupils who study in other schools on afternoon shift) also hired out bicycles to ride during break time on the football pitch. One explained: “I get 50 to 80 Naira daily
when I give my bicycle to boys on hire. I don’t give girls because they don’t know how to ride.”

Almajiri (children who have been sent from outside the locality to live and study the Qur’an under a local mallam) were also seen begging for alms in and around the compound.

School routines

Lessons are held from 8.45am to noon because JSS lessons begin on the site immediately afterwards. Assemblies are on Mondays and Thursdays, and according to the prefects interviewed: “We arrange ourselves based on gender according to our classes, with small ones at the front to enable them hear and see what is going on in the assembly”. Each class has a stone kept in front of the head teacher’s office to indicate where they will stand. The duty teacher greets pupils with “Good morning children”, three times, to which they answer, “Good morning sir.” Pupils then squat down for prayers. During the assembly that was observed the male duty teacher led Muslim prayers after which another female teacher led Christian prayers. Pupils then sang the national anthem and the pledge before being briefed by the head teacher. On Mondays, prefects explained, pupils are inspected:

Everybody will stretch his/her hand for inspection. Girls will remove their headdresses. Pupils who are not well kept will be addressed to be clean next time. The House that came first, second and third in cleanliness [cleaning the compound] will have all pupils to clap for them.

Pupils then march to class, starting from Primary 1 up to Primary 6. The school flag is raised by three male prefects assigned by the head teacher.

Every school day, pupils line up in the school compound in gender-segregated lines, organised by the school “police” (see section on School management of pupils, below) to pick up litter. Pupils are asked to go back if prefects feel that it has not been done well enough. Litter-picking starts at 8:00am, after assembly. Some meanwhile were seen cleaning the classrooms: boys moved the furniture while girls swept.

School management of staff

Although there was a general view among the community, LGEA and the head teacher that teachers “are trying” and the education situation is improving, there was simultaneously widespread recognition that teacher absenteeism is still a major problem, and that low teacher morale lies at its root. Indeed, the SBMC respondent identified low teacher morale as the main obstacle to pupil learning. Contradictory comments about teachers were made by various respondents, such as the following: “Teachers teach very well here even though government does not support them.” Yet with regard to pupil learning the same respondent said:

I cannot say they [pupils] learn well; I cannot say they don’t learn well. There are so many problems happening with teachers; the teachers are not paid well, so there is low morale with the teachers.

The ES and SS confirmed that teacher truancy and absenteeism constitutes a problem across the LGEA and said that offending teachers are called to the office and given a verbal warning. The ES said that although it occurs with both female and male teachers, female teachers are absent more often, on the whole. In Domingo the counselling teacher is involved:

When I notice an offence (like absenteeism, truancy etc.) I call the teacher concerned and talk to them, and they listen. ...In my school here teachers are trying; they take permission before being absent due to some family problems.

Cases were also cited by two sources of teachers absenting themselves on the pretext of collecting salaries from the bank. The LGEA thought it particularly affects teachers who have been too long in one school and that such a “lack of concern” by some teachers results in pupil latecoming. The community leader suggested that teachers should be made to sign an attendance register. Parents also thought there should be stricter supervision of teachers. They felt that some teachers do not take care of pupils – by not entering the class to teach, and not
disciplining them. As one male parent explained: “Often times I come here to check the school and people say we are poking our nose in things.”

Teacher strikes, teacher shortages, teacher absenteeism and teacher punctuality were expressed concerns of some pupils. Nevertheless most of the pupils interviewed thought teachers were good, especially those that showed some understanding, and spoke English. However, at the same time one group thought that “good teachers” would help address dropout, thereby suggesting that some teachers are less than good. Similarly, parents said “good teaching” would get and keep more kids in school though it is not clear what is meant by “good teaching”.

More positively, the SS said the office was liaising with staff to mobilise teachers into setting a good example to pupils by organising hygiene and sanitation activities and evening games.

Teacher duties in the school included having four teachers in charge of the school houses, and teachers in charge of uniforms, health, quizzes, games and discipline. The head teacher said teachers are appointed to a position of responsibility based on punctuality, neatness and good manners etc. although he said that the discipline teacher was appointed because he was “active” and feared by pupils. Currently, male teachers are in charge of discipline and quizzes, and female teachers are in charge of health, and games. The school counsellor, who has a B Tech in Guidance and Counselling, was appointed based on her academic qualifications. According to the head teacher, her duty is to advise/resolve problems (e.g. debts, insults etc.) whereas she sees her remit as broader, encompassing pupil, teacher and community members’ personal and/or school-related concerns. She felt that teachers appreciated talking to her: “After advising teachers, they feel happy; they don’t harass me, nor frown their faces.”

**School management of pupils**

Despite assertions to the contrary by the LGEA, corporal punishment is sanctioned under certain conditions (see below) in Domingo Primary School and plays a central role in its disciplinary system. Its practice is widespread among teachers, prefects and monitors, and was frequently witnessed by researchers.

Various pupil groups, and girls in particular, complained that beating was what they most disliked about school, despite several agreeing with the idea that corporal punishment could correct bad behaviour. One group mentioned the case of a pupil they knew who had stopped coming to school after being beaten. A group of female pupils thought that the abolition of corporal punishment would help increase enrolment and also considered a good teacher to be one who “doesn’t beat”. A group of male pupils said: “Beating makes us not to concentrate in the class.” A JSS 2 boy found in the school compound said he comes to school early:

...to check my younger ones (a boy and a girl) who normally come late and hide behind classes [He checks that they arrive at school and enter class]. They don’t enter class because they fear beatings in the school compound.

The SBMC representative said that some parents had transferred their children to another school on account of the beating, and corporal punishment is clearly a source of friction between some parents and teachers (see Section 2.2 on Community–school relations). Nevertheless, some parents were said to be in favour of corporal punishment and reportedly brought their children to the school to be beaten, according to one teacher: “Like yesterday, one parent brought his child that he don’t [who didn’t] want to come to school, that we shall discipline the child.”

Latecoming was admitted to by all pupil groups (either on account of household chores and/or Qur’anic school – see Section 2.2 on Socio-economic activities) and the school supervisor confirmed that the problem was common across schools though he felt absenteeism was not an
issue. In contrast, the community leader thought that latecoming was more due to children’s "idleness" and lamented that some teachers do not beat latecomers. One female pupil explained: "My home is very far from school so they always beat me in school". A lot of pupils were observed arriving late even during exams for the same reasons. They were admitted into the class. However, when some pupils arrived late, they said: "Malamai ma suna zuwa letti don me zumu zo da wuri?" [Teachers also come late, so why should pupils come early?].

The head teacher said that latecomers are given two to three lashes of the cane (others claimed three to four) by prefects and duty masters and made to clean the compound. Caning, according to the head is gender-differentiated: female prefects beat girls on the back of the legs while male prefects flog boys on the buttocks. Girls, he informed, are sometimes given a lighter beating on the hand, and made to run round the class. According to a male prefect, consistent latecomers (boys and girls) are usually taken to the head teacher’s office for punishment. Pupils disagreed as to whether male or female teachers beat more though more groups thought male teachers do, which was a view endorsed by one female teacher. There was some suggestion that female teachers prefer to use other punishments such as the cockroach balance (maintaining a balance on one knee and one raised arm) or making pupils kneel down.

The school discipline policy is to record corporal punishment in the punishment book, according to one teacher. The head teacher admits it is not always followed; teachers often only report to him afterwards, and he records the corporal punishment. School observations and interviews with pupils indicated clearly that not all corporal punishment is recorded. When asked about discipline, teachers gave a range of answers. Three teachers did not mention using the cane and one teacher maintained that there was no policy regarding corporal punishment in the school. Another teacher said “special cases” are sent to the discipline teacher, and “persistent offenders” are asked by letter to bring their parents to school. One teacher thought that “as a teacher, you need authority to discipline pupils anytime without going the head teacher”.

Pupils reported that latecoming also results in being made to sweep the compound, pick up litter, arrange stones, do frog jumping and machine riding (kneeling with arms outstretched as though riding a motorbike), often under the supervision of prefects. One teacher said that girls are sometimes sent to clean the toilets. Only one group of female pupils mentioned receiving verbal rebukes although the counselling teacher said that persistent latecomers and absentees, as well as pupils caught stealing, are sent to her for counselling. “They normally tell me that their relatives die; they take care of younger ones; they go to farm. ...These affect more of boys from both Christians and Muslims,” she said.

Both female and male pupil groups mentioned cases of truancy for a whole term. All said parents were made to explain absences to the school. Even so, female pupils complained that as a result they could be reprimanded, beaten, insulted, or chased away. One said: “We are not happy, [we] get angry; at times some of us cry; some are shy to stay in school; some cannot listen or participate in class.” Indeed, for one group of female pupils, being sent away from school was what they most disliked about school. The ES said that teachers take and mark attendance of pupils twice a day on a register, which the head teacher countersigns every week. Teachers’ views were mixed on attendance: they agreed that for some pupils it is good, and for others it is poor but disagree on which social groups were more affected. One teacher considered the solution to be to make perpetual offenders stand in class, or to make them sweep and arrange stones, or to send them to the head teacher for advice.

With regards to bullying, the counselling teacher said she tried to get pupils to report cases of bullying to her or another teacher “so I call those concerned and advise them and caution the
one at fault” (see Pupil–pupil relations below). Other teachers had other strategies: one female teacher reportedly investigates the matter and refers it to the discipline teacher; a male teacher reported calling pupils to order, warning them verbally before sending them back to class; another said he calls them out during assembly and asks them to arrange stones and cane them. Observations at break showed younger pupils, and girls in particular, reporting being bullied to the head teacher and other teachers. However, it was clear from pupil reports that some teachers beat those accused of bullying. “Teacher Bash”, whom pupils feared at the same time, was a teacher one group of pupils would turn to if bullied: “Teacher Bash, Teacher Bash, ah a kwai dariyan mugunta” [He has wicked laughs].

The school had a large-scale, differentiated prefect and monitor system in operation. There were said to be 39 prefects including the head boy, head girl, assistants, compound prefects, police prefects, doctors (who look after pupil health issues) and “office girls” (who clean the head teacher’s office). According to the head teacher and pupils, pupils that perform well in class are selected. A committee of senior class teachers interviews pupils, sets an exam for them, and then picks “good ones” as prefects. A couple of pupil groups thought that age and good behaviour also play a role. Two groups (both male and female pupils) thought that more female pupils are selected, though observations suggested it was about 50:50. The school had both a head girl and a head boy (each with an assistant), police who take care of the school compound etc. Police and compound prefects ensure latecomers are apprehended, according to one prefect. A female compound prefect said: “I bring out brooms from the office and distribute them to pupils and make sure they sweep.” A male police prefect continued: “We make sure pupils pick and sweep the school compound. Anyone who does not, we beat him/her and they don’t retaliate even on our way home.” This is contrary to the views of the counselling teacher who said that although prefects carry canes they are not allowed to beat pupils. The head boy said he supervises: “I tell prefects to make sure pupils pick [litter] and sweep the school compound”. The assistant head girl, however, had no idea of her duties: “I don’t know my duties, I was given the post”. One overage boy interviewed said he was made a prefect whose duty was to track down absentees: “We are the ones to go and look for pupils who don’t want to come to school but I did not accept it”.

Pupils said teachers, prefects and monitors intervened in pupils’, mainly boys’, fighting, bullying etc. by beating the culprits. One pupil objected to prefects/monitors beating younger pupils. One group of girls complained of female pupils being beaten with fan belts, canes, or cables on the hand or on the back. Monitors, according to prefects, are appointed based on their reading skills in English and they both supervise classroom cleaning and monitor and discipline the class when teachers are absent. In this school the boy was always the monitor; the girl was the assistant monitor. One prefect explained: “If pupils make noise when teachers are not around, then monitors beat them at the hand, legs or at [on the] the backs using stick.” This the monitors confirmed. However, monitors who write down the names of noisemakers and send the list to the teachers for punishment said they are not attacked afterwards. In a lower primary class which was without a teacher both the female and male monitors were observed beating pupils hard and indiscriminately with sticks. One boy who was beaten by the monitor cried profusely and saw the monitor as a monster. The monitor explained: “The boy I beat and he cried was making noise, so I beat him and he will not report me; neither will [he] refuse to learn.” Another monitor interviewed said: “If madam is not around, we make pupils to keep quiet by saying, ‘Keep quiet.’ Wanda ya ki yin shuru, sai ya sha bulala” [and if they refuse to keep quiet, then they will get a beating].
Most pupils were wearing school uniform, including sandals, though there was some confusion among pupils about the new state policy to provide uniforms for pupils, which they thought they would have to buy.

**Pupil–pupil relations**
Groups of pupils were seen socialising and playing games in the compound at break, generally in gender-segregated and age-related groups. Girls were seen playing catch-and-throw games and singing whereas some boys played football and rode round on bikes (see earlier section on Security). A number of pupils also moved to the far end of the football pitch to buy sugar cane, moimoi, cakes and oranges. Girls shared their food with girls while boys shared with other boys. A number of Primary 1 pupils were also seen playing and idling around during the exam period as they were without teachers.

However, teachers and pupils agreed that there was a fair amount of fighting and bullying in the school, though they disagreed about who was generally involved. One teacher thought that (some) boys bully both boys and girls whereas another teacher thought both boys and girls are involved, with younger ones generally the victims. Both female and male pupils interviewed complained about fighting, bullying, and pupil disobedience as one of things they most disliked about the school. On the way to class from assembly, lines of girls in particular were seen pushing and shoving each other.

Large, overage boys were often singled out as a problem group, by some pupils and the head teacher, both for bullying and being bullied. The head teacher said he tells overage pupils not to bully but other pupils – both girls and boys – insult them that they are “big for nothing”, which makes them feel “shy” and sometimes stop coming to school. One 17-year old boy, however, thought otherwise:

> I do understand what is going on; I participate in answering questions in the class but in Hausa. Pupils don’t laugh at me, and teachers see us as the same. “Bana shiga harkan yara a’i” (I don’t interfere with little children’s affairs). I sit in class, but I don’t disturb pupils. I don’t bully. If pupils tease me I tell the teacher.

Male and female pupils complained that pupils who missed a term were laughed at or teased by other pupils upon their return and female pupils complained of being disliked by their friends.

Bullying by prefects and monitors was both observed and reported (see School management of pupils, above) although one prefect denied its occurrence: “We [prefects] don’t bully here”.

There was also some indication that some older girls would brag about being superior to younger girls. In addition, as one group of female pupils explained, some girls drop out because they become interested in men: “Girls do not complete school because they get conscious of their age; they call themselves BIG GIRLS [original emphasis], and are interested in men.”

**In the classroom**

**Classroom conditions and resources**
Seven classes were observed. There were sufficient classrooms for all lessons to be held indoors though most rooms were very overcrowded. There were benches and desks but some had up to five pupils per bench. Walls were bare and floors were potholed in places. All classrooms had chalkboards but in varying states of repair though generally visible from the back of the classroom. However, one group of pupils wanted their class to be renovated, painted and the chalkboard to be replaced.
The vast majority of pupils had writing materials, a few had bags, but very few had textbooks and in one class there were no textbooks visible. Several groups of pupils thought more textbooks would help them learn better. The PTA also mentioned shortage of textbooks. The ES felt that in general more textbooks would help increase pupil enrolment. The counselling teacher pointed out, however, that some teachers improvise teaching aids. The SS thought that the use of teaching aids, alongside use of textbooks, also helped encourage children into school. No teaching aids were seen in use.

**Seating arrangements**

In the seven observed classes, class sizes in six lessons ranged from 65–76 (36–43 girls; 22–34 boys) including a substantial number of overage pupils, both girls and boys. One teacher said that the full class would total above 80. In the seventh lesson, observed on a very different occasion, numbers were much lower at 42 (23 girls; 19 boys), with many absentees. Two teachers thought they had a repeater each. While acknowledging government policy on no repeaters, one said: “but I don’t believe in the government policy of no repeat; it’s a corruption of the system”. The SBMC member interviewed said that the teacher–pupil ratio needed to be reduced. The head teacher said the school had approximately 20–30 pupils repeating – both boys and girls, Christians and Muslims – generally based on parents’ request on account of poor test performance or poor attendance.

Seats and benches were arranged in three or four columns and five to eight rows. There were more girls than boys present in each class with girls totalling double the number of boys in one observation. In that particular lesson, there was a mixed seating arrangement among boys and girls, though the moment the teacher left the room, pupils reverted to gender-segregated groups. In the other observed lessons, pupils grouped themselves in gender-specific blocks with overage girls noticeably grouped together in one class and boys and/or overage pupils often at the very back. It was also noticeable in a few instances that pupils preferred to be squeezed onto a crowded bench rather than sit on a less crowded bench with someone from the “opposite sex”.

Teachers said that although some teachers mixed girls and boys, generally pupils preferred to be in gender-specific groups. This was generally attributed to “culture”, and Muslim culture in particular, especially with regard to girls not interacting with boys. One group of male pupils complained of “teasing from girls when they sit together.” One teacher said that some parents told pupils that girls and boys should not sit together. However, two teachers maintained that whatever parents’ views about segregation at home, all pupils came to school for a common purpose: “But in school all of them come here to make great thing out of school.”

**Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)**

The seven lessons observed comprised traditional didactic whole-class teaching with the teacher generally at the front by the board though a couple moved about, checking that pupils were writing. Two teachers monologued throughout. The other teachers predominantly taught through question-and-answer routines which demanded a variety of choral repetition and individual questioning or, in the case of the two Maths lessons, by introducing the topic, giving some example calculations and then getting pupils to copy and answer sums from the board. In an English lesson, the teacher read a story from the textbook, breaking off to translate and ask pupils’ questions. There seemed to be some level of understanding among some pupils in most of the classes but in one class, where the teacher was not in control, none of the pupils appeared to understand the lesson.
The ES maintained that if teachers could vary teaching techniques and methods, it would improve pupil attendance and performance.

In the seven observed lessons, one teacher used English throughout, two taught predominantly in English – both these were English lessons – three taught in a mixture of English and Hausa and one teacher taught almost exclusively in Hausa. In this last lesson, pupils too tended to respond in Hausa, particularly the girls. All four teachers said they felt comfortable teaching in English but three said they also used Hausa to clarify issues, or for emphasis. As one put it: “Pupils never forget things taught in Hausa”. Teachers’ views were mixed on what they thought pupils felt about learning in English. Two of the four teachers explained that pupils couldn’t speak or understand English well: “Some of the pupils don’t understand English; that is why we are using Hausa”. Another added: “some pupils, when you are speaking English, they will just be looking at you like that [with a blank expression].” Some pupils, according to one teacher, were unable to speak Hausa either. Nevertheless, the teacher also acknowledged that even though some pupils found it difficult “they want to speak”. In contrast, one teacher was adamant that pupils were happy learning in English: “They greet me in English whenever we meet in town”. Two of the teachers thought perhaps that girls were happier learning in English, but only a few boys liked it. One male Muslim teacher thought it affected “slow learners” – both girls and boys from Muslim families who were late to school because of attending Qur’anic school in the morning. Pupils themselves held mixed views on the preferred medium of instruction. Most preferred a mix of English and Hausa, though two groups of female pupils said they preferred to be taught all in English. At the same time, however, one of the two groups also admitted that understanding English pronunciation constituted a major learning difficulty. One of the female groups that preferred all teaching to take place in English also considered teaching in English as a feature of a good teacher. Similarly, one of the boys’ groups thought they would learn better if the teacher spoke more English in their class.

Observations showed that generally oral participation in class was fairly balanced between girls and boys although in two classes, girls seemed to participate more. However, in both these classes the number of female pupils was substantially higher than that of boys. In one of these classes the teacher seemed to pay more attention to female pupils. Moreover, given the large class sizes, overall, very few individual pupils got to answer questions. In one class pupils also asked a lot of questions in Hausa.

Teacher and pupil views on patterns of oral participation also varied. One teacher was adamant that it depended on the class whereas two teachers believed that girls were often “shy”, which one male Muslim teacher thought applied particularly to Muslim girls because he maintained that according to Islamic beliefs, girls should not look people directly in the eyes. On the other hand another Muslim male teacher felt Muslim girls and boys were “more shy; some can write but can’t speak.” Pupil groups agreed along gender lines: female pupils thought that girls participated more, due to being more attentive and careful; boys thought that boys participated more because they concentrated harder whereas girls had a “nonchalant” attitude and were more affected by peer pressure. There was some cross-gender agreement that overage pupils felt particularly fearful of making mistakes and being laughed at (see below). As one female pupil put it: “Big boys are afraid to give wrong answers that will make other pupils laugh at them”. One of the boys concurred: “Overage don’t participate for fear of giving wrong answers. Overage girls fear younger girls will beat them in performance.” They feel “shame”, another pupil added.

Teachers held mixed views on whether there was any difference in the way female or male teachers taught; three were of the opinion that there were professional and unprofessional, lazy or not lazy teachers, irrespective of gender. That said, one male teacher thought that male
teachers were more supportive though pupils did not back this up. Most pupils thought teachers generally treated all pupils the same, a view held by the head teacher, except one group that thought some teachers favoured “intelligent pupils”. Some pupil groups, both female and male, accused some female teachers of being in a hurry to leave class, or of sitting around in class and not teaching.

Male teachers will make sure we finish our class work before we go out for break while female teachers will leave the class even before the end of the lesson. (male pupil)

Female teachers sit under the tree most times. (male pupil)

Male teachers take their time to explain. (female pupil)

Several groups identified good teacher–pupil relations as essential for a good teacher. In addition to having sound knowledge of the subject, they wanted teachers who were punctual, caring and kind. A couple of pupil groups highlighted teacher attention as helping learning, especially “a teacher who gives attention to individual differences of pupils”. Observations showed teachers to be encouraging and supportive on the whole, with a couple even calling pupils by name, although one who was so described still carried a cane throughout the class. One teacher, who struggled to control the class, seemed indifferent.

**Pupil performance**

There were similarly divergent views among teachers on pupil performance though all were agreed that pupils “are all trying”; opinion was divided on whether boys or girls generally “performed better”. One teacher said it depended on the class; another thought boys performed better because they interacted in class more than girls; a third teacher thought that girls performed better on account of parental assistance, which they could access because they spent more time at home.

Pupil opinions were similarly varied, though both groups of male pupils were adamant that “girls cheat” and copied answers off them. Conversely, female pupils complained of boys’ copying: “If we sit with boys, they copy our answers and the teacher flogs us [both the boy and girl involved]”. One group of boys was more undecided: “Boys perform better in tests in Primary 5. Girls play a lot, don’t come to school, go for petty trading”. While from Primary 6, the group said girls did better: “Boys do not come to school regularly, and play a lot.” A lower school monitor said: “In our class, boys perform better; the girls make a lot of noise so they don’t perform. The head teacher concluded that it varied but that more girls had won prizes in his two years at the school. Prizes (notebooks, rulers, pens), he said, were given out for the top three performing pupils in the class though one group of male pupils thought there should be graduation ceremonies for successful graduates.

PTA members and parents also offered opinions on pupil performance: “A na samu dai kalila a chikin mata” [We get good pupils; a few among them are girls] (PTA member). Parents thought perhaps boys do better “because they have less work to do at home, while girls don’t do better because they are burdened with a lot of home chores; they tend to sleep at home”.

**Discipline**

Several pupils were disciplined during four of the lesson observations. In the other three, no overt physical disciplining was observed. One teacher carried a cane throughout the lesson but did not use it. However, he disciplined one boy during the lesson for making noise by forcing him to kneel on the floor, and verbally reprimanded another for bullying. In another class, a male monitor went round the class enforcing discipline by beating pupils, though only flogged girls,
without interference from the teacher. In a fourth class, a male monitor flogged another boy for sleeping in class but was stopped by the teacher, who then cautioned the sleeping boy.

In terms of maintaining discipline, in a couple of classes pupils went in and out at will without interference by the teacher. There was also a lot of noise and playing around in some classes, involving different groups of boys or girls, which again were ignored or not noticed by the teacher. In one lesson, the teacher was not in control and attempted to assume control by shouting at them in Hausa: “Kuna hauka!” [You are mad!], and by appointing a large overage boy to control his peers. Even so there was a lot of noise by boys and girls a lot of bullying was observed among (some) male pupils, which went on unchecked. Pupils also complained about misbehaviour by other pupils (see section on Pupil–pupil relations below).

When asked about disciplining pupils in class, teachers’ expressed preferences ranged from advising pupils to behave using religious stories and sayings, to the widespread practice of making pupils (both boys and girls) stand up or kneel down. For serious offences (e.g. smoking/stealing), a couple of teachers mentioned sending pupils to the discipline teacher. (See section on School management of pupils above).

Pupil–pupil relations
In the observed classes pupil–pupil relations varied, depending to an extent on the degree and type of discipline maintained by the teacher and the seating arrangements. Thus, in the lesson where the teacher had no control of the class and pupils came in and out of the room at will, a lot of bullying was witnessed by older, bigger boys on other boys and girls, such as punching others, stealing their stationery or calling them names. In the only class where girls and boys were seated together and the teacher had a firm but friendly grip on the class there was no pupil–pupil interaction witnessed during the lesson. In the classes with gender-segregated seating, boys and girls predominantly interacted in gender-specific groups, which teachers said was usual although one said pupils sometimes stuck to family groups; there were several cases of groups of girls making a lot of noise and playing around, and of boys teasing other boys or also playing around. One teacher said boys sometimes pinched each other in lessons. In the one class where there was cross-gender interaction, it centred round exchanging and sharing food. Some of the female hawkers interviewed informally confirmed that they also sold to pupils in class. However, one teacher also said there was sometimes other cross-gender interaction in class: “Boys sometimes walk to girls to ask them answers to some questions.”

Teachers generally complained that girls made a lot of noise because of their large numbers but they also complained that boys played around, and that bigger boys sometimes bullied smaller boys and fought girls. As one teacher explained: “Boys are more stubborn. They always want to show off that they are boys.” Some of the pupils interviewed also complained about pupil disobedience, pupils eating in class and making noise – though it was not clear if the teacher was present on such occasions. As one put it: “I don’t care [for the] attitude of pupils, fighting, playing.” On one research visit, some of the lower classes were without teachers while the upper classes were sitting exams. In two classes a lot of boys were seen by the windows making noise and a number were beating girls, with one boy beating particularly hard and out of control. Nobody intervened.

Teasing pupils who get the answer wrong was another issue. One teacher explained: “When I ask a question and one fails to answer, they all laugh at the person.” I don’t allow beating [of pupils who laughed] by the class monitor; I try to talk to pupils.” Overage pupils seemed particularly affected, according to both pupils and some teachers. One teacher linked it to dropout although teachers generally did not think dropout was an issue: “They [overage pupils] are being teased;
they run away from some classes due to their age.” Pupils admitted overage pupils were sometimes called “fool” if they could not answer a question and one group suggested that overage pupils probably felt more ashamed because they were older and were expected to know more. Unsurprisingly, observations showed that overage pupils seemed to group together and sit apart in some lessons. Pupils that did not attend school regularly also tended to sit apart, according to one teacher.

2.2 Family and community
Socio-economic activities
There was agreement among LGEA, community and school respondents, including pupils, that absenteeism, dropout and/or non-enrolment in school was often due to children being involved in farming, petty business or learning a trade. Most respondents thought boys were most affected but pupils were less sure, especially when it came to identifying which social groups had never been to school. According to the head teacher, petty trading was the most common reason to drop out of school among boys. Overage boys, in particular, had resulted from dropping out for trading and returning to school. One teacher said they had lots of 15 to 16-years-olds (mainly boys) in their class for this reason. The school supervisor thought this was due to the proximity of the market and the motor park, which provided opportunities to earn some money from menial jobs. One overage boy said that both Muslim and Christian boys were often absent from school to go to mechanic shops. Teachers also mentioned boys leaving school to begin apprenticeships as welders or electricians. There was recognition by pupil groups that parents needed kids to earn money. As one female pupil explained: “Maybe their parents want them to go do petty trading to get money for the family.” The community leader concurred that boys in particular missed or dropped out of school in order to earn money: “Pupils always go to fend for themselves after looking for petty jobs at mechanic workshops. It affects their learning at school.” He concluded that their performance was affected because they didn’t stay at home to read. One male pupil group lamented the lack of job opportunities after school and thought that creating job opportunities would help dropout: “so that parents will allow pupils to stay in school”.

Farming too was highlighted by teachers and pupils as a cause of absenteeism, dropout and overage. One staff member thought that absenteeism and temporary dropout is highest among Higgi pupils because parents take boys and girls away to farm (or trade) during the planting season (May to June) and then return. He explained: “Some parents like the Higgis take their children for farming during rainy season and later bring them back for enrolment during [the] dry season.” Even without migrating, children’s labour is needed before school. One boy said he had to help his father “mash mud” for the construction of huts before coming to school. The counselling teacher reported that in her conversations with parents, many talked about the need for their children (girls and boys, Christians and Muslims) to help during the harvest.

Home chores, sometimes in combination with petty trading, were also identified by various respondents as a major obstacle to children’s schooling, resulting in absenteeism and late coming. Most respondents thought this affected girls in particular though all pupils reported having some chores. The head teacher thought Muslim girls, most of all, were late for school. One teacher and two groups of female pupils mentioned the fact that some parents kept their girls at home to take care of the home and look after siblings. All pupil groups – male and female – said they came late because of household chores. Female pupils reported girls cooking; both girls and boys reported fetching water. Parents and PTA members interviewed concurred that girls did more of the domestic tasks such as sweeping, washing plates and cooking while boys did heavier manual work, such as farming, and taking care of animals. Both groups agreed that girls’ attendance
(including punctuality) was affected more. One group of girls interviewed thought the school should “talk with parents to give children less work especially in the morning.”

**Families (including religion, ethnicity and issues of educational choice)**

Many pupils live within the vicinity of the school, but some reported having to walk up to an hour to reach school. Some pupils attributed their latecoming to the distance they live from school. The ES said that most schools in the LGA were within reach except a few places where there were rivers and no bridges, in which case, if it rained, pupils might not be able to get to school.

Although PTA members pointed out that some pupils arrived late because of staying at home to eat after chores or Qur’anic school in the morning, pupils not eating before coming to school was identified as a bigger problem by pupils, teachers and community members. One female pupil group complained of being late for school because there was no food to eat in the house. Another young girl who arrived late one day explained: “they sent me at home to buy something across the road, and I waited to eat food before coming.” A couple of teachers considered malnutrition at home due to poverty to be a major barrier to pupil learning. The head teacher added that pupils needed to be given food before school: “Hunger stops pupils from learning in school.” One teacher explained: “We invite and talk to parents to try and give pupils food to eat, no matter the hardship.” One female parent echoed these sentiments: “If a child eats well at home, he learns better in school.” Another teacher added:

Some get food to eat before coming to school; some don’t get [food]; they come to school and start complaining of fever, headache etc. When you examine them, you discover it’s hunger and not sickness.

Whatever the cause, all pupil groups said they missed the occasional day through sickness; several pupils mentioned bereavement or caring for sick family members. The ES also considered sickness to be a major cause of dropout, though maintained dropout figures were low for both boys and girls.

The SS, teachers and all pupil groups agreed that Muslim pupils attending Qur’anic school was another major cause of pupil latecoming. The head teacher explained that Qur’anic schools end at 7:15am, but some pupils live 2–3km from school. In addition, as the community leader pointed out, pupils then wait to eat at home in between schools. Although the SS thought that boys were more affected by attending Qur’anic schools than girls, teachers felt that the pupils who sometimes arrived very late, after the second or third lesson, were mainly girls. As a way of addressing the issue, teachers felt that parents should be told to bring pupils on time.

Some overage pupils were also due to Qur’anic schooling with some parents preferring children to complete some years of Islamic education before starting public school. Thus, as one teacher explained: Muslim parents “sometimes take their children to distant towns for Qur’anic schooling and after graduating, they bring them back to be enrolled into primary schools; by then they are overaged.” Another teacher added: “You see a child in Primary 1 who has already reached ten years.” A 17-year-old boy in Primary 5 told his story:

I attended army primary school and at Primary 3, my parents withdrew me and took me [away] for Qur’anic schooling. Thereafter we came back my father brought me here. The head teacher asked me some questions, and later put me in Primary 5.

Two teachers said they had overage pupils in their class. One said that overage Muslim girls were often there for cultural/religious reasons and also because their parents preferred girls to marry than to come to school.
Some teachers also thought that some Muslim children in the area had never been to a public school because some preferred a wholly Qur’anic education; as the SBMC member put it: “Their parents don’t believe in western education... They are just conservatives.” PTA members: also thought some parents have an “I-don’t-care attitude towards western education”. In the words of one LGEA official: “They view western education as a left-hand education; they prefer the Qur’anic school.” Although the community leader believed some parents were like that some preferred Islamic schools where the “western” and Qur’anic curriculum would both be taught.

The issue of almajiri, predominantly Hausa and Hausa-Fulani, especially from other states, and who were observed hanging round the school entrance, was also brought up by teachers, SBMC and LGEA officials. The ES explained:

Within my area there are about 1,000 almajiris who don’t attend primary schools; their mallams don’t want to send them to school. Their parents send them from far towns to read Qur’an only; the mallam don’t have money to send them to public school and it’s not within his powers to do that.

One teacher thought the solution was to talk to the mallams.

**Almajiri’s story**

I like the school and the pupils; they do attract me; that is why I come here virtually every day to watch them. My father don’t want school. When he travelled, my mother enrolled me in school but when he came back he removed me. My father lives in Kano. He sent me to X town to do Qur’anic school. Even if you go to him, he will not allow me to enter school. He had instructed the mallam not to enrol me into any western school. I want to be governor sometimes, but I do only Qur’anic school. This orange was given to me by people around. Mallam takes care of us, but we go out to beg for food and money. Sometimes I get 50 Naira; sometimes I don’t get anything. If mallam sees my money he will collect it from me, so I give one woman to hide it for me. If you give me free education, I will go to school even in your house in Yola. I will follow you.

There was also a view in the LGEA that “some parents are smugglers. They send their children to assist them in the business and once they start getting money, they stop coming to school.”

Pupil lateness or truancy was also blamed by various parties on the pupils themselves, or on poor parenting. One teacher commented that parents blamed (some) pupils for “idling and playing along the way to school”. One JSS pupil who came to check that his younger siblings had come to class attributed their latecoming to “play[ing] a lot on their way to school.” The community leader commented that “sometimes the parents want pupils to go to school and they [pupils] do not want to go to school.” Pupils and parents confirmed this: “Sometimes the children themselves don’t want to come to school.” What is not known, or was not articulated, are the precise reasons why some pupils do not want to go to school, which may be related to in-school practices. It may be the same reason that, according to pupils, some parents stop their children from going to school, or do not enrol them in the first place, namely because no teaching is done in school. One female interview group asked for parents to “stop children from drinking alcohol and drugs” and to “talk with parents about children flirting and making people believe that is school that spoil children [encourages bad behaviour].”

Some parents were also blamed for not monitoring pupils’ attendance in school and/or school or homework. One teacher thought that some boys – both Christian and Muslim – missed school because of a lack of parental supervision. One LGEA official, who was Muslim, thought this applied to some Muslim parents in particular, resulting in boys in particular being absent and/or dropping out. Parents interviewed believed it was the duty of parents to be close to (and monitor) their children in school. The community leader pointed out that parents did sometimes come to school to check attendance but “some pupils leave home with the guise of coming to
school, but they do not.” Commenting on such truancy, one PTA member pointed out that it was no surprise that pupils were not in school when some of them had even left home: “Some children even left home completely, how much less of [let alone] school?” This was more likely to apply to boys since, as one PTA member noted, boys generally had more freedom to move around at home than girls. Another PTA member noted that neighbours normally called on pupils to run to school when they saw that they were running late. Yet as one male parent recounted, times are changing:

In time past, any parent can discipline pupils when they are not behaving very well, but now it is difficult. I was once insulted by one mother because I disciplined her son, whom I found idling away during classes.

The parents interviewed believed that parents should provide school materials for pupils (exercise books, textbooks, pens, uniform, sandals etc) although a couple of respondents pointed to parental poverty and the inability of some to pay fees, and for uniforms as one reason for the non-attendance at school of some boys. Teachers too generally thought that there were some parents who could not afford to buy writing materials. The head teacher, on the other hand, thought parents generally did buy exercise books, pens, and give pupils money for breakfast. One teacher felt pupil obedience would help persuade their parents to purchase writing materials:

Yesterday I gave pupils work in maths. Some of them were just like this making noise. I fished them out and asked them of their writing materials they said they don’t have. Then I advised them to be obedient to their parents so that they will buy books for them, because some of the pupils are stubborn.

The teacher also thought parents should be checking pupils’ homework. Most pupils interviewed, both boys and girls, said they received help with their homework from family members though three Muslim boys in one group denied getting any assistance. The PTA confirmed that both Christian and Muslim pupils got help from older siblings and that Christian pupils also got help from parents at home. The parents interviewed confirmed this and two Christian parents (one male, one female) interviewed said they personally helped their children. One teacher also thought parents should give children a foundation in English and Hausa.

Views were mixed in terms of gender-differentiated attitudes to schooling. One teacher thought it was different for (some) boys and girls: “Boys attached more importance to school than girls because some of the boys see and want to imitate some professionals as role models. But some girls have seen their mothers in the kitchen; they are discouraged”. Some girls in the community, both Christian and Muslim are also married early, according to the community leader. One male parent thought that:

... some pupils want to make progress and benefit from school, while others (more of females) come to school for coming sake ... Children should not only go to school to acquire knowledge but be encouraged to acquire skills that will make them independent be they Muslims or Christians, e.g. mechanics, improve agriculture etc.

The PTA thought some parents (both religions) preferred boys “because of their culture” and their chances of getting jobs, but others did not:

_Wasssu iyyaye, sun fi so, su karfaxayansu maza su yi karatu domin su mazane, zasu zauna a gida. Wadansu kuma ba banbanchi don a yanzu ma yan mata sun fi taimakon iyyaye.”_ (Some parents prefer to encourage their male children to read because they are males; they will keep a home. Some parents do not show this difference now because female children help parents better than male children)

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Pupils mostly thought school was “important for all” although one group of girls thought that boys took it more seriously because they had better job prospects than girls. “Men can be more focused and strong hearted”, one girl said. A group of boys maintained that “Boys [can] think better than girls” although another group (both Muslim and Christian boys) thought that religion was a more important determinant and that more Christian boys and girls preferred school than Muslims.

LGEA officials also thought communities in the area were generally positive about girls’ education and cited the case of a former female commissioner from the area who had served as a role-model to parents for their female children to emulate. However, the ES was of the view that some Hausa-Fulani settlers did not value formal education, and the SS, who was Muslim, thought that in Domingo school, the Christian community showed more commitment to their children’s education while the parental attitude of some Muslim parents was still affecting the participation of Muslim girls in school.

Other schools in the area included an Islamiyya school, offering Islamic and “western” education, according to the head teacher, as well as many private schools. One parent was of the opinion that “private schools had destroyed [Domingo Primary School] because rich people took their children to private school.” A couple of the pupil groups said they went to Domingo because their parents did not have the money to send them to private school. None of the pupils interviewed had family members in another school.

**Community–school relations**

The head teacher described relations with the community as “cordial” while the PTA members similarly said they thought the head teacher and teachers were “co-operating ... and are trying”. The main communication link between school and community was the PTA, which, according to the SS, was also the main means of communication between the LGEA and the school (see Section 2.3. on LGEA–community relations).

In Domingo Primary School the money for a lot of the school renovation and furniture repairs derived from the PTA levy, ₦50 per term, as well as from infrequent ad hoc collections for particular projects (in addition to the ₦200 enrolment fee). The head teacher praised the PTA’s assistance: “During PTA’s last meeting, they agreed and collected ₦200 from each member for renovation of classrooms”. This was confirmed by the community leader, who was formerly involved in the PTA. He thought school, community and PTA communication links were good. PTA members saw communication with the community primarily in terms of responding to school/committee needs: “Whenever there is an outstanding project, we do have general community meetings and parents do willingly make contributions and donations towards it”. Parents confirmed that community concerns about the school had similarly been about fixing infrastructure, such as repairing roofs or benches. They also thought the PTA chair and committee functioned well and that the school responded to their requests, such as sorting out a drainage issue when the school was flooded though it was not clear exactly what the response was. PTA members said they had regular meetings with teachers and also collaborated with LGEA officials to solve problems (see also Section 2.3. on LGEA–community relations).

More broadly across the LGA, the ES confirmed that community support occurs principally through construction and repairs though some communities are also employing temporary teachers:

Parents assist in renovating classrooms; in 2002, 38 communities launched an appeal fund to help the school. At Community X, a community constructed classrooms valued up to 4 million Naira through the self-help project.
Teachers, however, had mixed views on community support. One teacher thought PTA support was variable: “At times they provide whatever we tell them the school needs, a time they object.” Another teacher noted that although the community had renovated classrooms and provided a water supply, they thought the community should renovate the entire school. In contrast, one teacher denied that there was any support from the community:

If you look at our school, there is nothing from the community. During raining season, most of the classes are leaking. Anytime we resume from breaks, our classes will be contaminated with human faeces; there is no security in the school.

One group of pupils also complained of classrooms being used as toilets by some community members and drugs users.

Outside of infrastructural development and support, however, there was clearly less agreement and/or less effective communication between some community members and the school. The head teacher saw the encroachment onto school land and/or the selling of school land by community leaders as the school’s main problem. Interestingly, in another school, the ES had taken a PTA chair to court for encroachment into school lands and won the case.

A major area of tension between some parents and teachers was some teachers’ use of corporal punishment. Indeed, teachers thought parental attitudes, especially as regards corporal punishment, constituted one of school’s main challenges:

- Parents insult teachers when pupils are disciplined.
- Parents molest teachers when pupils are disciplined.
- Parents are harassing teachers.
- Parents attack teachers for caning their wards.

The PTA committee reportedly had had to intervene between parents and teachers, with reports that someone told parents: “When you spare the rod, you spare the child”. Teachers felt the need for more PTA meetings and “greater parent–teacher cooperation” to address parents and “tell them that we are there for the children. Let them support us in training the children.” There was a call for better attendance at PTA meetings and a plea for PTA members to visit school more to check on and report pupils’ problems. School staff thought more meetings with parents could also help rectify absenteeism, latecoming and non-enrolment of children, especially by “ignorant parents” although one teacher thought that teachers should go to pupils’ homes to check on absent pupils. There was contradictory evidence among some school and community members as to whether the issue of pupil absenteeism had been raised with parents. However, the LGEA said they had successfully worked with the PTA in one school to address parents on attendance, which had subsequently improved.

Some Muslim parents were singled out by teachers as needing to be educated on “western education.” Pupils too felt more dialogue was necessary with some parents, as some “don’t care” or are “indifferent” to school. The parents interviewed said that the school reported back to parents about pupils in meetings and invited parents to school but admitted: “Some parents don’t understand; they try to fight teachers,” which is a further reference to disagreements about corporal punishment.

Some teachers wanted greater communication with mallams and religious leaders to encourage children to go to Domingo Primary School in the morning and Qur’anic schools in the evening. According to one teacher, the school had tried to persuade parents to send their children to school by 7:30am.
There was a call from some school and LGEA sources for greater community involvement. The ES thought this could include provision of accommodation for teachers near the school, provision of water supply and supervision of teachers and school activities.

The LGEA in particular was also keen on greater involvement by the SBMC in the running of schools, which they thought would help the LGEA to do its job. The ES and SS gave examples of “strong SBMCs” in the area: One school SBMC chair had mobilised “old boys” and they had constructed a classroom block; another SBMC chair had lobbied and got furniture and classroom blocks from the Board for their school; another had fixed the borehole in a school; another had “enlightened” parents to sew new school uniforms. In Domingo the SBMC representative acknowledged that the SBMC was “weak now because it is a new body and we don’t have resources” although the head teacher said the SBMC was good at lobbying for school projects. The SBMC representative also admitted that the community preferred to communicate through the PTA. He also emphasised the need for the school to respond to the community: “They have to because if they don’t do what the community wants, they will be in trouble.”

2.3 The LGEA/LGA

**LGEA/LGA internal relations**

LGEA officials felt they needed greater incentives to help them do their work: the ES felt that the Level 14 barrier should be removed so that the ES could reach Level 17 like counterparts in other government areas; the SS mentioned the need to have running costs paid for his motor bike, and for more stationery. The view was also expressed that the “office of the ES should not be politicised; it should be professional” and that teacher appointments were also sometimes politicised, with unqualified “natives” [Gude] sometimes preferred over qualified “non indigenes” One of the teachers echoed this view: “Politics in the appointment of officers should be discouraged.”

**School governance**

There was widespread recognition across school, community and LGEA respondents that addressing teachers’ conditions of service was major way of improving the quality of education. The greatest priority, all agreed, was for government to ensure prompt payment of teachers’ salaries. Teachers were unanimous that delayed promotions and salaries, and poor salaries was what they most disliked about school. “Teachers are not treated well,” one said. “Government should take care of teachers”, one parent said “and ensure teachers are paid on time.” Conversely, a couple of teachers said that good pay and prompt promotion were what would most help them do their job better. It was suggested that government should pay teachers’ salaries similar to those in other organisations. The SS noted that the bank payment schedule, in particular, should be revisited because it caused teacher absenteeism. One parent noted the need to stop teachers’ strikes.

LGEA officials agreed. The ES thought teachers’ salaries should be increased by up to 27%; teachers should be trained up to NCE level; motorbikes should be provided for head teachers; and that there should not be a cap of Level 14 for primary teachers who held a degree since they could reach Level 17 at secondary schools, which encouraged a brain drain from primary schools. The ES also said he had promised to grant a duty post allowance requested by head teachers and school supervisors, and he also wanted motorbikes to be provided for head teachers.

The shortage of properly qualified teachers was also brought up by LGEA, PTA and school staff as an issue affecting pupil access, which the SS thought was partly due to the poor incentives for teachers.
In terms of governance, the head teacher confirmed that the district education committee was not operational while the ES made it clear that he relied on communities, PTAs and SBMCs. He said he met directly with SBMCs, and asked for support from the communities before asking government: “I do ask the community to do whatever they can do to assist the school before government can come in.”

LGEA officials also acknowledged the work the Board has done, particularly as regards constructing classrooms and improved provision of textbooks and free uniforms, which had, in turn, improved access, but said more classrooms, furniture and textbooks were needed to further encourage more pupils into school. Teacher’s guides and teaching aids were also requested. Teachers were unhappy about school conditions, and requested “decongested classrooms” with adequate furniture. As one teacher pointed out: “even the teachers, sometimes we stand in the class; we don’t have seats”. Teachers and pupils also wanted more teaching materials (which they thought government and parents should jointly provide). However, only one teacher thought the lack of school materials was the main obstacle to pupil learning. Teachers also wanted a better foundation for pupils through nursery education and thought Grade II should still be accepted as a teaching qualification. The provision of computer facilities was mentioned by one LGEA official and one pupil group. Lack of toilet facilities and water were also mentioned: “We don’t have water and toilets, so it’s an access problem”.

There was also a strong call from some pupils, teachers and the community leader for play facilities and materials to be provided to increase enrolments, which was also a view endorsed by the LGEA. One LGEA official also thought the creation of recreational facilities and clubs and societies encourages pupils to come and stay in school.

**School support**
Teachers were positive about support by the LGEA. One teacher thought the ES had an “open door” policy while another said the SS visited the school every two to three days “checking our lesson notes and making corrections” and giving advice. The head teacher agreed, saying the ES came to the school to solve school problems and provided materials such as charts, apparatus etc. However, teacher absenteeism was still considered to be an issue and there was a feeling that although some action was being taken in transferring teachers who taught far from home to schools nearer home, the LGEA could take more action on teacher absenteeism.

LGEA staff thought teachers needed regular induction and professional training but did not indicate who should be doing the training or what form it should take: “Let there be induction and trainings for teachers regularly.” LGEA officials said they taught teachers how to improvise teaching materials and encouraged them to share professional knowledge among themselves but admitted: “We need new innovations in our professions.” There was reportedly liaison with head teachers to mobilise teachers into setting a good example to pupils by organising hygiene and sanitation activities and evening games.

**LGEA–community relations**
The PTA was identified by the LGEA as providing the main link between the community and the school, and primarily seemed to be involved in community mobilisation, to encourage parents to send pupils to school. The ES explained:

> At the beginning of [the] first term, we send information to community and religious leaders and parents asking them to bring their children up to 6 years for free admission. Sometimes we go to the parents and ask the parents to give us their children for enrolment.
The ward head was also seen as a key person to work with in order to reach communities, as the SS explained:

Last year we went to the ward head, which helped us in mobilising the community, especially on the effect of Qur'anic schools causing low enrolment in primary schools. This strategy helped to get more enrolments this year.

The LGEA highlighted recent mobilisation efforts as being particularly successful in increasing the number of female enrolments. Although the LGEA thought generally that they were having greater success among the Christian community than the Muslim community, it was noted that efforts in Domingo School had proved particularly successful with increasing the number of Muslim girls in school. The PTA and one of the teachers thought more sensitisation and mobilisation was needed among the community to further increase enrolment. Parents mentioned using female mentors such as politicians and religious leaders, to organise sensitisation talks with girls. They said they preferred female speakers because they were mothers and could persuade children faster. As one parent explained:

If pupils especially girls see a successful woman talking with them, they will want to be like her. Moreover, women are mothers, they will tell the truth so that you can understand they will never play politics with the issue of education and they know how to talk and draw children’s attention.

“We must use this to be successful”, one parent said.

The LGEA also highlighted other successes working to support schools, such as planting trees and renovating classrooms, and responding to a community complaint of understaffing, by employing temporary teachers. Nevertheless, there was disagreement about the degree of contact between the LGEA and communities, and the community leader urged for more communication: “There should be consultations among government and the community from time to time.” The LGEA also thought communities needed to be further enlightened on the roles of the PTA and the community as regards the school.

AIC3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY

AIC3.1 Infrastructure and security

- The LGEA noted that school infrastructure was gradually improving across the LGEA, resulting in increased enrolments.
- But there was widespread agreement among respondents that Domingo lacked sufficient classrooms and furniture, or had rooms and furniture in need of repair, all of which impacted negatively on pupil learning.
- The school had one block of toilets in poor condition, causing people to defecate in the surrounding area – a major issue of concern for the SBMC.
- The school has no electricity or potable water supply as the borehole is always dry, forcing pupils to leave the compound in search of water and some do not return.
- Poor water and sanitation were judged by some to affect access.
- The compound is shared with the SS and the primary school site operates a double shift with the JSS – both issues of concern for some community members.
- The school's location next to a main road has resulted in children being hit by passing cars and bikes on the way to/from school.
- Security is poor as the compound is only partially fenced, the main gate is unstaffed (no money to pay a security guard) and a dirt track runs across the compound.
- School and community respondents agreed that lack of security was a major issue and some thought improved security would increase enrolment and reduce teacher and pupil absenteeism and pupil dropout.
• Lack of security was said to have resulted in vandalism, drug-using youths using the classrooms at night, JSS pupils arriving early and loitering round the school, and unrestricted access by vendors and almajiri.
• There was a call across respondent groups for more play and recreational facilities, clubs and societies to be provided in school to encourage enrolment and retention.

AIC3.2 Teacher management
• It was commonly agreed that “teachers are trying” and that the education situation is generally improving but that teacher morale is low and impacting on school quality.
• Teachers complained about poor salaries, delays in payment and promotion, overcrowded classrooms with insufficient furniture and teaching materials.
• LGEA and community members were very sympathetic to teachers’ complaints, and considered government’s need to address the issues as fundamental to improving school quality.
• But there was also widespread recognition that teacher absenteeism and latecoming caused by low teacher morale constituted a major obstacle to pupil learning, as did teachers’ strikes.
• Parents and other community members called for stricter supervision of teachers.
• The shortage of trained teachers was also highlighted as a major access issue, which the LGEA attributed to poor incentives for teachers.
• Teachers were positive about support from the LGEA although some thought that more action should be taken by the LGEA as regards teacher absenteeism.
• The school’s degree-trained counselling teacher reportedly looks after both staff and pupil welfare.
• Teacher duties were said to be allocated on merit, but were often gendered e.g. the discipline teacher was male, the health teacher was female.

AIC3.3 Pupil management and pupil relations
• Pupil attendance was said to be variable, though no particular social group was singled out. But in all lesson observations more boys were absent from class.
• Corporal punishment was sanctioned under certain conditions in the school and was central to school discipline in practice.
• The unspoken policy on corporal punishment was gendered with girls reportedly getting caned (usually more lightly) on the back of the legs or hand, and boys on the buttocks, with punishments recorded in the book. Male teachers were thought by some to beat harder.
• Widespread and indiscriminate corporal punishment by teachers, prefects and monitors, using a range of implements, was observed and was the source of many pupil complaints.
• Pupils, especially girls, reported pupil truancy and dropout on account of corporal punishment and the SBMC reported some parents transferring pupils to other schools on account of it.
• A few parents reportedly brought children to school to be beaten.
• Other punishments, which were often gender-specific (e.g. girls sweeping, cleaning toilets, boys frog-jumping) included sweeping the compound, picking up litter, cleaning the toilets, being made to kneel down, frog-jumping, machine-riding etc. but also counselling and verbal rebukes, sometimes by the head teacher.
• Female pupils in particular disliked being sent home as a punishment.
• An extensive, specialized prefect system operated in the school with a gendered hierarchical system, e.g. the head boy was in overall charge of boys and girls whereas the head girl was only in charge of girls.
• At break pupils generally socialized in gender-segregated age-related groups.
Teachers and pupils agreed there was a fair amount of bullying and fighting, which female pupils, in particular disliked. This was especially noticeable in classes without teachers.

Both female and male pupils, and prefects and monitors, were mentioned in relation to bullying but large, overage boys in particular were singled out both for bullying and being bullied.

Pupils who missed a term were reportedly ridiculed and teased/bullied by peers.

**AIC3.4 Teaching and learning**

- Although pupils said they had some “good teachers”, there was recognition by pupils and parents that more “good teaching” (unspecified) would improve enrolment and retention.
- There were sufficient classrooms but conditions were overcrowded (65–76 pupils observed in lessons) with five pupils squeezed on a bench, potholed floors and chalkboards in variable condition.
- Reportedly 20–30 pupils generally repeat the year, in response to parental requests, following poor attendance and/or performance.
- Most pupils had writing materials but very few had textbooks and only one teacher was seen using a textbook in class.
- Pupils thought more textbooks would help their learning while other LGEA and community members thought more textbooks and teaching aids would improve enrolment.
- Despite some teachers’ efforts, pupils generally sat and interacted in gender-segregated groups, even if it meant more overcrowding, and overage pupils and/or boys were often grouped at the back.
- Teacher talk dominated in most lessons interspersed with choral repetition and some individual questioning, which made limited cognitive demands of pupils. Pupils were observed copying from the board in some lessons, with the teacher monitoring.
- Given the large classes, very few pupils got to participate individually, but generally more girls were thought to answer questions than boys though more girls were present in all classes.
- Learning in English caused major learning difficulties for pupils, resulting in teachers needing to code-switch with Hausa though some pupils were said even not to understand Hausa.
- Most pupils felt they learnt best in a mix of English and Hausa though some pupils and teachers considered all-English lessons to be better.
- Most pupils thought female and male teachers treated girls and boys the same though some thought some teachers favoured “more intelligent” pupils and that some female teachers hurried to leave class.
- Teacher–pupil relations were generally observed to be positive and teachers were supportive though one carried a cane.
- Both boys and girls were observed messing about and making noise in several classes with no teacher intervention and in a couple of classes pupils wandered in and out at will.
- Where teachers had control of the class pupils seemed to get on well; otherwise, older, bigger boys were seen bullying younger boys and girls.
- Pupils mentioned being teased for sitting next to someone from the “opposite sex” or for getting the answer wrong.
- Overage pupils in particular were susceptible to being teased and more affected by the teasing.
- No particular social groups were identified as consistently performing well or badly although girls and boys were adamant that “the other” cheated or copied.
3.5 Socio-economic and family issues

- School and community respondents identified poverty, malnutrition and hunger as having a major impact on pupil learning.
- All pupil groups said they occasionally missed the odd day through sickness and/or caring for sick family members.
- All respondents agreed that the non-enrolment, absenteeism and dropout of many pupils, especially boys, is due to their involvement in petty trading, apprenticeships or farming.
- Petty trading was the most commonly cited reason for dropout among boys, with the nearby motor park and market considered major sources of work opportunities.
- Some overage boys in school had reportedly dropped out to trade or farm and then re-enrolled.
- Children's labour was said to be particularly in demand during harvesting but also sometimes before school, when boys in particular were sent to farm or look after animals.
- Home chores were widely identified as a major cause of latecoming and absenteeism for girls and boys, but especially girls, who sometimes also looked after siblings.
- Some pupils arrived late to school because of the distance from home, with pupils in a few locations in the LGEA unable to reach school during the rains if they had to cross a river.
- Attendance at Qur’anic schools was a major cause of latecoming among Muslim girls and boys and overage enrolment for boys who have been sent away for a Tsangaya education before starting conventional school.
- Some Muslim parents were said to prefer a wholly Tsangaya education for their children because of their mistrust of “western education”, though a combined Islamiyya education was thought to be more appealing to a few.
- Around 1,000 almajiri were said to be in the area according to the LGEA.
- Pupil lateness and truancy, and not doing homework, particularly by boys, was often blamed on poor parenting though some pupils were said to be without parental support.
- Both Christian and Muslim pupils said they sometimes got help from siblings in doing homework and some Christian pupils said they also had help from parents.
- Some parents were said to be unaware that their children were not going to school.
- Community and school respondents considered that the inability of some families to pay school fees or afford writing materials and uniforms, in particular, impacted heavily on enrolment, absenteeism and retention.
- Most respondents thought school was equally important for girls and boys though some thought that some parents, both Christian and Muslim, considered it to be more important to educate boys.

3.6 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)

- The PTA was universally acknowledged as the main channel of communication between the school and community and the LGEA and the community.
- The SBMC was said to be new and “weak” because it lacked funds.
- PTA committee members reporting holding regular meetings with teachers and LGEA officials and thought the school responded well to their concerns.
- The PTA levy of N100 per term, other donations and adhoc collections were used to renovate and develop the school.
- The LGEA said that most community support related mainly to construction and repairs and employment of temporary teachers.
• Outside these issues, there was less agreement among, and/or less effective communication between some community members and the school and/or LGEA.
• Corporal punishment was a source of friction between some parents and teachers.
• Greater parent–teacher co-operation was called for, even by pupils, as was better parental attendance at PTA meetings and more consultation of communities by government.
• There was contradictory evidence on the extent to which pupil absenteeism had been raised with parents.
• Although acknowledging some support, some school and LGEA respondents thought the community could and should do more for the school, e.g. provide teacher accommodation, supervise school activities.
• The LGEA wanted SBMCs to be more involved in running schools.
• Examples of activities by strong SBMCs within the LGEA included lobbying for funds, fixing a school borehole, encouraging parents to sew new school uniforms and mobilising “old boys” to construct a classroom block.
• LGEA officials wanted more incentives (e.g. running costs for vehicles, removal of salary caps, duty post allowances for head teachers and SSs) and for appointments to be depoliticized to help them do their jobs better.
• LGEA officials deemed recent mobilization efforts to have been very successful in increasing girls’ participation in schooling, especially increasing the number of Muslim girls in Domingo.
• Both Muslim and Christian communities in the LGEA were said to be positive generally about girls’ education, though Christian communities were thought to show more commitment to girls’ schooling in Domingo.
• More social mobilisation was called for by some school and community sources, to further improve enrolments using female role models and religious leaders.
APPENDIX ID

METROPOLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AID1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS
This is the case study report of Metropolis Primary School in the context of the relevant LGEA and the school’s local community. It is an urban school located in the Central Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents
A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 16 adults and 28 children, as indicated in Table AID1.1. Same-gender group interviews were held with pupils (two female, three male), and group interviews were also held with parents and community leaders. Other respondents were interviewed individually. While there was a gender and religious balance for pupil interviewees, the vast majority of adult respondents were Muslim and male. Female and Christian representation at the community and LGEA level was non-existent.

Table AID1.1 Metropolis case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES,SS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, informal interactions were held with an overage boy (a 20 year-old) and another 11-year old boy.

AID1.1 The LGA (LGEA)

Socio-demographic context
The LGA lies in the Central Senatorial Zone and comprises a large flat urban area with a population of just under 200,000, according to the most recent census. Consequently, many houses have access to potable water, electricity, medical facilities and to other essential goods and services. The LGEA has a diverse population, both Muslim and Christian. Although Lakka is the area’s indigenous ethnic group the population is of mixed ethnicity, for example Hausa-Fulani, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are all represented. Most of the population are involved in commercial activities though on the outskirts of the urban area, there is subsistence farming.

Local Educational Context
See main report, Chapter 4.
AID1.2. The school community

Metropolis Primary School is located in the centre of a major urban area in a religiously and ethnically mixed community. It is also situated on a main road and close to a major market, shops and several places of worship. Most parents are said to be traders and civil servants although some are also involved in farming, with extra labour needed in July and August, according to the school. The major ethnic groups represented in the locality are Hausa, Hausa-Fulani, who are Muslim, although there are also substantial (almost all) Christian Lakka, Yoruba and Igbo communities in the area. The language of interaction within the wider community and in the school is Hausa. Pupils interviewed also mentioned communicating in the following languages at home: Igbo, Yoruba, Bali, Idoma and Igala.

AID1.3 The school

School description

Basic school information

Metropolis Primary School lies on the main road in a major urban centre and has an intake of over 1,700 pupils. Most pupils come from within a radius of 2km from the school though some pupils reported taking up to an hour to reach school on foot. Female pupils account for 49.7% of enrolments whereas males account for 50.3%. Currently, 53.2% of the pupil intake is Muslim and 46.8% is Christian. An admission or readmission fee of ₦100 has recently been dropped. Each pupil pays a PTA levy of ₦50 per term.

It should also be noted that there was a change of school management between earlier and later research visits, which clearly had a positive impact on the school, e.g. improving security. Since data were gathered over time it may be that some of the issues raised by some respondents have subsequently been addressed following the change of management.

The staff

The head teacher is a Muslim male and had only recently taken over the headship. There are 72 other teaching staff members. The distribution of the teachers (including the head teacher) by qualification and gender is shown in Table AID1.2 below. Of the 73-strong teaching force there are almost twice as many male teachers (48; 65.8%) as female teachers (25; 34.2%) and the vast majority are qualified (83.6%). Almost three quarters of the teaching force (72.6%) have NCE while eight – almost all women – are degree holders (11%). Seven male and three female non-teaching staff are also employed by the school.

Table AID1.2: Teachers, including head teacher, by qualification and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53 (72.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC II</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12 (16.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>25 (34.2%)</td>
<td>48 (65.8%)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes

Pupil enrolment

Over the last four years, enrolments have decreased slightly, from 1794 in 2007–8 to 1716 in 2010–11, peaking at 1797 in 2008–9, as illustrated in Table AID1.3. For the first three years of the period the gender ratio remained fairly constant at around 47% for female pupils, to 53% for male pupils. However, in 2010–11 the ratio reversed dramatically, due in particular to a large increase in the number of Muslim female pupils that now total over 900 and make up over half the school population, to 60.1% for female pupils and 39.9% for male pupils. This may be attributable to the success of the recent large-scale advocacy campaigns about getting more girls into school, which are highlighted in the qualitative data. Over the last four years, it has retained a steady 1500 Muslim pupils, after dropping slightly in 2008–9 and 2009–10. However, the percentage of the school population that is Muslim has increased as the number of Christian pupils have decreased; after peaking at 332 (18.5% of the school population) in 2008–9 there are now only 183 Christian pupils, comprising only 10.7% of the school population. This, it has been suggested by parents, may be due to Christian parents withdrawing their children to place them in private schools.

Table AID1.3 Metropolis Primary School enrolments by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>842 (46.9%)</td>
<td>952 (53.1%)</td>
<td>1532 (85.4%)</td>
<td>262 (14.6%)</td>
<td>1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>839 (46.7%)</td>
<td>958 (53.3%)</td>
<td>1465 (81.5%)</td>
<td>332 (18.5%)</td>
<td>1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>819 (47.2%)</td>
<td>917 (52.8%)</td>
<td>1419 (81.7%)</td>
<td>317 (18.3%)</td>
<td>1736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>1032 (60.1%)</td>
<td>684 (39.9%)</td>
<td>1533 (89.3%)</td>
<td>183 (18.4%)</td>
<td>1716</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering enrolment figures by grade (see Table AID1.4) for the four-year period in question, there are no clear patterns. The most striking observation, however, is the substantial drop in numbers of the Primary 1 cohort of 280 in 2009–10, which was almost halved to 141 in 2010–11; this did not occur with the Primary 1 cohorts of 2007–8 and 2008–9 which only recorded modest reductions in number in Primary 2 the following year. There are some strange drops and/or hikes in numbers year on year with particular social groups that also cast doubt on the reliability of the figures and/or point to children leaving and re-entering school or entering school midway through the school cycle. This ebb and flow of numbers is also difficult to explain in the light of the school’s statement that no pupils drop out of the school but rather transfer to other schools (see the section below on dropout) and a statement by one member of school management stating that the school did not allow more than five pupils to repeat in any one class. For example, a group of 122 Muslim female pupils in Primary 2 in 2007–8, subsequently becomes a group of 115 in Primary 3 the following year, and then increases substantially to 142 in Primary 4 the year after, increasing to 243 in Primary 5 in 2010–11 – almost double the number of the Primary 2 cohort.
Table AID1.4 Metropolis Primary School enrolment by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2010–1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F M</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F M</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>135 (44.1%) 171 (55.9%)</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>140 (48.3%) 150 (51.7%)</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>143 (50.2%) 142 (49.8%)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>140 (47.5%) 155 (52.5%)</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>145 (50.3%) 143 (49.7%)</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>140 (46.8%) 159 (53.2%)</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>124 (44.9%) 174 (54.6%)</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>162 (48.4%) 173 (51.6%)</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>154 (49.0%) 165 (51.0%)</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>126 (45.0%) 154 (55.0%)</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>86 (38.1%) 157 (61.9%)</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>131 (44.0%) 167 (56.0%)</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>842 (46.9%) 952 (53.1%)</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>839 (46.7%) 958 (53.3%)</td>
<td>1797</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AID1.5 Metropolis Primary School enrolment by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus Chr Total</td>
<td>Mus Chr Total</td>
<td>Mus Chr Total</td>
<td>Mus Chr Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>267 (87.3%) 39 (12.7%)</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>245 (84.5%) 45 (15.5%)</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>242 (84.9%) 43 (15.1%)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>244 (82.7%) 51 (17.3%)</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>246 (85.4%) 42 (14.6%)</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>247 (82.6%) 52 (17.4%)</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>273 (85.0%) 48 (15.0%)</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>277 (82.7%) 58 (17.3%)</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>256 (84.5%) 47 (15.5%)</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>221 (73.8%) 59 (26.2%)</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>248 (85.2%) 43 (14.8%)</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>231 (77.5%) 67 (22.5%)</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1532 (85.4%) 262 (14.6%)</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1465 (81.6%) 332 (18.5%)</td>
<td>1797</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overage pupils**

Statistics for the number of overage pupils were not available in the school.

**Pupil attendance**

Tables AID1.6 and AID1.7 below illustrate the number of pupil days absent per term by gender and religion, respectively. Total numbers of pupil days absent per year apparently increased from 47 in to 78 in 2007–8 to 2009–10, with more absences recorded for boys than girls in each of the years, and more for Muslims than Christians. More importantly, however, comparing the very low numbers of absences with the very high numbers of pupils (over 1,700 for each of the three years) leads to the improbable conclusion that the vast majority of pupils never miss a day of school. However, the qualitative data strongly suggest otherwise, which means that the figures below are likely to represent a major underestimation.
Table AID1.6 Metropolis Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Totals</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AID1.7 Metropolis Primary School number of days absent by term and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Totals</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pupil dropout**
Dropout rates were not provided by the school because it was said that pupils did not drop out from school but only transferred out to other schools though much of the qualitative data suggest that there are dropouts.

**Pupil performance**
The performance data for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10 set out in Table AID1.8 seem very unreliable given that the top mark for female Muslim pupils in 2007–8 exceeded 100% at the same time as the top mark for Christian boys was merely 10%. Ignoring the mistaken 104%, the table shows that Primary 6 marks have ranged from 5% to a 94% across the social groups with Muslim pupils performing better than Christian pupils. A further reason to doubt the reliability of the figures lies in the fact that if correct, they would indicate that the top mark scored by a Christian boy in each of the years would be less than the bottom mark scored by a Muslim girl or boy.

Table AID1.8 Metropolis Primary School pupil performance according to gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Overall range of marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AID2. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

AID2.1. The school

General school issues

School buildings and facilities

The primary school shares the premises with a junior secondary school, which is built just behind the primary school. The primary school has 44, mostly new, classrooms spread among several buildings, some of which are two storeys high. All the grades have sufficient classrooms. The school is fenced with a substantial wall that has two official entrances. There is also an examinations hall, a computer hall and a well-stocked library though pupils were not seen using either the computers or the library on research visits. Teachers wanted library lessons to be included on the timetable to encourage greater use of the library. There are also two head teacher's offices, one of which is for the assistant head teacher, and a staffroom, which was not being used at the time of the research. A mosque is on the school site used by JSS pupils. There is some cultivation in the centre of the compound, including some flowers, and a sports field that was marked off with some posts and wire and is for the exclusive use of the primary school. There are four large trees in the compound and some additional shade is provided by the shaded walkways outside the classroom blocks.

There is electricity in the school and water is periodically an issue in the school but the community leaders said parents are now happy that there is a water source on the compound whereas before pupils had to cross the main road to buy water and some Muslim boys were said not to return to school after break. As one parent explained: “Some pupils will complain of thirst and on the process going out to get water, they run away from school”. However, the borehole suffers from power problems and isn’t always functioning. Hawkers in the compound at break sell water as well as snacks. When the three pumps were working pupils were observed fighting to get water with no teacher supervision. Older, bigger boys were dominating access, elbowing other pupils out of the way although at one pump an older boy was ensuring the younger girls and boys could get water, which was collected in plates and pots.

There are four toilet blocks with several cubicles and which are gender-segregated, with one allocated to staff and three to pupils. One block was also shared with the junior secondary school on the compound. The toilets were unlocked and seemed to be in good condition when researchers visited although judging by some comments (see below) this may not always be the case. According to the school and community profile, their condition was adjudged “fair” by school management. Nevertheless, the toilets appeared little used, as boys were seen urinating by the side of them. Although most pupils liked the fact that the school was neat and clean, one group complained about the condition of the toilets, which was an issue also raised by the community leaders, who thought better toilet facilities would help increase enrolment.

Security

There was a major improvement in security from the time of the first research visits to the later visits under the new head teacher, as the side entrance was closed and holes in the wall were repaired, leaving the main gate, guarded by two security men, as the only entrance to the school. The security men, who carried a cane to beat JSS latecomers, moved from the main gate itself to seek shade when the day got hotter. Thus, although many outsiders were seen wandering in and out in earlier visits, following the change of management, the security had tightened up by the last visit. The improved security was appreciated by the parents interviewed, though parents and community leaders still thought security could be better and would improve attendance, if the school could stop pupils from leaving the compound. Hawkers were only allowed to sell during break periods.
School routines
Lessons are from 8am to 12.30 for Primary 1 to 3, and until 1.05pm for Primary 4 to 6. Break is from 10 to 10.30am with a second, short five-minute break at noon. A short assembly is held three times a week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7.50 to 8am. Classroom cleaning takes place every day before assembly or lessons. General labour day occurs every two weeks on Thursdays, 8 to 9am.

The head teacher thought that the annual speech and prize-giving day, which community leaders attend, helped encourage pupils to come to school.

School management of staff
There were over twice the number of male teachers as female teachers in Metropolis School, though female teachers were said to be in the majority across the LGEA. The head teacher said teachers were appointed to positions of responsibility within the school based on merit but did not elaborate. In addition to the assistant heads, positions of responsibility within the school included the “senior mistress”, the heath teacher and exams officer, quiz, debate and duty teachers – all currently female teachers – and the staff secretary and labour teacher, who are male. There are also a female and a male teacher in charge of discipline for girls, and boys, respectively (see School management of pupils below).

Pupils, parents and community leaders generally thought that “teachers are trying” in the school and were sympathetic to teachers’ poor wages and delays in payment (see Section 2.3 LGEA, school governance) though management admitted that teacher professionalism was a problem among some teachers with one estimate that only around 50% of teachers conducted themselves professionally. One senior member of staff thought that some female teachers in particular struggled with attendance and lesson preparation: “maybe because they are female teachers and maybe because they do home chores, so they don’t have enough time.” The SS calculated that around three quarters of female teachers had to do home chores in the morning before school.

School management said that counselling strategies were used to address teacher indiscipline, which generally referred to absenteeism. They said that teachers were referred to the school advisory committee, whose members were selected by the head teacher, if the problem was “academic”, and to the school counsellor if the problem was “social”:

We use teachers who read guidance and counselling to counsel erring teachers and pupils. It is only when [a] problem gets out of hand that offending teachers are reported to the LGEA.

The head teacher recognised that poor attendance by teachers was bad for pupils and one group of pupils pointed to teacher absenteeism as one reason why some pupils “run away from school at break time; they say there is no teaching going on.”

That said, on research visits there, very few teachers were seen sitting around the compound not teaching, unlike in some schools. More generally across the LGEA, LGEA officials noted that there were some “stubborn” teachers and that teacher absenteeism and truancy was sometimes an issue, but that generally it was the head teacher’s job to enforce discipline in schools. The SS said that they usually questioned and counselled erring teachers – both female and male:

I call them; I counsel them, ask the head master to query them. If they refuse to answer [the head teacher], I do that [question them] myself. I don’t report head master nor teachers [to the ES]. I deal with them myself. Absenteeism, truancy. Our problem is part-time teachers. No action is taken.
This, the SS explained, referred to teachers who despite possessing full-time contracts studied part-time and therefore left the classes unattended. It was suggested that teachers should only be released for study on a rota basis.

Another teacher discipline problem the LGEA faced was the excessive beating of pupils, which generally applied to male teachers. Three incidents of rape were also reported and action was taken after pressure exerted by the community, resulting in the dismissal by the Board of the male teachers involved.

**School management of pupils**

Reports from the LGEA, staff and pupils were mixed as to the extent of disciplinary issues in the school and the way in which pupils were disciplined although it was acknowledged that there was no written policy.

LGEA officials and school management reported that corporal punishment was generally a thing of the past, with respondents noting variously that it had been prohibited by the Board, was against professional ethics and discouraged pupils’ attendance. The ES gave the example of a teacher who used to beat kids very strongly but reformed after being spoken to: “We have stopped beating in schools; it encourages pupils to come to school”.

According to management, “only discipline masters and mistress are allowed to spank children” and punishments were supposed to be recorded in a black book though, according to one source, the book was not always used. Boys, management said, were disciplined by the male discipline teacher, generally more harshly, such as caning on the back or on the buttocks, whereas female pupils were generally beaten on the back of the legs by the female discipline teacher. Some of the teachers interviewed, who were all female, maintained that they did not beat children because of the school policy though most disagreed with it, believing caning to be the best way to correct behaviour. One Christian teacher said: “I don’t agree with it [policy of no beating]; my Bible said the father chastises the child that he loves.” Another teacher was adamant that “there is no way you can correct a child without a cane. The only thing is that you don’t do it with annoyance.”

Pupils maintained, however, that some teachers, as well as prefects and monitors, did apply corporal punishment, especially if pupils were found to be bullying others or fighting, though not until after the culprit had been questioned on the issue. Pupils also pointed out that female and male teachers generally disciplined differently. All four pupil groups agreed that male teachers were usually harsher, some making pupils lie down and beating more indiscriminately on any part of body and using any implement e.g. using a fan belt.

The male teachers are harsh to pupils, but the female teachers are not that harsh. Male teachers flog children. They tell pupils to lie down but female teachers give kneel down, frog jump etc. (male pupil)

Up to 20 lashes were reported by pupils for some offences. Female teachers were said only to discipline using a cane or by verbal reprimand. One group of female pupils interviewed said that they were not punished only questioned about the issue by the teacher, yet they were keen for latecomers to be flogged when they lied about the reason for their lateness: “They are supposed to be punished because some pupils tell lies that their parents sent them [on errands] and it’s not true.”

In general, however, pupil views were mixed on corporal punishment. Most pupils considered the practice to be fair, so that, as one male pupil put it: “We can correct ourselves next time.” One group of female pupils said they liked “good discipline [fair punishment]” and one female pupil
admitted to being put off her work after being beaten: “I feel bad and don’t participate in class for the rest of the day.” An average boy interviewed said he disliked the beating and caning in school.

Management and teachers said that school labour was the preferred method of punishment, such as getting pupils to sweep the compound or the library, pick up litter, clean the toilets or being made to kneel down (see section below on in the classroom, discipline) for 5 to 10 minutes. Frog-jumps were also mentioned by one teacher.

The main discipline issues identified by management concerned pupil latecoming, which teacher and pupils say affects all pupils, and, to a lesser extent, attendance, though the head teacher thinks that attendance is generally good in the school. The head teacher said that parents are usually questioned before the pupil is disciplined:

We invite parents and inquire of pupils’ poor attendance if any. If a child comes to school today and did not come tomorrow, we call the parents to find out. If the parent said they send the child somewhere, we discourage that but if the parent said they sent him/her to school but they refuse to come, then we discipline the child.

One senior member of staff confirmed that sometimes teaching does not start until second or third period because of pupil lateness, which, as various respondents pointed out, was due to household chores, Qur’anic schooling or because of living far from school (see Section 2.2. on Family and community for details). The community leaders said that when they meet pupils that are late – mainly Hausa boys – they told them to hurry up. To encourage pupils to come to school early, the school had a song that children were made to sing every morning: “Boys and girls, boys and girls, come to school, come to school. 7.30, 7.30 is the time of school, 7.30 in the morning.” Parents, however, were displeased that some latecomers were sent home – which one group of pupils also said they disliked – as it hinders pupil learning, as the following statements illustrate:

Batun yaro in yazo lettii yakamata ayi masa bulala abar shi ya shiga aji. Amma Koran yaro ache koma gida kayi lettii, to zai bar makaranta amma ba zai koma gida ba, sai ya kara tairinkai, ba zai yi karatu ba. [On the issue of boys coming late, we want teachers to flog them and allow him to enter class. But to send him back home, he will leave school and will not return home, that will make him more stubborn and he will not read again.]

Some pupils don’t go back home; they roam the street instead.

Latecomers should be punished but not to be sent back home because the child you sent back home might not really go back home. He may decide to branch [off] somewhere.

Parents and community leaders felt that there should be closer monitoring of pupils by teachers to improve pupil absenteeism or truancy, and that teachers should also monitor pupils roaming about in school compound during lessons. That said, on research visits, relatively few pupils were observed out of class during lesson time and under the new school management later in the research the head teacher was seen gathering up pupils who were late to class after break and getting them to pick up litter. Long-term absenteeism, according to pupils, can also result in corporal punishment.

Pupils reported that some pupils dropped out of school because they didn’t like it. Both female and male pupils generally felt that dropouts should be counselled and/or punished. The head teacher said that generally dropout was not a problem in the school, that generally only 2–3 girls or boys dropped out per term, though mainly girls, but of both religions.
Prefects, led by a head girl and head boy, and monitors also assisted with maintaining discipline. One group of female pupils complained that prefects beat pupils too much and did not attend classes because they were carrying out duties. According to staff and pupils, prefects were selected by a committee based on performance, age, neatness and punctuality although one senior member of staff said: “There are big ones [pupils] that can sometimes be used; even if they are backward, we still use them because of their age”. Depending on their classes, they got different posts and were given “feminine and masculine duties” with female prefects looking after girls and male prefects looking after boys, and doing jobs such as ringing the school bell.

In terms of positive school management, the school was divided into four different houses to promote the spirit of competition and clubs were established including the Muslim Student Society and the Christian Fellowship. According to the deputy head, the school used extra-curricular activities such as egg (and spoon) race or sack races, in school houses, and other sporting activities, to mobilise enrolment and motivate pupils to improve their academic performance. One teacher thought that the school needed to set up a counselling committee to deal with pupil welfare issues.

**Pupil–pupil relations**

At break pupils were observed generally playing in gender-segregated groups and buying snacks and water off hawkers. Pupils tended to prefer buying food off the pupil-hawker rather than from the older women selling in the compound. Pupil interviews confirmed on the whole that girls and boys preferred to remain in gender-segregated groups although one group of female pupils said that boys and girls mixed and played together. Both groups of boys made gender-typed disparaging remarks about girls to explain the segregation:

- Boys play alone because girls are not strong. (male pupil)
- We play alone because girls cannot play the way we do play, because they are not strong like us. (male pupil)

Girls too wanted to be separate to avoid “rough play”:

- We separate ourselves between girls and boys because boys are doing rough playing; they beat us and we don’t want to be lazy like them. (female pupil)

Although very little bullying or fighting was witnessed in the school during break times, pupils were unanimous that the fighting and bullying is what they most disliked about school. Girls in particular disliked it while one group of boys also complained about stealing in school. Some girls considered bullying to be rife because they considered boys to be rough and to bully a lot.

- I don’t like fighting, cursing and bullying in school. I don’t like rough play by pupils in the school. (female pupil)
- There is bullying; pupils fight, misbehave and some are jealous because you are more hardworking than them so they try to beat you [up]. The senior boys are fond of bullying the younger girls. (female pupil)

Overage boys and girls in particular were perceived to be bullies by pupils. One group of female pupils thought that overage pupils didn’t get on with other pupils because they were big and did not want younger pupils to disobey them. However, one boy who was overage by many years denied bullying other pupils, said he preferred playing and laughing with the younger pupils and that he too disliked the rough play that went on in the school. Aside from overage pupils, female and male pupils agreed that generally boys bullied girls more. This was backed up by teachers. Bullying behaviours identified by pupils or teachers included shouting, laughing at, beating or punching somebody or throwing stones. Teachers, and sometimes prefects or monitors, were said to intervene and one teacher said that in some cases the parents were called to the school.
In the classroom

Classroom conditions and resources

The five Primary 5 and 6 lessons that were observed were held in new classrooms, with good furniture and clear chalkboards though one or two were dirty and walls were bare in all classrooms. In all of the classrooms there was adequate seating for the pupils, who were seated two to three to a bench.

According to the assistant head, not more than five pupils were allowed to repeat a class, to avoid overcrowding. One teacher thought that pupils should be allowed to repeat, otherwise they would drop out although some were said to transfer to other schools; another teacher thought the PTA should decide about which pupils should repeat. The head said that in general “we do organize special classes for backward pupils to drill them adequately” and one teacher thought an extra class should be put on at break time for repeaters.

Both boys and girls, Christian and Muslim, could be overage though Muslim boys were identified as mostly commonly overage, starting primary school at 10–12 years old after completing several years of Islamic schooling in other towns. Several overage pupils observed in class were around 20 years old. One of the senior members of staff explained that overage children mostly comprise pupils who have transferred from other schools or who are new admissions. They also said that initially, the school had established a special class for the overage pupils taught by experienced staff, adopting an individualised instruction strategy. The idea was for children to later join the regular class at an appropriate level according to “individual ability”. The class was closed by the previous management but the idea was about to be revived by the new head teacher and the class would now also take care of repeaters or pupils that had previously dropped out.

Although most pupils in the observed classes had writing materials with them, a few did not and were seen borrowing in class, with girls generally borrowing from girls, and boys from boys though in one observation a boy was seen snatching a ruler from another male pupil, which pupils mentioned was a problem. Moreover, some teachers said that some pupils either did not possess or did not bring writing materials with them. Textbooks were also a challenge. In the observed classes, textbook coverage ranged from one textbook in the class to the majority of pupils having a textbook. Pupils, school management and some of the teachers agreed that more textbooks were needed. Pupils said it was difficult to learn without books, a view echoed by the LGEA, with reference to the more general shortage within the LGEA.

Seating arrangements

In the five observed lessons, class sizes ranged from 35 to 49 (13–17 girls; 20–29 boys). There were more boys than girls in all the classrooms, although this did not reflect the gender ratio in terms of enrolment within the school for Primary 5 and 6. This may either be because the statistics are inaccurate or because more girls were absent from class since numbers represent pupils present rather than numbers on the register. The average class size, according to one senior member of staff, was 50, which, if correct, means that there was a high rate of absenteeism in some of the lessons observed. The number of Christian pupils per class in the school was generally said not to exceed ten.
Pupils were seated two to three on a bench; benches were organised in three columns and seating was generally gender-segregated with pupils grouped in gender-specific columns although one class had girls at the front and boys at the back. In two classes some mixed seating was observed.

**Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)**
The five lessons observed were all teacher-dominated, predominantly or wholly led from the front of the class. In two of the lessons the teacher monologued for most of the time in English (see below). In all the two Maths lessons observed a few pupils were called to the board to work out sums. In almost all the lessons pupils did a lot of copying from the board. Questioning was predominantly choral with some individual questioning in some classes, in which questions were shared between girls and boys. Only one teacher spent considerable time wandering round the class checking individual pupils’ progress. No teaching aids were used.

Within the school, according to one LGEA official, remedial classes were organised for pupils who did not understand the lessons:

> You know, we don't have dull children in education; we only have backward pupils. We give them special attention. We divide the board into two; one for those with high IQ on [the] one hand and the backward on the other. ...We give them different work; same level for those with high IQ, Book 1 for those with low IQ.

There was some acknowledgement within the LGEA and school management that teachers were in need of more professional support both in terms of subject knowledge and pedagogy, to help improve teaching. One senior member of staff recalled the case of a teacher teaching fractions but at the end of the lesson neither the teacher nor the pupils could identify the numerator or denominator. One LGEA official acknowledged that this was a more general problem across the LGEA: “Some teachers now are not knowledgeable in subject matter; some can’t construct simple sentences”, adding also that if teachers made classes livelier, it would encourage more children to come to school. One senior member of staff ascribed the problem to initial teacher education, which emphasises a specialist curriculum that is incompatible with the generalist approach necessary for primary school teaching. They also thought that teachers’ lumping together of a lot of concepts for pupils to learn at the same time hampered pupil learning. As a result, Metropolis Primary School organised in-house training for staff on new concepts and pedagogy, conducted by teachers who had had further training.

Teaching in English was identified by school staff as a major barrier to pupil learning. Four of the lessons were conducted almost exclusively in English although levels of understanding by pupils varied. The three teachers interviewed said they all used Hausa sometimes, one explaining that “teaching in English is not easy. I sometimes use Hausa.” Another teacher explained: “If I keep on using English they don't understand.” In one lesson, pupils tried to reply in Hausa but were threatened with punishment by the teacher despite the fact that the teacher openly admitted that pupils were quiet in class precisely because they had to speak in English: “English is making you people close your mouth”. All the pupils wanted to learn wholly in English but school management and several of the teachers highlighted the fact that teaching in English impeded pupil learning. As one teacher explained: “Pupils like English but they don't have the capacity; they try to speak it” and their lack of proficiency causes them to fail: “Pupils fail exams because they can't express themselves in English.” This was borne out by the pupils themselves in the research interviews: they all expressed the desire to learn wholly in English yet struggled to speak or understand English in the interview. Some were aware, however, that they needed to improve their reading skills in English. One of the school managers also pointed out that the
school's efforts to promote mother-tongue education in the first three years were inhibited by the fact that many of the teachers were non-Hausa speakers.

In the observed lessons relations between teachers and pupils seemed good with pupils interacting fairly freely. One teacher thought good interaction with pupils was an important feature of being a good teacher and that “being with children [as a teacher] was like an extension of motherly responsibility.” All pupil groups interviewed said they had good teachers and that was what they most liked about school, especially teachers that explained concepts well and paid attention to pupil differences. Although all pupils thought teachers treated all pupils the same, some identified gender differences, describing male teachers as “harsh” and “lazy” and “more strict”. In contrast one group of male pupils described female teachers as “tender.”

School management thought that in general female and male teachers taught in the same way and that female and male pupils responded to both in the same way. However, teacher “performance”, or competence, was said to depend on a range of factors such as their mood, availability and use of teaching materials etc.

Gender differences (in terms of pupil participation) were more readily acknowledged by pupils than teachers. Pupils in general perceived gender differences along gender lines. Boys thought boys concentrated and participated more; conversely girls generally thought girls concentrated and participated more in class though one girl insisted that “girls sometimes play a lot”, which echoed the view of one teacher. Boys said girls were more focused on selling things in class – witnessed in several observations – and made noise whereas girls said boys were stubborn, lazy, played around with balls, did not listen in class and were more often absent. However, when one teacher left the class to fetch some textbooks on one occasion both girls and boys were seen messing about.

Views among teachers were mixed: three teachers said girls participated more, one specifying Christian girls. Another, in contrast, identified Muslim girls as the group that participated the least due to “Muslim culture”, believing they lacked exposure to verbal interaction because they are more focused on marriage:

> You know more Muslim girls, because of their culture even if they know [a] little, they don’t want to talk; they don’t want to contribute. They know better of marriage than this education we are talking about. I talked to some yesterday, one of them, Aisha, told me that she is no more interested in schooling. I said if you are not interested, go to the backside of the class and lie down; she went and lied down. When I asked them they confirmed that they are only preparing for marriage. That spirit of marriage is in them; I don’t know why. (female teacher)

Two teachers thought that Christian pupils participated more in class: one said Christian boys participated more, the other said Christian girls did. Another teacher, in contrast, thought that boys participated more because girls played around and talked more though an opposing view was that some boys were less interested in schooling because they had their mind on trade. From classroom observations it was difficult to gauge whether there were any noticeable differences in participation between girls and boys given the limited time and low levels of oral participation witnessed in class; in one class noticeably more boys participated and in another two girls participated a lot. The head teacher thought that overage pupils participated less in class because younger ones laughed at them and one teacher reported difficulties with an overage pupil: “The one with 21 years can not read and write and I don’t know what to do.”

**Pupil performance**

School and community respondents considered Metropolis to be a very good school though pupil performance was said to be one of the main concerns of the newly formed SBMC. Respondents disagreed, however, as to whether girls and boys performed equally well in tests.
and differed in the reasons for their opinions. No data were produced to confirm any of these views.

The school managers interviewed thought boys performed better than girls, one explaining that it was because girls’ education was seen to end in the kitchen although a colleague declared that “the belief that women’s education ends in the kitchen is no longer true.” In particular the school manager thought Muslim boys performed better than girls because “they will take care of the home while girls think they will be forced to marry early”. Two teachers thought boys performed better in tests, one specifying Christian boys, whereas one thought they performed equally and another said girls did better. Muslim girls were identified by two teachers as being likely to underperform. Three underage Muslim girls were identified as not performing well in one class.

Pupils also disagreed on whether girls or boys tended to do better in tests. Although boys were adamant that school helped both girls and boys and that job opportunities were open to both, one group thought boys performed better in class because girls were more focused on marriage; the other group thought girls did because boys did not read at home. In contrast both girls’ groups generally thought girls performed better because boys did not listen in class, were more often absent and therefore missed tests. Parents also thought girls did better because boys played a lot and were truants. The school supervisor also noted that girls were collecting more prizes than boys these days. Since the school performance data were unreliable it was difficult to comment further.

Discipline

Teachers all managed to maintain discipline in the observed lessons though one turned a blind eye to two latecomers, a girl and a boy, and pupils messing about. Most pupils interviewed said they preferred teachers that were “not harsh and do not beat children”; one boy said that the threat of being beaten made him silent in class: “If you make noise in the class, they will beat you, but if you keep quiet, nobody will touch you. So I always keep quiet.” As one female pupil explained: “Teachers should take good care of pupils.”

As mentioned in the earlier section on School management of pupils, forcing latecomers to kneel down was a common punishment in the school. In one class two boys came late and were made to kneel on the floor for the rest of the lesson. One automatically stretched his arms out without being asked. That particular teacher carried a cane the whole time though never used it, preferring to castigate using eye contact and verbal reprimands. Another teacher said she specifically banned prefects from carrying a cane in her class: “I have my own rule that any boy should not fight girls and even prefects should not hold [a] cane in my class.” One other teacher had a female student teacher in her class who monitored class behaviour and at one stage hit a boy on the head with an exercise book though she also helped mark a pupil’s book.

Pupil–pupil relations

Teachers generally thought that pupils got on well in class though several qualified that by saying that interaction was often along gender lines for religious reasons. Classroom observations also showed interaction primarily within gender-groups; this was even true for the girls and boys who shared benches. A couple of teachers thought that pupils did not interact very easily together “due to cultural and religious difference”. I had to force pupils to interact and they are used to it now.” Older Muslim girls were said by two teachers not to interact easily with boys “because of their religious beliefs”.

Three out of the four pupil groups said that girls and boys did not get on well. Girls complained that boys in general bullied girls, physically and verbally (see section on Pupil–pupil relations in
General school issues above) although one group of female pupils said that overage boys and girls both bullied because they were often jealous of younger girls performing well:

> Some are jealous of you because you are very hardworking than them, so they try to beat, curse and disturb you. Mostly the senior boys and girls are the ones doing this to the younger girls.

_Idan kana rubutu sai a naushe ka ko a muskuleka ta kasan benchi, wani sai ya shaфа rob a hannu sai ya shaфа maka a ido._ [When you are writing, some pupils will punch you, squeeze you from under the bench; some will put ‘robb’ (a sneezing substance) in their hand and then rub it into your eyes] (male pupil)

One group of boys also complained that (some) “girls steal answers” though both girls and boys were seen “giraffing” (copying answers from other pupils) in class. These latter comments perhaps suggest an overly competitive classroom environment.

According to the head teacher, teachers tell overage boys not to bully younger ones, but he also noted that younger boys laughed at their overage peers, who, as mentioned earlier (see section on Pupil–pupil relations in the section on General school issues), did not participate in class for fear of ridicule. The much older pupil interviewed said that he personally is not laughed at, perhaps because, by his own admission, he does very well in class. No blatant bullying was observed in classes. Otherwise, all four pupil groups complained that pupils making noise, playing around or fighting in class made it difficult for pupils to learn though it was not clear whether the teacher was in class on such occasions.

AID2.2 Family and community

Socio-economic activities

Poverty was cited across all stakeholders as the main reason (alongside preference by some Muslims for religious education) why some pupils in the area had never been to school, dropped out of school or arrived late in the morning as they needed to earn money hawking or trading. As one staff member explained with regard to pupil latecoming:

> Some of the children/wards have to do one or two things in the morning maybe sell one or two things for the parents to get some money before they can come to school. Sometimes, the wards will not go out for petty business, but the parents will have to go and look for one thing or the other to give the children to eat before they can allow them to come to school. For many the purchasing power of the parents is so low they hardly get food for their children to eat in the morning.

And as regards pupil absenteeism and/or dropout, he added:

> Some of the children would rather join those doing menial jobs like pushing [a] wheelbarrow or collecting garbage on the streets or doing other works to earn money.

Community leaders, teachers and pupils agreed that males, and Muslim Hausa boys in particular, more than females, tended to drop out or miss school, generally for petty trading. Pupils acknowledged that this was not always with parental knowledge. As one teacher explained: “Some pupils leave home dressed for school but don’t arrive.” One teacher reckoned that some Muslim children missed school once or twice a week to sell water or rice to feed themselves and their families.

Muslim girls were also said to drop out for hawking. In terms of latecoming, one female pupil group mentioned the fact that girls working as maids had to go to market to sell for their employers before coming to school. A teacher similarly remarked: “Igbo maids keep their master’s shops and sell pure water.” The teacher explained that she tried to persuade one woman to give her maid more time for school: “I rang one woman and advised her: she said, after all, she brought the child to work for her and not to come to school. If I persist she will
withdraw the child from school.” One teacher, however, also pointed out that some Christian boys, such as the head boy, were also late to school because they had to open up their parents’ shop. However, as one senior member of staff pointed out, inevitably Muslim pupils were late, absent and dropped out in greater numbers since the numbers of Christian pupils were “insignificant” in the school.

Doing home chores was also widely recognised as a major reason for latecoming, and sometimes absenteeism, by LGEA, school and community respondents. All pupils admitted to coming late because of home chores although parents maintained that girls did more home chores and boys more often play. LGEA and school respondents generally believed that Muslims were more affected than Christians, in part because many also had to fit in Qur’anic schooling (see below) before attending Metropolis Primary School. One female pupil said: “Some children sleep late at night due to too much work at home” A male pupil said: “We do home chores in the morning before coming to school and some of us sell things in the market.” One teacher too cited the example of a girl in her class: “A girl in my class wakes up at 3.30am, begins home chores and comes to school late.” The result, according to the SS, was that these pupils slept in class and did not do their homework.

**Families (including religion, ethnicity and educational choice)**

Early marriage or pregnancy was another issue said to have forced a small number of girls to drop out of school, according to some teachers and one of the pupil groups. One teacher, however, mentioned how she had prevented one girl in her class from dropping out: “I counsel one girl in my class who want to leave school for marriage and she finally agreed to stay.” One of the male pupil groups, however, claimed that 17 pupils had dropped out to marry or on account of early marriage, including ten Muslim boys.

School managers also cited distance from school – up to 3km – as a cause of latecoming; some pupils reported taking up to an hour to reach school. School management said that at community gatherings they tried and persuade parents who lived a long way from the school to send their children to more local schools: “for those whose houses are far, we tell them to send their children to nearby schools.”

However, the main reason widely recognised as being the cause of non- or late-enrolment and/or latecoming to school was Qur’anic schooling, which affected some Muslim families and particularly the Hausa-Fulani. The head teacher explained that some Muslim pupils undertook only Qur’anic schooling first, with some boys being sent to other towns before returning to start Primary 1 at age 10–12. Others reportedly attended Qur’anic school in the morning before coming to Metropolis, resulting in late arrival. One LGEA official thought the solution was for Qur’anic schools to operate in the evening whereas one of the teachers called for greater integration of Qur’anic schools.

LGEA officials concurred that many parents were not in favour of “western education”; nor do they see its value especially when parents see so many unemployed people around. One official also considered the “I-don’t-care attitude” of some Muslim parents within the LGEA to be a major cause of absenteeism. As one official said: “We have facilities; we have teachers; we have learning materials, but we wait for pupils to come to school. The parents here don’t have value for western education”. According to the LGEA, enrolment was lowest among Muslim, Hausa-Fulani females, whose parents did not go to school themselves. However, there was reportedly recognition that although a few nomadic cattle-rearing Fulani had never been to school, some were now attending nomadic schools and attitudes generally were changing. They reportedly
often said: “Since I did not go to school, I will make sure that my children go to school.” LGEA officials also said that girls often collected prizes.

Hunger due to poverty was another major impediment to pupils’ punctuality and attendance recognised by LGEA, community and school sources although the potential effect on pupils’ ability to concentrate was not mentioned. The assistant head teacher explained:

- Kids are sent out to earn money before school or parents are hunting around for something to eat.
- Children do not eat enough or at all before coming to school while some are not given money for refreshment.

Community leaders also stressed the need for parents to give pupils food early in the morning to ensure that they stayed in school. But as one LGEA official pointed out: “Most parents are poor; they can’t afford three square meals. We try to give their children quality education. ...Yet you collect money from these poor people and be consuming [take all their money].”

Sickness or caring for a sick family member were also identified by school and community members as major causes of absenteeism, which may not be unrelated to hunger. Three out of the four pupil groups and one teacher mentioned sickness as a reason for absenteeism. One girl said: “My brother was sick so I missed school.” Both female pupil groups also mentioned pupils being orphaned as a reason for dropout or non-attendance in school. One female pupil also mentioned travel for family reasons as a cause of absenteeism.

Many Muslim boys who were absent from school, however, seemingly got distracted en route and played around, which pupils confirmed, or went to follow “bad friends” to ride bicycles because, as one parent put it: “Boys normally play a lot”. One teacher said: “Some pupils don’t come [to school] even though they dress at home to come to school.” Parents also explained that absenteeism was higher among boys because their activity was less monitored. In contrast, girls’ attendance and performance were better because they were made to stay at home and were paid more attention to their studies.

\[Mata suki zauna tare da uwayensu a gida amma maza sai yawo suna buga boll da bin baban bola. [Girls perform better than boys because girls stay at home with their mothers, but boys don’t stay at home; they move around playing football and following people who collect rubbish] (parent)\]

The community leaders agreed, maintaining that:

- girls are always closer to their mothers; they do home chores and are always monitored so come to school better prepared whereas boys are always playing sports and play around a lot as well as sometimes not going back home after school.

One teacher pointed out that some Muslim boys were absent on Fridays, ostensibly for Friday prayers, even though prayers did not start until 1.30pm. They said “the mallam will tell the boys to pack sand rather than coming to school.”

Thus, according to the parents, Muslim Hausa-Fulani fathers and mothers were too busy to ensure that pupils left home early. In the words of one male parent:

\[Mu iyaye, laifinmu shine; bamu da lokachi mu lura da zuwan yaranmu makaranta. Iyaye mata kuma su na chikin tare tare da aikin gida, baza su sami lokachin yin ma yara magana su tafi da wuri ba” [Our problem as parents is that we are always busy with work to monitor our children going to school early. Mothers are also busy with home chores; they will not have time to ensure children go to school early].\]

Parents thought ward heads and parents should round up loiterers, who were mainly boys, and ensure they got to school. The assistant head teacher maintained that some children stayed out
of school for up to three days without their father’s knowledge and pupils confirmed that some parents were unaware when their child had run away from school. Some teachers held the view that many children had to “fend for themselves” at home.

Also related to the perceived lack of parental supervision in some cases was the fact that some pupils didn’t wake up on time because they were watching films until late. Missing school to watch films was another reason for absenteeism, according to some pupils. Both girls and boys also ascribed some absenteeism or dropout to idleness.

In terms of educational choice, the assistant head teacher explained that parents had a lot of choice in the area with three other public primary schools, at least three Islamiyya schools, and several private schools available though claimed that parents still preferred Metropolis School because of its facilities and infrastructure, which the parents interviewed confirmed. One of the community leaders, however, noted that private schools’ fees were often unaffordable: “We’ve private schools but I don’t know much about them; besides who can afford their fees. I never asked those who send their children there”. The other community leader said: “When I could not secure space for two of my children here, I took them to one primary school; then I removed them that very term. ... I later got space and they are all here”.

There was an acknowledgement among community and LGEA respondents that among the Muslim community, attitudes were changing towards sending girls to school. The parents interviewed, who were all Muslim and male, considered school to be more important for girls, as they would pass on their knowledge to future children. As one parent put it: “Educating one girl means educating a nation” whereas the boys will be busy looking after their business”. One community leader said: “It’s my daughter that comes to school here; my son had refused to come to school. We tried everything possible; he refused, maybe due to peer group influence.” He added that even the Hausa-Fulani now send their girls to school. As one of the LGEA officials explained:

They now bring girls to school. They buy textbooks for girls now. If they don’t have money, they even come and plead: ‘Madam kuyi mana hakuri, next time zamu saya.’ [Madam, please be patient with us, we will buy the textbooks next time when we have money.] They also pursue children who don’t want to come to school and they bring them to us.

Pupils’ views, however, about the relative importance of schooling were more gendered. Although boys were adamant that school helps both girls and boys and job opportunities are open to both, Muslim boys maintained that Muslim girls preferred hawking to school. One group of boys also thought boys took school more seriously because of the responsibility to take care of the home:

*Mu yan maza muna dauchar makaranta da muhimmanchi saboda mu zamu rike gidajenmu, da yayanmu. Idan munyi makaranta, Allah ya bamu aiki zamu iya rike gidajenmu, amma idan bamu yi ba, bamu da aikin yi baza mu iya rike gidajenmu ba.* [We the boys take school more serious than girls because we are going to be responsible for taking care of our homes and children. If we attend school, and God gives us [a] job, we can take care of our homes, but if we did not attend school, we will not have jobs that will help us take care of our homes].

In contrast, one of the female pupil groups thought the opposite, maintaining that boys preferred playing, watching games or films, or working as mechanics to schooling, which was also a view expressed by one of the teachers. Although one group of girls also admitted: “Some girls just want to help their parents; they don’t want school.”
Three of the four pupil groups interviewed said they also received help with homework from parents, relatives and siblings although one of the teachers estimated that only about five out of forty pupils received any help with homework and that more would benefit from help with school work at home. One teacher complained that some pupils did not do their homework and this affected their learning. The parents interviewed said that although they assist with homework, fathers were always busy so usually only educated mothers and older siblings helped pupils. Moreover, they thought parents should assist pupils to do the homework themselves, and not allow it to be done by someone else. One of the school managers and parents were of the view that teachers should give more homework.

**Overage pupil**

One 20-year-old man in Primary 6 was interviewed: I want to be a medical doctor when I finish school. The only problem is that I will be old. I am not ashamed, because I am looking for knowledge. I did not start school early because I attended village school where they don’t teach, until the school collapsed. We stayed without going to school for nine years before being enrolled here. I came third in the class last term. Now I want to be first or second. My father tells me to read at home. He checks my books very well for the nine years I was doing petty trading with my father.

**Community–school relations**

Community–school relations were described as “cordial” by the head teacher and “not good” by one of the teachers interviewed. However, there was recognition on all sides that communication between the school, parents and the community needs to be improved.

School management and teachers recognised parents’ contribution to the school in terms of provision of writing materials and uniforms for pupils and, in some cases, textbooks though one of the teachers said that parents say they do not have the money for textbooks and that education is supposed to be free. Nevertheless, two of the teachers thought that more parents should purchase textbooks and another thought they should speak English to their children at home to help improve pupils’ English. According to one school respondent, if pupils lack writing materials, teachers are allowed to write to parents requesting that they purchase them, and some parents were said to respond. The parents interviewed confirmed that they are sometimes sent letters via their children.

Parents’ main communication with the school has historically been through the PTA, which, according to various sources was “not functioning” and/or was “weak” at the time of the research. It had reportedly functioned well before, meeting twice a term, whereas the SBMC was allegedly in the process of being formed, comprising seven members: five women and two men. One community leader expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of support from the PTA and SBMC, saying that the school now contacts the parents and community directly through community leaders rather than the PTA whenever there is a problem since “the PTA and SBMC do not care about us”. Moreover they thought that school–community relations could be improved by continued communication with parents through ward heads:

*Hanyan da za a bi, shine malamai ne zasu gaya wa masu anguwa; muna neman abu kaza, kuzo muyi shawara masuanguwa kuma zasu gawa jama’a masu mutunchi to kuzo gashi gashi. [If teachers are looking for something or they want something done in school, the only way is to tell ward heads and the ward heads will eventually inform the people concerned especially people of high regard and integrity]. (male parent)*

*Idan an bamu zarafi, zamu inganta sadaswa stakanin malamai da iyyaye da kuma masu anguwa. Domin I dan yaro bai zo makaranta ba, yakamata malamai su gaya wa iyyaye ta wurin masu anguwanne. Kuma idan malamai suna da wani magana sai su gaya wa masu anguwanne, su kuma sai su gaya wa iyyaye” [If given the chance, we will improve communication between teachers and parents through*
the ward heads. Whenever a child does not come to school, it will be proper for teachers to inform
his parents through the ward head. What's more, if teachers have something they want to
communicate, let them tell the ward heads and the ward heads will tell the parents.] (male parent)

When the PTA was fully functioning, the PTA chair summoned community meetings twice a term
and the last issues of concern reported by the school were the provision of drinking water and
giving more homework tasks to pupils. One teacher thought that the PTA needed to tackle pupil
welfare issues. According to another staff member, attendance at PTA meetings was usually low
and most of the attendees were female and could only convey the message to their husbands.
The respondent said that at times, parents sent the children's siblings to attend the PTA meeting.
Low attendance at PTA meetings, they maintained, reflected the prevailing attitude of parents
“who would rather concentrate on looking for what to eat than attend meetings”. The PTA levy
was ₦50 per term and according to one LGEA official, PTA levies are no longer an access issue in
the area. One staff member said that previously the PTA had also fined “erring parents” who had
not paid the fee but had abandoned the fine because they thought it would reflect badly on the
LGA. However, parents wanted receipts to be issued for the PTA contributions to account for the
money that was given to the PTA fund via the teachers at school.

The SS said that in their area, the schools normally charged an admission fee, but had been
directed not to by the Board, who had pointed out that education is supposed to be free.

More generally, the LGEA saw the PTA and SBMC as useful bodies in helping to raise funds for
schools. In the words of one official, the PTA could make up for “the shortfall of government”. The
SBMC was seen a body that dealt directly with schools and not the LGEA.

There were differing views between some school and community members as to the extent of
the contact the school had with parents collectively as regards latecoming, absenteeism and
dropout. Pupils also reported that parents were called to the school about such issues, especially
long-term absenteeism and some parents were “called to order.” Four out of five teachers had
one or more pupils in class who had missed a whole term, one noting that some pupils only
turned up for exams. Whatever the level of communication, the parents interviewed reported
coming to school periodically to check on their charges. One parent said he came every two to
three weeks to check his kids were in school. The community leader also reported sending to
school any loitering boys he came across and two of the teachers also noted that community
members brought straying children back into school and sometimes visited the school though
another teacher thought the community should do more to find out why pupils were roaming the
streets during school hours. The LGEA also said it encouraged parents to ensure that their
children reached and stayed in school. However, LGEA and community members agreed that
generally the head teacher contacted the community – in this case through the ward head – if
they wanted parents and community members to get together about specific issues such as
raising money for school renovations.

Various school respondents thought parents could further support their children by giving them
rewards for performance; assisting more with homework; putting aside study time at home;
supplying extra materials such as colour pencils; and support the teachers in disciplining the
children.

Some male pupils thought that in order to increase enrolment, teachers should make home visits
to parents. A teacher also thought this would improve school attendance.

In terms of the school responding to community requests, the LGEA and community came up
with a couple of examples, including the provision of potable water on the compound although it
was recognised that there were still problems with the borehole. Parents also mentioned the fact that the school encouraged them to make suggestions and comments about the school.

**AID2.3 The LGEA/LGA**

**LGEA/LGA internal relations**

Changes that LGEA staff thought would improve LGEA performance included ensuring that appointments for duty posts such as head teacher and SS were based on performance. Similarly, they thought teacher appointments and replacements should be based on experience and qualifications, at least NCE. One teacher was adamant that “the government should respect teachers and stop employing non-teachers to teach.” The view was also expressed that there should be a central examination committee to help centralize examinations within the LGA.

**School governance**

There was universal approval for the school’s improved infrastructure and facilities and a call by some for similar improvements to be carried out in schools across the LGEA and for more schools of similar quality to be built. It was agreed that these improvements had helped motivate pupils to come to school. However, parents, community leaders and some school staff thought the classrooms and/or the school was “overcrowded” and “overpopulated” and that more buildings were needed. As one parents put it: “In dambu yayi yawa, bayar jin mai” [Pupils here are too many, so teaching will be difficult]. One teacher also thought that the overcrowding in the school made administration difficult. Parents thought further school improvements could include more sports facilities and decorations in the school. From the perspective of the LGEA, adequate government funding, provision for more running costs and school material would further enhance the quality of education in school.

There was acknowledgement of improved textbook provision by the Board, which was said to be encouraging attendance and learning even though pupils often shared. The head teacher noted that using the same textbooks to teach all pupils centrally was enabling a central examination system to be organised. However, the LGEA, school and community respondents agreed that there was still a textbook shortage and that books need to be provided for all pupils. Parents thought that more English and Maths textbooks would be a major way of keeping kids in school. One pupil group also requested more books for the school library.

The LGEA and pupils also called on government to provide free uniforms. As one LGEA official put it: “Even this uniform, let every pupil be given the uniform free of charge.” Female pupils also wanted transport to school and payment of PTA levies.

Teachers said that the SS provided the main contact with the LGEA, who checked their school records, lesson notes and, as one teacher put it: “corrects our mistakes”. The ES also stated that the LGEA’s main support to schools was financial: “My office helps schools with money. We undertake school renovations. We buy and distribute chalks, school register etc”. SBMCs were said to deal with schools directly and not the LGEA office.

When asked what they most disliked about their job, teachers were unanimous in their dissatisfaction with low salaries and late salary payments and increments. As one teacher put it: “Government underrates teachers by not paying their entitlements and in time.” Another teacher said they disliked “the government relegation of teachers to the background as if we are not important”. Parents, school management and community leaders all supported teachers in this, recognising that teacher morale was crucial to educational quality, and, as parents pointed out, would help keep children in school. The head teacher thought “teachers must be motivated in term of timely promotions and yearly increments” and one of the community leaders
considered increasing teachers’ salaries to be the most important change that would improve primary schooling: “I will add salaries to teachers; they will teach well.” Parents also thought the school needed more teachers, including subject specialists.

School support
School managers noted that teachers had been sent on workshops organised by the LGEA and designed to increase teacher motivation, but thought that head teachers also needed administrative training and provision of a head teacher’s allowance.

The plan to managed examinations centrally was thought to be a way of enhancing pupil outcomes, which the LGEA said were improving.

LGEA–community relations
LGEA officials and school management said they regularly conducted community mobilisation within Muslim communities and sensitisation activities, including house-to-house visits. The house-to-house enrolment drive to encourage more girls into school was deemed very successful. The LGEA thought that some Muslim parents took advice as regards sending their children to school but some did not. The head teacher said he and the ES “meet regularly to encourage parents to send pupils to school” and the LGEA suggested using PTA and SBMCs and educational dramas as well as community meetings. “We need to organise advocacy campaigns to sensitise parents on the benefits of education vis-a-vis Qur’anic school,” the ES said. The ES also said that he attended meetings or was represented at PTA meetings but also saw it as part of the head teacher’s job to call parents to meetings from time to time, “to enlighten them on the benefits of education”. Both school management and LGEA officials were aware of the need for more interaction and engagement with communities.

Community members reported some contact with the LGEA. The parents interviewed vaguely recollected contact with the LGEA as regards PTA levies but could not really remember any details. One of the community leaders recounted being approached by the SS about parents dumping in the school compound:

The SS consulted me when the school fence got broken and people dump refuse there. The SS threatened to report the issue to law enforcement agencies. I intervened and talked to the people and they responded.

With regards to the LGEA dealing with community concerns, the SS also said that parents sometimes complained about issues, which they reportedly resolved without going higher to the ES. The LGEA, however, was concerned that the community sometimes bypassed the LGEA and went directly to the Board. As one teacher put it: “The school is too close to the seat of authority”.

AID3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY
AID3.1 Infrastructure and security

- There was widespread appreciation of the school’s new buildings and improved facilities, which were said to be encouraging more pupils to come to school.
- There was a call for similar quality schools to be built throughout the LGEA.
- Some community and staff members were still concerned about overcrowded classrooms, making teaching difficult, and mention was also made of too many pupils being in the school, making administration difficult.
• There was also widespread satisfaction with the recent provision of a water source in the school though with intermittent power supply the borehole didn’t always work. When the water wasn’t flowing, pupils left school to get water and some boys did not return.
• Older, bigger boys were seen to dominate the water supply.
• Four toilet blocks (not gender segregated) were in fair condition on research visits but were underused (boys were seen urinating at the side) and were a source of concern to some pupils and community leaders, who thought better toilet facilities would help increase enrolment.
• There was noticeably improved security in the school after a change in leadership midway through the research when the compound wall was repaired and side entrances closed. The main gate had security guards.
• Parents and community members appreciated improvements in security but thought more could be done to prevent pupils leaving school during school hours.
• Vendors were only allowed into the compound during break.
• Pupils appreciated the fact that their school was generally neat and clean.

AID3.2 Teacher management

• It was commonly agreed that “teachers are trying” but that teacher morale was low, which had a major negative impact on school quality.
• Teachers were unanimous in their dissatisfaction with poor salaries, delays in payments, promotions and increments.
• LGEA and community members were very sympathetic to teachers’ complaints, and considered government’s need to address the issues as fundamental to improving school quality.
• But there was also widespread recognition that teacher absenteeism and latecoming constituted a major obstacle to pupil learning and encouraged pupils to drop out of school.
• Some respondents thought some female teachers in particular struggled with attendance and lesson preparation on account of household chores.
• On research visits, however, few teachers were seen hanging round the compound not in class.
• LGEA and senior school staff reportedly counselled teachers about absenteeism, referring them to the LGEA only if counselling failed.
• The school had two advisory committees – one “academic”, the other “social” – to which teachers could be referred.
• Excessive corporal punishment was deemed to be the second main problem of teacher indiscipline across the LGEA, affecting some male teachers, in particular.
• Teacher duties were said to be allocated “on merit” though predictably the health teacher was female, the labour teacher male. There were separate discipline teachers for girls and for boys.
• School managers thought more administrative training was needed for head teachers in addition to a head teacher’s allowance.
• Teachers confirmed regular contact and supervision of work by the school supervisor but one teacher thought “good, regular supervision” would improve their teaching.
• Parents thought more teachers were needed in the school, including subject specialists.

3.3 Pupil management and pupil relations

• The main pupil disciplinary issues in the school were identified as latecoming, and, to a lesser extent, attendance.
• Poor attendance of boys in particular was considered to be due in part to their being less closely supervised.
• Lesson observations suggested girls were absent from class more often than boys, if enrolment statistics are correct.
• Although very little loitering by either staff or pupils was seen on research visits, parents and community members in particular wanted closer supervision of pupils.
• There were reports of some girls and boys dropping out of school for unspecified reasons, e.g. because they “refuse to go to school” or “do not like school”.
• Contradictory statements were made about the status of corporal punishment both within the LGEA and within Metropolis though the consensus within the school seemed to be that only the discipline teachers could cane, though teachers disagreed with the policy.
• Corporal punishment was gendered: girls were reportedly caned (usually more lightly) on the back of the legs or hand whereas boys were beaten on the buttocks or back. Punishments were supposed to be recorded in the book. But often weren’t. (Some) male teachers were said to beat harder, using a variety of implements.
• Pupils said other teachers, prefects and monitors also practised corporal punishment, especially to punish bullying or fighting.
• Pupils’ views on the practice were mixed though some reported being put off studying and participating in class after being beaten; most pupils preferred teachers that don’t beat.
• Labour was the preferred punishment, e.g. sweeping the compound, picking up litter and cleaning the toilets. Making pupils kneel down and do frog-jumps was also popular though counselling and verbal rebukes were also mentioned.
• Prefects were selected by committee based on academic performance, neatness and punctuality though size was also considered and “feminine and masculine duties” assigned.
• Some pupils complained about prefects beating too much and missing class.
• At break pupils generally socialized in gender-segregated age-related groups.
• Very little fighting or bullying was observed but female and male pupils complained about bullying, fighting and “rough play”, singling out older, overage boys and girls in particular but agreeing that in general (some) boys tend to bully girls.
• Teachers, and sometimes prefects or monitors were said to intervene and parents are sometimes called.
• Most teachers reported that one or more pupils had missed a whole term. Pupils said those who missed a term were often ridiculed and teased/bullied by peers though some tried to counsel them.

**AID3.4 Teaching and learning**

• All pupils said they had some “good teachers”, which is what they most liked about the school.
• There were sufficient, new classrooms with clear boards and adequate seating, though a number of pupils appeared to be absent.
• Repeaters were apparently limited to five per class though it was suggested that more should be allowed to repeat to avoid dropout or transfer to other schools.
• The school had formerly held special classes for “backward pupils” – an idea that was about to be taken up again with the new management.
• There was appreciation that the Board had improved textbook provision but LGEA, school and community respondents agreed that more textbooks were needed and would help improve attendance and learning.
• Use of the same textbooks in schools was said to facilitate a central exam across the LGEA.
• Pupils sat in gender-segregated groups in three lessons and more mixed seating in two (which one teacher thought meant less noise) though little cross-gender interaction was observed.

• Teacher talk dominated in all lessons, interspersed in some with choral repetition and some individual questioning, which made limited cognitive demands of pupils. Pupils were sometimes called to the board to solve problems and pupils observed copying from the board in some lessons, with the teacher monitoring.

• Most pupils had writing materials but some had to borrow; letters were sometimes sent to parents requesting them to purchase materials.

• Given the large classes, very few pupils got to participate individually, but both girls and boys answered questions.

• There was some acknowledgement within the LGEA and school management that teachers needed more professional support in both pedagogy and subject matter, and that livelier lessons would improve attendance.

• In-house training was said to have been organised for teachers as well as LGEA workshops, though neither was mentioned by the teachers themselves.

• Learning in English caused major learning difficulties for pupils, prompting some teachers to switch to Hausa, though one threatened pupils if they answered in Hausa.

• Implementing the mother-tongue policy, however, was said to be tricky in the school given the number of teachers who did not speak Hausa.

• Most pupils wanted to learn wholly in English yet struggled to understand English both in class and in interviews.

• Pupil and teacher views varied as to whether girls or boys participated or performed better in class though there was some agreement that overage pupils participate less in class because they were teased if they made mistakes and that Muslim girls, and underage Muslim girls in particular, often participated less and underperformed.

• Gender or religious stereotypes were invoked by pupils and teachers to explain their views.

• Teacher–pupil relations were generally observed to be positive and teachers were supportive, though one teacher carried a cane.

• Both boys and girls were observed messing about in class both when the teacher was absent and present though most teachers maintained discipline; all pupil groups complained that pupils messing around or fighting in class impeded learning.

• Teachers thought pupils generally got on well; pupil groups did not, with girls in particular complaining about boys' verbal and physical bullying though some girls were also said to bully.

AID3.5 Socio-economic and family issues

• Across respondents, poverty and preference for Islamic education were the main reasons given for non-enrolment, latecoming, absenteeism and dropout.

• One senior member of staff said teaching often didn't start until the second or third lesson because of pupil latecoming.

• Hausa boys in particular were said to be late, absent or drop out of school for petty trading sometimes without parental knowledge and/or consent.

• Muslim girls who hawked goods and other girls who were household maids often had work to do before school.

• Home chores were widely identified as a major cause of latecoming, absenteeism and even fatigue in class for girls and boys though girls were said to have more work.

• Some pupils living far from school arrived late though school management tried to persuade them to go to a nearer school.
• Early marriage or pregnancy was mentioned as a cause of dropout for a small number of girls.
• Attendance at Qur’anic schools was universally blamed for latecoming among Muslim girls and boys and overage enrolment was common for boys who have been sent away for a Tsangaya education before starting conventional school. Some 20-year-olds were in class.
• Some Muslim parents were said to dislike “western education” and/or not appreciate its value given the unemployment situation of those who have completed schooling.
• Attitudes were said to be changing, however, especially as regards the value of girls’ education, even among nomads.
• School and community respondents identified poverty and hunger as having a major impact on punctuality, attendance and pupil learning in this and other schools in the LGEA.
• Three out of four pupil groups said they occasionally missed the odd day through sickness and/or caring for sick family members.
• Pupil lateness and truancy, (e.g. going to watch films, ride bicycles), particularly by boys, was often blamed on lack of parental supervision though some pupils were said to be without parental support.
• Both Christian and Muslim pupils said they sometimes got help from siblings in doing homework and some pupils said they also had help from parents, mothers in particular.
• Most respondents thought school was equally important for girls and boys and considered community attitudes to be changing as regards girls’ education; parents (all Muslim, male) thought girls’ education to be more important as they would pass on knowledge to future children.
• There was a lot of school choice in the area but LGEA and community respondents said Metropolis was popular because of its improved infrastructure.

AID3.6 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)

• There were mixed views on the state of school–community relations but all were agreed that communication between the school, community and parents could be improved.
• There had been successful contact between the LGEA and communities, especially in terms of community mobilization to increase pupil enrolment.
• LGEA officials recognised the need for further involvement with communities, who sometimes bypassed the LGEA and took concerns directly to the Board.
• The SBMC was in the process of being formed but the PTA was said not to be functioning, with low, mainly female attendance at meetings; sometimes parents’ siblings attended in their place.
• The school therefore contacted parents directly through community leaders.
• The LGEA considered the PTA and SBMCs to be a useful means of raising funds for school.
• The school recognised that parents supported the school through provision of writing materials and uniform but some respondents thought parents should do more (e.g. buy textbooks, give rewards to pupils, and support teachers in disciplining pupils).
• Parents and community members recognized that the school had responded to requests such as the provision of potable water and thought it was open to suggestions and comments.
• It was said that LGEA performance would improve if LGEA and school appointments were made based purely on qualifications, experience and performance.
APPENDIX IE

KILFI PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AIE1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE DATA
This is the case study report for Kilfi Primary School in the context of the relevant LGEA and the school’s local community. It is an urban school located in the Central Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents
A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 17 adults and 35 children, as indicated in Table AIE1.1. Same-gender (but of mixed religion) group interviews were held with pupils (three female, three male), and group interviews were also held with SBMC members, PTA committee members and parents. Other respondents were interviewed individually. Over four times more Muslim than Christian interviewees were accessed, which reflects the religious balance of the school’s pupil intake. In addition, only two adult female respondents were interviewed.

Table AIE1.1 Kilfi Primary School case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES, SS)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, informal interactions were held with: a 10-year-old out-of-school boy; two women in two separate households, both with children of school-going age whom they could not afford to send to school; a former teacher; a group of young men who had left school (either primary or secondary); and a group of JSS students. Six classroom observations were conducted.

AIE1.1 The LGA (LGEA)

Socio-demographic context
The LGA lies in the Central Senatorial Zone and comprises a large, predominantly rural area with a population of around 200,000, according to the most recent census. The LGEA comprises both flat and hilly terrain. The main agricultural activities are farming and fishing with rice a major cash crop. The population is mainly Muslim with the Hausa-Fulani the main ethnic group, including a significant population of nomadic pastoralists, according to LGEA officials. There are also substantial numbers of Vere, Bata and Laka.

Local educational context
See main report, Chapter 4.
AIE1.2. The school community

Kilfi Primary School is located on the edge of a major urban area in a predominantly Muslim residential area surrounded by a mixture of very wealthy and very poor housing. Most parents are said to be farmers, who, according to the school, require extra labour in November and December. The major ethnic group in the locality is the Hausa-Fulani, including nomadic pastoralists but there are also Vere and Bata, among other ethnic groups. Thus, Fulfulde and Hausa are the most widely spoken community languages. Pupils, parents and PTA members interviewed also mentioned communicating in the following languages at home: Yungur, Bare, Mopa, Kanuri, Yandang, Chamba, Vere, Kwatiye, Igbo, Higgi and Bata. As Kilfi is an old and historically important school, it was said that many parents wish to send their children here although pupil enrolments have been decreasing. Pupils interviewed lived within a two to forty-minute walk from the school.

AIE1.3 The school

School description
Basic information

Kilfi Primary School lies off the main road in the residential area of a large urban centre. It has an intake of over 1,000 pupils. Female pupils currently account for just over half the enrolments (51.1%) whereas males account for just under half (48.9%). In terms of the religious composition, four times more Muslim pupils than Christian pupils are enrolled in the school.

Kilfi Primary School shares a fenced compound with a pre-school. The buildings are new and in excellent condition. There are 28 new and well furnished classrooms and well furnished offices for the head teacher and two assistant heads spread over several buildings. The staff room is also well provided with desks and comfortable chairs. The school also has a well-stocked library and computer room. The onsite pre-school has play facilities, including slides and swings. There are three toilet blocks of pit latrines, one for staff use, one supposedly abandoned though with signs of continued use, and one clean block of eight for pupil use, though lacking in privacy (see Section 2.1 on School buildings and facilities). The compound was generally clean, tidy and secure, though it was possible to climb over the compound wall at the back; it offered limited shade by the main school buildings and under the classroom veranda or porch. The school has a potable water supply and electricity for both lights and fans.

The staff

The head teacher is male and Muslim, and has been running the school for a number of years. Both assistant heads are also male and Muslim. There are 54 other teaching staff members. The distribution of the teachers (including the head teacher) by qualification and gender is shown in Table AIE1.2 below. There are more male teachers (31; 55.4%) than female teachers (26; 45.6%) and almost two thirds of the teaching force are qualified teachers (65%); a slightly higher proportion of male teachers are qualified than female teachers (67.7% to 61.5%) and there is only one degree holder. Seven female and eight male non-teaching staff are also employed by the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC II</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(45.6%)

(55.4%)
Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes

Pupil enrolment

Over the last four years, enrolments have decreased steadily each year, reduced by 27.8% from 1405 in 2007–8 to 1014 in 2010–11, as illustrated in Table AIE 1.3. Over the four-year period the gender profile has altered too as the proportion of female pupils has increased each year, from 44.5% in 2007–8 to 51.1% in 2010–11. Conversely, the proportion of male pupils has steadily decreased, from 55.5% in 2007–8 to 48.9% in 2010–11. The intake has remained predominantly Muslim; four times as many Muslim pupils as Christians have registered each year, consistently comprising around 82% of the intake, whereas Christian pupil participation has remained around 18%. However, in absolute terms, the numbers of females, males, Muslims and Christians have steadily declined each year over the four-year period.

Table AIE1.3 Kilfi Primary School enrolments by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>625 (44.5%)</td>
<td>780 (55.5%)</td>
<td>1149 (81.8%)</td>
<td>256 (18.2%)</td>
<td>1405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>613 (46.3%)</td>
<td>710 (53.7%)</td>
<td>1076 (81.3%)</td>
<td>247 (18.7%)</td>
<td>1323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>551 (48.4%)</td>
<td>587 (51.6%)</td>
<td>941 (82.7%)</td>
<td>197 (17.3%)</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>518 (51.1%)</td>
<td>496 (48.9%)</td>
<td>827 (81.6%)</td>
<td>187 (18.4%)</td>
<td>1014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering enrolment figures by grade (see Tables AIE1.4 and AIE 1.5) for the period in question, there are no clear patterns. However, there are some strange drops and/or hikes in numbers year on year too that cast doubt on the reliability of some of the figures and/or point to children leaving school but not being recorded as dropouts, or entering school midway through the school cycle. Even given that data on repeaters are lacking, this ebb and flow of numbers is difficult to explain. For example, a cohort of 190 pupils in Primary 1 in 2007–8 increases to 211 in 2008–9, dropped by 27.5% to 153 in Primary 3 in 2009–10, then surged back up to 194 in Primary 4 in 2010–11. Although 58 pupils from Primary 2 in 2008–9 did not re-register for Primary 3 the following year, dropouts recorded for that year across all grades only totalled nine. Even assuming that all nine dropouts occurred in that grade – which according to the dropout figures provided (see Table AIE1.8 below), they don’t – that still leaves 49 pupils unaccounted for.

Table 1.4 Kilfi Primary School enrolment by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>91 (47.9%)</td>
<td>99 (52.1%)</td>
<td>190 (49.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106 (52.0%)</td>
<td>106 (53.7%)</td>
<td>204 (50.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>86 (43.0%)</td>
<td>114 (57.0%)</td>
<td>200 (52.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>109 (51.7%)</td>
<td>109 (51.7%)</td>
<td>211 (52.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>82 (41.6%)</td>
<td>115 (58.4%)</td>
<td>197 (51.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>105 (48.2%)</td>
<td>105 (48.2%)</td>
<td>218 (51.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>124 (44.9%)</td>
<td>152 (55.1%)</td>
<td>276 (50.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106 (52.0%)</td>
<td>106 (52.0%)</td>
<td>253 (50.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>154 (49.0%)</td>
<td>160 (51.0%)</td>
<td>314 (50.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>103 (43.3%)</td>
<td>103 (43.3%)</td>
<td>238 (52.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>86 (38.1%)</td>
<td>140 (61.9%)</td>
<td>226 (55.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92 (46.2%)</td>
<td>92 (46.2%)</td>
<td>199 (53.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>625 (44.5%)</td>
<td>780 (55.5%)</td>
<td>1405 (53.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.5 Kilfi Primary School enrolment by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus</td>
<td>Chr</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Mus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>(86.8%)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>(13.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>(82.0%)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(18.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>(84.3%)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>(15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>(81.2%)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>(18.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>(82.4%)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>(75.2%)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1149</td>
<td>(81.8%)</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>(18.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overage pupils
Statistics for the number of overage pupils are clearly inaccurate so are not presented here. For example in the 2007–8 analysis (by grade, gender and religion) alone, in nine cases the number of overage pupils exceeded the number of pupils said to be enrolled in those groups.

Pupil attendance
Table AIE1.6 below illustrates the number of pupil days absent per term by gender for the years 2007–8 to 2009–10 and Table AIE1.7 (also below) shows the number of pupil days absent by religion for the same period. The numbers of days absent per year have apparently almost doubled from 91 to 173 in 2009–10, after having dropped slightly to 87 in 2008–9. More absences were recorded for girls than boys in the first two years even though female enrolments were fewer. More absences were recorded for Muslim pupils than for Christian pupils though not in proportion to the much higher Muslim intake. There are no discernible patterns according to terms. Importantly, however, the figures would seem to represent a considerable underestimation. Comparing the numbers of absences with the very high numbers of pupils leads to the improbable conclusion that the vast majority of pupils never miss a day of school. Even taking the highest figure of 173 absences for 2010–11, that equates to an average of 0.2 days absent per pupil during the entire year. The qualitative data suggest otherwise as pupil absenteeism was a major concern of the PTA.

Table 1.6 Kilfi Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table AIE1.7 Kilfi Primary School number of days absent by term and by religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil dropout
Dropout rates for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10 increased dramatically, as shown in Table AIE1.8. From only seven (0.5%) in 2007–8 they rose slightly to nine (0.7%) the following year, and 14 (10.1%) the year after. Given the small numbers reported there is little meaningful comparison that can be made between girls and boys, Muslims and Christians. The more important point to make is that the very low dropout figures do not correspond to the steady drop in overall enrolment numbers from 2007–8 to 2010–11 reported above in Tables AIE1.4 and AIE1.5; nor do they correspond with the more dramatic drops in numbers between some grades. Even if figures for pupils who do not reregister the following year are not included in dropout figures, the very low numbers for the first two years do not tally with findings from the qualitative data.

Table AIE1.8 Kilfi Primary School number of dropouts by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total dropouts</th>
<th>Overall dropout rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The dropout rate here is the number of dropouts expressed as a percentage of the total pupil enrolment for the year.

Pupil performance
The performance data for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10 set out in Table AIE1.9 indicate a wide spread of marks each year. Over the three-year period the bottom mark increased from 18% to 23% while the top mark increased from 81% to 86%. In each year the top and bottom Primary 6 marks went to Muslim pupils, which is not surprising given the far greater numbers of Muslim pupils in school. The reliability of some of the high marks is called into question, however, given that classroom observations and interviews with teachers and pupils indicated that pupils were unable to understand or communicate in English.
Table 1.9 Kilifi Primary School pupil performance according to gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Overall range of marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIE2. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

AIE2.1. The school

**General school issues**

**School buildings and facilities**

LGEA, school and community respondents all expressed satisfaction with the new and improved school facilities and increased number of classrooms and teachers. Pupils and teachers expressed appreciation of the “large”, “beautiful” and “new” buildings, which make the school "beautiful and attractive" and which teachers thought helped boost attendance and the LGEA thought had helped improve school quality.

The school has its own water source and electricity supply to power both lights and ceiling fans. There are 28 new, clean classrooms (including pre-school rooms) in several buildings, including a two-storey building, and a shady play area with slides and swings for nursery school pupils, and some bare ground and a football pitch. The school also boasts a well-furnished staff room, where some teachers were observed preparing lessons, as well as offices for the head teacher and two assistant head teachers. There is also a well-stocked library and computer room. On one research visit pupils were being taught computing skills, which one pupil said helped them learn, although while being observed neither pupils nor teachers actually touched a computer. Nevertheless some pupils mentioned liking the facilities. In the library, two library assistants were supervising pupils who were studying.

There are several trees providing shade round the main school buildings and the new classrooms also have a shaded veranda/porch but shade is lacking elsewhere in the compound although new trees have been planted.

The water pump is for the exclusive use of the school and was seen being freely used by girls and boys though more often by girls, who often handed over the water for a boy to drink. However, the nearby community was allowed to use the borehole daily between 2 and 4pm although at times during lessons the occasional outsider was seen accessing the water pump. Parents were of the opinion that another borehole was needed for the school.

The three toilet blocks are located some distance from the main school buildings close to the outside wall, where boys were seen climbing into school unobserved. The cleanest block containing three cubicles with doors was reserved for teachers. Another clean block for pupils contains eight cubicles, in two rows of four, facing each other. However, the cubicles have no doors and so lack privacy. The third and older toilet block was said to be abandoned though there
were signs of continued use. One group of female pupils really disliked the fact that some pupils excreted in the school compound and not in the toilets. Researchers observed numerous boys, and the occasional girl, relieving themselves, usually against the wall, even against the outside wall of the toilet. On one occasion a boy was seen urinating in the embers of fire that was burning the school’s litter.

There is a football pitch in the compound, which is considered inadequate for the large school population. The nursery school also has two sets of swings and two slides, which a teacher was seen supervising on one occasion. One set of swings was observed being used by boys, the other by girls. Only boys seemed to use the slides. Both girls and boys interviewed thought a sports field would help improve retention and girls also mentioned facilities for music too.

**Security**

As highlighted above, the school is wholly surrounded by a wall, with a large main gate and two smaller gates, which were both kept locked. According to the community leader, the school had responded to community concerns by employing 24-hour security guards and improving security in the school. However, school management still thought that the three guards were inadequate to protect the improved facilities and the school had made a request to the LGEA for more. The wall at the front of the school is very high and insurmountable; however at one side of the compound, behind the toilets and out of sight of the main school, footholds had been gouged out of the wall to help boys climb over the wall and large stones were to be found both inside and outside the compound to aid the clandestine coming and going. Several male pupils and outsiders were observed climbing the wall on research visits. The SBMC expressed concern about the height of the wall and thought it should be made higher as a matter of priority. While wandering outside the school one time, researchers came across some four boys who had been picking fruit rather than being in class and who were heading for this “back entrance” to get back into school.

Food vendors were said to be allowed into school only during break time and this was adhered to on the initial research visit as a hawker in the compound during lesson time was chased out by the security guard, seemingly after catching sight of a researcher. However, on a later visit, the rules were far more relaxed when some of the female pupils joined the vendors, selling food even during lesson time. All the food vendors seen were female, with some of them school-going age, and they were also seen sitting around outside the main gate.

One pupil praised the fact that the school was not next to a main road so pupils were safe from road accidents.

**School routines**

Classes usually start at 8am and finish at noon for Primary 1 to 3, and at 12.30 for Primary 4 to 6. Lessons are 35 minutes long and on research visits started and finished promptly. Assembly is usually held three times a week. (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) from 7.30am to 8am. However, on one visit it was cancelled due to cold weather and classes were put back until 9.30am. The main break is from 9.30 to 10am, with a second smaller break at 10.30 to 10.50am.

The classrooms and their immediate area are cleaned on all days by pupils. General school cleaning occurs on Thursdays before class and assembly 7am to 7.30am. Weekly staff briefings are reportedly held on Monday mornings.
**School management of staff**

Pupils and parents interviewed generally considered the teachers and the teaching to be good in the school and one pupil group highlighted that fact that there was “no fighting with teachers unlike in other schools.” The head teacher also recognised that teachers in the school “are trying” in part, he believed, because they were closely monitored by school management to ensure that they entered class on time when the bell sounded. Observations generally confirmed this although some classes were seen to be without teachers.

Nevertheless, according to some pupils and community sources, insufficient teachers and teacher absenteeism on the part of some staff were serious issues in the school, identified as being one of the main obstacles to pupil learning. One community member said: “about half of teachers live far from the school. Sometimes they don’t come to school; sometimes they come; if we ask them, they complain of sickness, home chores etc.” According to another member: “Some [parents] complain that teachers don’t teach; they stay under trees and send pupils on errands only.” Parents interviewed felt that teachers needed closer monitoring by management and should be disciplined if they did not come to school. Two of the three teachers interviewed also complained about lack of professionalism from some colleagues. One teacher explained: “I want people to tell the truth. Some teachers come to school by 9am and write 7am on the teacher attendance register”. One teacher also felt there was a lack of cooperation among teachers, which they thought could improve through staff meetings.

According to the head teacher, disciplinary procedures regarding teachers’ lateness or absenteeism were first dealt with at the school level:

> First I call the attention of the teacher and speak with him/her verbally ... If the teacher doesn’t change, I speak to a close friend of the teacher to speak to him/her. If that doesn’t work, then I report the teacher to the supervisor.

The head teacher added: “We’ve a disciplinary committee where all staff and students’ disciplinary cases are attended to.” See the Section 2.3 on School governance for details of disciplinary procedures at the LGEA level.

Given that the school had a teaching staff of 56 and over 1,000 pupils enrolled, a number of teachers had special responsibilities: alongside the male head and assistant head teachers (one in charge of academic matters, the other in charge of administration), other positions of responsibility held by male teachers at the time included: debating, discipline, games. Positions of responsibility held by female teachers included “senior mistress”.

**School management of pupils**

Pupil attendance at school varied from “fair” to “impressive”, an estimated 80–90% according to some school and LGEA staff. The head teacher estimated the vast majority were in by 8am, and the rest by 8.30am. The PTA thought that the high attendance of most pupils showed that all pupils valued schooling. However, latecomers were acknowledged to be serious and a major access issue for both female and male pupils, according to school, community and LGEA sources, predominantly due to Qur’anic schooling on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, and/or home chores, or lack of food for pupils (see Section 2.2. on Family). It was thought by one member of staff that more girls tended to be late.

On research visits pupils were generally found to be in class, and not loitering in the compound although absentees may well have already left the compound by then. Even when there was no teacher present, pupils tended to remain in the classrooms. Although the SBMC suggested otherwise, asking for closer monitoring by teachers to keep pupils in school.
School strategies to deal with latecoming included complaining to parents through the PTA, and, according to the head teacher, “at staff meetings we agreed that teachers on their way to school should look out for pupils on the road and make them run to school.” The head teacher also said he drove his motor cycle round the town to check for pupils who were playing on the way to school. Pupils and staff agreed that latecomers were punished. Parents also mentioned bringing their children to school to be caned. “We bring children to the school to the head teacher for the necessary action,” one parent said. “I bring them to the school for punishment” another added.

According to staff there was an unwritten policy to use “verbal corrective disciplining”, which followed directives from the Board. The general punishment for latecoming, according to the school, and backed up by pupils, was that girls were made to pick up litter or sweep the compound and boys were made to weed. Indeed one female pupil was observed arriving late and was made to sweep some of the compound by the duty teacher. Nevertheless, pupils reported (and were seen) being beaten by some teachers and several teachers were seen wandering around school with a cane in their hand. One teacher was adamant that punishment should be lighter for latecomers than for those committing other offences, noting: “Punishment should be given in terms of little work for latecomers”.

Views about the extent to which corporal punishment was practised in the school and the fairness of punishment varied across pupil groups. One group of girls said they valued teachers’ kindness and the fact they did not beat much. Yet several female pupil groups also reported pupils dropping out of school because of being beaten: “We have classmates that left school because they were flogged,” one said. “Some disliked and dropped out of school because of flogging,” added another. One schoolgirl was found lurking at the back of a classroom on one research visit; she said she was scared to go to class in case she was beaten for being without a text book.

All three groups of female pupils defined a good teacher as one who did not flog but “takes care of pupils”. That said, more female pupil groups considered corporal punishment not to be very widespread in the school and the disciplinary practices to be “fair” though perhaps that was because they were not beaten as much as the boys although all pupil groups mentioned being beaten on some occasions for being late, or absent. Generally, girls were said to receive fewer strokes of the cane on the palm of the hand whereas boys received more strokes on the buttocks or the back. Boys were generally more dissatisfied with the punishments for latecoming; two of the three group judged them to be unfair. One boy explained: “Some pupils do not have parents or money. Life is difficult for them.” One group of male pupils identified corporal punishment as something they disliked about the school. As one boy put it: “It’s very painful and annoying to be beaten in school.”

Although all pupil groups thought that male and female teachers punished differently, only one group said that they considered male teachers to be harsher and beat more. Otherwise groups variously mentioned female teachers disciplining by caning on the palm, making pupils do frog jumps or machine riding (maintaining a kneeling posture with arms outstretched as if riding a motorbike) whereas for male teachers pupils variously mentioned flogging, sometimes using a fan belt, making pupils carry stones or kneel down. Some pupils were reportedly sent to the discipline or duty teacher for punishment. Even nursery school pupils were seen being chased into class with a teacher using an instrument of plaited palm fronds.

Although there was no school counsellor, pupils said that in some cases the head and assistant head teachers talked to pupils who insulted teachers, came to school without uniform or writing materials, and who had “personal issues”.

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Offences that pupils were disciplined for, aside from latecoming and absenteeism, included stealing, fighting – including “using a razor to cut other pupils” mentioned by one group of male pupils, bullying, not doing homework or class work, jumping the school wall, insulting or refusing to obey teachers. Aside from “rudeness”, which was said to refer to (some) boys, it was not clear from the data whether any of these offences were particularly associated with girls, boys or both. A few cases were recounted of pupils being turned away from school for not wearing uniform, or for their uniform being incomplete.

Pupils agreed that prefects and monitors were selected according to exam performance and consideration of neatness of appearance, sometimes taking into account punctuality and “respectfulness”. One group of boys, however, also considered size to be important. Another group of boys noted: “For monitors we have male pupils as monitors and female pupils as assistants.” Neither prefects nor monitors were seen beating other pupils and prefects were not visibly identifiable within the school.

School duties supervised by prefects are generally gendered. Female pupils cleaned the classrooms and swept the compound every day, which one group declared was unfair:

Female pupil: We do the sweeping of the classroom.
Researcher: Is that fair?
Female pupil: Noo!, it is not fair.
Researcher: Why?
Female pupil: Because is only the girls that sweep while the boys play football and this work should be shared between boys and us the girls.
Researcher: Why is the work not shared?
Female pupil: The boys refused that they do not sweep at home, that it is the work for girls.

Girls also picked up litter and cleaned the toilets and had to clean the nursery classrooms at break. Boys were said to weed with a hoe, which children brought from home.

Pupils were seen playing in gender-segregated groups at break time; (some) boys played football and a couple were seen playing around with the embers of a fire (see above) whereas girls congregated in other areas in groups, mainly chatting. Nursery children played on the slides and swings. Cases of fighting and bullying were frequently witnessed although teachers said it was not as bad as it was before. Whereas it was mainly (some) boys fighting and bullying other boys, and sometimes girls, one girl was seen slapping a much younger boy. Teachers were not seen intervening although both pupils and teachers said that teachers disciplined pupils that bullied. Teachers said they asked about the incident before either giving a warning or sometimes sending them to the head teacher. Alternatively, teachers punished pupils by making them weed the grounds or clean the toilets. Pupils also reported being flogged but one group of boys said that sometimes “teachers call those involved, ask questions, punish the offender and at times [it is] amicably settled.”

Several pupil groups remarked that pupils were generally well behaved and respectful although cases of fighting, bullying, predominantly involving boys were acknowledged. Several pupil groups complained about stealing (mainly by boys) as the thing they most disliked about the school. Indeed the behavior of (some) boys came in for criticism from boys and girls, and older, overage boys in particular, for fighting, bullying, throwing stones, or for “stubbornness” (i.e. refusing to take orders) and running round the compound for no reason. One group of boys complained about “slapping, beating, snatching of things by overage boys. Victims are younger
boys.” Another group said: “Big boys beat and tease the younger ones.” However, one girl was particularly happy to be at this school on account of the lack of witchcraft:

I like this school because there isn't secret society [witchcraft] like in other schools like in [senior secondary school and another primary school]. There was a day people in town were running helter skelter and our teachers sent us back home and when we went back we were told the problem in the schools.

**In the classroom**

Six formal classroom observations were made in Primary 5 and Primary 6 classes.

**Classroom conditions and resources**

All the classrooms were bright, new and tidy with two entrances with doors and two chalkboards. Rooms had lights and ceiling fans. The cement floors were smooth and lots of light was admitted through large glass windows. There was sufficient new furniture for pupils to be comfortable (see below). Walls were bare except in one class, which had some wall charts.

One pupil group particularly liked the availability of textbooks in the school and several pupil groups thought that having textbooks in class helped them learn though one group wanted to be able to take books home too. In the six observed lessons, textbook availability varied: in two classes almost all pupils had textbooks whereas in two classes there were some textbooks and in one just two girls shared a book. In the sixth lesson the number was not recorded. Crucially, however, only two teachers were seen using a textbook in class. One pupil group defined a good teacher as one who “is always teaching with a textbook.” The head teacher was adamant of the need to ensure that teachers used instructional materials to improve pupil learning.

**Seating arrangements**

In the six observed lessons, class sizes ranged from 38 to 50 (13–17 girls; 18–27 boys). There were more girls than boys present in three of the classrooms, which is unsurprising given that slightly more girls were currently enrolled for Primary 5 and 6.

Pupils were generally comfortably seated three to a bench, though occasionally two of four pupils were observed together. Benches were organised in three columns and seating was generally gender-segregated with pupils grouped on gender-specific benches although not in blocks. One class had mixed-gender seating and generally either overage pupils and/or boys sat on the back rows. One class had smaller, possibly underage, pupils at the front.

Although the classrooms were big, so were some class sizes, and parents, along with one of the teachers, thought overcrowding in some classes was a major obstacle to pupil learning.

**Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)**

The head teacher felt that the “wrong teaching methods” used by some teachers constituted a major obstacle to pupil learning. The assistant head (academic) checked teachers’ lesson notes but the head thought the situation would improve through additional checks by himself, and through further reminders of appropriate teaching methods during meetings, and class visits by school management. At the Monday teachers’ briefing in particular, teachers were reportedly encouraged to re-teach topics that pupils did not understand.

All three teachers enjoyed “imparting knowledge” to pupils, in line with the didactic teaching styles observed in all six lessons and there was acknowledgement by one teacher that teachers should make lessons “more interesting” to improve pupil punctuality and dropout. One female pupil group also thought “good teaching” would encourage retention. Important aspects of
good teaching that were identified by various pupil groups included giving good explanations, repeating information if necessary, speaking audibly, and writing clearly on the board. One pupil group noted that “step by step teaching and [teachers] not jumping topics” would help improve their learning while another group asked for more correction of homework and class assignments. Treating pupils kindly and not flogging were also highlighted as features of a good teacher. In only two of the lessons observed, did some pupils show signs of having learned something during the lesson.

Across the six lessons, teacher talk dominated though it was interspersed with choral repetition and individual questions and answers (see below on pupil participation) to varying degrees, generally demanding simple factual recall. Three teachers preferred individual questioning and two preferred choral questioning and repetition, with one teacher combining both. In the Maths lesson, individual pupils were asked to come to the board to solve problems. In two other lessons individual pupils were called to the board to read aloud from what the teacher had written and in another they copied what the teacher had written in their exercise books.

Teacher–pupil relations were generally said to be good by several pupil groups and one said there was “no fighting with teachers like in other schools.” In four of the six lessons observed teacher–pupil relations appeared positive and in three classes teachers were observed praising pupils for correct answers and/or encouraging other pupils to clap for them. In two classes relations were not good between teachers and pupils; in one case the threat and practice of corporal punishment affected relations (see below); the teacher did not give any indication whether pupil answers were correct or not. In the remaining lesson, the teacher struggled to maintain the interest and discipline of the majority of the class, who clearly could not understand what was being taught, so they focused on a few who could answer the questions. That said, pupils almost all agreed that teachers treated all pupils the same but were divided on whether male and female teachers taught in a similar way.

The language of instruction constituted a major obstacle to teaching and learning. Although in several observations, pupils were able to repeat what was written in English on the board and could answer simple questions in English, there were clearly varying levels of understanding. Teachers believed that pupils wanted to learn wholly in English but were equally well aware that pupils did not understand if they taught in English. As one teacher explained: “Teaching in English is not easy because the pupils do not understand English even though the pupils want to learn [in English].” The same teacher thought that female pupils in particular struggled to learn in English. He also noted that teaching in English slowed down the lesson and wasted time and thought that government should approve the use of local languages for teaching:

To solve this problem of communication maybe government should approve the use of language of the immediate environment to teach. ... These children can't speak English because they do not have good foundation and this can be solved if only qualified teachers are employed. ... Teaching in English is good but because it is a foreign language to the children, pupils find it difficult, it makes teacher to stay long teaching one topic and it wastes time.

Two of the three teachers said they taught in a mixture of English with a local language, one also using Hausa, the other Fufulde. Although the English lesson observed was wholly conducted in English, all other lessons were given in a mixture of English and Hausa, usually with presentations made in English and then explanations and clarifications made in Hausa.

Contrary to what teachers thought, pupils were unanimous in wanting to learn in a mixture of English and Hausa, as the following statements illustrate:

English and a little Hausa so as to be able to speak fluently. (female pupil)
Mix for better understanding. (male pupil)

Some don’t understand English so explanation in Hausa will help us understand the lesson. (male pupil)

Start with English and explain in Hausa (female pupil)

We do not know English well because we speak Hausa more at home and in school. (female pupil)

On the other hand, teachers’ command of English and ability to speak and teach in English was considered a valued feature of a good teacher.

There was only limited participation by pupils in the most of the lessons observed, although one class stood out as being much more interactive with pupils also asking questions. Two of the three teachers interviewed thought boys participated more in class; girls were deemed “shy” and lacking in confidence. One teacher explained: “Girls are always shy; they fear pupils will laugh at them whenever they give wrong answers.” Notably, one teacher emphasised that all pupils were encouraged to participate. Observations indicated that (a few) girls were selected to give answers or solve problems at the board, more than boys in three of the lessons, and in two lessons both girls and boys were called upon in equal measure. In the remaining lesson, pupil participation was too minimal to be able to comment. One teacher ascribed lack of participation by boys in general to “lack of interest” and their playing around. Pupils’ views were more mixed as to whether girls or boys participated more, though no group thought that girls and boys participated equally in class. The notion that boys “play a lot” and female pupils are “very shy” were offered as explanations for gender differences. Girls, too, however, were said by one male pupil group to “play and jest a lot”. However, observations indicated that both girls and boys would play around and make noise if given the opportunity, and/or if they were not learning anything in the lesson especially those at the back of the class. Parents thought some girls fell asleep in class because they were tired from household chores.

Another male pupil group thought that overage girls did not participate much because they “do not concentrate in class”. In one of the lessons both overage girls and boys at the back were seen messing around, eating and making a lot of noise, which went unchallenged. On the other hand, in another class, overage pupils were clearly ignored by the teacher.

**Pupil performance**

The head teacher acknowledged that performance of pupils is “poor” but “girls do better; boys are very playful”, adding that “at prize-giving days girls take almost all the prizes,” which were provided by the PTA. However, in the lower primary classes the head thought boys generally did better. Teachers and pupils generally thought that girls performed better in class because boys played around more and girls “don’t play too much even at home”. The one teacher who said that a boy usually came top of the class added that girls usually took second and third place. Female pupil groups were sure that girls did better but male pupils differed in their views:

- Girls perform better; boys don’t care. (three male pupils)
- Boys don’t concentrate in class and girls cheat a lot. (two male pupils)
- Sometimes girls do better and sometimes boys do better (male pupil and PTA member)
- Only two girls do very well in our class. (male pupil)

SBMC members also agreed that girls were trying hard and “sometimes girls are doing better” adding that “in fact, people will judge our performance from the performance of our female child in school.” One member also commented that “all pupils have [the] potential to attain well”. On the other hand, one SBMC member felt that although “a lot of pupils learn here, some pupils have stony hearts; they may not learn [and it] cuts across gender, religion, ethnicity.”
In terms of repeaters, teachers thought both girls and boys repeated, though one teacher thought repeaters comprised mainly Muslim pupils though no explanation was offered. One teacher was of the view that “those who don’t attend school [for a term] should repeat”. Teachers variously identified Muslim girls and boys, overage girls and underage pupils as low performers. The ten underage pupils in one class were reportedly supposed to be in lower classes. Dropout was variously considered to be very low or non-existent by LGEA and school staff.

Parents thought some pupils’ home chores affected class performance whereas the community leader highlighted poor attendance due to hawking and trading in particular as affecting boys’ progress and performance (see also Section 2.2. on Socio-economic activities in Family and community).

**Discipline**

Teachers were aware that there was a “no flogging” discipline policy in the school, which they were reminded about in meetings. Two teachers said they agreed with it although one of them also admitted they caned on the hand and buttocks when pupils couldn’t answer questions. The teacher who was against the policy said: “I tell them to stand up and sometimes I flog them.” One teacher observed that whereas male teachers “take action immediately” female teachers often send pupils to the discipline teacher. (See also the earlier section on School management of pupils).

In the four of the observed lessons, to varying extents, pupils were making noise, messing around, eating, and/or teasing others. Both girls and boys were involved except in one class, in which girls were predominantly making noise. Teachers ignored the noise and pupils not paying attention, yet noise was mentioned by most pupil groups and one teacher as hindering understanding in class. No monitors were called on to control the class. None of these teachers was observed disciplining any individual. One parent thought that “some pupils play [around] because teachers are not just enough” whereas one member of staff ascribed it to “lack of concentration by pupils”, which they saw as a major obstacle to pupil learning.

In contrast, in one lesson, pupils behaved well with minimal noise perhaps because the lesson was relatively more interactive, the teacher was supportive and encouraging and more pupils appeared to understand. In the remaining class, pupils were visibly too afraid of the teacher to participate in class since pupils who made mistakes were observed being flogged – both girls and boys, though predominantly boys, who returned crying to their seats.

**Pupil–pupil relations**

Although teachers said they thought pupils generally got on well together in class, pupil views were more mixed. Observations showed interaction to be primarily within gender groups in half the classes observed, such as sharing a textbook, with some cross-gender interaction witnessed in the other classes.

Overage pupils were identified by teachers as sometimes having awkward relations with other pupils. Although one teacher thought that other pupils respected them because of their age, another thought that other pupils often laughed at them, which made them become angry and feel isolated:

I have three overage in my class: two boys and two girls. I believe is because of late enrolment into school. ... When a teacher asks these overage questions and they are not able to answer, other
pupils laugh at them. Sometimes it affects them positively and they try to put in more effort to answer while sometimes it makes them feel sad and they refuse to answer questions.

This may be why overage girls were often said to be absent from school. The head teacher suggested that the situation was worse in some other schools, saying: “I’ve got pupils who dropped out from other schools and come to my school when they want to return to school because they say children in their former school laughed at them.”

Several pupil groups said that girls and boys did not want to sit or interact together for fear of being labelled “husband and wife”. One boy explained: “girls do not want to come close to us because of the husband and wife syndrome”. One teacher also thought girls “do not want to mingle with boys”. Teachers otherwise thought pupils got on fairly well in class though also admitted there was some “slapping and bullying” and both girls and boys talked of “teasing” and being laughed at by other pupils (or girls in the case of one male pupil group), which they said made it difficult for them to learn in class. A female pupil in one group gave the following example:

Boys tease more, when our teacher taught us the topic VVF [vesico-vaginal fistula], the boys always teased us that if we marry early we will contract VVF and wherever they see us they will be laughing at us say look at them draining urine.

In the classroom observations, (some) boys were seen teasing girls and (some) girls were seen teasing other girls. In one observation, a girl was laughed at by some boys for getting the answer wrong and in another observation, a male pupil shouted out to a female pupil: “Baki iya komai ba” [You are not intelligent ... You do not know anything.], which visibly made her angry. No action was taken by the teacher in either case.

One teacher suggested that although rare, older boys sometimes bullied younger boys and girls although pupil accounts and researcher observations suggested that bullying was more widespread than the teacher was prepared to acknowledge. One male pupil noted that “boys do not want to be disrespected” by other pupils otherwise they will react.

Pupils reported that peers who had missed a whole term got a mixed reception at school. Some pupils are sympathetic and said they went to the homes of absent friends and tried to encourage them to return to school; others “call and talk with parents” or try to “play with children to try and make them like school”. On the other hand, some pupil groups said that returnees were laughed at, or called names such as “liar” and “fool”. Some pupils, according to one pupil group, shunned the former absentees because they believed most of them cheated in order to pass the tests:

When they leave school they go to hawk, play aimlessly or even beg and because they didn’t come to school for so many days they miss classes and don’t know what we have been taught. So when they come back to school – their parents bring them back most times. So when they come back at times it is almost test or exams, so they will always want to pass and to pass they have to cheat. Because they will cheat and copy from our work we don’t want to be friends with them.

One group of pupils said that in some cases, parents flogged their children/wards at home then brought them to school to be beaten again: “Parents must bring them back, repeat flogging”. A couple of male pupil groups though that absentees or dropouts should be “remanded for rehabilitation” or “punished when they leave school.”
**AIE2.2 Family and community**

**Socio-economic activities**

School and community respondents recognised that hawking and petty trading affected the enrolment, attendance, progress and performance of some pupils, particularly boys. According to both pupils and teachers, attendance of some boys was particularly affected on market days, though teachers disagreed as to whether mainly Muslim boys or both Muslim and Christian were involved. One male pupil explained: “Some pupils prefer petty trading and begging because it is easier [than going to school].” The head teacher also confirmed that some boys left to beg in the streets. In contrast, some girls thought it affected girls more than boys. According to pupils, some dropped out of school to trade and hawk of their own volition; others were withdrawn by parents though the reasons behind the actions were not clear from pupil accounts, as the following comments illustrate:

- Parents prefer children to go hawking wares. (female pupil)
- Some children run away from school to go petty trading. (male pupil)

One teacher also thought some boys and girls had never been to school on account of hawking. PTA members said those that didn’t make transition to JSS tended to begin petty trading.

According to a number of school, community and LGEA sources, a substantial number of Hausa-Fulani, and nomadic Hausa-Fulani in particular, have children that have never been enrolled in formal education (around 25% according to one school source) or that are overage, or have problems with latecoming or attendance. Poverty was identified as being at the root of it as children were needed to help with rearing animals and farming. However, parental attitudes were also cited as contributory factors (see below). Parents thought that latecoming due to farming particularly affected boys while school staff noted that attendance for Hausa-Fulani boys was particularly low in the rainy season on account of farming though the head teacher maintained that the situation had improved after talking to parents directly and via the PTA:

- We have 80–90% of my pupils come to school every day, though during rainy season these, our Hausa brothers, prefer to take their children to the farm. Now attendance has improved because I present this issue at PTA meetings even though some parents do not like attending meetings. We also contact the parents of such pupils directly; we also meet with the mai unguwas [ward heads] to help us talk to the parents of these pupils.

It is clearly a more general problem across the LGEA, according to LGEA sources, with Hausa-Fulani suffering a higher dropout rate, especially among nomadic farmers in rural schools and particularly in the rainy season. LGEA officials had the following to say:

- The problem of dropout affects the migrant Fulani nomads who withdraw their children when they are to move away from that area and the Hausa farmers in the local government especially during farming and harvest seasons.

The ES also noted that schools on afternoon shifts particularly suffered from low attendance during harvest time:

- Low attendance is recorded more in the Hausa communities’ schools in the LGEA especially during harvest, so what I do is organise sensitization session for these communities and I always mention named of highly placed officers in the LGA who couldn’t have been there if they weren’t educated and I also tell them that these people are helping their various communities to benefit from government programme and that they can also be represented if they send their children to school and allow these children to finish school.

Most pupil groups and community respondents identified home chores as a major reason for pupils, and girls in particular, arriving late to school. Girls specified having to wash plates, fetch water and cook breakfast prior to coming to school. Parents confirmed this and said that boys
sometimes had to go to the farms as well. A PTA member noted that girls were more engaged with work at home while boys had a lot of time to play:

Girls have specific house chores and they are always with their mothers while the boys fetch water or any other assignment that may be given to them from time to time. Though the girls have more work to do in the house like washing the plates, cooking and general cleaning of the house while the boys after fetching water only if no other assignment is given, has more time to play, busy playing football in particular.

**Families (including religion, ethnicity and educational choice)**

Family poverty was identified by LGEA, school and community respondents to be the root cause of numerous access issues.

In addition to child labour, poverty also resulted in hunger for some children. Some were late for school, according to some pupil and community respondents, as they had to wait for breakfast because the mother or daughter had not had time to prepare the food on time. One SBMC member pointed out that if children didn’t eat, they couldn’t learn and therefore their performance was automatically affected though they thought it only applied to a small minority of children:

Some children come late to school because they were given breakfast late some don’t even eat before they go to school, so when they come to school they won’t be able to concentrate and we have stopped pupils from leaving the school compound during break because they may not come back after break so the gate is always locked during classes and a gateman at the school gate.

More generally across the LGEA, one official observed:

Though government provide free uniforms for pupils but some parents find it difficult to provide writing materials, shoes, exercise books for their children. Especially these our Hausa people with their culture that at the age of seven years the child is on his own and is expected to fend for himself. The child is now forced to look for food because he has to survive therefore has to look for money to get food. Such a child will not be stable in school .... Even their mothers commercialise the food in the house [they sell food to the children] for the children.

In addition, he said that some husbands had so many wives and children that they couldn’t afford to send them all to school.

The inability of some families to provide uniforms, school fees or writing materials as the cause of non-enrolment or dropout arose in several pupil interviews, and the issue of uniforms in particular was a major issue of concern. It also arose in informal conversations with members of the surrounding community. One community member said that parents had made their views known about the cost of materials being a barrier to access but the PTA had responded that school rules demanded that pupils wear uniform. Yet some PTA members were aware that parental inability to pay for uniforms was preventing some pupils from enrolling in school. SBMC members reported checking on absent pupils, saying: “We go to parents to enquire. They always complain that their pupils don’t have uniforms, which is why they do not attend”. One young boy encountered talked of being refused entry to the school because he did not have shoes although he said he was wearing the rest of the uniform. One woman talked about her oldest daughter reaching primary three and doing well at school but having to give up for the time being because she could not afford the uniform. Two women talked about being unable to afford to send any of their children to school. Another respondent explained: “Two of my children are not in school because I can’t afford uniforms for them, but I tried; the remaining six are in school. The uniform cost about ₦1,500 per child.” Acknowledging the fact that government had provided uniforms, they noted that it only applied to girls in order to encourage girls’ education.
Out-of-school boy

My name is Gambo Umar. I am 10 years old. We are four in my house that are not in school one of them is older than me. We all want to enter school. I am saving money to enrol in school. I fetch water for people and they pay me to enable me to enter school. I have saved five hundred Naira so far. I want to buy uniform, sandals and socks to enable me to enter school. I want government to provide uniform, sandal and socks for me so I can enter school. My mother will buy books for me. But for the head teacher, I don’t know what he will do for me, because he said if he gets money he will enrol us in school.

Bereavement, ill-health or caring for a sick relative (in the case of some girls) were also cited as reasons for missing the odd day from school by around half the pupil groups and parents although one teacher thought some pupils lied about being sick as an excuse for absenteeism.

Parents also noted that some pupils (boys and girls, Christian and Muslim) lived more than 30 minutes from school, which caused them to be late. Pupils in one of the pupil groups said it actually took them 40 minutes to reach school.

Negative parental attitudes to what was commonly dubbed “western education” were widely blamed by pupils and community members, including parents themselves, for children either not enrolling or dropping out of school and pupils were adamant that more sensitization of parents was needed to encourage them to enrol or retain their child(ren) in school:

- Parents should be encouraged to bring their children to school. (male pupil)
- Talk to parents and [get] parents to talk to their children. (female pupil)
- Positive motivation is needed by parents and teachers. (female pupil)
- Parents’ attention should be drawn to pay attention to their children’s attendance and intensify effort. (male pupil).
- Sensitization of parents is needed. (female pupil)
- Some parents show I-don’t-care attitude towards western education. (PTA member)

This attitude was considered to be particularly prevalent among some Hausa-Fulani parents, and nomads, in particular, especially as regards girls’ education.

In contrast, as mentioned by school, community and LGEA sources, there was a preference among some Muslim parents for Tsangaya or Islamiyya schooling rather than state school education. As the ES explained: “There are some communities that think that western education corrupts their culture and prefer Qur’anic education” One male pupil considered this to apply to nomadic communities in particular: “Some religions that don’t believe in western education especially the nomadic who wander about rearing animals and do not enrol their children in school.” One group of male pupils said that some pupils dropped out of schools because “they said western education is unlawful – in Hausa “boko haram ne”. Ignorance by some parents, their own lack of formal education or lack of interest or dislike of “western education” were all cited as reasons by some pupil groups for why some parents preferred not to send children to school.

One teacher disliked the fact that “pupils are not always ready to learn” because they lacked support from home.

Alternatively, some Muslim pupils attended Tsangaya schooling before public school, which often caused pupils to be late, which, according to the ES, was a widespread problem across the LGEA. All three teachers and half the pupil groups noted that both girls and boys were often late for school on account of Tsangaya schooling, which “makes the pupils have a very tight schedule”.
One teacher thought it should be rescheduled for the evening and one male pupil group also thought morning Islamiyya should be cancelled: “Early morning Islamiyya should be stopped to make us concentrate.” One Christian girl also mentioned occasionally missing school for church functions.

Teachers also felt that the negative attitude of society, and parents in particular, towards teachers prevented teachers from their doing their job well. One teacher complained: “Most parents do not value the teaching job and the teacher, [and] therefore encourage their children to be rude to us.”

Lack of parental supervision was also mentioned in relation to access. Pupils thought that while most parents were aware about their child(ren)’s latecoming, absenteeism or dropout, others were not. When it came to dropout, as one male pupil group explained: “sometimes their families do not agree.” On the other hand, in other cases parents chose to withdraw the child(ren): “Some parents know [about dropout] and some don’t while some of the children it is the parents that take them out of school when their children make complaints to them.”

Parents and SBMC members were of the opinion that lack of proper monitoring by some parents was responsible for some pupils not attending and/or dropping out of school. As one SBMC member put it: “Parents should be more vigilant on monitoring their children.” It was recognised that girls tended to be better supervised by female relatives, while “boys play a lot”.

This gender difference was particularly apparent with regard to truancy and loitering, which were identified by one teacher and the community leader, as causing latecoming, absenteeism and eventual dropout and constituted a major obstacle to pupil learning, particularly among boys. Boys themselves admitted that some boys loitered on the way to and from school, climbing trees and playing around and therefore arrived late. Indeed on one of the research visits, several boys were spotted up a tree picking fruit when they should have been in class. Several male pupil groups also made reference to boys missing school or dropping out just to idle about, sometimes due to peer pressure and “wandering in the bush” [idling around]. One member of staff recounted examples of boys missing school to watch Hausa films or play football, remarking: “If you ask these pupils to tell you the names of the actors in Hausa films and European footballers they will give a long list and even more”.

PTA members remarked: “We follow up pupils to see they come to school early without playing on the road.” The PTA chair said he personally comes to school to check the class attendance register while the head teacher said he goes out on his motorbike to round up pupils playing but wants parents to ensure that pupils leave home and come straight to school.

As for whether schooling is considered more important for some children rather than others, most respondents considered it to be important for everyone:

- It will make men respect women and make women independent just as much as it will help the man get a job and take care of his family. (female pupil)
- Women take care of home more than men. (SBMC member)
- You can see as a woman I brought my daughter for enrolment today. (female parent)

However, there were some dissenting voices: “It is more important for boys because they are the heads of families; they feed the family and help feed their parents,” one male pupil affirmed. One group of female pupils agreed but did not give a reason while another saw a need for “sensitizing parents especially against boys’ preference.” The community leader felt that the general community view favoured boys too, especially in Muslim communities: “Boys are always theirs;
girls are for their husbands … They prefer boys to go to school because they think girls are very soon getting married.” One male parent backed up this view: “Boys’ education and progress is [for] my own progress [benefit], but girls will soon get married to someone.”

Parents considered early marriage and/or pregnancy to be the cause of dropout for some girls, both Christian and Muslim, though the LGEA thought that the problem that was once “rampant” was less of an issue now because communities were more “enlightened”. However, they said: “There are still a few parents in [the area] that believe girls should marry at 15 years, especially Hausa people.” They said they used the PTA and community elders to talk to them. One male pupil interview group mentioned that one girl had dropped out due to either pregnancy or marriage.

In terms of educational choice in the area, the community leader noted four public schools, three private Islamiyya schools (but no nomadic schools). One or two other pupils reported younger siblings attending other primary schools in the areas because they were nearer home, though this was not the case for the majority of pupils. Nevertheless, PTA members said proximity of public school was an important consideration for parents. So too was educational quality. The SBMC noted that “some [parents] complain that teachers don’t teach; they stay under trees and send pupils on errands only” hence why they chose another school.

According to the community leader, poverty determined where parents sent their children since “private schools are more dedicated in terms of supervision and monitoring”.

**Community-school relations**

The main channel of communication between the school, parents and the wider community, according to most respondents, was the PTA, to whom a ₦50 termly levy was paid. This applied to Kilfi School and to the LGEA more generally. The LGEA noted that PTAs helped with sanitation, providing toilets, wells, employing security personnel, controlling land encroachment, donating seedlings for fencing schools, providing furniture for the school and rehabilitating classes. As the SS pointed out: “Without the PTA parents can’t check what is happening in the school.” In the case of Kilfi School, the head teacher highlighted PTA assistance in renovating school structures, replacing broken windows and doors and campaigning to increase enrolment. He insisted: “We interact well with the PTA. Without the PTA schools cannot move forward and that is why we must cooperate because that is only way out for teaching and learning.”

Campaigning for increased enrolment was clearly a function of both the PTA and the SBMC across the LGEA, according to LGEA and school sources. Despite campaign efforts, the head teacher felt that enrolment could still be improved: “We are campaigning for parents to bring their kids to school” and one teacher thought “parents should enrol children early to avoid them dropping out.” Another teacher thought the PTA should intensify its activities to improve punctuality, which was another issue of concern for the Kilfi PTA, along with absenteeism. In addition the head teacher, who was secretary of the PTA, said that although he sometimes talked to parents directly he also talked to the **mallams** and ward heads at PTA meetings:

> Hmm! You see not all parents come for meetings, so what we did was to get representatives that are respected from each ward to serve as representatives of each ward to attend PTA meeting so that when they go back after the meeting they can help us talk to other parents and encourage them to ensure that children come to school.

The PTA thought their job was to channel communications from the school to parents during PTA meetings (three times a term) and to find out the views of community members. The community leader said he also attended PTA meetings: “As a community leader, I attend PTA meetings; if
there is any problem in school I attend to it and go between school and parents”. All community respondents interviewed thought the PTA represented their views adequately. The main issues discussed at recent meetings included enrolment, lateness and absenteeism, which some school and community sources felt had improved, and school renovations and security matters. The community leader said that they also worked through the mosques and churches: “We mobilise parents in mosque and churches and they do agree.” The issue of the prohibitive cost of school uniform and school materials affecting enrolment and retention was also a major issue for PTA members and parents – both those interviewed formally and those encountered informally in the immediate vicinity of the school – although according to one community member, the issue had still not been resolved because the PTA was still reportedly insisting that school rules demand that all pupils should wear uniform. As one PTA member asserted: “Government should provide uniforms free.” (See also the section on School governance in Section 2.3)

In terms of the school responding to community/PTA requests, the community leader said they now displayed attendance registers as the PTA had requested. Security had also improved in response to the community leader’s request: “When the school had no fence, I suggested the use of local security men and the school accepted and implemented it.” The SBMC also said that the school had responded to parental requests for discipline: “We talked on pupils’ discipline and they responded.”

School and community respondents agreed that there was a lot of contact between teachers and parents, and that teachers checked up on absent pupils. As one parent explained: “Teachers visit us at home to find out why our children are not in school or why they are not enrolled. They are really trying.”

The head teacher said he also went into community and to the Qur’anic schools to fetch pupils from those schools:

We talk to the mailams through the PTA officials so that they can release these children that go for this early morning Qur’anic school but sometimes it is the fault of the children even when they are released on time, instead of them to prepare and run to school, they walk to school and even play on the road. So what I do is after assembly I ride on my motor bike round the community and when I see my pupils playing on the road I send them running to school.

Both PTA and SBMC members also reported following up on absentee pupils.

The LGEA considered the role of the SBMC was to help mobilise the community for school development, and the committee usually met with the SS. Kilfi SBMC was newly formed in 2011. Nevertheless, the head teacher confirmed that “it [had] already procured a generator set and a hand water pump for the school.” SBMC members said they met regularly to discuss how to assist the school in repairs of school properties through personal contributions. They said that most recently they had contributed to roof repairs. They also said they provided prizes for prize-giving and graduation “to encourage learning”, taking into consideration attendance, performance, obedience etc.

The community leader noted that the school also had a local education committee that he interacted with and that members sometimes visited his home.

All school staff agreed that the main way in which families supported their pupils’ learning came through the provision of writing materials, textbooks and school uniform. According to one teacher: “some parents even provide pocket money for their wards to eat breakfast.” Another said some parents visited teachers to check on their charge’s progress. To give further support to children’s learning, school staff thought some families needed to ensure that their children had
Parents and the community leader said that the PTA levy was the only financial contribute they were asked to make to the school.

As regards wider community involvement in the school, the head teacher said they helped provide security by watching the school: “They put eyes on the school building and furniture, especially those [living] around the school”. In addition, some “old boys” were said to have donated some books and one teacher said some community members sent children back to school who were trying to leave early. Other school and community respondents, however, were not very positive. The community leader said: “We have plenty committees and NGOs here, but they do not support school.” One SBMC member echoed these sentiments: “Wanda ra riga ya kubche, baya waiwayawa” [Those who passed this level don't look back to assist]. A teacher felt the community could provide more security and advice; another wanted better attendance at graduation ceremonies.

More generally across the LGEA, mothers’ associations, “old boys” associations and NGOs were identified by LGEA officials as helping contribute money to schools and organizing and sponsoring extra-curricular activities such as games and football competitions. The ES said: “We’ve made the community to know that the school is theirs.”

AIE2.3 The LGEA/LGA

**LGEA/LGA internal relations**

LGEA officials appreciated that “government is trying” and particularly appreciated government provision of monitoring vehicles, and running costs to enable them to carry out their functions but felt they could do their job better with greater cooperation from some of their colleagues and one officer thought they could do their job better with more cooperation from some head teachers.

**School governance**

LGEA, school and community respondents were all appreciative of the infrastructural development in the school (especially the computing facilities), which they thought helped improve enrolment and retention. However, more buildings and computers were requested by some community sources, as were more play materials and better sporting facilities. One group of community respondents also thought gender-segregated play facilities would help pupil learning.

Despite recent improvements, provision of materials was still seen as a major access issue. Community respondents across the board were adamant that government should provide more textbooks, and supply free exercise books and uniforms, and, as one interviewee put it: “make school totally free”. This, they were convinced, would help increase pupil enrolment and retention (see also Section 2.2, Community–school relations)

More qualified teachers were widely requested by community and school respondents, even by teachers themselves, as was closer and better supervision of teachers. Parents suggested that around six qualified teachers were needed in class each day. PTA and SBMC members wanted
more qualified teachers and enforcement of teacher professionalism and better control of
teacher transfer:

We need more teachers and teaching materials. Teachers are posted to this school and before they
settle down they are posted out again. One thing that worries us most is lack of qualified teachers
that are employed. If I were in charge, I will only employ qualified teachers to teach our children.

The SBMC in particular thought that government should provide more teacher accommodation
near the school to help improve teacher attendance (see also Section 2.1. on School management
of teachers) although the LGEA explained that the general policy within the LGEA was to prioritise
the employment of “indigenes” (Hausa-Fulani, Bata, Laka and Vere) where possible – though
irrespective of gender or religion – and post them to their home town or village. Only where
there are insufficient qualified locals “in areas of need” are workers employed from other LGAs.

Teachers in turn complained of “disappointment from government” at teaching conditions,
especially the low salaries and delays in payment. They thought better pay and prompt payment
would “serve as incentives” and help them do their job better.

The LGEA felt that teacher discipline was not too much of an issue across the LGEA, with the main
problems identified being that some teachers (both female and male) did not write lesson notes
or use instructional materials. According to the LGEA, the general procedure regarding teacher
absenteeism was that the head teacher reported cases of absenteeism and the teacher
concerned and the head teacher were invited to the LGEA office and, depending on the outcome,
the teacher was disciplined, for example by being given a warning letter of salary deduction.
Sometimes the teacher was merely advised, and/or given a verbal warning by the SS at school
level. The ES reportedly sometimes called teachers to the office to discipline them for
absenteeism. The PTA also wanted more monitoring of teachers to ensure that they taught what
was on the syllabus.

As regards concerns from the school, according to the LGEA, the SS listened and reported any
issues brought up on school visits to the ES. The ES then reportedly came on follow-up visits and
advised school staff how best to solve problems at the school level and reported all other
problems to the Board for consideration.

School support
The LGEA considered its main support to the school to consist of teacher development through
the Board, sending teachers to attend workshops and training. Additionally, the local
government and four development area offices reportedly gave funds to the ES to organise in-
house training for teachers in subject areas. The head teacher confirmed that the LGEA had made
it compulsory for teachers who did not have the minimum teaching qualification to go back to
school and particularly commended the MDG training for teachers and head teachers. The head
teacher said that continuous capacity building for all teachers would help him to do his job
better. He also thought it was important that head teachers passed down their own
training/knowledge acquired to teachers. One teacher thought more teacher training and
retraining programmes/workshops would help them to improve their teaching.

The SS said they regularly visited each school, called teachers together and told them how to
prepare lesson notes, and helped them where they had difficulties. Teachers also reported the SS
making weekly visits to school to brief staff on developments. Otherwise, they said the SS
checked lesson notes, registers and teaching.

LGEA–community relations
Opinions differed on the amount of contact and degree of consultation there was between the LGEA and community members in relation to the school. The LGEA said that their main involvement with the community involved mobilising them to enrol children in school.

The community leader said the ES consulted him on school issues and that discussions were productive regarding workshops for teachers. The SBMC also reported discussing the issue of more teachers and teaching materials with the SS while the PTA also recounted visits from the ES to “monitor progress” and see what the school was doing and what problems they had, but was not sure whether community consultations took place outside the PTA. Parents who were interviewed maintained they had not had any contact with the LGEA.

The ES and head teacher also pointed to the involvement of the district education committees (district head as chair; all ward heads as members and the SS as the secretary of the committee) that submitted reports on any school problem such as non-enrolment, school land encroachment, absenteeism, attendance, retention, lack of completion, which are then forwarded to the Board. The ES recognised the importance of involving the community and religious leaders, saying “people respect the traditional rulers.” He said he regularly met the ward heads and community leaders to encourage them to talk to people talk to people as well as trying to bring the school and the community together. The ES also reported holding monthly meetings with the district and the village education committees (the latter consisting of PTA, SBMC and community representatives) for every district. He said he was encouraging them to draw up a yearly development plan. The ES also reported that head teachers met community leaders twice a month while the SS met schools’ assistant head teacher(s) twice a month.

Even so, teachers thought that government needed to increase involvement in more awareness-raising in communities and to “intensify advocacies”, using community role models to encourage enrolment, and “talk with religious leaders”. They felt that parents needed to be “advised”. There was also a suggestion from the school that LGEA committee meetings could be used to improve school, community and LGEA cooperation.

AIE3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY

AIE3.1 General information

- There seems to be a contradiction between qualitative evidence from school and community sources that the school (because of its historical importance and new, improved facilities) is much in demand and unable to accommodate all applicants, and the quantitative data, which indicate that pupil enrolments are declining within the school.

AIE3.2 Infrastructure and security

- School, community and LGEA officials all appreciated the new, improved school buildings (including electricity, water supply, library and computing facilities and well furnished classrooms) that some felt had boosted enrolment and improved school quality.
- Researcher observations suggested the well-furnished staffroom is under-utilised by teachers.
- The walled compound is secure at the front but can be (and is) often breached at the side, e.g. by male pupils missing or arriving late for lessons.
- The formidable school gate was staffed 24 hours a day by security guards, responding to community concerns about security.
- Improving security was still an issue for some school staff and SBMC members, who wanted a higher wall all round the compound.
• There were sufficient gender-segregated, clean toilets for staff and pupils but the main pupil block had toilet cubicles facing each other without doors, which therefore lacked privacy and are under-used.
• Pupils were seen urinating in the school compound, even against the toilet wall, and some reportedly also defecated in the compound, which some female pupils really disliked.
• More play materials and sporting and recreational facilities were requested by pupils and some community respondents, as a means of improving retention – gender-segregated play facilities were suggested by one group, as a means of enhancing learning.
• Food vendors were reportedly only allowed into the compound at break though at times they were witnessed selling food during lesson time when some female pupils also joined in the selling.

AIE3.3 Teacher management

• More, qualified teachers were widely requested by community and school respondents (including teachers).
• Pupils and parents interviewed generally considered teaching to be good in the school but had some reservations.
• Teacher absenteeism and/or latecoming were seen as major obstacles to pupil learning by school and community members.
• The school had a disciplinary committee, which deals with all teacher and pupil disciplinary issues.
• Teachers felt “disappointed” at poor salaries and delays in payment, which if rectified, they said, would act as incentives to do their job better.
• Closer and better supervision of teachers was also widely requested, which LGEA officials felt they were now doing more effectively due to improved government provision of monitoring vehicles and an increased budget to cover running costs.
• The LGEA was said to have made it compulsory for all unqualified teachers to upgrade their qualifications to NCE though there was a call by some for more CPD for teachers.
• The school supervisor was said to visit the school regularly to check registers, help teachers with lesson notes and check teaching quality.
• LGEA officials also thought better co-operation from some colleagues and some head teachers would help them monitor schooling more effectively.

AIE3.4 Pupil management and pupil relations

• Pupil absenteeism and latecoming were seen as major issues in the school.
• Staff acknowledged there was an unwritten policy to use “verbal corrective disciplining”.
• Pupils were generally disciplined for latecoming by being made to do manual labour: sweeping, picking up litter or weeding though pupils also reported other physical punishments such as frog-jumping, cleaning toilets, carrying stones or being made to kneel down.
• Pupils were reportedly turned away from school for not wearing full school uniform, which was a source of school–community friction.
• Corporal punishment by some teachers was reported by pupils, and witnessed by researchers, and was reportedly a cause of absenteeism and/or dropout, and seen to cause discouragement in class.
• Corporal punishment was gendered with girls generally given fewer and lighter strokes of the cane on the palm of the hand whereas boys received more and harsher strokes on the buttocks or back although other implements were also mentioned. Some thought male teachers to be harsher.
Prefects and monitors were appointed according to exam performance, behaviour and presentation though some pupils considered size to be important too. Male pupils are “monitors” and females are “assistant monitors”. Duties were gendered, e.g. girls generally swept the compound and classrooms in the morning and boys weeded. Fighting and bullying were frequently witnessed by researchers, but teachers said the situation was much improved. Pupils considered pupils to be generally well-behaved and respectful in the school though noted some older, bigger boys (often overage) bullied younger boys. Teachers were said to intervene in pupil bullying and fighting though no interventions were witnessed. Pupils who missed a full term were sometimes treated sympathetically by peers but sometimes ridiculed and bullied.

AIE3.5 Teaching and learning

- The new, bright classrooms with good chalkboards and sufficient benches and desks ensured pupils had a good physical learning environment.
- Despite big classrooms, some parents and staff thought large class sizes hampered pupil learning.
- Pupils were generally seated on benches with pupils of the same gender and overage pupils or boys tended to sit at the back.
- Textbook availability varied among the six observed classes from almost all pupils possessing a textbook to almost none.
- Pupils considered textbooks to be vital to pupil learning, though crucially only one teacher was seen using a textbook in class.
- There was some acknowledgement among staff and pupils that teaching methods needed to be improved and that making lessons more interesting would improve pupil punctuality and dropout.
- Teacher talk dominated in most lessons interspersed with choral repetition and some individual questioning, which made limited cognitive demands of pupils. Occasionally individual pupils were called to the board to solve a problem or read aloud. Some copying from the board was also observed.
- One lesson was more interactive and the teacher was more supportive and more pupils appeared to understand.
- There were no discernible patterns of gendered pupil participation in class and both girls and boys were seen playing or messing around in class if bored and given the opportunity.
- Pupils making noise in class was widely identified by pupils as a major impediment to learning.
- The language of instruction, both spoken and written, caused major learning difficulties for pupils, resulting in teachers needing to code-switch with Hausa.
- Pupils felt they learnt best in a mix of English and Hausa.
- Teacher–pupil relations were generally positive except in one class where the threat and practice of corporal punishment had a detrimental effect on classroom relations and pupil learning.
- There were mixed views on pupil performance; no particular social groups were consistently identified as performing well or badly although girls were often said to take the prizes at prize-giving.

AIE3.6 Socio-economic and family issues
Household poverty was universally identified to be the root cause of numerous access issues. Hunger was said to cause some pupils to be late for school and affected learning. Bereavement, ill health or the need to care for a relative (in the case of girls) were also said to affect attendance. Hawking and petty trading were widely recognised as affecting the enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of some pupils, especially boys. In some cases parents were said to withdraw children to engage them in petty trading; in others, pupils dropped out of school themselves, sometimes without parental knowledge and/or agreement. Absenteeism by boys in particular was said to be particularly noticeable on market days. Some boys were also said to drop out of school to go begging. Hausa-Fulani households, especially nomadic pastoralists, were widely identified as the most affected as regards children not attending, missing, or dropping out of school. According to LGEA sources this was also a more widespread issue across the LGEA, especially in schools operating afternoon shifts and in the rainy season. Home chores were identified as a major reason for latecoming, especially for girls. Boys farming before school was also identified as a cause for latecoming. Community members were adamant that the inability of some families to pay school costs, writing materials and uniforms, in particular, impacted heavily on enrolment and retention. Negative views about “western education” held by some parents were identified as a cause of non-enrolment and/or dropout. Nomadic Hausa-Fulani in particular were singled out, especially as regards a perceived negative attitude towards girls’ education. Some parents were said to prefer Tsangaya or Islamiyya schooling. Boys and girls attending Tsangaya schools before attending Kilfi were often said to arrive late, which was also seen as a widespread problem across the LGEA. A lack of parental supervision (e.g. ensuring pupils reach school) was blamed for loitering and truancy, especially by male pupils. School managers and PTA members rounded up (male) pupils caught loitering and idling on the way to school, even sometimes taking them out of Qur’anic schools. Schooling was generally considered to be equally important for girls and boys though there was recognition that among some Muslim parents in particular, boys’ schooling was seen to be more important. Early marriage or pregnancy was said to be a cause of dropout for a few female pupils – both Christian and Muslim, but especially among the Hausa-Fulani – though the situation was said to be improving. School proximity, school quality and poverty were said to determine parental choice of school.

AIE3.7 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)

The PTA was the main channel of communication between school and community; the SBMC was newly formed. The main role of both the SBMC and PTA appeared to be fund-raising and procuring community labour for school infrastructural development, or mobilising the community/parents to improve pupil enrolment, punctuality and attendance. It was agreed that parents primarily supported pupil learning through provision of writing materials, textbooks and school uniform though some parents and older siblings helped with homework. Parents said that apart from the N50 termly PTA levy, they were not asked to contribute financially to the school.
There was clearly a level of communication and co-operation between the LGEA and the PTA and SBMC committees and evidence of consultation with community and religious leaders by the LGEA and the school regarding school matters.

Some district education committees were said to be functioning across the LGEA. The ES reported holding monthly meetings.

There was seemingly less communication between the LGEA and ordinary parents/community members.

Some staff members thought that yet more awareness-raising and advocacy work was needed in communities, involving religious leaders and community role models (i.e. people from the community who had achieved academic success) to improve enrolment.

It was generally agreed that there was a lot of contact between teachers and parents, including teachers checking up on absent pupils at their home, and parents bringing their child to school to be disciplined.

Some teachers thought that the negative attitude of some parents encouraged rudeness in pupils, which prevented them from doing their job well.

There were mixed views on whether the wider community supported the school although the LGEA thought that more generally NGOs, CBOs and “Old Boys” associations supported schools in the area.

There was a suggestion from the school that LGEA committee meetings could be used to improve school, community and LGEA co-operation.
DOYA PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AIF1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

This is the case study report of Doya Primary School in the context of the relevant LGEA and the school’s local community. It is a rural school located in the Southern Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents

A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 15 adults and 12 children, as indicated in Table AIF1.1. Same-gender group interviews were held with two pupil groups (one female, one male), and group interviews were also held with parents, SBMC and PTA committee members. Other respondents were interviewed individually. There were fairly even numbers of Muslim and Christian respondents whereas the number of adult male respondents was much higher than the number of female respondents. Female representation at the community and school level was particularly low. In the latter case it was because there was only one (temporary) female teacher at the school at the time.

Table 1.1 Doya case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES, SS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, informal interaction occurred with a former male pupil of the school, now a civil servant, and a girl from another school. Two classroom observations were made.

AIF1.1 The LGA (LGEA)

Socio-demographic context
The LGEA comprises a predominantly rural and hilly area, where most people are involved in farming and petty trading. The main indigenous ethnic group is Chamba, who are both Muslim and Christian, and the Muslim Hausa-Fulani. The LGA is relatively small, comprising a population of around 150,000, according to the most recent census. It lies in the northern senatorial district, within easy access of Cameroon.

Local educational context
See main report, Chapter 4.

AIF1.2. The school community
Doya Primary School is a rural school located some distance from the nearest urban area. The population of the local community is estimated at around 2,000, according to the head teacher, and is predominantly Muslim, with Chamba the main ethnic group and some Mumuye. Chamba
and Mumuye are therefore the common local languages. There is a market nearby, and a church with a dispensary attached close to the school, dating from missionary times. There are also several mosques a little further away. Most parents were said to be involved in animal husbandry and farming, requiring extra seasonal labour primarily between April and October, according to the head teacher. Yams are also grown as a cash crop. A few parents were said to be civil servants.

**AIF1.3 School**

**School description**

**Basic school information**

Doya Primary School lies along a dirt track some kilometres from the nearest urban centre though near a tarred road. Although founded by Christian missionaries, the school is now predominantly populated by Muslim pupils, and has an intake of just around 500 pupils. Pupils come from within a radius of 3km from the school though some pupils reported taking up to an hour to reach school on foot. Female pupils account for 43.5% of enrolments whereas males account for 56.5%. Currently, 54.6% of the pupil intake is Muslim and 45.4% is Christian. An admission, or readmission, fee of ₦50 has now been dropped but each pupil still pays a PTA levy of ₦50 per term.

**The staff**

The almost completely male teaching staff of 13 includes a head teacher and two assistant heads. The distribution of the staff by qualification, gender and religion is shown in Table AIF1.2 below. Only two members of staff are female; at the time of the research one was on maternity leave, the other was temporary and neither was qualified. In contrast, out of the male staff of 11, five are qualified, possessing NCE, while six are unqualified though five possess TC Grade II. There is one other male non-teaching member of staff employed by the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table AIF1.2: Teachers, including head teacher, by qualification and gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes**

**Pupil enrolment**

Over the last four years, enrolments have fluctuated, from 518 in 2007–8, dipping to 477 in 2008–9 before rising again the next two years, recording 513 in 2010–11, similar to 2007–8 enrolment figures, as illustrated in Table AIF1.3. The gender profile too has fluctuated over the four-year period; in 2007–8 female pupils constituted 42.7% of enrolments with male pupils accounting for 57.3% and although the gap narrowed, then widened in the following two years, the 2010–11 gender ratios are fairly similar to what they were four years earlier at 43.5% and 56.5%. The Muslim-Christian ratio too, which stood at 55.6% and 44.4%, respectively, in 2007–8 returned to a similar ratio (54.6%, 45.4%) in 2010–11 after some fluctuation in the intervening two years. Muslim boys have consistently made up the largest proportion of the intake, comprising around 30% although numbers dropped off very slightly in 2010–11 while female Christian pupils have consistently comprised the smallest group, comprising just under 20% in 2010–11. The proportion of Christian boys and Muslim girls is also currently similar to 2007–8, despite fluctuations in the interim years, standing at 26.3% and 24.4%, respectively.
Table AIF1.3 Doya Primary School enrolments by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across the grades (see Tables AIF1.4 and AIF1.5) for the first three years of the 2007–8 to 2010–11 period, enrolment figures generally decreased between Primary 1 and Primary 6 after rising at some stage in the intervening grades. In contrast, in 2010–11 enrolment figures increased overall from Primary 1 to 6. On the other hand, the reliability of these 2010–11 figures is questionable given the unlikely coincidence that the number of pupils registered for Primary 2, 3, 4 and 5 in 2009–10 are exactly the same as for Primary 3, 4, 5 and 6 the following year. These repeated totals become even more improbable if the high numbers of dropouts for 2009–10 reported in Table AIF1.10 (see below) are anywhere near accurate. Some dramatic reversal of numbers and ratios also cast doubt on some figures’ reliability. For example, the gender ratio for Primary 3 in 2009–10 stood at 29.3% for girls, 70.7% for boys, yet apparently reversed substantially in Primary 4 the following year when 58.6% of enrolments were said to be female, as opposed to 41.4% male, despite fairly stable gender ratios in favour of boys for the same cohort in 2007–8 and 2008–9. Similarly, it seems unlikely that the Primary 4 cohort of 50 girls and 40 boys in 2009–10 reverses the gender ratio so dramatically to become a group of only 31 girls and 59 boys in Primary 6 the following year, especially when taking into consideration the dropouts (see Table AIF1.10). Table 5 also shows some improbable swings in numbers and ratios too, such as the 2007–8 cohort of Primary 1 pupils that maintains similar numbers and a similar balance of Muslims to Christians for the first two years but then records a huge 62% increase in the number of Muslim pupils (from 48 to 78) in 2009–10, whereas Christian pupils decreased from 36 to 21 over the same period yet shot back up to 50 the following year.

Table AIF1.4 Doya Primary School enrolment by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.8%)</td>
<td>(55.2%)</td>
<td>(51.3%)</td>
<td>(48.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(47.7%)</td>
<td>(52.3%)</td>
<td>(56.0%)</td>
<td>(56.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(41.0%)</td>
<td>(59.0%)</td>
<td>(53.7%)</td>
<td>(53.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.4%)</td>
<td>(55.6%)</td>
<td>(52.2%)</td>
<td>(49.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(40.2%)</td>
<td>(59.8%)</td>
<td>(56.0%)</td>
<td>(57.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(36.8%)</td>
<td>(63.2%)</td>
<td>(50.0%)</td>
<td>(49.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42.7%)</td>
<td>(57.3%)</td>
<td>(50.2%)</td>
<td>(47.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

268
Table AIF1.5 Doya Primary School enrolment by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus</td>
<td>Chr</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Mus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>47 (54.0%)</td>
<td>40 (46.0%)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>40 (51.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>46 (53.5%)</td>
<td>40 (46.3%)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>48 (57.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>65 (61.9%)</td>
<td>40 (46.5%)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>55 (57.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>40 (44.4%)</td>
<td>50 (55.6%)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>49 (62.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>50 (61.0%)</td>
<td>32 (39.0%)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>49 (57.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>40 (58.8%)</td>
<td>28 (41.2%)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>30 (54.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>288 (55.6%)</td>
<td>230 (44.4%)</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>271 (56.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overage pupils
The number and percentage of overage pupils rose from 95 (8.3%) in 2008–9 to 113 (9.8%) in 2009–10, before declining to 91 (8.5%) in 2010–11 though the pattern was not uniform across social groups. The difference among social groups, however, was slight, irrespective of the year, with the percentage of overage pupils only ranging from 6.7% for female pupils in 2008–9 to 10.1% for male pupils in the same year.

Table AIF1.5 Doya Primary School overage* pupils by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>44 (19.9%)</td>
<td>55 (18.5%)</td>
<td>45 (15.6%)</td>
<td>54 (23.5%)</td>
<td>99 (19.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>29 (12.7%)</td>
<td>32 (12.0%)</td>
<td>30 (11.1%)</td>
<td>31 (15.0%)</td>
<td>61 (12.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>28 (13.7%)</td>
<td>39 (14.1%)</td>
<td>37 (12.6%)</td>
<td>30 (16.0%)</td>
<td>67 (13.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>38 (17.0%)</td>
<td>37 (12.8%)</td>
<td>42 (15.0%)</td>
<td>33 (14.2%)</td>
<td>75 (14.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pupils three or more years older than the official age for each year

There are few discernible patterns when looking at the data by grade and social group (see Tables AIF1.6 and AIF1.7 below) except to say that the overage percentage is predominantly highest in Primary 1 across all four years for all social groups. However, given the concerns expressed above about the reliability of some of the enrolment figures, then these figures for overage pupils need to be interpreted with similar caution.
Table AIF1.6 Doya Primary School overage pupils by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28.1%)</td>
<td>(33.3%)</td>
<td>(31.0%)</td>
<td>(10.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26.8%)</td>
<td>(33.3%)</td>
<td>(30.2%)</td>
<td>(10.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14.0%)</td>
<td>(9.7%)</td>
<td>(11.4%)</td>
<td>(15.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
<td>(13.3%)</td>
<td>(11.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(24.2%)</td>
<td>(18.4%)</td>
<td>(20.7%)</td>
<td>(15.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.0%)</td>
<td>(7.4%)</td>
<td>(7.4%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.9%)</td>
<td>(18.5%)</td>
<td>(19.1%)</td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AIF1.7 Doya Primary School overage pupils by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Ch</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21.3%)</td>
<td>(42.5%)</td>
<td>(31.0%)</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(23.9%)</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
<td>(30.2%)</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10.8%)</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>(11.4%)</td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
<td>(10.0%)</td>
<td>(13.3%)</td>
<td>(6.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14.0%)</td>
<td>(10.0%)</td>
<td>(20.7%)</td>
<td>(8.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.5%)</td>
<td>(7.1%)</td>
<td>(7.4%)</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15.6%)</td>
<td>(23.5%)</td>
<td>(19.1%)</td>
<td>(11.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil attendance
Table AIF1.8 below illustrates the number of pupil days absent per term by gender and religion for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10. Overall the number of days pupils were absent increased from 593 in 2007–8 to 620 in 2009–10, declining substantially to 376 in the intervening year. These figures equate to an average of 1.3 days absent per pupil in 2010–11. No clear patterns emerge as regards either gender or religion. Although more absences were recorded for male pupils for the first year of the period, more absences were recorded for female pupils in the last two years. In terms of religion, there were more absences for Muslim pupils in the first and third years of the period. However, since researchers visiting the school on two days noted that scarcely any pupils were in school following heavy rains, and interviewees reported lengthy absences during harvest time for some pupils, these figures clearly represent a major underestimation. Nor do the figures reflect any seasonal variation suggested in the qualitative data that indicate that absenteeism is higher during the harvesting season.
Table AIF1.8 Doya Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual totals</td>
<td>593 (F:293; M: 300)</td>
<td>376 (F:196; M:180)</td>
<td>620 (F: 328; M:292)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AIF1.9 Doya Primary School number of days absent by term and by religion 2008–9 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual totals</td>
<td>593 (Mu:305;Ch:288)</td>
<td>376 (Mu:179;Ch:197)</td>
<td>620 (Mu:737;Ch:738)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil dropout

Dropout rates appear to have increased dramatically over the three-year period, 2007–8 to 2009–10, from 48 (9.3% of enrolments) in 2007–8, to 105 (22%) in 2008–9, and 180 (37.3%) in 2009–10. Thus, the figures for 2009–10 indicate that over a third of pupils dropped out of school during the year. This steady increase in the proportion of enrolled pupils that have dropped out of school over the three-year period holds true for girls, boys, Muslims and Christians.

Table 1.10 Doya Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total dropouts</th>
<th>Overall dropout rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>25 (11.3%)</td>
<td>23 (7.7%)</td>
<td>32 (11.1%)</td>
<td>16 (7.0%)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>52 (22.8%)</td>
<td>53 (21.3%)</td>
<td>60 (22.1%)</td>
<td>45 (21.8%)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>87 (42.4%)</td>
<td>93 (33.6%)</td>
<td>88 (29.9%)</td>
<td>92 (48.9%)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of dropouts as a percentage of the number of enrolments for the year.

However, large differences in the percentage of pupils enrolled who drop out in particular grades (see Tables AIF1.10 and AIF1.11) and inconsistencies of some of the grade-specific dropout numbers with the enrolment numbers shown in Table AIF1.4 suggest that some of the dropout figures, like some of the enrolment figures, may be unreliable. For example it seems unlikely that 66% of pupils enrolled in Primary 6 in 2009–10 dropped out of school, especially when only 8.8% and 10.9% had dropped out from Primary 6 in the previous two years. To take another example, of the 40 Muslim pupils registered for Primary 1 in 2009–10, 24 were said to have dropped out,
leaving 16 pupils; yet in 2010–11 for Primary 2, 34 pupils were apparently enrolled, suggesting over half of the Muslim cohort comprised new enrolments, returnees or repeaters. Even more unlikely, of the 29 female pupils in Primary 3 in 2009–10 16 (55.2%) were said to have dropped out, leaving 13, yet the following year’s enrolment for female pupils is 58, suggesting over three quarters of enrolments were new pupils, returnees or repeaters.

Table AIF1.11 Doya Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th></th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th></th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>(7.7%)</td>
<td>(16.6%)</td>
<td>(11.5%)</td>
<td>(28.9%)</td>
<td>(53.0%)</td>
<td>(32.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>(12.2%)</td>
<td>(13.3%)</td>
<td>(12.8%)</td>
<td>(35.1%)</td>
<td>(27.7%)</td>
<td>(31.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>(7.0%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
<td>(5.7%)</td>
<td>(20.5%)</td>
<td>(11.8%)</td>
<td>(15.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
<td>(8.0%)</td>
<td>(12.3%)</td>
<td>(13.6%)</td>
<td>(31.4%)</td>
<td>(21.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>(9.1%)</td>
<td>(2.0%)</td>
<td>(4.9%)</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>(16.0%)</td>
<td>(4.7%)</td>
<td>(8.8%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
<td>(7.4%)</td>
<td>(10.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>(11.3%)</td>
<td>(7.7%)</td>
<td>(9.3%)</td>
<td>(22.8%)</td>
<td>(21.3%)</td>
<td>(22.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.12 Doya Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2010–11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th></th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th></th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Ch</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Ch</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>(14.9%)</td>
<td>(7.5%)</td>
<td>(11.5%)</td>
<td>(32.5%)</td>
<td>(31.6%)</td>
<td>(32.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>(13.0%)</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>(12.8%)</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
<td>(22.2%)</td>
<td>(31.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>(4.6%)</td>
<td>(7.5%)</td>
<td>(5.7%)</td>
<td>(16.4%)</td>
<td>(15.0%)</td>
<td>(19.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>(20.0%)</td>
<td>(6.0%)</td>
<td>(12.3%)</td>
<td>(16.3%)</td>
<td>(30.0%)</td>
<td>(21.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>(6.0%)</td>
<td>(3.1%)</td>
<td>(4.9%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>(3.6%)</td>
<td>(8.8%)</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
<td>(4.0%)</td>
<td>(10.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>(11.1%)</td>
<td>(33.5%)</td>
<td>(9.3%)</td>
<td>(23.3%)</td>
<td>(21.8%)</td>
<td>(22.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil performance

Over the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10, the range of top marks improved noticeably from 54–70 in 2007–8 to 80–100 in 2009–10. Even the range of bottom marks improved slightly. This was true overall and for all four social groups except for Muslim girls, whose bottom marks were lower in 2009–10 than they were in 2007–8. Male Christian pupils recorded the top marks in each of the three years, which is in line with what teachers said about pupil performance in the interview data.
Table 1.12 Doya Primary School pupil performance according to gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Overall range of marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26–52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63–73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20–52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>top mark</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80–100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bottom mark</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30–55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIF2. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

AIF2.1. The school

General school issues

School facilities
There are five blocks containing ten classrooms in the school. Several buildings had a leaking roof and the rooms were generally in poor condition, with numerous broken doors and windows and non-cement or potholed cement floors. Only classrooms for Primary 5 and 6 had windows, doors and benches though even they had insufficient furniture. One parent complained: “This is an old school ... most of us attended this school and no attention [has come] from government [un]like other schools in the state.”

Despite the fact that there were classrooms available, Primary 1 lessons were held under shade and pupils drew in the sand so they did not have to use books or pencils. Nor did most have uniforms, in part to help parents save money. An area in one of the classrooms was set aside as a library with a few books that clearly had not been used for some time as they were covered in thick dust. Teachers said that there were insufficient books but maintained that pupils sometimes used them under the supervision of monitors when teachers were holding staff meetings. One classroom was also set aside for pre-school.

The school has no electricity or water supply. The school used the community borehole; buckets of water, with a cup, were kept outside the head teacher’s office for pupils to use. Pupils also went to town or went to homes with wells to get water at break but were said not to return on many occasions. The SS, commenting in general on their schools, said that kids were often taken away from school to look for water.

The one toilet block of two latrines (one female, one male) was safe and clean but there were no toilets for children, who had to use the bush although the SS and parents were under the impression that there was a toilet for pupils, albeit dilapidated. One parent explained that some pupils did not like using the bush: “The children go back home when pressed and most times do not return.”

The compound was effectively unfenced apart from a few posts and a bit of barbed wire, which served to protect a few young mango trees. Various school and community respondents, including members of the PTA and SBMC, were adamant that the school should be fenced and have a gate, and that a borehole should be sunk:
This school is an old school, with many graduates that are successful all over the country. In this regard, we would like the government to make the school good by fencing it and making it solid (PTA member)

If I am to change something in this school, I will start by building a fence around the school with a gate; then I will sink two boreholes (SBMC member)

The head teacher was also keen to acquire land from the community for a school garden but was aware that land was scarce. The compound was clean during the visits but the ground was uneven and stony. However, pupils complained that they did not like the “dirty environment” of both the classrooms and the compound. They were possibly referring to the state of the school after the lengthy teachers’ strike. In the area around the school cattle, goats and sheep were visible. There was limited shade provided by two large trees, and the mango trees constituted the only cultivation. There was also an overgrown and stony football pitch and an assembly area with the flagpole down on the ground and no flag, as it was apparently torn.

The head teacher’s office had furniture and there was a staff room but no first aid kit in school.

**Security**
Since the compound is unfenced, pupils can easily leave the compound while unauthorised outsiders can easily pass through the school. The lack of fencing round the school was a matter of concern to all parties and parents expressed the view that it encouraged pupil truancy and absenteeism. As one parent put it: “Teachers can’t catch latecomers because pupils can decide to come into the school at any angle.” For the pupils it was one of the main things they disliked about their school. One teacher reported that farmers often passed through to get to and from their fields, sometimes bringing their animals with them. On one research visit, a goat was seen in the classroom. Some farmers, they said, insulted pupils through the windows. The head teacher admitted that use of the school premises by some farmers was a point of tension with the community (see Section 2.2. on Community-school relations). Cattle, goats and sheep were seen around classrooms on research visits and on one occasion a goat was seen inside a classroom. Furthermore, “school properties are destroyed by youth from the community”, the head teacher added. Other outsiders smoking Indian hemp also reportedly passed through the school grounds. According to the head teacher, drug abuse was a priority issue for the PTA.

**School routines**
Assembly was said to be daily at 7.30am although one teacher said it was more usually held around 7.45am. Lessons start at 8am, ending officially at 1.30pm with the main break at 9.30am. Teachers said pupils are inspected in assembly twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays. The routine of a teacher raising the flag in the morning and lowering it after school had been abandoned since the flag was said to be torn.

The SS reported that generally in schools prefects organised the pupils for assembly according to class and height though some pupils grouped themselves according to gender, which was allowed. Pupils are required to clean the school at 6.30am before assembly and weekly general cleaning takes place from 8–10am, supervised by the labour teacher and aided by prefects (see section on School management of pupils below). All pupils complained that they disliked constantly having to sweep in school and the girls, in particular, said it was not fair that the boys were never asked to sweep inside the classrooms.

**School management of staff**
LGEA, school and community respondents all agreed that the shortage of teachers, especially qualified teachers, was a major issue in the school. To help address the shortfall the head teacher
said that “applicants from the community who have pivotal training /diploma certificates are pleaded with to also teach on a non-payment basis.” Female teachers, in particular are lacking in the school, which has only one permanent female teacher (on maternity leave) and one temporary one, who are both unqualified. One is nominally in charge of the library. The teaching staff of 13 includes two assistant heads. Other posts of responsibility include discipline, exams (which includes drawing up the timetable) games, and labour, which were all held by male teachers. The discipline teacher was known by pupils as “Dr Beating”. There was also a “duty master” in charge of daily activities, including assembly and punishment of pupils, but no school counsellor.

The SBMC praised the teachers in the school for being hard working and teacher absenteeism was not mentioned by pupils and only mentioned indirectly by parents when they compared current teachers to teachers in the “olden days”, when teachers did not skip classes. However, the ES said that across the LGEA sometimes teachers came late to school and/or did not prepare lesson plans. The latter was confirmed by the head teacher. The lack of teaching and learning witnessed on two out of the four research visits were ascribed on one occasion to the rainy season, and on the second occasion to the teachers’ strike. This had been called off in other schools by then, but not in Doya. All the above provides further evidence of teacher (and pupil) absenteeism. Moreover, one teacher also confirmed that teacher absenteeism was an issue, particularly on market days, and that (some) parents had mentioned it. “Teachers do not enter class. Pupils only have one lesson a day; parents say so too” they said, adding that “teachers do not work because of pay. Teachers are discouraged. Teachers suffer more.” Generally, teacher morale was said to be low and there was resentment that teachers had not been considered in government discussions about the minimum wage. “Government usually abandons us”, one teacher explained. There was sympathy from parents, who felt that teachers were poorly paid, not paid on time, and lacked incentives such as being able to go for further studies. Additionally, parents pointed out that since there was no accommodation in the village, teachers had to travel far to reach school. One suggested that the reintroduction of a teachers’ college in the area “will improve teacher performance to teach well and better”.

On two of the four visits no teaching was going on and few teachers or pupils were present in school. On the only day lessons were observed the Primary 6 teacher was absent and several teachers were seen sitting around under the tree, chatting with each other.

The SS reportedly visited their schools at least once a week to ensure that teachers were teaching and absentee teachers were reported to the LGEA and sometimes summoned to the ES to explain their absence and/or get a warning. The head teacher did not complain about teacher absenteeism even when teachers were seen to be absent from class on the research visits.

A teacher confirmed that since the head teacher was a member of the teacher’s union, he was also often absent on union business. The head teacher was absent for two out of the four research visits.

School management of pupils
There was disagreement among teachers as to whether a discipline policy existed in the school though there was more agreement that practice was gender-differentiated. One teacher explained that teachers were supposed to use their discretion in how they disciplined pupils and if necessary they were to send the pupil to the head teacher. Another teacher said that there was a policy, namely to give boys two strokes of the cane on the buttocks and girls one stroke on the hand whereas the head teacher also talked about age-related punishments for latecomers: “proportion to their ages – light punishment two to four canes on the buttocks and a verbal
reprimand.” He continued: “Most times female teachers punish female pupils and administer the light punishment of two to four strokes.” Two male teachers thought “female teachers and women generally have more sympathy when dealing with children” because of their involvement with children at home. Generally female teachers punished girls and male teachers punished boys though this presumably was not always possible given the lack of female teachers. One male teacher said that “sexually mature” girls were not flogged, which he believed encouraged some such girls in Primary 6 to misbehave.

Observations and interviews confirmed that corporal punishment was widely practised in the school, especially on boys. And parents said that flogging put off some boys from coming back to school. Pupils were seen being flogged either with a cane or a stick for latecoming; “girls on the hand and boys on the buttocks”. Girls thought it was unfair to be beaten for latecoming. As one girl put it: “Teacher X and teacher Y beats us when we come late; they beat us at the buttocks using cane and it’s unfair to beat us for just coming late”.

For absenteeism, pupils agreed they were either beaten, verbally reprimanded and/or given a warning. Other punishable offences included improper dress, such as torn uniforms or wearing trousers “swagger ass down” (i.e. not properly pulled up), coming to school dirty, not doing homework, insulting parents or teachers, fighting, refusing to sweep the school, or not making their own broom. Punishments include flogging, being made to kneel down or forced to carry a stone. One teacher said that for serious offences, such as stealing or insulting teachers, pupils were publicly flogged at assembly.

Pupils reported that if they complained about “teasing” of any kind to teachers, such as boys beating girls, the teacher will intervene and flog the offending pupil(s). Prefects too intervened and beat their peers. However, older boys were seen bullying younger boys but no teacher intervention was observed. Nor did teachers try to prevent pupils from leaving the school area during break.

Teachers reported that prefects were selected from Primary 5 and 6 pupils based on classroom performance – especially in English, according to pupils. The SS said generally in schools some were selected based on size. Pupils said both girls and boys could be selected as prefects and monitors but staff noted that prefects were mainly male. The head girl and boy were appointed on performance, punctuality and confidence. The head girl was said to “control” girls whereas the head boy, was the Head Prefect in charge of both boys and girls. Generally though, observations indicated that prefects generally performed gender-segregated duties with female prefects in charge of girls, and boys in charge of boys. Teachers explained that prefects arrived early at 7am to stop and cane latecomers. Monitors were in charge of pupils in the classroom when the teacher was absent.

Prefects for other specific duties included the “office girl”, who cleaned the head teacher’s office, and four house captains in charge of sporting or other competitive activities. In addition a timekeeping prefect was in charge of the school bell (a male prefect when researchers visited) and social prefects ensured pupils were dressed correctly, with the head boy and male prefects advising boys, and the head girl and female prefects advising girls. All pupils seen in the school had uniforms except for one boy in one of the observed lessons but girls generally seemed to be neater. The duty prefects, according to the SS, “inspect sweeping, cleaning, ring the bell, help conduct assembly by arranging pupils according to class”.

Prefects themselves were distinguishable by their green caps and/or long sleeves whereas the head boy and girl wore red caps. Girls in Primary 4, 5 and 6 were permitted to wear trousers. The
school supervisor said teachers checked on missing pupils at home since some boys refused to go to school and others got “diverted” on the way to school or hung out with gangs:

Boys especially during raining seasons go to other people’s farms to do work that earns them money. Some boys also go to the eastern part of the country looking for money. Those who attend school, sometimes divert to join lay-about and miscreants.

The school’s only female teacher was said to take care of girls, advising them about cleanliness, hair and uniforms, which helped improve neatness, and how girls should “take care of themselves”, especially during menstruation:

One of my responsibilities [as the school’s only female teacher] is to take care of girls concerning their health, to be tidy always. Sometimes I notice girls that are menstruating; sometimes they complain about stomach problem and headache. Some don’t come to school during their period and if I find out I report to the class teacher so that they will not be punished. I suggest that government should help encourage girls by providing pads to girls as an awareness. There was a time I told my class to stand up, when they did, one girl was menstruating and was wet, the whole class started laughing at her. Since at the moment [that time] I’ve [still] nothing to assist her; simply told her to go home and bath, which she did and she came back to school the next day.

Pupil–pupil relations

Teachers said that at break girls and boys generally played separately. Observations indicated that younger boys and girls mixed more freely whereas older pupils stayed in age-related gender-segregated groups.

Pupils complained that there was a lot of fighting, bullying and noise in the school both inside and outside the classroom, which they did not like. Teachers also confirmed that pupils often teased each other for wearing torn, patched or dirty uniforms, or for not taking a bath. They also maintained that generally girls teased each other more because they were dirtier:

Sometimes some pupils with new uniforms come to class and show off by teasing those with dirty uniforms, sometimes they laugh at those without good uniforms.

However, on the one visit when classes were happening, the girls seemed generally to be neater. Nearly all pupils were wearing uniform except for one boy. On another visit a boy was seen heading off for market, allegedly to get his school shirt mended. The SS said that both girls and boys teased each other; girls teased boys particularly when girls did better academically.

In the classroom

Classroom condition and resources

Classroom conditions varied across the school from adequate to grossly inadequate. The classrooms where the two lessons were observed had good chalkboards, one of which had clear notes from the previous lesson. The walls were bare but the windows allowed in sufficient light. Furniture in one of the observed classes was in very poor condition, as in other classrooms where there was furniture. Some classrooms had good cement floors, some had potholed floors and others had no cement floor (see earlier section on School buildings and facilities). Parents said that some classes had no chalkboard or windows. One parent recounted how the PTA had repaired the broken windows but observed that they have been broken again.

The ES was of the view that providing functional classrooms and reducing overcrowding helps improve the quality of teaching.

In the two observed classes all pupils appeared to have writing materials but interviews suggested this was not always the case. One teacher remarked that some boys sometimes did not bring pencils to class so couldn’t copy off the board whereas one parent commented that
some parents couldn’t afford to buy exercise books for their children and so some pupils without books stole from those who had them. The SS, though, maintained that across their schools all pupils came to school with writing materials.

Shortage of school textbooks was widely cited as a major obstacle to pupil learning by school and community respondents, and identified as a more widespread problem across the LGEA. As the SS said: “In a class of 20 pupils it is possible to find six texts – inadequate”. One pupil complained: “Teachers should be reading for us so we can also read on our own, we also need textbooks to take them home and we need calculators too.”

In Doya Primary School only teachers were said to have textbooks though a few parents apparently provided textbooks. The SS said that in some schools teachers put pupils in groups to share books although in Doya one of the teachers interviewed said he did not ask pupils with textbooks to share in his class. In one of the two observed lessons, no pupils had textbooks; in the other, a pile of textbooks remained on one seat but they were not used. Teachers also bemoaned the lack of teaching aids. Chalk was seen to be readily available.

Seating arrangements
In the two observed lessons, class sizes ranged from 28 to 36 (15–19 girls; 13–17 boys) with slightly more girls than boys present in both classes. Some female pupils interviewed maintained that their attendance is usually better because they liked school more. There were ten benches in one class, eleven in the other, arranged in rows with four pupils on average per seat in Primary 4, and three in Primary 5. In the Primary 5 class the benches were arranged fairly haphazardly.

As observed in the Primary 4 class, many other classes were said to be overcrowded and/or lacking in furniture, particularly at the beginning of term when enrolments were high. According to the ES and SS, this situation was common across the LGEA. Pupils therefore sat on logs, stones or on the window frames, according to the SS. In Doya, this is a major source of dissatisfaction with pupils, teachers, parents and the PTA. As one teacher pointed out, it constitutes a major obstacle to pupil learning. The following comments from parents illustrate the problem:

When you see six pupils seated in a bench you know that seats are not enough.

Our children sit on the floor because there are no seats, desks and classrooms. Some sit on the window frame.

Because the children sit on the floor their uniforms get dirty fast and most parents are too poor to be buying detergent every day

The implication seemed to be that the situation eases slightly when numbers drop off during term. On the other hand, one of the things that pupils liked about the school was the fact that there were a lot of pupils.

In both observed lessons, girls and boys sat on benches together, reflecting school policy. As the pupils explained: “Teachers mix us”. One teacher explained that it was to stop girls and boys playing in class. He said pupils did not mind and tended to groups themselves according to the village they come from. Parents also accepted the seating arrangement as it was official school policy and “it aids learning”. However, the SS noted that generally Muslim boys did not like sitting next to girls, especially in the higher primary classes

Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)
Both lessons observed involved whole-class teaching. In one class the teacher monologued throughout, demanding occasional choral repetition but with no questions to check understanding and indeed it appeared that pupils did not understand the lesson content. In the
other lesson, the teacher demanded slightly more interaction from pupils, occasionally asking some individual questions and some pupils – girls more than boys – appeared to show some understanding.

In the lesson where pupils were asked questions, the teacher concentrated on a group of girls, especially one girl at the back who usually knew the answer. Generally more girls raised their hands to answer questions than boys and appeared to display a greater level of understanding. In the interviews, girls confirmed this: “Girls answer more questions in class; more girls raise their hands in class.” However, the boys interviewed maintained that they participated more because “girls play too much.” The head teacher and both teachers interviewed also thought that boys participated more. One teacher said that although very few pupils answered questions, a few asked questions: boys more than girls and Christians more than Muslims (see below). The head teacher believed that girls were too shy to participate in class. “It may be natural that girls can’t do well; most girls behave like that. Though the girls participate more when female teachers teach them but for the boys it doesn’t matter.”

The language of instruction, however, was identified by teachers as a major barrier to pupil learning. The head teacher explained:

This school is a rural school, the environment is not educative like urban areas e.g., language, communication is a problem. Some pupils are slow learners – some can only speak Chamba and Fulfulde... Teachers teach in English and interpret in the mother tongue.

One lesson was conducted primarily in English with extensive code-switching with Hausa; the other lesson was conducted mainly in Hausa, code-switching with English and Chamba. Pupils had mixed views. They admitted that learning was difficult in English but thought that learning in English would improve their English: “We want to speak English.” One pupil said: “Mix[ing] Hausa/English will make us mix – English/Hausa.” Some pupils thought it would be better if they learnt to read and write in English but were taught in Hausa, especially if difficult concepts were explained in Hausa: “We understand better, we understand better.” One of the teachers also found teaching in English difficult and used Hausa and Chamba too.

Both boys and girls agreed that male and female teachers taught differently but did not elaborate. One of the male teachers interviewed thought that men taught better while another thought that female teachers could handle small children better because they were used to dealing with them at home whereas “men go out”.

Teacher–pupil relations in the observed classes were deemed to be authoritarian but positive. One girl was seen showing traditional respect for her elders by bowing down when asking permission to leave the classroom. The pupils interviewed said that teachers like the pupils and treated them all equally. In particular pupils like teachers who explained clearly, ensured pupils were clean, caring, punctual, respected pupils’ opinions, asked pupils questions and turned up to teach every day.

The issue of lack of homework was also raised by parents and the SS, although a writing assignment was given to pupils in one of the observed lessons. Parents wanted more homework “to keep pupils busy” because “pupils watch films”. The SS complained that in general in schools not enough homework was given out and that “even when pupils are given homework, they go home to give someone to do the homework for them.” The SS’ solution was for teachers to redo the homework assignment in class to make sure that it was the pupil’s own work.
Parents were unconvinced that all teachers could manage all the subjects they taught and said that some skipped topics that they couldn’t handle, such as knitting.

**Pupil performance**

In terms of academic performance, girls’ and boys’ views differed once again: boys thought that girls did not do as well because girls went out at night:

\[
\text{Girls do not perform well because they play a lot; they do throw one another [playing]. Girls also do not learn how to read, at night, they go out even when they are being stopped; they remove their shoes, hold hands together and sneak out to play at night.}
\]

Girls, in contrast said they performed better because “boys play a lot”. The teacher interviewed thought boys did better and Christian boys in particular since through Sunday school he thought Christians were more used to the classroom learning environment, such as using a chalkboard and learning in English (and Hausa). The head teacher also thought that boys generally got better results, especially Christian boys, although the school was unable to produce any PSLE statistics, for example, to back this up. He also thought that (some) female pupils got discouraged in class because they knew they were going to marry. This was his explanation for why some girls did not copy notes from the board, nor do homework. However, he also noted that some boys did not copy, generally those who did not bring pencils.

In terms of test results, the PTA thought all pupils did equally well and the ES and SBMC thought highly of school results. An SBMC member boasted that good graduates were produced each year, some of whom got places in the federal secondary schools.

**Discipline**

Pupil behaviour was deemed to be poor in both classes observed although in one class the teacher rebuked pupils for laughing at a boy for getting the answer wrong. In the same class, however, he made no comment at an older girl coming into the class with food and handing over a N20 note to a female vendor in the class. Pupils admitted to sometimes eating sugar cane in class. In one lesson, where the researcher described many of the boys as “rough”, the teacher struggled to maintain control shouting at the pupils though he ignored one older, larger boy hitting a younger one on the head in plain view. Several incidents of boys bullying other boys were witnessed in that class. Indeed, all pupil groups – and boys in particular – complained that bullying, fighting and teasing were aspects of school that they disliked (see below). Pupils also complained that rowdy classes (confirmed by observation) made it difficult to learn: “Bam muson duka, surutu da neman fada” [We don’t want flogging, noise making and some pupils (both boys and girls) looking for trouble].

Though no physical disciplining of pupils was witnessed in the classroom, pupils and staff reported that pupils – and generally boys – were physically disciplined, for example for fighting in class. One teacher said that boys were given two strokes on the buttocks whereas girls received one stroke on the hand. Other disciplinary practices reported by one teacher included making pupils run round the classroom or sending out noisemakers. Pupils also said they could be punished for speaking in local languages. (See also School management of pupils.)

Pupils reported, however, that rewards for good performance helped them learn better. The SS too reported that (some) teachers gave rewards such as sweets, groundnut cake, corn flour snacks and “dabra” that children appreciated, presumably paid for out of their own pocket.

**Pupil–pupil relations**

Despite mixed-gender seating arrangements in class, in one of the lessons girls tended to interact with girls, and boys with boys. In that same class, where incidents of bullying were witnessed,
boys were seen bullying boys. In the other class, there was freer interaction across gender, religion and ethnic group. Nevertheless, teachers and girls admitted that (some) boys bullied girls, though boys maintained it was teasing rather than bullying: “We tease; we don’t bully.” When boys or girls sat together, both girls and boys teased each other about being married: “We are teased husband and wife and girls fight back.” Girls also complained of being “teased” by being touched, prodded or poked. Boys also admitted that boys sometimes fought amongst themselves. Girls in contrast maintained that girls got on well with each other. Teachers considered girls to be “shy” and did not want to mix with boys, though the above-mentioned harassment by (some) boys was likely to be a factor. The teachers considered that boys and girls had good relations in the school, for example eating together. They also cited the fact that boys lent their materials to girls although the latter seemed to go against one of the teacher’s earlier observations that some boys did not bring their pencils to class.

AIF3.2 Family and community

Socio-economic activities

Although there are some civil servants among the community, the vast majority are farmers involved in crop cultivation and animal husbandry. According to the head teacher, seasonal labour is in demand from April to October. Teachers said absenteeism for farming was greatest at harvest time when some pupils also went to work on other people’s farms to earn money. One teacher thought that this affected girls in particular. Various respondents agreed that cattle rearing and farm labouring were major causes of lateness, absenteeism (and therefore subsequent repetition) among both Christian and Muslim boys year round, and also a cause of overage enrolment in school, according to parents. Older boys in school sometimes teased and insulted those out of school. The ES pointed out that boys sometimes dropped out to rear cattle because a year’s labour would earn them a cow in payment. Although the PTA said some parents preferred boys to rear cattle rather than go to school, in other cases boys made the choice themselves.

Although both girls and boys undertook agricultural labour, pupils said that parents preferred boys to do more of the farming and rear animals while girls carried out more home chores. One parent explained:

*Iyayen mu sun fi son maza su je gona suyi aiki, mata kuma suyi aikin gida.* [Parents prefer boys to go and work at the farm while girls do home chores. Sometimes girls also go to the farm.]

A former pupil at the school said their agricultural labour was necessary to support the family, and in some cases paid for their own participation in school. He added that some children even had their own fields to cultivate.

Various community and LGEA sources stated that boys sometimes “run away” from the area to make money petty trading. The SS said that if they were unsuccessful, they tended to return to school. The SS explained: “Dropouts come back and they are accepted. When they return they are tested and placed in an appropriate class depending on their performance.” Girls too, especially Muslim girls, the community stakeholder and ES mentioned, sometimes absent themselves to hawk goods.

Teachers and pupils confirmed that home chores, such as cooking and grinding corn, were also a major cause of lateness and absenteeism, particularly for girls. One teacher felt that Muslim girls were particularly affected; another thought both Muslim and Christian girls were affected. The SBMC thought that lateness through chores might be the cause of some girls’ low performance in school exams and continuous assessment. One teacher pointed out that both Christian and Muslim girls sometimes dropped out of school to take care of a newborn child for their mother:
Mostly girls drop out especially when their mothers put to bed, they prefer to take them to farm to take care of the new born than allowing them to come to school; so they drop out.

**Families (including religion, ethnicity and educational choice)**

Homework was another area of difference between Christian and Muslim families that was singled out. Staff, PTA and SBMC respondents agreed that some educated Christian families helped their children with homework; one teacher pointed out that because Muslim parents were not able to, this resulted in poorer participation in school by Muslim children:

> Iyaye musulmi ba sukan kula da dube takardun yara idan sun dawo daga makaranta, amma yanuwanmu christa kam sura kokari. [Muslim parents do not always check pupils’ books after school, but Christian parents are trying in this regard]. (male teacher)

Some Muslim pupils bemoaned the fact that they had nobody at home to help with their school work.

Pupils also blamed latecoming by some pupils, and especially boys, on playing around and going to sleep late, suggesting a lack of supervision by some parents. According to one male pupil: “Girls mostly come late because of home chores. They don’t wake up early in the morning because they stay longer in the night playing.” Parents themselves seemed to concur; one explained: “Children were sent to bed early before but now children stay awake until 10 to 12pm”. Some parents are also seemingly struggling to get pupils into school. One parent explained:

> Some children will leave home in the morning to school, but idle out to play somewhere and sometimes do not reach the school at all and during break time they will go back home.

Pupils, however, reported that parents were expected to explain their child’s absence from school.

Ill health was also cited by pupils as a reason for absenteeism. The ES noted more generally that since poverty levels were high in the area pupils came to school hungry and often left class to find food. The former pupil thought that lack of parental commitment was a greater issue than poverty. “I believe that the actual reason for parents’ lack of interest is not poverty but lack of commitment.”

There were contradictory views on whether there were children in the community who had never been to school. Pupils interviewed said that all children in their homes were in school and that school was important for everyone. Some parents and the community stakeholder too were adamant that all children in the community had been to school at some stage: “A nan kam ba yaron da baya zuwa makaranta” [As far as this village is concerned, all our school age children have been enrolled into school.” The school supervisor was also of the view that the community appreciated the school. As one parent recounted:

> I reared animals for 15 years near this same primary school. I listened to teaching through the window and sometimes gave answers when the teacher asked questions. I was noticed by the head teacher and [he] advised me to tell my father and that was how I started school very late.

On the other hand, numerous other school and community respondents, including some parents, reported that some Muslim children, and girls in particular, did not go to school. There was a general view that (some) Muslim parents, and Chamba Muslim parents in particular, perceived school to be a waste of time and believed that boys would be better off rearing cattle rather than being unemployed after school and that girls were not worth educating, either because they would be married or because of lack of job opportunities.
Some parents who have no education will prefer their children to do cattle rearing than attending school. *Akwai kyaliya a wuring iyaye*” [Some parents show I-don’t-care attitude toward education of their children. (community stakeholder)]

Government should help educated youths with employment, if parents sees some one child gainfully employed, he will be encouraged to sent his child to school. But the way we are now, without employment, some parents will prefer their children to do cattle rearing than sending them to school to end up without employment. (male teacher).

One teacher singled out Chamba Muslim girls, in particular, as not going to school because of lack of job opportunities. The “I-don’t-care” attitude to schooling by some parents was thought by the SBMC to be responsible for the poor exam performance of some pupils.

Early marriage was another reason given by pupils for drop out by girls, according to pupils. One group of pupils reported that two girls in their class had done that. Parents said that girls generally married between the ages of 13 and 16 and that they rarely continued to secondary school. One parent explained: “Girls do not continue school after primary school due to poverty. They are married out before they become wayward.” The teachers said that at the JSS, pregnancies were “rampant”. One teacher expressed the view that the prospect of eventual marriage could discourage girls:

> Here we say girls’ education ends up in their husband’s kitchen, so the girls know that whatever they do, they will end up getting married; they get discouraged about furthering their education.

Boys were thought to be more interested in school although some of the girls interviewed maintained the opposite (see Section 2.1 on *In the classroom*).

Although Doya was said to be the only primary school in the village, there was a girls’ school several kilometres away across a river. A girl encountered in the village who went to the all-girls school said she wanted to come to Doya because there was “more teaching” but her uncle did not want her to transfer. According to the school supervisor, parents were complaining about the lack of female teachers at that school, saying: “Only female teachers should teach there but because most female teachers stay where their husbands stay only male teachers are posted.” However, the situation was scarcely better in Doya. Teachers also pointed out that there were many Islamiyya schools in the village. Attendance at nursery school was considered an important foundation for pupils by both teachers and parents.

Pupils thought that education was important for girls and boys. No explicit statements were made by respondents about preferring to educate girls or boys; rather various respondents reported that some parents – particularly Muslim Chambas – preferred girls to help at home and/or get married, and boys to rear livestock (see above).

**Community–school relations**

Relations with the community were described as “cordial” by the head teacher and parents yet there were clearly issues of tension between the school and some sections of the community. Of primary concern to school management was the fact that animals were being brought through or kept on school premises. The head teacher said he had “tried the traditional leader on the matter, but at any time the matter is discussed it brings tension. I believe it has to be handled with care.” The head teacher was also hoping to get some land from the community to cultivate but admitted “land is a big problem in this community.”

Pupil lateness, absenteeism and dropout were also highlighted by various respondents as being important issues in school–community relations. Pupils thought that more collaboration between the school and parents, such as by inviting parents for dialogue, would help check pupil absenteeism and drop out. Teachers similarly called for greater “consultation with parents” to
arrest repetition: “Let there be announcements telling children to come back to school. Their parents should be called upon so that they can be advised to bring their children to school.”

Nevertheless, interaction was clearly already taking place between the head teacher and some parents, at least, through PTA meetings. The parents interviewed said they could easily request an emergency PTA meeting with the head teacher through the PTA chair (also the ward head) and at the same time they reported that the head teacher informed them about government policies and decisions.

The community stakeholder too felt that the PTA had sufficient influence in the school, citing the fact that the head reported cases of latecoming, poor attendance and dropout by particular pupils and consulted him on such matters. The SBMC was not mentioned by anyone in the school or community although SBMC members themselves said they talked to parents at meetings about pupil lateness and made home visits to encourage children to come to school and the ES maintained that the LGEA supervised the SBMC, which worked hard “hand in hand with the PTA”.

Community participation in school took place primarily through the PTA and payment of the PTA levy, which was ₦50 per term. Teachers confirmed that this had been used to help build and renovate classrooms. Parents also contributed by buying school materials, uniforms and giving money to children for breakfast. Parents said that while some parents bought exercise books, some did not because they were too poor, so some pupils stole books from others.

According to the head teacher, the main concerns of PTA meetings were how to address poor pupil performance, and drug abuse within the youth of the community. PTA and SBMC members reported working together and spending time making house-to-house enquiries encouraging parents to enrol and/or keep their children in school and on issues regarding poor performance. The community stakeholder also maintained that he went around coaxing pupils into school.

For the community, shortage of teachers was the most pressing issue. Parents said they were helping by collectively contributing ₦500 to ₦1,000 a month to pay for three retired school teachers to teach part-time. The head teacher also appealed for unpaid volunteers (see Section 2.1 on School management of staff).

Parents stated that they had also constructed a building for a nursery but could not afford the desks or chairs as they were at the limit of their financial capabilities. “Yanzu community ma mun kasa, mun kusa bari.” [Now the community can’t cope and is about to give up]. On the other hand, the former pupil, now a civil servant, thought that former pupils were not doing enough for the school (see section on The LGEA, below)

Some parents, they said, went to the school to confront teachers about their children being flogged:

- Some teachers beat pupils excessively, which is not good because you may not know the health status of the child. Some children when you beat them excessively they may not come back to school.

  Sai maman yaran su tashi su zo suna zagi [Some mothers do come to school to insults teachers when their children are beaten excessively.]

However, it was not clear how school management addressed the issue:
The ES thought greater cooperation from some of their subordinates would help them do their job better.

School governance
Teachers complained about poor pay and delayed payments, which the SS said he disbursed together with the head teacher.

As mentioned earlier (see Section 2.1 School management of staff), a shortage of teachers was a major issue of concern for various respondents. Parents said that they had complained to the school supervisor about teachers being transferred and not replaced: “Important teachers are taken away; the school will collapse.” The SS also admitted that the recruitment of secondary school graduates – a number of whom were in the school – was a problem “since they do not know anything about teaching and do not know the method of teaching.” (See below on School support).

Teachers agreed that the ES and SS regularly visited the school, with the latter checking schemes of work, ensuring teachers were in class and monitoring the school, though there was disagreement as to how often. The SS reported visiting at least once a week, talking to the relevant people – the head teacher, community leader, PTA or SBMC, depending on the issue. The ES says he visited “regularly”. One teacher said they saw the SS once every two or three weeks and the ES once a term. The SS said they worked alongside the local government district committee, whose members assisted in inspecting schools, checking on teacher attendance, behaviour and teaching. “They assist in close monitoring.” The ES believed that constant and regular supervision of teachers would help improve teaching quality.

The need to increase government provision of free textbooks was widely identified as central to improving pupil learning by school, community and LGEA respondents although the ES maintained that instructional materials were distributed evenly across the schools. Teachers and the SBMC also complained that prescribed textbooks were changed too often and urged that they be used for at least a year. One SBMC member said: “Frequent changes of textbook constitute a major challenge in the school.” Free uniforms were also requested by parents and teachers, who asserted that they would help improve enrolment. Provision of free textbooks was also seen as an enrolment incentive by the ES, and a means of improving teaching quality. Head teachers were said to collect textbooks from the LGEA.

There was also a widespread call for government to provide more and better sports facilities, which various respondents said would encourage more pupils to come and stay in school. The school supervisor considered the lack of proper sports facilities to affect girls more than boys: “Boys can play anywhere but girls can’t.” Parents concurred: “The play field is stony and children can’t play on it; during break girls sit only or go home while boys play football in front of the classes, making a ball out of rags.” Another parent reminisced about having better play materials during their school days, which encouraged them to go to school:

Even if our parents didn’t want us to go to school, we sneaked from rearing animals and attended school because of play materials and different sports for boys and girls.

The ES considered SBMCs to be important hard-working bodies in school governance, which the LGEA supervised. He maintained that they worked “hand in hand” with the PTA in organising meetings and assisting schools with materials. The SBMC, which comprises 17 members (15 male,
confirmed that they work closely with the PTA and with the head teacher in the running of the school. However, no PTA, community or school respondents mentioned the SBMC in their interviews and the school was unable to specify dates of the last meetings.

**School support**
Teacher professional development is seen as vital to improving teaching quality by LGEA and school staff alike. Teachers want “regular workshops”, supervision and the prospect of promotion to encourage them to teach better. The SS said that teachers were released for further studies and that the LGEA had provided “mini workshops” for secondary school graduate teachers without the NCE to upgrade their qualifications.

**LGEA–community relations**
There was disagreement among respondents as to the degree of LGEA interaction with the community. Teachers reported that the ES and school supervisor attended PTA meetings.

Parents too reported having formal and informal access to the school supervisor to air their views. Yet some PTA members interviewed maintained that they did not see LGEA officials, had no contact with them and were not consulted. “Mu kam ES da Supervisor basu taba kiran mu ba. Su kan zo makaranta kawai” [ES and school supervisor never called on us, but they do come to the school]. One parent said that they only see the ES at the end-of-year prize-giving. One PTA member also complained that school supervisors were not always qualified and that they could brag a lot and demonstrate tribalism.

The ES said he met with the communities regularly to solve problems although he also said he communicated with communities via the head teacher. He also believed greater community participation in running schools would help him to do his job better: “Communities should participate in running the school like in classroom construction, providing shelter to the schools; you know some communities do.” The community stakeholder, however, maintained that outside PTA meetings they were not consulted by the LGEA on matters: “Ban da PTA, ba wanda ya taba tuntubanmu game ga makaranta” [Apart from the PTA, no one ever consulted us on school issues].

The village head was identified by the SS as an important link between the community, school and LGEA, whom the SS said he often visits sometimes with the ES and DSS. The village head, the SS explained, helped to mobilise parents to enrol their children in school. According to the SS, some village heads even taxed parents who did not comply. The village head also visited schools and reported back to the ES on what he found in school. “This improves attendance” according to the SS, who recounted one such episode:

I visited a school and found nine pupils and the next day found five, so I reported to the village head and called for a meeting with all the parents and he urged them to send their children to school.

The former pupil interviewed maintained that it was also government’s responsibility to mobilise former pupils to increase their contributions to the school, which he currently said were “non-existent”. “The community needs to be mobilised by government. Old pupils need to participate more in the provision of infrastructure for the school and mobilising for enrolment.” However, LGEA officials thought that in general the presence of the LGEA at community meetings, sometimes in the church or mosque, had succeeded in mobilising community members to send
their children to school, as has the use of town criers. To keep pupils at school, the SBMC suggests that government (and parents) should “tell them that if they do not go to school now they will be labourers in the future.”

**AIF3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY & PUPIL OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY**

**AIF3.1 Infrastructure and security**

- The school had a shortage of classrooms (some teaching under shade) and classrooms of variable quality: some with leaking roofs, damaged floors and illegible chalkboards, which were said to affecting teaching quality.
- The school has no electricity or water supply. Although water is fetched from the community borehole and kept in buckets, pupils were said to leave school at break to get water elsewhere with some not returning. This is a widespread issue across the LGEA.
- The one toilet block was clean and safe but only for teachers’ use. Pupils had to use the bush. It was suggested that some pupils went home to use the toilet and then did not return.
- Parents were helping to improve the learning environment by building and renovating classrooms through the PTA levy and by providing labour.
- A lack of fencing round the compound made it difficult to control access to the school premises, which was a matter of concern to all respondents.
- The resulting lack of security was said to encourage pupil truancy and absenteeism, allow encroachment by farmers, and vandalism of school property by youths.
- The stony compound/playing field was a source of complaint, prompting widespread calls for government to provide more and better sports and leisure facilities, for girls in particular, to encourage pupil enrolment and retention.

**AIF3.2 Teacher management**

- It was universally agreed that shortage of teachers (sometimes through transfer), especially qualified teachers, and female teachers, was a major issue in the school, prompting the community to pay for three part-time retired teachers and the school to seek out from the community voluntary teachers who had some training.
- Teacher morale was said to be low on account of poor and delayed pay, lack of opportunities for promotion and/or further study, and feeling neglected by government. There was sympathy from parents.
- Teacher absenteeism (especially on market days), latecoming and lack of lesson preparation were highlighted by some respondents and witnessed by researchers.
- The problem was said to be widespread across the LGEA.
- Teacher latecoming was also attributed to lack of accommodation in the village.
- The head teacher was absent on two out of four research visits on union business.
- There was recognition, by LGEA and school staff of teachers’ need for further training and support to improve teaching quality.
- LGEA staff, and the SS in particular, were said to visit regularly (though opinion differed as to how often) to monitor teacher attendance, behavior and teaching.
- Absentee teachers were said to be reported to the LGEA and sometimes summoned to the ES to explain their absence and/or get a warning.
- The district education committee was said to be active and involved in school monitoring.
AIF3.3 Pupil management and pupil relations

- Pupils were said to be inspected twice a week at assembly and “social prefects” were in charge of regulating pupils’ dress.
- Pupils were required to clean the school before lessons at 6.30am and undertake general cleaning for two hours on Fridays. All pupils complained about this, particularly girls who said boys were never made to sweep the classrooms.
- There was disagreement among teachers as to whether a discipline policy existed in the school though it was widely agreed that punishment was gender-differentiated with girls usually caned more lightly on the hand (and “sexually mature girls” not caned at all) and boys caned more harshly on the buttocks.
- Female teachers were said to punish female pupils where possible (though there is only one full-time female teacher in the school).
- Observations and interviews confirmed that corporal punishment was widely practised by teachers and prefects, especially on boys, which was said to deter some boys and girls from coming to school, and prompted some parents to confront teachers about the issue.
- Offences resulting in caning included latecoming, absenteeism, improper dress, being dirty, not doing homework, insulting parents or teachers, bullying or refusing to sweep the school.
- For “serious offences”, such as stealing or insulting teachers, pupils were reportedly publicly flogged at assembly.
- Other punishments included verbal reprimands and being made to kneel down or carry a stone.
- Pupils were seen freely leaving school at break without teacher intervention.
- Some teachers were said to check on absentee pupils at home since boys in particular sometimes refused to come to school.
- Long-term absentees – usually boys – who have left school to earn money farming or trading may return a year later and are tested and assigned to a year.
- Prefects are apparently selected based on classroom performance, especially in English, though size was also said to be a factor in some schools within the LGEA.
- A gender hierarchy existed among prefects with the head girl in charge of girls and the head boy in charge of boys and girls. Girls were generally seen to discipline girls and boys disciplined boys.
- The prefect system was highly specialized, e.g. social prefects (to regulate pupils’ dress), duty prefects (organizing sweeping and assembly), house captains (organizing sporting and other competitions) and the “office girl”.
- Pupils complained of a high level of fighting, bullying and teasing (e.g. about poor clothing, personal hygiene or poor marks) with older boys in school teasing those out of school.
- Both girls and boys were said to “tease”, but especially girls, though no evidence was gathered of the impact of this on pupil learning or school attendance.

AIF3.4 Teaching and learning

- Classroom overcrowding with inadequate seating was reportedly a major issue throughout the LGEA, which was said to impact negatively on pupil learning.
- In the two observations almost all pupils had writing materials but interviews suggested some parents couldn’t afford them (prompting some pupils to steal) and some pupils forgot them.
• Shortage of school textbooks was widely cited as a major barrier to learning in this school and across the LGEA though some parents provided books. Observations confirmed the shortage though a pile of books remained unused in one class.
• School and community respondents complained that prescribed textbooks were changed too frequently.
• The two classroom observations indicated that teaching made limited cognitive demands on pupils: one teacher monologued, demanding choral repetition; the other demanded some closed questioning.
• Learning in English was identified as a major obstacle to pupil learning (and difficult for one teacher) although some teachers code-switched extensively with Hausa, and also Chamba. Some pupils were said only to understand Chamba and Fulfulde.
• Pupils reported being punished for speaking in local languages.
• Girls and pupils were seated together on benches – though teased about being “husband and wife” – reflecting school policy aimed at prevent pupils from playing around, thereby aiding learning.
• There was very limited oral participation by pupils though a few female star female pupils were selected to answer questions. Teacher and pupil views were mixed on who participated more in class: teachers all thought boys did; girls said girls did; boys said boys did.
• Views were also mixed as to whether girls or boys generally did better in tests and exams though no data were provided to back up assertions.
• Some teachers reportedly gave rewards to pupils for good performance, which pupils said helped learning.
• As regards both pupil participation and performance gender stereotypes were invoked to explain gender patterns.
• Parents said some teachers skipped topics they couldn’t manage.
• Parents and LGEA officials bemoaned the lack of homework given and the fact that sometimes other family members did pupils’ homework.
• Some expressed the view that more formally educated Christian parents could help pupils with schoolwork whereas Muslim pupils sometimes had nobody to help them at home and this affected their learning.
• Bullying, “teasing” and noise by girls and boys (and fighting amongst boys) was widely reported and witnessed with little or no interference by teachers. Pupils complained it impeded learning.

AIF3.5 Socio-economic and family issues

• Poverty was a widely cited reason by all respondents for children’s involvement in agricultural labour, petty trading/hawking and (in the case of girls) early marriage, affecting participation in schooling.
• Pupil ill health and hunger were also said to be causes of pupil absenteeism.
• Child labour: boys and girls were reportedly needed for farming, trading and/or household chores resulting in lateness, absenteeism, and dropout.
• Overage enrolment in particular was ascribed to boys’ involvement in farming and cattle rearing.
• Girls’ participation and performance in school were said to be particularly affected by household chores, and looking after young siblings, though both boys and girls were said to have chores.
• Early marriage (13 to 16), often as a result of poverty, was given as a cause of dropout for some girls; pregnancy was said to be a major problem at JSS level.
More frequent and long-term absenteeism occurred during April to October on account of families’ need for additional farming labour or availability of waged farming labour.

Lack of parental supervision reportedly affected pupil attendance, especially among boys.

Some parents were said to be unable to control (some) boys, who ran away from school regardless of parental wishes, to go petty trading, often returning to school if unsuccessful.

It was variously reported that some Muslim children (especially Chamba Muslim children) and girls in particular, had never attended school because parents were variously thought to be uninterested in formal education or perceived it to be a waste of time given inevitable unemployment afterwards, or marriage, in the case of girls.

Pupils who attended the school’s nursery (constructed by parents) were thought to get a good foundation.

AIF3.6 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)

- School–community relations were said to be cordial but with tension between the school and some sections of the community, especially regarding animals being brought through/kept on the school premises, and pupils’ lateness, absenteeism and dropout.
- The PTA was said to be the main point of contact between the school and community, whose main concerns were said to be pupil performance and drug abuse among some of the youth.
- There was reportedly good communication between the PTA committee and the head teacher.
- Female participation on the PTA committee (one) and SBMC (two) was minimal.
- The PTA was said to be actively involved with the school but none mentioned the SBMC (apart from the SBMC) although the LGEA considered SBMCs to be important for school governance.
- Pupils and teachers called for greater dialogue with parents to help stem repetition, absenteeism and dropout.
- The ₦50 termly PTA levy has been used to help build and renovate classrooms.
- There were widely differing views on the degree of contact the LGEA had with the PTA and on whether the LGEA consulted the community outside PTA meetings.
- Government provision of free textbooks and school uniforms were also widely requested, which respondents felt sure would increase enrolment and retention.
- The village head was identified by the LGEA as an important link between the LGEA and the community. Some village heads within the LGEA were said to tax parents if they did not send their children to school.

AIF3.7 Other

- Heavy rain prevented many pupils and teachers from coming to school.
APPENDIX IG

BAOBAB PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY REPORT

AIG1. CONTEXT AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

This is the case study report of Baobab Primary School in the context of the relevant LGEA and the school’s local community. It is an urban school located in the Southern Senatorial Zone of the state.

Respondents

A mixture of formal group and individual interviews were held with 18 adults and 21 children, as indicated in Table AIG1.1. Same-gender group interviews were held with pupils (two female, two male), and group interviews were also held with parents, SBMC and PTA committee members. Other respondents were interviewed individually. The majority of respondents were Muslim and there were considerably more male respondents than female respondents, especially at the community and LGEA level.

Table AIG1.1 Baobab case study respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School – staff (head teacher, teachers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School – pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (parents, PTA, SBMC, community leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGEA (including ES, SS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AIG1.1 The LGA (LGEA)

Socio-demographic context

The LGA comprises a fairly large, primarily flat, rural area with a large urban centre, and has a population of under 100,000, according to the most recent census. It lies in the Southern Senatorial Zone, where there is substantial rice and maize farming. Two major rivers flow through the area, on the banks of which lie many of the LGA’s village settlements. Migrant fishing communities also inhabit these areas. The population is of mixed religion and ethnicity; the main ethnic groups are the Hausa, Hausa-Fulani, Bachama and Mbuła.

Local educational context

See main report, Chapter 4.

AIG1.2 The school community

Baobab Primary School is located in a low-income residential area on the outskirts of a major town, in a religiously and ethnically mixed community. The population of the local community is estimated at around 20,000, according to the head teacher, and there are several markets, places of worship and two medical facilities in the vicinity. Most parents are said to be farmers, who require extra seasonal labour primarily between June and December, though a few parents are civil servants. The major ethnic groups in the locality are Hausa, Hausa-Fulani, Mbuła, Bachama,
Kanakuru, Bagudire, Baobiri and Waja; the Mbula and the Bachama are the indigenous ethnic peoples. The main local languages therefore are Hausa, Fufulde, Bachama and Mbula with Hausa the main language of interaction within the community and in the school.

**AIG1.3 The school**

**School description**

**Basic school information**

Baobab Primary School lies on the main road on the outskirts of a major urban centre. It was founded in the 1940s and has a rapidly expanding intake of around 3,000 pupils, who are taught in two shifts. Most of the pupils come from the immediate community, estimated by the head teacher to be around 3,000, though some pupils live further afield, taking up to 30 minutes to reach the school. Although a mixed Christian and Muslim area, the majority of the population are Muslim Hausas involved in farming and some in fishing. This is reflected in the Muslim-Christian ratio of the pupil intake, of which 63.4% is currently Muslim and 36.6% is Christian. Female pupils account for 47.1% of enrolments whereas males account for 52.9%. There are no school fees but each pupil pays a PTA levy of ₦50 per term.

**The staff**

The head teacher is male and Christian. There are 72 other teaching staff. The distribution of the teachers (including the head teacher) by qualification, gender and religion is shown in Table AIG1.2 below. Over three quarters of the 73 teachers are female (79.5%) and over two thirds are qualified (68.5%). The vast majority (60.3%) have NCE while six (8.2%) are degree holders. Three other female and one male non-teaching member of staff are employed by the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (8.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44 (60.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unqualified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC II</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16 (21.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>58 (79.5%)</td>
<td>15 (20.5%)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statistics on educational access and pupil outcomes**

**Pupil enrolment**

Table AIG1.3 below shows Baobab Primary School enrolment figures from 2007–8 to 2010–11 inclusive. Over these last four years, enrolments have almost doubled from 1578 in 2007–8 to 3058 in 2010–11, perhaps due, in part at least, to the reported success of the large-scale advocacy and sensitisation campaigns and new school infrastructure (see qualitative findings). There have consistently been more boys enrolled in school than girls with the gender gap widening slightly in the last two years although numbers for both boys and girls have increased dramatically. The female to male ratio has ranged from 45.5% to 48.4% for female pupils and 51.6% to 54.5% for male pupils with the gender gap widest in 2009–10. Similarly, there have consistently been more Muslim pupils in the school than Christian pupils, though the percentage dropped slightly from 64.5% in 2007–8 to 58.7% in 2009–10 before climbing back up to 63.4% in 2010–11. The proportional representation of all four social groups (Muslim girls, Muslim boys, Christian girls, and Christian boys), which is not presented in the table, has changed little over the four-year period; Muslim boys have consistently been the most numerous group, comprising around a third of all pupils enrolled (from 30.2% to 33.9% of enrolments). Muslim girls have then been the most numerous, followed by Christian boys and Christian girls, across the four years.
At the grade level across the years (see Tables AIG1.4 and AIG1.5) there are no clear patterns for overall enrolment. Considering particular cohorts of pupils over the four-year period, numbers have increased steadily, with some doubling in size. For example, a cohort of 214 Primary 1 pupils in 2007–8 increased steadily over the next two years to become a group of 575 in 2010–11; similarly a group of 212 Primary 2 pupils got larger over the next two years to result in a Primary 5 cohort of 573 in 2010–11. Still, there are some improbably large jumps in enrolment, which raise concerns about the reliability of some of the figures, especially when taken together with dropout figures (see Tables AIG1.9 and AIG1.10). For example, a cohort of 348 in Primary 2 in 2009–10 escalated to 630 in Primary 3 in 2010–11, which seems particularly improbable if the 58 dropouts recorded for the year are correct. Even more unlikely, the 46 Christian pupils recorded for Primary 5 in 2007–8, which had apparently reduced to 21 by the end of the year through dropout, shot up to 130 for Primary 6 the following year. In addition, there are a number of unlikely round numbers. For example, it seems highly improbable that exactly 200 Muslim pupils registered for Primary 3 and 5 for two years in succession (2007–8 and 2008–9).
Overage pupils
The figures for overage pupils are clearly unreliable so not presented here. For each of the six grades across all four social groups for the year 2007–8, 20 out of the 24 figures for overage pupils equalled or exceeded the number of pupil enrolments for that category. Similar patterns were evident for the other three years.

Pupil attendance
Tables AIG1.6 and AIG1.7 below illustrate the number of pupil days absent per term by gender and religion for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10. The number of days pupils were reportedly absent decreased from a total of 778 in 2007–8, to 762 in 2008–9 before increasing to 986 in 2009–10 though the average number of days absent per pupil remained much the same moving from 0.5, down to 0.4 and back up to 0.5. More absences were recorded for male pupils in 2007–8, but more for female pupils in the subsequent two years. Similarly there were more recorded absences for Muslim pupils than for Christian pupils in all three years, which is unsurprising given the substantial numerical superiority of Muslim pupils within the school. However, the qualitative data indicate high levels of pupil absenteeism, suggesting that these figures represent considerable underestimations.

Table AIG1.6 Baobab Primary School number of days absent by term and by gender 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mus</td>
<td>Chr</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Mus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>118 (55.1%)</td>
<td>96 (44.9%)</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>160 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>134 (63.7%)</td>
<td>78 (36.3%)</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>200 (63.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>200 (59.5%)</td>
<td>136 (40.5%)</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>200 (54.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>212 (61.3%)</td>
<td>134 (38.7%)</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>220 (60.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>200 (81.3%)</td>
<td>46 (18.7%)</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>200 (55.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>160 (68.7%)</td>
<td>73 (31.3%)</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>174 (57.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1024 (64.6%)</td>
<td>563 (35.4%)</td>
<td>1587</td>
<td>1154 (58.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.7 Baobab Primary School days absent by term and by religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>230</td>
<td></td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third term</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>141</td>
<td></td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>781</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>986</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Mu:418; Ch:363)</td>
<td>(Mu:437; Ch:325)</td>
<td>(Mu:559; Ch:427)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pupil dropout**

Dropout rates for the years 2007–8 to 2009–10, as set out in Table AIG1.8, would appear to be more in line with the high number of dropouts that the qualitative data indicate. As with the absences, the number of dropouts initially fell from 251 in 2007–8 to 237 in 2008–9, before rising again to 287 in 2010–11 though the dropout rate has declined marginally over time. Female pupils recorded more dropouts in all three years than male pupils, both numerically and as a proportion of enrolments. More Christian pupils than Muslim pupils dropped out of school during the first two years though more Muslim pupils dropped out in 2009–10. However, given the higher enrolment numbers for Muslim pupils, this still constituted a slightly lower dropout rate than for Christians. Looking at particular social groups (not presented in the table), female Muslim pupils have recorded the highest number of dropouts in all three years though only marginally so.

Table AIG1.8 Baobab Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Total dropouts</th>
<th>Overall dropout rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>150 (19.5%)</td>
<td>101 (12.3%)</td>
<td>115 (11.2%)</td>
<td>136 (24.2%)</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>136 (14.3%)</td>
<td>101 (10.0%)</td>
<td>117 (10.1%)</td>
<td>120 (14.8%)</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>146 (16.3%)</td>
<td>141 (13.2%)</td>
<td>165 (14.3%)</td>
<td>122 (15.0%)</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of dropouts as a percentage of the number of enrolments for the year.

Tables AIG1.9 and AIG1.10 show the dropout figures and rates by grade and by gender, and by grade and by religion, respectively. Considering Table AIG1.9’s dropout figures by grade, for the first two years the highest dropout was recorded in Primary 1, with the number of dropouts decreasing in Primary 2 and the lowest dropout figures occurring in Primary 6. In 2009–10 dropouts increased steadily over the first three grades, then decreased over the next three grades, also recording the lowest dropout figures in Primary 6, though several of the single digit figures for dropouts in Primary 6 seem improbable given the other figures and patterns. However, the figures do not tally with the enrolment figures (though the reliability of the enrolment statistics, as mentioned earlier, is also in doubt) even if dropout figures do not include pupils who do not register for the following year. For example 46 Christian pupils were enrolled in Primary 5 in 2007–8, of which almost half (21) were said to have dropped out. Yet, 130 Christian pupils were apparently registered for Primary 6 the following year. This would suggest that over 80% of Christian pupils for that grade were either new entrants, which is unlikely for a final year, or repeaters from the previous Primary 6 cohort. This again is unlikely given that only 73 Christian pupils were reportedly enrolled for that grade the previous year, of which 24 were said to have dropped out.
Table AIG1.9 Baobab Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by gender and grade 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(22.6%)</td>
<td>(23.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.4%)</td>
<td>(15.4%)</td>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16.9%)</td>
<td>(10.8%)</td>
<td>(13.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14.9%)</td>
<td>(10.4%)</td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(27.3%)</td>
<td>(11.0%)</td>
<td>(19.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15.5%)</td>
<td>(6.5%)</td>
<td>(10.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.5%)</td>
<td>(12.3%)</td>
<td>(15.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table AIG1.10 Baobab Primary School pupil dropout and dropout rate by religion and grade 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2007–8</th>
<th>2008–9</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Ch</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26.3%)</td>
<td>(20.8%)</td>
<td>(23.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14.4%)</td>
<td>(24.4%)</td>
<td>(17.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.0%)</td>
<td>(16.2%)</td>
<td>(19.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8.0%)</td>
<td>(19.4%)</td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.0%)</td>
<td>(14.3%)</td>
<td>(19.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.6%)</td>
<td>(12.9%)</td>
<td>(10.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(11.2%)</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
<td>(15.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pupil performance**

According to performance data displayed in Table AIG1.11, for the three-year period 2007–8 to 2009–10 marks have ranged from 20% to 70% across the social groups though the top marks recorded in each social category has predominantly been under 50%. Over the period the overall top mark has steadily decreased while the range of bottom marks has improved from 20–30% in the first two years to 27–33% in 2009-10. Although the generally low spread of marks seems in line with what the qualitative data suggest about low performance of pupils in assessment, there is some concern about the reliability of the marks. For example, it seems improbable that the marks of 73 Christian boys in Primary 6 during 2007–8 all fit into a range of six marks (20–26%); even more unlikely is the idea that the marks of 137 male Muslim pupils in 2009–10 fit into a three-mark range (38–40%).
Table AIG1.11 Baobab Primary School pupil performance by gender and religion 2007–8 to 2009–10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Overall range of marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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AIG2. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
AIG2.1. The school

**General school issues**

**School buildings and facilities**

Baobab Primary School is located in a large compound, which is shared with a feeder pre-school and abuts the main road. A road connecting the local community and the main road bisects the compound, which is prone to flooding in the rainy season. The school has been recently renovated so has good, modern facilities including 25 well furnished classrooms with cement floors, doors and windows, a head teacher’s office and a staff room. All classes are taught in rooms with functioning doors, windows and smooth cement floors. There is electricity in all classrooms, which has both lights and fans, although neither was needed during any of the research visits. The head teacher’s office has notices on the wall and possesses a first-aid kit although the community leader thought the school needed a clinic. The staffroom contains three chairs and two tables though staff preferred to sit outside under the trees.

There is, however, very limited shade and no water source on the compound, an issue of concern brought up by staff, pupils and the community stakeholder. Staff said that pupils are supposed to bring water with them from home; however, both staff and pupils admitted that some pupils left school at break, ostensibly in search of water, but that many failed to return, which observations subsequently confirmed.

The school also possesses a well-stocked library and a computer suite. However, no pupils were seen using either the library or the computer rooms during any of the visits and indeed pupils complained that they had asked to use the computers but maintained that only staff and paying outsiders were allowed to use them.

There are six VIP toilet blocks, at the far end of the compound. On research visits, three were locked and two were in very poor condition and surrounded by excreta. This, as the SBMC pointed out, effectively means that pupils have no toilets. The area was also the hang-out of some drug-taking male youths, whose intimidating presence was evident even during school hours (see section on Security below).

Although the school has a wall surrounding the large compound, the gate was frequently broken (as it was on all research visits) and, as mentioned above, there is effectively a road running between the main school site and the pre-school, which is a major thoroughfare connecting the community and the main road.
Although the immediate vicinity of the classrooms was fairly neat and tidy, the rest of the compound was exceedingly dirty. Piles of rubbish lay in the corners, which pupils and staff confirmed had been dumped by community members, despite requests from the head: “We have tried to stop refuse dumping in the school by the community but they still do”. The head also pointed out that some community members used the compound as a toilet: “If you go round the edge of the wall you will see people’s faeces.” Observations confirmed this and the fact that there was a lot of litter, including excreta, across the compound. The area surrounding the toilets was particularly bad. Pre-school teachers explained that the situation worsens during the rainy season when the compound, which slopes down from the road, floods. LGEA officials, however, thought the compound was “clean enough”; the SS said that he “tried to see that the school environment is well kept and devoid of dangerous things that will cause injury to pupils.” The ES and head teacher both mentioned the fact that flowers had been planted but had been eaten by goats. Teachers complained about the dirtiness of the compound, which they blamed on interference by some community members.

Some of the compound was used as a football pitch and was said to be used for other sports, though none were witnessed on research visits.

The community leader thought that improved school facilities would help improve retention:

> Providing shades for pupils to rest and eat during break, play materials. Even though our school cannot be like other schools but we would like our school to have upstairs and beautify the school like other schools in the state.

**Security**

Security was a major issue in the school, and was raised as such by most school and community respondents (though not mentioned by the LGEA) especially with regards to repairing the main gate, which remained broken, hanging off its hinges throughout the six-month research period. As highlighted above, there was a major thoroughfare running across the compound, bisecting the compound and separating the main school and pre-school area. At all times of the day, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists passed through the school compound at will. According to the head teacher, a temporary security guard was employed by the LGEA but had stopped work as he had not been paid for a long time. The head teacher had also asked the LGEA for building blocks to make the wall higher so that it cannot be climbed.

The head teacher explained that the main gate and the hole in the wall leading directly to the community were repaired periodically but were always broken again, to reopen the access route from the community to the main road. “We have blocked the passage dug through the school wall and have tried to stop people from passing or driving through the school compound but they still do,” he said.

There were two other smaller official entrances and several holes in the compound wall. According to staff and the SBMC, these were made by community members to create shortcuts from homes to the main road through the school although the community stakeholder pointed out that some community members had helped repair one of the damaged walls.

Pupils complained about classrooms being vandalised and about outsiders passing through the school.

Duty teachers try to control access via the main gate when pupils arrived for school in the morning but after assembly once lessons started, the broken gate was left unguarded. Hawkers – predominantly young girls of school-going age and women – were allowed into the compound at
break to sell goods but were sent away afterwards. However, given the lack of security, some continued to loiter even after classes had restarted. Some female pupils were even seen hawking goods in the classrooms during lessons.

At the same time, the porous perimeter means that pupils could easily slip out of school, which a couple of respondents highlighted. As mentioned above, pupils often sneaked out at break, but many did not return. On one occasion only eight primary six girls re-entered the classroom after break while a group of boys played football outside and the teacher was nowhere to be seen.

Another security concern was the intimidating cluster of male youths observed sitting and lying around near the toilets taking drugs, even during school hours. They were seen interacting freely with some of the older school boys. On one research visit, a young man was found asleep outside the toilets; on another the researcher was chased away. According to the PTA and several teachers, the youths were responsible for making the holes in the compound wall. One female teacher explained: “Some bad boys from the community break the wall to create a passage.... And you know these bad boys also use the school as a hiding place in the evening to smoke and take drugs”. According to the ES the issue had been reported to the traditional leader.

In addition, the head teacher said the school suffered from local “area boys” from outside the immediate community, who sat on the wall in the morning before school and verbally abused pupils, kicking out at them if they answered back, to prevent them from arriving at school early. He explained that they sometimes even entered the school to force pupils out of the classrooms. He said, the LGEA was aware of the issue but felt powerless to prevent it since the boys reportedly come from round the nearby motor park.

**School routines**

Since the school operates a double shift system, lessons are timetabled to start at 8am and finish at noon. Primary 1, 2 and 6 are taught in the morning, alongside the nursery school classes, and Primary 3, 4 and 5 are taught in the afternoon (12 to 4). Breakfast for the morning shift is 9.30–10am. Assemblies occur on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays at 7.30am, held under the school’s large trees, which provide the school’s only shade, close to the main blocks. In the assembly area there is a flagpole and a flag that is lowered and raised by the male timekeeping prefect. The timekeeper was also observed ringing a metal car part, which dangles from one of the trees and serves as a bell.

On the day assembly was observed the male duty teacher conducted affairs, as was usual. Pupils lined up according to grade and gender with taller and older pupils generally at the back. There appeared to be more girls than boys present and teachers led Islamic followed by Christian prayers.

School cleaning is done by the morning shift from 6.30am and some Muslim pupils reportedly arrive at school at 5am to do their share of the cleaning and then return home for Qur’anic school before returning to the school. Labour day is Friday, when pupils clean the whole school under the supervision of prefects between 7.30am and 9.30am.

**School management of staff**

According to the head teacher, the school has a sufficient number of teachers and all teachers, except for the instructors of IRK and CRK, have the minimum NCE requirement, though the information given on the school–community profile form contradicts this. Even so, the head teacher says he encourages his teachers to apply for further studies.
There are several positions of responsibility in the school, e.g. for health, games and quizzes, all held by women. Only the teacher in charge of labour was male. The two rotating duty teachers were in charge of discipline. The “headmistress”, a Christian, acts as the deputy head. The head is also Christian.

Teacher absenteeism was said to be an issue. In fact one teacher considered teacher absenteeism, “nonchalance” and latecoming to be the main challenges faced by the school. Several teachers were observed arriving late to school and some did not return to class after break because, as one teacher put it: “all the pupils have dispersed”. However, the SS maintained that it is a general problem that teachers’ irregular attendance contributed to pupils’ poor attendance. Although LGEA officials thought that “teachers are trying”, they asserted that the quality of education within the LGEA was being affected by the absenteeism, latecoming and inadequate lesson planning of some teachers. In particular, the ES believed, teacher and pupil absenteeism lowered the morale and ultimately the performance of other teachers. The head teacher said he talked to teachers and gave them a verbal warning if teachers were persistently late or absent, and tried to talk to the teachers’ friends; if that failed, he says he reported the person to the SS.

Teachers were observed sitting outside class, in gender-segregated groups, at all times of the school day. Although the head maintained that teachers only sat about outside when they did not have lessons or during break, reports from parents, pupils and even some teachers confirmed that this was always not the case. All pupil groups reported that (some) teachers, and female teachers in particular, missed lessons and spent more time chatting under trees than in class.

No! Our teachers don’t teach in the same way, the male teachers teach very well and they explain very well but you see the female teachers always rush out of lessons and just sit under the tree most times. They will be eating groundnuts and drinking ‘kunun zaki’ drink made from grains. (pupil)

It was the responsibility of duty teachers (and prefects) to watch for and discipline latecomers in the morning and truants. Pupils said the head teacher also ensured that teachers and pupils were in class for lessons. Both girls and boys, but predominantly boys, were seen loitering in the compound rather than returning to class after break. Some boys were even seen playing football. Several teachers were observed flogging pupils and shouting at them to get them into class. Female teachers more than male teachers were seen shouting at pupils but then female teachers were far more numerous in the school. During break itself, teachers, even duty teachers, tended not to intervene if pupils were fighting or bullying but both male and female teachers were seen flogging pupils who tried to leave the compound.

**School management of pupils**

The LGEA was adamant that corporal punishment was “prohibited within the authority” even though schools did not have a written document. Instead pupils were asked to carry out menial tasks such as weeding, picking up litter, sweeping the compound, fetching water etc. though parents could be summoned to school if the offence is serious. The head teacher was of the view that the code of conduct in the teacher’s handbook specified that “only the head teacher is permitted to determine punishment given to pupils in the school” therefore although he admitted he sometimes used corporal punishment, and allowed the “senior mistress” to physically discipline girls, he maintained that teachers were not allowed to beat pupils.

However, in practice both teachers and prefects caned pupils. All pupils groups maintained that male teachers did most of the flogging though female and male teachers and prefects were all
observed caning pupils. Pupils said they were beaten for coming late to school, fighting, stealing, noise-making, and missing class etc., and that girls were generally caned on the palm or the back of the legs whereas boys were caned on the buttocks, which observations confirmed. Teachers said that bullying was also punished. Other punishments, pupils said, included sweeping the compound, kneeling down (in class), picking up litter (especially for girls) and frog-jumping (mainly for boys). Although some pupils reported that some male teachers used abusive language, pupils generally thought that punishments were fair in the school and indeed that treating pupils equally and fairly was the mark of a good teacher.

On the Monday an assembly was witnessed; a male prefect was observed bringing the predominantly female latecomers to a female teacher to be caned on the hand. Pupils were inspected for neatness (nails, hair, mouth and uniform) and made to hold their hands out for inspection; the majority were caned on the hand until the head intervened. Pupils were publicly flogged for not paying PTA levies.

However, there was also fairly widespread recognition that corporal punishment was a cause of absenteeism and dropout as the following comments illustrate:

- Corporal punishment can deter pupils from coming to school (school supervisor)
- Pupils drop out after being punished or [being] requested to bring parents [to witness their beating] after committing an offence. (head teacher)

The head teacher also explained how corporal punishment could lead pupils dropping out of school:

- You know it is very bad for a teacher to use negative words for the children when they can't give answers to question asked such as ‘shame’, it will make the child to withdraw them self because other children will laugh at them. A teacher should use words like ‘fair, who can help him/her’, which will encourage them, or when a teacher give children lashes in front of other child, it will discourage them from coming to school the next day. You see this is what I call ‘negative teaching’.

There were mixed views as to whether more girls or boys dropped out because of being beaten. At the same time, there was evidence of parental approval (at least by some) of corporal punishment and a couple of cases were recounted in which parents specifically asked the school to beat their child. One parent emphatically declared:

- Children will not be obedient if they are not flogged. That is the best way to discipline children. I begged the teachers to report to me if my child refuses to come to school. I will flog the child and bring him to school and request the school to flog him again. If a child comes home to tell me that my teacher has flogged me, I'll tell the child to greet the teacher for me.

Prefects and monitors, who were selected by the class teacher according to “performance”, also assisted teachers in disciplining, including beating, other pupils.

Staff also reported positive reward policies: the head teacher said prizes are awarded termly for punctuality and teachers bought stationery as prizes for good performance in class, which he believed had helped boost enrolment.

However, although discipline was strict in some respects, very little seemed to be done about pupils disappearing from school after break, or even teachers not teaching.
**Pupil–pupil relations**

Pupils tended to play at break in gender-segregated groups and often according to age, though not necessarily religion. Boys were seen playing football and girls were observed playing clapping and catching games. Some boys were seen fighting and bullying other boys while others were seen harassing or laughing at girls. Teachers intervened where they saw something going on but there were cases where the teacher was unaware. Pupils themselves acknowledged that pupils teased each other and that (some) boys in particular teased girls, and, according to one teacher, sometimes beat girls. One teacher also noted that prefects also bullied other pupils.

Overage pupils, according to some staff, were generally treated well and interacted well with other pupils though one teacher thought they were teased.

**In the classroom**

**Classroom conditions and resources**

Pupils confirmed that the good condition of the classrooms was what they most liked about the school. Apart from one pot-holed floor, the rooms were all in good condition with smooth cement floors, functioning windows and doors, desks for teachers and clear chalkboards, legible from the back of the room. All the walls were bare. The PTA expressed satisfaction at the renovations to the school carried out by government, which the ES considered to be a factor in having reduced dropout. However, he acknowledged that some schools in the LGEA lacked classrooms and/or suffered from overcrowding.

In all observed lessons, no pupils had textbooks though almost all had exercise books and the vast majority had pens. Girls were in the majority for those that did not have a pen. In one lesson, a female teacher gave a pen to one girl, ignored another and sent four boys without a pen to go and buy one. Another female teacher was also seen giving money to a girl to buy an exercise book. Some pupils, and girls in particular, had school bags, some of which were improvised. However, the SBMC complained that some pupils did not have the requisite stationery; staff explained that they constantly had to remind parents at PTA meetings to buy writing materials for their children, which the PTA confirmed. However, the PTA also noted that most pupils who were sent home to purchase stationery but were unable to afford it then dropped out of school.

All teachers had sufficient chalk but explained that they did not use teaching aids because of low and/or delays in pay, which meant that they couldn’t afford the necessary materials. All teachers were observed with a teacher’s handbook and some were observed teaching from the textbook in class. Although the head teacher thought that textbooks were given out in class and collected in at the end of the lesson, teachers and pupils said that this did not happen, both arguing that the textbooks would be ruined if used in class. “Pupils will destroy them if they are given”, one pupil said. The few pupils whose parents bought the textbooks reportedly used them and were encouraged to share in class.

Government provision of textbooks and chalk was confirmed to be generally good across the LGEA though a few schools were said to be lacking. The SS also said schools sometimes had to be provided with materials such as chalk. However, the problem of some pupils coming to school without exercise books or pens was clearly widespread across the LGEA.

**Seating arrangements**

In the six observed lessons, class sizes ranged from 20 to 27 (7–17 girls; 7–18 boys) with slightly more girls than boys present in class for four out of the six lessons. However, the actual numbers of pupils enrolled in the classes were much higher, which perhaps explains one respondent’s comments that more classrooms were needed to cope with increasing school enrolments. There
was no overcrowding in classes with pupils generally seated three, and occasionally four, to a bench. Seats attached to benches were all in good condition and arranged in the same way across classes, in rows and columns with two aisles.

Seating was generally gender-segregated with female pupils occupying the benches by the door in all six lessons. Larger pupils were seen at the back of some classes. In a couple of classes girls were seen squeezed onto a bench in order to sit together rather than be seated next to a boy. Similarly, in one class a boy squatted down at the back of the class rather than share a bench with girls at the front of the class. Teachers explained that pupils regrouped if teachers tried to organise mixed seating, which was also observed in most classes; all teachers thought preference for gender-segregation was for religious reasons among Muslim pupils, and in order to be with friends. Pupils confirmed they liked to sit in same-gender groups but gave alternative explanations. Boys claimed that girls copied their work if they were sitting beside them, whereas girls complained that boys teased them about being the wife of the boy they were next to. In one class some boys were heard teasing girls that they were dirty.

Male pupil: We don’t like sitting near girls because they are girls.
Researcher: Why?
Male pupil: They run away from us because they are shy, they feel uncomfortable, and they will disrespect us.

All pupils denied sitting according to religion but said that they chose friends who were either home neighbours or school friends, though immediate neighbours tended to be of the same religion. Nevertheless, most teachers thought that Muslim girls in particular preferred to stick together.

Pedagogy (including teacher–pupil relations)
The six lessons observed involved traditional didactic teaching with teachers predominantly at the front of the class by the board lecturing at pupils. This was interspersed with a minimal amount of individual and/or choral questioning and occasional choral repetition, though the amount of interaction varied among classes. In the classes observed, a couple of teachers directed individual questions to both girls and boys, whereas a couple focused more on either girls or boys. A couple of teachers made a point of insisting that (some) girls answered questions: “I want a girl to answer this question now, no not you! I want a girl to give me the answer,” one teacher said. Pupils reported that some girls stopped coming to school on account of being teased, generally by boys, if they were unable to give the correct answer. Teachers’ opinions were divided on whether girls or boys participated more in class; boys’ low participation was attributed to their “playfulness” and being “weak”, girls’ to their “shyness”.

Pupils said that teachers generally did not like pupils asking questions. One female teacher reportedly told the class: “If you have understood fine; if you haven’t, ask those that do.”

Pupils were also asked to copy notes or exercises from the board in several classes and solve problems. Some teachers monitored pupil activity as they wrote. In one Maths class, exercise books were collected in by the teacher, but 15 out of the 27 pupils had not finished the task. Teachers were also seen giving homework, which the SBMC and community leader considered to be signs of good teaching.

Most classes were conducted in a mix of English and Hausa, though to varying degrees. Sometimes the teacher asked questions in English and the pupils answered in Hausa, which sometimes caused pupils to be reprimanded. In one class the teacher began in English and pupils
showed little understanding and there was hardly any oral participation. Only one boy was able to answer a question in English. However, once the teacher switched to Hausa, pupil participation increased, albeit to a limited extent, mainly involving choral responses. Pupils all said they preferred to learn in Hausa though they wanted to learn English. Most of the teachers said they found teaching in English difficult but said they also used Hausa. The majority thought that although some pupils enjoyed being taught in English, other pupils became discouraged while one teacher identified pupils’ poor communication skills as a major barrier to pupil learning.

Teacher–pupil relations varied; some teachers appeared formal, and/or indifferent whereas others seemed friendly. There was general agreement among pupils that male teachers “teach better” because they took the time to explain more whereas female teachers were often in a hurry to leave the class and sat around under the trees.

Teachers admitted that sometimes teachers skipped parts of the lesson if they found it too difficult to teach, which was a view echoed by the SS

**Pupil performance**
The SS was of the view that pupil performance in general across their schools was “not encouraging” although most teachers thought that girls generally performed better in tests and exams. The head teacher thought this was because boys were often “not attentive”. One teacher also singled out overage pupils as a group that often did not perform well, which she attributed to their feeling self-conscious about their age. The community leader, in contrast, thought that both girls and boys did well at school.

**Discipline**
No caning was witnessed during any of the observed classes although all schools and community respondents agreed that corporal punishment was used for disciplining pupils (see earlier section on School management of pupils). For a number of pupils not beating or shouting at pupils was an important quality of a good teacher. However, teachers said they also disciplined pupils by making them kneel down for a long time, weed the compound or pick up litter. In one class a girl was made to stand for being unable to solve a problem. There were also a couple of cases of humiliating comments by female teachers to reprimand boys. For example: “Look at your shirt, like a dog played on it” and “You’re a dummy if you can’t answer this question.” On the other hand, more supportive comments were also noted in some classes and pupils were encouraged to clap correct answers. A couple of latecomers were given verbal warnings. In one class the teacher ignored pupils talking among themselves and continued to lecture at pupils in English, possibly because she did not speak Hausa, and so was unable to translate for pupils who could not understand English. Boys who teased girls were sometimes reported to the head teacher or to a senior member of staff to be disciplined.

**Pupil–pupil relations**
Observations indicated that interaction between girls and boys was virtually non-existent. It was noted in a couple of classes that female pupils tended to ask to borrow pens from other female pupils and teachers felt that Muslim girls in particular tended to interact more with each other than with other social groups. All teachers agreed that some boys fought (playfully), imitated their teachers (both female and male) when they were not in class, and messed around throwing papers about, which was observed in several classes. Teachers and pupils also agreed that in general boys teased girls more, making girls feel uncomfortable when they sat together, laughing at them when they walked past inside or outside class, or when they answered questions incorrectly in class. As one teacher put it: “Boys are likely to tease girls more because they are boys and feel superior.” Girls also reported that some boys slapped girls to get their attention.
Teachers, including the head teacher, confirmed that girls reported boys who laughed at them to the head teacher, duty or classroom teacher, who usually punished or cautioned them not to do it again. The trend for (some) boys to fight and to tease girls was noted more widely within the LGEA by the SS.

AIG2.2 Family and community

Socio-economic activities
The families’ main economic activities in the community generally relate to farming, fishing and trading; thus, the need for child labour, according to the head teacher, was greatest in the harvesting season when good money was on offer, and during the fishing season (September to November and then February and March), as well as on market days. Parents were unanimous that many children were not enrolled in school because some parents preferred and/or needed them to help on the farm, rear animals or to help with business:

Some children really want to come to school but their parents will stop them and insist that they must go to hawk. Sai neman kudi kawai iyayensu su ke sa su nema [Their parents are only concerned about making money.]

Across the board respondents agreed that child labour was also a major cause of absenteeism and dropout, particularly for boys as they got older. Boys were often said to be absent after break and to abandon school either to trade goods in the market, especially on market days, or to learn a trade, such as a mechanic or welder. Girls, in contrast, and Muslim girls in particular, were said to miss school and/or drop out to hawk goods, sometimes in order to earn money for their marriage. This too was said to be more prevalent as the girls got older. As staff members explained:

Pupils – especially Muslim girls – drop out because their parents stop them from coming to school, to help sell wares, or for marriage. All these make retention a big problem because parents are not helping.

Parents prefer the girls to hawk and the explanation they give is that they will assist their parents with money to buy their wedding plates, dishes, beds, and all they need for the wedding.

It was clear from various interviews that some pupils were withdrawn from school by parents to earn money on account of household poverty; however, in other cases, pupils themselves decided to leave school because they prefer to earn money. A pupil’s dislike of school, one parent hinted, was sometimes a factor in both non-enrolment and dropout: “Pupils do not like to go to school and instead of leaving them idle, we engage them in business, selling soup items fried groundnut etc., at least to make money for the family.”

Some pupils reported that some boys and girls, predominantly Muslim, dropped out of school to try their hand at business but that a few boys, more than girls, returned as overage pupils after a few years.

Families (including religion, ethnicity and educational choice)
Family poverty was seen as a major reason for non-enrolment of pupils in school, according to community and school sources. The community leader explained:

There is lack of food. Some pupils don’t eat in the morning, [not] even reheated food. Children go back home to eat. Some may come back while some may not. Maybe they couldn’t find something to eat or the parent stopped them.

Pupil illness or family illness (as mentioned above) was also cited as a reason why pupils – usually girls – missed school. Teachers and pupils both mentioned that some teachers went in their own
time to pupils’ homes to check on pupils’ whereabouts and wellbeing. This was appreciated by some pupils – both girls and boys – who mentioned it as characteristic of a good, caring teacher.

School and community respondents identified household chores as a reason for latecoming. Parents felt that school started too early for pupils to finish their household tasks. The community leader pointed out that girls, more than boys, were late on account of jobs in the home. Teachers mentioned that girls in particular sometimes had to stay at home to look after sick family members or run errands.

Pupil absenteeism was said to be high, especially among girls, according to pupils, the head teacher and the school supervisor, and was attributed to parental negligence by various interviewees. As one LGEA official put it: “Negligence from parents is a main access issue. It contributes to poor attendance.” Several respondents were of the view that it was parents’ responsibility to check that pupils actually reached and stayed in school.

Attendance is a problem, due to negligence of parents children do not come to school regularly and sometimes some children play on the road before coming to school (PTA member)

The parents are responsible for the children not coming to school; they don’t send the children to school. The parents send the children on errands at the time the children are ready for school. The children take advantage of their parent’s attitude and don’t come to school. Some of the pupils even wear two clothes, a personal dress under the uniform and half way from home they pull [off] the uniform and go to the market. (PTA member)

Yet, as the community leader and several parents pointed out, parents may be away working long hours or, in the case of fathers, away for several days to look for work. Some of the parents interviewed, who were all male, thought some mothers were not ensuring their children go to bed on time and/or were not waking them up early enough in the morning.

In contrast, some parents were said to be active in ensuring pupils arrived at and stayed in school: some reportedly accompanied children to school; some came to school to check on attendance; some disciplined their children for truancy and/or approved of harsh disciplining of their children by the school for missing lessons. The ES thought that generally within the LGEA parents were more aware of the whereabouts of girls than of boys: “More girls are absent and their parents know but boys that are absent the parents do not know that they do not come to school.” According to various sources, many pupils, and boys in particular, got distracted on the way to school, or drifted off after break. As the PTA member explained: “Pupils [boys] leave home to go to school but do not enter school. They go to market to do menial jobs or follow bad friends to smoke and drink. They even go fishing.” Pupils backed this up, adding that boys sometimes played truant to watch films or football matches on TV.

Most families within the school community were said to be Muslim, a number of which sent their children (both girls and boys) to Qur’anic schools before they came to Baobab. As a result, teachers and pupils agreed, many were late for school in the morning, some even arriving after the first lesson has ended. Pupils also reported that some pupils were later withdrawn from school to attend Qur’anic school full time.

Islamiyya schools were also said to be popular with some parents, according to LGEA, school and community sources. The community stakeholder also believed that private education was generally preferred by parents, but that poverty prevented them from sending their children to private school, which was thought to be better quality:
Private school teachers teach better. [They are] supervised, don't go on strike. Some teachers [in public schools] sit under the tree when they are not paid. In private schools your money takes care of your children's education.

There was also a strong perception among LGEA, school staff that early marriage was responsible for many girls dropping out from school, especially Muslim girls, though the ES thought that the same was true for Christian girls in more rural schools. The head teacher said that this occurred from Primary 3 onwards, with the highest numbers dropping out in Primary 6. In the words of the community leader: “Girls do not complete school, especially when they find husbands.” Although the head teacher and school supervisor explained that boys too sometimes married early, he maintained that they often returned to school as overage pupils. The ES was of the view that Muslim girls comprised the main group of children who had never been to school.

According to LGEA and school respondents, including pupils, many Muslim parents had a negative attitude toward government schools because they thought “Western education corrupts.” Nevertheless, some parents clearly saw the value in public schooling. One male parent declared: “Western education is useful but consumes so much time and is expensive.” Those interviewed thought a formal education would make children more useful to the family and community, enhancing business and farming skills or enabling them to get a government job. As one parent put it: “Teachers should teach well to help pupils to be useful to parents and [the] community.” A couple of parents were clearly particularly motivated to send their children to school because they had not had the opportunity to go to school themselves:

We are from Sokoto; our parents ran away from there because they were forced to take us to school but they preferred us to go and rear animals or farm. Today we are regretful and that is why I have all my children in school. Most are girls.

I regret not to have gone to school to be educated today. I would have been a better person today; our parents have cheated us but my children must all go to school.

The issue of educating girls, however, drew mixed responses. The community leader maintained that within his community people now appreciated that formal education was for everyone whereas previously it had been only considered for boys:

Parents in my domain are trying. I see them buy uniforms, sandals, writing materials and books for their children and these parents provide all these for both boys and girls. Parents in my domain appreciate western education now.

The parent from Sokoto also held this view though he perceived female education as a means of improving a girl’s marriage prospects:

I've a neighbour whose daughter married a man which ordinarily if she isn’t [in] education she wouldn't have married. I believe because she went to school, he married her and now her father dresses better than all of us. He eats good food; in fact we see good things happen only in his house.

In contrast, a couple of male PTA committee members perceived the likely outcome of marriage as a waste of precious resources and a reason not to educate girls. “Women’s education ends in the kitchen,” one said. “Women’s education is a waste of the little money the family has,” said another.

Community–school relations
Despite the head teacher’s assertion that relations were “very cordial” between the school and community, there were contradictory views and contradictory evidence about community–
school relations and community attitudes towards to schooling, sometimes from the same sources.

The access road connecting the community and the main road, which predated the construction of the school, was clearly a major source of tension between some sections of the community and the school since every time the main gate and the break in the wall at the community end of the compound were repaired, they were reportedly broken down again to reopen the access route. Indeed, parents interviewed complained that the community had not been consulted about the fencing round the school. That said, parents interviewed were glad that they had a school in their community within walking distance of home. However, the community leader added that they had voiced serious concern about the holes in the wall and school security. According to the community leader, some community members had been involved in repairing the damage to the compound perimeter. The LGEA considered it to be the head teacher's responsibility to ensure that the gate was secured and that pupils were prevented from leaving the compound.

The continued dumping of rubbish and building encroachment on school premises, despite requests by school management to desist, also pointed to other tensions with some sectors of the community. Additionally, as the following conversation illustrates, there seemed to be lack of communication between the school and (some) parents. The researcher, seeking a class to observe after break and noting the major absence of pupils in general, asked a female teacher about the situation:

Researcher: Why do pupils not to return to class after break?
Female teacher: That is how they are. Oo! They go to market, back home or go fishing. We don't know why.
Researcher: Don't their parents know?
Female teacher: They know, I guess, because if we send for the parents, they do not come and even when they come we hardly see any changes and the children are even stubborn.

Community participation in school occurred primarily through providing school building materials and paying the termly ₦50 PTA levy plus other one-off development payments (which were usually used to repair the walls and broken furniture) and parental provision of uniforms and learning materials. For example, according to the community leader, they had earlier constructed waterways to help divert water and prevent the school from flooding before the school was fenced. Parents, however, were seemingly not informed about the particulars of the spending. One parent said: “Monies are used to improve school ... we are not told how monies [that] are collected are used for but we believe that it is used for school.” Nevertheless, the parents interviewed were generally happy with the PTA committee.

The SBMC was said not to be functioning and according to one school source had “contributed nothing to the school”. In contrast it was generally agreed that the PTA was active in coordinating with traditional leaders to mobilise parents to enrol and retain their children in school, especially girls, and to send pupils back to school on time after holidays.

I am collaborating with the ‘sarkin kasuwa’ and ‘sarkin tasha’, market chairman and motor park chairman, to send away school age children when they see them in the park or market. This arrangement has contributed to the improvement in attendance we have today. (PTA chair)

Parents also confirmed that at the meetings teachers encouraged parents to come and check on their wards and to ensure they were neat and clean. The head teacher, however, also wanted parents to check pupils’ school work and to increase financial contributions, as well as desiring
more community support in lobbying government to provide drainage, water and upstairs classrooms.

The LGEA, head teacher and PTA claimed that as a result of social mobilisation at PTA meetings, school enrolment and attendance was improving and dropout was slowly decreasing. However, the fact that less teaching/school activity was generally witnessed after break indicated that attendance was still a serious concern.

At the same time, however, parental attitudes in the community towards schooling were criticised by LGEA officials, school management and staff and often dubbed as “not encouraging”. More generally, the ES maintained that most school PTAs in the LGEA were not active, that there was confusion regarding the SBMC’s and PTA’s different responsibilities, and that parents “do not cooperate” with schools. He said that parents “had refused” to attend a sensitization tour organised by the support and monitoring team and was unimpressed that some children enrolled themselves in school or were accompanied by older siblings to school rather than being enrolled by their father, as was customary: “It is the duty of a father to take a child to school.”

One PTA member cited as an example the fact that some children could not attend school because their parents did not provide the requisite clothing or learning materials. This they attributed to lack of interest rather than poverty. One SBMC member also noted that some teachers clearly expected pupils to provide textbooks:

When teachers send pupils that do not have text books to go back home and tell their parents buy them text books to bring to school, most time such children do not come back to school until almost end of term.

Teachers also complained about the fact that attendance at PTA meetings was often poor – which was put down to parents being “careless” by one source – and that parents rarely came to the school even when requested. Yet the SBMC and community leader reported that (some) parents did visit the school periodically, generally to enquire whether their children were in class. The head teacher also noted some parents showed concern about pupil punctuality. But as one parent explained, it was a question of time: “I am a farmer both seasonal and dry season. I leave home very early every morning and return in the evenings so that my family can feed.”

In general, parents felt they were able to air their views at PTA meetings, calling on teachers to “teach well”, in other words to go to class and teach instead of sitting around outside. However, when their child had specific concerns about the school, parents explained that they were afraid to talk to teachers in case their child was then victimised at school. As a result, they said most parents did not follow up on their children’s complaints. As one parent explained:

Yes our children come home to complain to us e.g, they sometimes say they didn't get any lesson today or no teacher entered our class today, etc. we don't have the power to confront the teachers; we are afraid of them.

Some did, however, and parents confirmed that in all such cases, the school took action. One parent cited the case of a parent who brought their boy back to school after he had been absent for a whole year; the head teacher flogged the boy who, according to the parent, never missed school after that.
AIG2.3 The LGEA/LGA

LGEA/LGA internal relations
There was recognition within the LGEA of the support received by ADSUBEB in terms of monitoring vehicles for the ES and motorbikes for the school supervisor but more money was requested for fuel.

School governance
Appreciation was expressed by the SBMC and pupils of all that government had done in terms of renovating and repairing the school buildings, which was seen by some as important in boosting pupil enrolment and retention. However the question was raised about the politicisation of school infrastructural development across the state. It was said, for example, that the school had been earmarked for upstairs classrooms but then at the last minute, another school was given priority. The awarding of contracts and supervision of contractors was also questioned by one interviewee, as some of the wall surrounding the school was swept away in the rains because of poor quality work.

Despite all the progress reported, the community stakeholder thought more needed to be done by government, specifically, providing water and a clinic or first-aid post, and in-service training for teachers: “Government should provide [for] all these needs,” he declared. Repairing the gate, which was reportedly a major concern of parents, was, he argued, another government responsibility:

Community people are poor and can’t repair it. Some fathers leave their home for three to four days to look for money. Are you expecting the community to repair it? It is a problem that the school gate is broken.

On the other hand, one parent suggested that the community also needed to assist financially “since we cannot wait for government to do everything.”

The head teacher also urged government to stop the community from encroaching on school land and to ensure the removal of buildings that had already been constructed.

Teachers’ main complaints related to poor salary and delays in payments and perceived lack of concern by government:

Government does not care about we teachers and we are the once that are working, they don’t care about our welfare, even this increase in salary they don’t care to include us. We are discouraged.

There was LGEA and parental support for government to address these issues and generally to improve teachers’ working conditions. One parent said:

Teaching children is very difficult ... therefore government must improve teachers’ work conditions e.g good pay, welfare packages, bonuses, housing, teaching environment improved, teaching materials provided and many more. The government knows all.

The ES also noted how “men are running away from teaching” because the low salaries were insufficient to support a family:

I've more female teacher than male teachers in this local government. You know, madam, men do not want to be in the teaching profession again. The salary is not enough; the government doesn’t pay well; even [a] duty post allowance is not given. On my own I met the chairman of this local government and begged him to help the supervisors with some little amount to motivate them and he promised to give them Naira 2000 monthly for fuelling their machine to go for supervision.
Recognising the need to boost teachers’ morale and motivation, he said: “It will be nice if teachers’ salary is increased and duty post allowance is introduced.” He also suggested allowances for teachers who agreed to go to rural schools. He identified the lack of teachers, especially in rural areas, and teacher absenteeism as the main cause of falling standards of education. In particular he bemoaned the shortage of teachers for CRK and IRK, which he considered necessary to improve the moral development of pupils and which might therefore improve truancy and absenteeism. The ES said that he was working together with the education committees, experimenting with transferring teachers to rural schools.

Teachers also asserted that increased provision of textbooks would help them to teach more effectively while the community leader thought that textbooks would “encourage children and parents to accept western education” and that play materials such as swings would also improve enrolment. The SBMC also called for more textbooks.

The school supervisor thought in-service training and further studies would help teachers perform better, adding that he already organised workshops for teachers on specific areas such as teaching aids. He was also encouraging teachers to organise extra lessons for pupils, especially in Maths and English.

Problems of teacher absenteeism and punctuality by some teachers (both female and male) across the LGEA were acknowledged by LGEA officials. Teachers were reportedly disciplined at LGEA level through advice and verbal reprimands.

**LGEA–school support**

The school had clearly been supported by the LGEA in various ways: some of the teachers interviewed had acquired their NCE through in-service training and the SS was said to visit schools regularly, addressing pupils in assemblies about not fighting and on obedience, attending SBMC meetings, and interacting with the parents in relation to pupil latecoming and not bringing writing materials.

**LGEA–community relations**

According to the ES, advocacy and sensitisation workshops had been taking place, which he thought would impact positively on enrolment and dropout: “Parents are sensitized about early marriage, early pregnancy, [the] importance of education, especially for the girl child, early pregnancies and HIV /AIDS”. The ES reported interacting with traditional leaders on school issues such as enrolment, attendance and “general cooperation of the community”. Although the ES thought the tour had been a success overall, he reported that some parents had refused to attend and that it was obvious that PTAs and SBMCs were generally unaware of their responsibilities and had to have them explained.

Although there was clearly frequent meetings between the LGEA (and the SS in particular), the school, SBMC and PTA, parents of the case study school interviewed said that most parents did not know the ES or the SS.

The ES considered it the responsibility of communities to engage in self-help projects to improve school infrastructure, applauding those that had used World Bank funds. He criticised some rural communities that had done nothing to improve schools that lacked classrooms and/or shade and so had to close at 10am because the sun was too strong:

> Madam if you go to some schools in the rural areas you will feel bad; there are schools where there is no single structure; the children outside with no shade. They come to school at 7am and
by 10am the school has to close because the sun is strong at that time. I can remember two or three schools that do not have structures.

The SS maintained that it was the SBMC’s duty to mobilise the community to renovate schools whereas the PTA’s duty was to provide the link between schools and communities.

The community leader confirmed that there were meetings between community representatives, the school and the LGEA; the ward head, for example was invited by the school and the LGEA.

AIG3. EDUCATIONAL ACCESS, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES – A SUMMARY
AIG3.1 Infrastructure and security

• There was widespread appreciation of government’s efforts in infrastructural development and renovations of school buildings, which were thought to boost pupil enrolment and retention.
• But concerns were raised about the politicization of decisions about prioritizing which schools to develop/renovate across the state and the awarding of construction contracts.
• There was disagreement as to where the main responsibility lay for infrastructural development – with communities, or government. The LGEA applauded communities who engaged in self-help projects.
• The school has electricity but no water and limited shade. School and community respondents called for more shade and for water for pupils, who often left school at break in search of water, and some did not return.
• Toilets were locked or in disrepair, and surrounded by excreta.
• Drainage was also an issue that the school thought government should address as the compound reportedly floods during the rainy season.
• There was a well-stocked library and computer suite in the school, neither of which pupils were seen using. Pupils complained they were not allowed to use the computers, which were said to be used by staff and fee-paying outsiders.
• Some of the compound was used as a football pitch and to play other sports though none were witnessed during research visits and there was a call for more “play facilities” to help boost enrolment.
• Security was a major issue of concern for the school and community, particularly the road that bisects the compound between the main school and pre-school, unauthorized entrances in the compound wall, and the repeatedly broken main gate.
• A security guard was appointed by the LGEA but had not been paid so stopped coming to work.
• At all times of day, pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists passed through the compound.
• Hawkers were only allowed in at break but loitered around and were even selling during class time because of lack of security.
• Though the compound was fairly neat and tidy by the main buildings, elsewhere there were piles of rubbish dumped by community members, and excreta because some community members were said to use the compound as a toilet and out of hours classrooms were reportedly vandalized sometimes.
• Drug-taking youths that hung out round the toilets, interacting with school boys even during school hours, were identified as another security problem.
• “Area boys” from outside the immediate community sat on the compound wall and abused and intimidated pupils to prevent them from getting to school in the morning.
AIG3.2 Teacher management

- There were said to be sufficient teachers in the school, most of whom were qualified, though the LGEA as a whole was said to be short of IRK and CRK teachers and teachers for rural schools.
- Teacher morale was said to be low on account of poor and delayed pay, and teachers feeling neglected by government. There was sympathy from the LGEA and community members.
- Teacher absenteeism, latecomin and lack of lesson preparation were highlighted by various respondents, including all pupil groups, and witnessed by researchers. Pupils suggested this applied to (some) female teachers in particular.
- Despite asserting that “teachers are trying”, the LGEA acknowledged that teachers’ irregular attendance was encouraging poor attendance by pupils, affecting teaching quality, and impacting on other teachers’ morale.
- Teacher (and pupil) numbers were reportedly often lower after break, which was confirmed by observation.
- There was recognition by LGEA and community respondents of the need for further in-service training to improve teaching quality.
- The LGEA suggested duty allowances as incentives for teachers to work in rural areas.
- Some teachers were said to visit pupils’ homes to check on their whereabouts and wellbeing.

AIG3.3 Pupil management and pupil relations

- Assemblies conducted by a duty teacher and assisted by prefects were said to be held three times a week and pupils were inspected for neatness and punished if found wanting.
- The LGEA was adamant that corporal punishment was prohibited and pupils were generally given menial tasks as punishment: weeding, sweeping, fetching water etc.
- However, punishment was said generally to be determined by the head teacher for boys, and deputy/senior “mistress” for girls; female teachers and prefects punished girls and male teachers (said to beat more) generally punished boys. Punishment was gender-differentiated with girls usually caned more lightly on the hand or back of the legs, and boys caned more harshly on the buttocks. Observations confirmed these practices.
- Observations and interviews confirmed that corporal punishment was widely practised by teachers and prefects, especially on boys, and it was reported as a cause of absenteeism and dropout among boys and girls.
- Some parents approved of corporal punishment, and asked the school to flog their child.
- Offences resulting in caning included latecomin, absenteeism, improper dress, being dirty, not paying PTA fees (resulting in public flogging), bullying, fighting or stealing, trying to leave the school at break.
- Other punishments included verbal reprimands and being made to kneel down, sweeping the compound, picking up litter (especially for girls), frog-jumping (especially for boys).
- Staff also reported positive reward policies: termly prizes for performance and stationery provided by teachers for punctuality were thought to help boost enrolment.
- Female and male prefects and monitors were said to be selected by class teachers based on classroom performance; duty prefects assist duty teachers in apprehending and disciplining latecomers and trying to prevent pupils leaving school at break. There was a suggestion that some prefects bully pupils.
- Pupils acknowledged that pupils “tease” each other and that (some) boys, in particular, teased girls, and, according to one teacher, sometimes beat girls.
• Bullying and fighting was witnessed at break; where teachers were aware, they intervened but much went unnoticed.

AIG3.4 Teaching and learning

• There was widespread satisfaction by LGEA, school and community respondents of the improved classroom conditions: cement floors, good chalkboards and sufficient benches and desks, which was thought to help reduce dropout.
• But there was a call for more classrooms to cope with increasing enrolments and other schools in the LGEA reportedly suffered from overcrowding.
• Most pupils had writing materials and although some girls were seen being given/lent materials, pupils and other pupils were reportedly sent home to purchase stationery but dropped out if they couldn’t afford it. Pupils lacking writing materials was a widespread problem across the LGEA.
• There was contradictory evidence on the availability of textbooks in the school though provision was said to be good in general across the LGEA. None were visible in lessons, and pupils and teachers wanted the shortage to be addressed to improve teaching quality.
• Despite teachers’ attempts at mixed seating, pupils preferred to reorganize themselves into same gender groups with friends and neighbours, with larger, older pupils at the back.
• Teachers thought this was for religious reasons though the “teasing” of girls by (some) boys in class was also reportedly a factor.
• Observations showed cross-gender interaction among pupils to be almost non-existent and that Muslim girls in particular tended to interact more with each other.
• Teacher talk dominated in most lessons interspersed with choral repetition and some individual questioning, which made limited cognitive demands of pupils. Other activities included copying from the board, and answering questions in exercise books while teachers monitored.
• The level of pupil interaction varied across classes and not all teachers directed questions equally at both girls and boys.
• Teacher–pupil relations varied from formal or indifferent, to friendly and encouraging.
• Pupils said some girls dropped out of school after being teased in class for getting the answer wrong.
• Teachers and pupils said they found teaching and learning in English difficult, and some pupils were said to find it discouraging. Most classes were conducted in a mixture of English and Hausa though pupils were sometimes reprimanded for using Hausa.
• Pupils wanted to learn English but to learn in Hausa.
• Most teachers thought girls usually performed better at school but overage pupils were singled out as one group that did not perform well.
• Teachers admitted some topics were skipped if too difficult.
• There was a perception among pupils that some female teachers were in a hurry to leave class.

AIG3.5 Socio-economic and family issues

• Household poverty was widely cited as a reason for non-enrolment, absenteeism and dropout, especially for boys, as parents were said to need children to help/earn money farming, animal rearing, or trading.
• Some boys who dropped out to try their hand at business returned to school as overage pupils if business failed.
• Some children were reportedly withdrawn by parents to help with family work and/or earn money; some pupils chose to drop out of school themselves.
• Boys were often said to be absent on market days, or after break as they went to trade or train as an apprentice.
• Girls, and Muslim girls in particular, were said to miss school and/or drop out to hawk goods, sometimes to earn money for their marriage.
• Home chores were not mentioned by pupils but parents complained school started too early for children to finish their chores while community and school sources mentioned that home chores and running errands caused children, especially girls, to be late to school.
• Hunger, illness, or caring for a sick relative (especially girls), were also mentioned as reasons for absenteeism.
• Both in Baobab school and across the LGEA, lack of parental supervision was seen as a major factor in pupils, and boys in particular, getting “distracted (e.g. going fishing, smoking and drinking, watching TV) and not reaching school in the morning.
• Community members, including parents, pointed out, however, that parents may be away working long hours and unaware of their child’s truancy.
• Qur’anic schooling before government school caused some Muslim pupils to be late and some were even withdrawn to attend Qur’anic school full time.
• Islamiyya schools were commonly said to be popular and the community stakeholder thought private education was generally preferred by parents but poverty prevented them sending their children there.
• It was widely believed that early marriage was responsible for many Muslim girls dropping out of school, especially Muslim girls, though the LGEA thought this also to be true of Christian girls in rural areas.
• Some Muslim boys were said to marry early but sometimes returned to school as overage pupils.
• Some Muslim parents who did not send their children to government schools were variously said to consider “western education” as corrupting, too expensive and time-consuming though some parents who had not had the chance to go to school themselves were keen to make amends.
• Responses were mixed among community respondents as to the value of educating girls and marriage was seen as both a reason to educate (better prospects) and not (waste of money).

**AIG3.6 School–community relations (including LGEA involvement)**

• There were contradictory views and evidence, sometimes from the same sources, as to the state of school–community relations and community attitudes to schooling.
• A major point of friction with some sections of the community was the access road through school, which predates the school, since every time the gate/gap in the wall at either end is repaired (by some community members) it’s broken again (by others).
• The community had not been consulted about the fencing (wall) though parents wanted security to be improved in the school.
• The presence of drug-taking youths round the toilets (and their use of the premises out of school hours) was another source of concern, which had been communicated to the traditional leader.
• The continued dumping of rubbish and building encroachment on school premises, despite management pleas, was another issue.
• It was generally agreed that the PTA was active coordinating with traditional leaders to mobilize parents to enrol and retain pupils in school.
• However, across the LGEA, PTAs were said not to be functioning and there was confusion between the differing responsibilities of the SBMC and the PTA.
• Despite general satisfaction with the PTA by community respondents, concern was voiced about transparency and communication about the spending of PTA funds.
• Some parents felt happy to air general opinions at PTA meetings but not to tackle teachers directly about their child’s complaints in case the child is victimized at school.
• Parental participation in schooling was primarily through payment of the N50 termly PTA levy, provision of building materials and one-off development payments.
• The SBMC was said not to be functioning.
• The school wanted government intervention in preventing community encroachment on school land and to increase the height of the compound wall to improve security.
• Regular meetings were held between the LGEA, school and community representatives though there seemed to be little contact between the LGEA and ordinary parents.