



**State, Qawmi Madrasas and Children in Bangladesh:
From a Social Protection Perspective**

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List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CSSP	Child Sensitive Social Protection ()
DSS	Department of Social Services
EYE	Education for Youth Empowerment
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GDP	Governance and Development Policy
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
JJ/WBGSP	Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program
KII	Key Informant Interview
MPO	Monthly Payment Order
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
ROSC II	Reaching Out of School Children (Phase II)
SP	Social Protection
SPD	Social Policy for Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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Abstract

Qawmi madrasas were evolved in the Indian subcontinent more than 150 years ago by the conservative part of the Muslim community as a rejection to the British education policy. Instead of taking funding from the state, these madrasas took community support as their basis for survival. Keeping the curricula almost unchanged, these madrasas have been providing fundamental Islamic religious education since that time. Even after more than 70 years of the end of the colonial rule and many subsequent historical upheavals, the madrasas have still been maintaining almost the same conservativeness with the government. Even today the madrasas solely rely on people's donation. Studies say there are at least 1.4 million children in about 15000 qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh. Studies also say that the madrasas have a concentration of children from the very poor households, including orphans and vulnerable children, who cannot afford education in the mainstream secular institutes. However, the country's constitution and other major policies aspire to social protection initiatives for such vulnerable groups. While Bangladesh's social protection expenditure has been increasing every year with a large number of child focused programmes, there is no study so far if these programmes include the children in qawmi madrasas. This study is an attempt to investigate into the outreach of the child focused social protection programmes to qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh. At the same time, it has identified the policy barriers at the government end as well as the barriers (reservations) at the recipient end (madrasas) to receive support from the government (i.e., social protection). A mixed method approach for data collection and analysis has been approached with emphasis on qualitative techniques such as key informant interviews and focus group discussions with various stakeholders such as madrasa teachers and governing body members, government officials implementing major social protection schemes in education and social sectors, NGOs working on child rights, and researchers/scholars on education and child rights. Review of relevant government policies and programmes has also been another major source of data and information.

The study has come up with several crucial findings. Almost all the child focused social protection schemes exclude children in qawmi madrasas by design. Most of them target children through institutional arrangements, e.g., school education stipend. Registration of the institute with any government department and an approved curriculum are essential criteria for inclusion. The view of the departments implementing the major child focused social protection schemes and other stakeholders is that the children in qawmi madrasas deserve support from the government in terms of social protection. However, unless the madrasas are following government rules (e.g., registration, curriculum etc), there is no scope to include them. Lack of interest to come under a government system is also another reason for this exclusion. Madrasas are surviving solely on donations of the people which is insufficient for the well-being of the children. However, they will accept any support if the government only provides it without any condition. Tension about too much control/influence by the government has also been viewed as another reservation by the madrasas. Whatever the reasons are, because of this rigidity of both of the parties, the children are being deprived from state benefits which has immediate and long-term implications. There is scope for supporting the children with/without any change and modification of the curricula which must be decided by the state. The recent recognition of the highest degree of qawmi madrasas by the government may bring about serious changes in the policies in the future.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study is very much relevant for the social protection debate, particularly for child sensitive social protection. It is a good example of how despite having a large number of child focused social protection schemes, a particular vulnerable group may remain excluded from the benefits of the state. This study also leaves a good example on how community itself works as a social protection for the children. It can be useful for the discussion of governmentality, recognition and social exclusion.

Keywords

Social protection, Child Poverty, Child Sensitive Social Protection, Qawmi madrasa, Unrecognised religious education, Social Exclusion

Chapter 1

Introduction, Background and Objective

About the Research Paper: This research paper has investigated into the child sensitivity of the major child focused public social protection schemes in Bangladesh in relation to the children in unrecognised Islamic religious education institutes known as Qawmi madrasas. In the context of the conclusion of many studies that Qawmi madrasas are mainly a resort to children from poor and vulnerable families including the orphan children, using a mixed method approach (particularly interview, focus group discussion and policy review), this study has recorded the policy barriers and reservations at both ends—the government and the madrasas, to provide state support to the children in Qawmi madrasas.

1.1 Evolution of Madrasa Education in Bangladesh

By the medium of instruction, the education system in Bangladesh can be categorized into three streams: Bengali Medium, English Medium and Islamic faith based or Madrasa education. The madrasa education has two further streams—Aliya and Qawmi (Barkat et al. 2011:36; Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:57). In a nutshell, Aliya Madrasa education is recognized by the government while the Qawmi madrasa education does not follow a government approved curricula and is still mostly unrecognized. A historical background of the two systems is also necessary to understand their divisions. With the establishment of Calcutta Madrasa in 1780, the Aliya madrasa education was introduced by the British colonial rulers allegedly to have influence over the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent with colonial curricula (Al-Hasani et al. 2017:3; Bhattacharya 2006:226). On the other hand, establishment of Qawmi madrasas can be traced back to 1867, almost after one hundred years of Calcutta Madrasa (Al-Hasani et al. 2017:3). This conservative, Islamic religious value oriented and radical education system was established by the Indian Muslim scholar, Shah Waliullah Muhaddis al-Dehlovi as a rejection to the education policies of the British rulers. This is how, Madrasah Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband, the first Qawmi madrasa in the subcontinent was established. The curricula they followed was called Dars-i-Nizamiyyah (Al-Hasani et al. 2017:3). Since Aliya madrasa education was established by the British rulers, it has historically been recognized by the government. The Aliya madrasa education in Bangladesh is now governed by a Madrasa Education Board under the Ministry of Education. With an emphasis on Islamic religious education, Aliya Madrasas follow a curriculum developed by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and teaches general subjects such as mathematics, science, geography, English language (Barkat et al. 2011:37). They also receive fund from the government including salary of the teachers¹ (Barkat et al. 2011:37).

The other stream, the Qawmi madrasas, do not follow the national curriculum and mainly offers religious education such as memorizing Quran and analysis of the Quran and Hadiths (Barkat et al. 2011:36; Bhattacharya 2006:227). They do not receive fund from the government as well. Until 2017 the degrees offered by such madrasas were not recognized in the country. In April 2017, the Government recognised the highest degree obtained from Qawmi

¹ In Bangladesh most teachers and other staff of non-government schools and colleges, including the Aliya Madrasa teachers, receive 100% of their salary from the government through a monthly pay order (MPO). Qawmi madrasa teachers do not receive any such MPO from the government

madrasas as equivalent to a university master's degree in Islamic Studies or Arabic (The Daily Star 2018a).

1.2 Qawmi madrasas: An unrecognized and missing sector

Qawmi madrasas are not only unrecognized, the madrasas as well as the students are also missing in official documents of the government and elsewhere (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:58). There is no reliable statistics on the number of Qawmi madrasas and enrolled students (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:58). Historically, Qawmi madrasas have avoided contact with the government (Asadullah and Chaudhury, 2016:58). As a result, their exact number is still unknown. The number of Qawmi madrasas and their students has various estimates. Studies report that there are 19 different private independent boards for governing Qawmi madrasas and Befaql Madarisil Aarabia Bangladesh (Befaq) is the largest (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:57). In 2006 Befaq submitted a report to the Prime Minister where it mentioned the number of students to be 1.9 million in about 15000 Qawmi madrasas (Barkat et al. 2011:128; The Daily Star 2009). However, the authenticity of this figure was questioned since there are many such madrasa boards in Bangladesh (Barkat et al. 2011, 128). Barkat et al. (2011) estimates the number of students in Qawmi madrasas to be 5.2 million (Barkat et al 2011: 129). Other estimates show the number of Qawmi madrasas in the country ranges from 4000 to approximately 60,000 and the number of students in such madrasas is estimated to be around 1.4 million (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:59). Although the most conservative estimates also show the number of students is more than a million, there is hardly any mention of Qawmi madrasas in the documents of the government². On the other hand, despite poor economic return and lacking recognition by the state, studies say that the enrolment rate in such madrasas is increasing particularly for the girls (Barkat et al. 2011; UNICEF 2009).

While the number of students is growing in Qawmi madrasas, studies also found a reverse scenario in mainstream general education. The number of enrolled students in the government primary schools in Bangladesh has been showing a declining trend over the last five years (Mohiuddin 2018). Experts also comment that low-income people are sending their children to Qawmi madrasas because of increasing education costs (Mohiuddin 2018; Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016; Barkat et al. 2011). Poverty is an important factor for sending children to madrasas. As Barkat, A (2011) finds, 60 per cent of the madrasa student households are absolute poor households and nearly one-third of such households are hardcore poor households (Barkat et al. 2011: 146). This study further reveals that many slum dweller households, particularly with working mothers, send their children to madrasas, especially Qawmi madrasas because of residential facility and with food at low or no cost. This was a more common phenomenon for girl children for security concerns (Barkat et al. 2011: 146). There are so many reasons for madrasa being a better choice, particularly for the orphan children.

² For instance, the Bangladesh Education Statistics 2016, a key publication in the education sector by the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIIS) reports statistics on number of institutions and students, enrollment, teacher-student ratio, performance etc. However, there is no mention of Qawmi madrasas in this report although Qawmi madrasas and their students outnumber Aliya madrasas.

1.3 Child poverty and Qawmi madrasas

A large number of the students in Qawmi madrasas are orphan and physically challenged children (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2016:56; Barkat et al. 2011). As Asadullah and Chaudhury (2016) points, “*Households unable to afford admission fees, textbooks, transport and private tuition required to attend government recognized schools and/or madrasahs may often find that their only option is a Qawmi madrasah*” (2016:62). Many of the Qawmi madrasas use the word *yateem-khana*, meaning orphanage, after their name. Therefore, in rural Bangladesh orphanage is synonymous to madrasas (particularly, Qawmi madrasas). Studies show that about 15% of the Qawmi madrasah students are orphan children (Barkat et al. 2011). Taking this estimate a base, the number of orphan and vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasahs should be between 210,000 and 780,000 (15% of 1.4 million or 5.2 million). On the other hand, the capacity of 85 state-run orphanages (not madrasah) is only about 9000 (Department of Social Services 2017). Madrasahs provide the basic needs such as food, accommodation and education free of cost to such students.

1.4 Social protection and children in Qawmi madrasas

With an annual spending of over 12% of the national budget, social protection programmes are often credited to this remarkable contribution in poverty alleviation along with growth in labor income and changes in demographics in Bangladesh (World Bank 2013:108). The Government has been spending an average of 12-14 percent of total annual public expenditures (about 2 percent of GDP) for social protection since 2000-2008 (World Bank 2013:108). The Children Act 2013 of Bangladesh defines “all citizens of the country below 18 years of age” as children (GoB 2013). The Constitution of Bangladesh in its Article 15 (d) envisions on provision of social protection for the disadvantaged groups of people with special emphasis on orphan and vulnerable children (GoB 1972). In line with this, children have been given special emphasis in the social protection programmes of the country. For example, in the fiscal year 2015-2016 there were at least 18 different types of social protection programmes exclusively targeting children (GoB 2016)³. They shared 7.22 percent of the total social protection expenditures (Annex A). The larger share of this budget goes to a few stipend programmes (Annex A). Remaining programmes target disabled, orphans and other vulnerable groups. Almost all studies conclude that Qawmi madrasas have a concentration of children from the very poor families. However, no study carried out on madrasa education explored the issue of social protection to the children of Qawmi madrasas. However, the studies have mentioned that Qawmi madrasas have been surviving without any support from the government and relied exclusively on private donations (Asadullah and Chaudhury, 2016:58). If Qawmi madrasas are the ultimate resort to children from low income families, lower participation (or exclusion) of children in Qawmi madrasas from all public social protection programmes clearly identifies a serious policy gap.

³ Estimation of the researcher based on social protection data published by the Finance Division, Government of Bangladesh. This estimation does not include the health sector programmes.

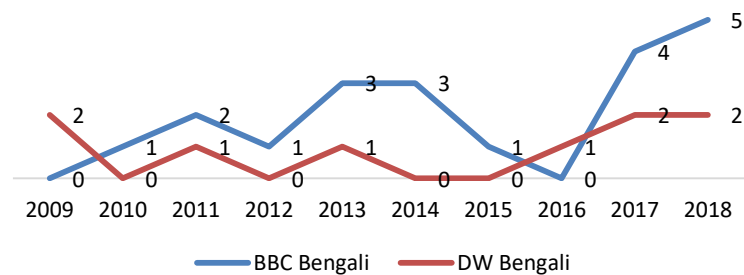
1.5 Statement of the problem

From the above discussion it is clear that there is a contradiction between the supreme policy—the Constitution and the child focused public social protection policies/interventions. While the constitutional article is inclusive, the specific programmes/project policies exclude a particular vulnerable group of children. These policies define children's vulnerability in different ways, set eligibility criteria that exclude orphan and vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasas. In the above context, this research has investigated into the factors responsible for exclusion of orphan children in Qawmi madrasas from existing public social protection programmes in Bangladesh. The research has made attempts to analyse the contradiction between the key state regulations for protection of vulnerable children (e.g., the Constitution, Children Act, Orphanage Act, National Social Security Strategy) and the child focused social protection programmes. Efforts has also been made to show how does this contradiction results in exclusion of extremely vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasas, particularly the madrasa-based orphanages. The views of the madrasas on receipt of public supports for the children or this exclusion has also been another aspect of the study.

1.6 Why is this study important?

Qawmi madrasa is one of the most talked-about issues in Bangladesh particularly after the 2013 *Shapla Square Protest* organized by the Islamist pressure group Hefazat-e-Islam (in English Defenders of Islam), an organization based on the coalition of students and teachers from more than 25000 madrasas in Bangladesh (Mustafa 2013, Barkat 2018:37). On 6 May 2013 thousands of madrasa students and teachers (mostly from Qawmi madras) gathered at the city centre of Dhaka in a counter demonstration to voice their commitment to Islamic values and condemning the views of secularists on certain social issues (Ahmad 2014:193). It is beyond argument that following this demonstration the organization of Qawmi madrasas has become politically significant in Bangladesh (Barkat 2018:37, Rahman S, and Marjan SMH 2013:5). The century old Qawmi madrasa education that remained unrecognized by the government even during the Pakistan era, have been successful to gain recognition within few years (Barkat 2018:37). In 2017 the government published gazette recognizing the highest degree of Qawmi madrasas (Takmil or Dawra-e-Hadith) equivalent to master's degrees obtained from any public university in Bangladesh on Arabic or Islamic Studies (The Daily Star 2018a). The most recent development on this issue is that on 4 November 2018, less than two months ahead of the National Election, the Prime Minister attended a *Shukrana Mahfil* (gathering to show gratitude on achieving the recognition) organized by the organization of Qawmi madrasas as the chief guest where she was given the title of Qawmi Mother (The Daily Star 2018b). In the words of one of the top leaders of the organization, "You are playing the role of a mother for 14 lakh students. From this Qawmi sea, I want to announce today that I give you the title of Qawmi Mother" (The Daily Star 2018b).

Figure 1.1: Search results for 'quomi madrasa' in the Bengali service of two news media BBC and DW (all results until November 2018)



At this backdrop, this study is a very timely attempt to know the views of various stakeholders on exclusion of Qawmi madrasa students from the social protection schemes of the government. At the same time, it has also made efforts to see the position of the Qawmi madrasas in receiving supports from the government. This study can also help the policy makers to find ways to support a huge population to turn into human resource, if necessary, without changing their conservativeness.

1.7 Research objective and research questions

1.7.1 Research objective

Since 2013 a series of events have taken place in relation to Qawmi madrasa education in Bangladesh including the formation of Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh, the 2013 *Shapla Square* Protest by thousands of Qawmi madrasa students and teachers and the subsequent recognition of the highest degree of Qawmi madrasas. However, in the recent times there has not been any academic study on the issue that reflects the opinion of both ends. The studies carried out so far captured various issues of Qawmi madrasas including their economy and curriculum. The issue of social protection deprivation of the children in Qawmi madrasas remained almost unexplored. This study is expected to explore the issue with some policy recommendations in the changing scenario of Qawmi madrasa education in Bangladesh.

1.7.2 Research questions

In the above context, the proposed research paper has made efforts to answer the following main research question:

Why state policies in Bangladesh fail to include the orphan and vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasas in public social protection benefits?

Sub questions

1. What forms of social provisioning are provided by the religious community-qwami madrasas for orphan and vulnerable children?
2. What are the specific State social protection programmes for the wellbeing of children in Bangladesh and do they extend coverage to the children in the madrasa-based orphanages?
3. What are the barriers (both in state policies and recipient end) to reach the poor children in madrasas (orphanages) with social protection benefits?

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

The subject matter of the study is deprivation of children studying in unrecognised religious education institute known as Qawmi madrasas. This research has made efforts to frame the research problems through the framework of Child sensitive social protection. This chapter discusses the basics of this framework. In light of this framework, the analysis follows in three empirical chapters of the RP: chapter 4, 5 and 6.

Child sensitive social protection

Children's needs are different from that of the adults and failure to fulfil their needs exposes them to a cycle of poverty. Therefore, it is now beyond argument in the development discourse that poverty (or wellbeing) of children should be considered separately from that of the adults (Roelen, 2015; Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012; Ortiz, Daniels and Solrun Engilbertsdottir 2012). While social protection is now often credited to be a successful tool for poverty reduction in general (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 291), its impact as well as potential impact on reducing poverty of children has also got attention of the social protection academia and practitioners (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 291). Here evolves the concept of Child Sensitive Social Protection (CSSP). Definitions of CSSP particularly emphasizes on the need for interventions that will address the particular vulnerabilities of children (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 293).

Temin (2008) defines child-sensitive social protection as:

“the range of economic and noneconomic social protection interventions that need to be strengthened if the most vulnerable children and families are to benefit. These include (but are not limited to) cash transfers, social work, early childhood development centres and alternative care” (Temin 2008:3).

A link could be established between Temin's definition and Roelen's (2015) argument that having large number of child focused social protection interventions of a country do not necessarily indicate child sensitivity of its social protection. While the author acknowledges the positive impact of some child focused social protection schemes in Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, she also points out that they may exclude “particularly vulnerable groups of children; such as those of ethnic minorities, lower caste groups or orphans” (Roelen's 2015). While conditionality in certain social protection programmes (e.g. CCT) may give multiple positive outcomes, sometimes imposing conditionality also undermines the child sensitivity of the programmes (Roelen's 2015).

What should be child sensitive social protection when resource is very constraints? Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler (2012) argues, “the idea of CSSP is not to propose a new set of measures or interventions but rather to act as a tool to assess such interventions against the extent to which they respond to children's practical and strategic needs” (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 292). The authors also identify three types of vulnerability of children that requires special attention (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 292) in the perspective of social protection. They are:

- 1) physical/biological vulnerabilities;
- 2) dependence-related vulnerabilities; and
- 3) institutionalised disadvantage

(Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 292)

Physical/biological vulnerabilities: This emphasis that children at different ages are more exposed to suffer from malnutrition or diseases because of their immune system (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 294). The consequence of deprivation of nutrition, healthcare and education during childhood leaves long-term negative impact on the children. This in turns affects the society as well (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 294).

Dependence-related vulnerabilities: Since children themselves are not economic agent, they cannot decide about their wellbeing (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 295). Therefore, they need to rely completely on adult members of the family and society. The households, family members and the society decide about addressing and prioritising the needs of the children (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 295). Therefore, children's wellbeing is a dependant variable on the households, family members and the society. If The households, family members and the society fail to realise their needs or do not prioritise children needs, the children are vulnerable to poverty.

Institutionalised disadvantage: Institutionalised disadvantage or 'cultural devaluation disadvantage' means, "to the devaluation of certain groups in society based on perceptions of who they are" (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 295). To explain this (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler (2012) points,

"if society at large places little value on women or children, the vulnerabilities associated with this type of disadvantage present themselves in the form of voicelessness of these populations, lack of recognition, lack of representation and often entrenched inequalities that can provide fertile grounds for the deliberate abuse and exclusion of these groups.

(Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 295)

Chapter 3

Methodology

The study has adopted a mixed methods approach for data collection and interpretation. It has combined formal and informal interviews, focus group discussions, observation, analysis of secondary quantitative data and policy analysis. The research questions provide a hint that the study would rely both on secondary sources of information such as previous studies, government reports and statistics and policies, and primary data from the persons and organizations related to the issue. For secondary data/information mapping of the child focused social protection programmes in Bangladesh and analysis of the key policies has been the main strategy. For primary data, the study mainly adopted qualitative techniques such as focus group discussion and key informant interviews. The sample respondents and participants include madrasa teachers and governing body members, persons related to designing and implementing public social protection schemes and policy making, and scholars/researchers in this field. The sources of data/information, study locations, respondents and participants, data collection strategy and tools and techniques etc have been described below:

3.1 Sample social protection programmes for secondary data analysis

The study mapped all the 18-child focused social protection interventions such as programmes, projects, schemes etc in Bangladesh in fiscal year 2015-2016. Names and implementation manuals of the programmes from the Finance Division and the relevant departments implementing the social protection programmes has been collected for mapping. A good source of such data/information has been the Social Security Policy Support project under the Cabinet Division where the researcher himself worked for two years. A programme mapping format has been used to obtain information from the implementation manuals (see Annex B). For some programmes, the required information has been collected during interview with the officials of the implementation agencies (e.g., Department of Social Services).

3.2 Study timeline, location and sample for primary data

The primary data/information collection for the study took place in August and September 2018 in two sub-districts (Adarsha Sadar and Sadar South) of Comilla district of Bangladesh. Since the researcher has lived and worked in in the sub districts for many years, he knows the area well. It has been observed by the researcher that there are many Qawmi madrasas in the district including madrasa-based orphanages. The researcher also has some personal contacts in some of the madrasas. Therefore, the study locations have been purposively selected considering ease of communication and access to the madrasas.

Picture 3.1: Map of Bangladesh showing the study location



3.2.1 Sample madrasas, respondents and participants

Eight (08) Qawmi madrsas having orphanages have been selected from the two sub-districts for the study. From those madrsas, using a semi structured madrasa information format (questionnaire) data/information related to enrolment of orphan children, types of goods and services provided, sources of fund etc have been collected.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): A total of 4 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) have been conducted with the madrasa teachers/governing body members and the officials of the Department of Social Services. A total of 5-9 participants participated in each of the FGDs (List of FGD Participants in Annex C).

Key Informant Interview: A total of 15 Key Informant Interviews with the officials of Department of Social Services (on state-run child focused social protection programmes and orphanages), Sub-district Primary and Secondary Education Officer (on education stipend programmes), Education/Social Protection Researchers (on social protection and madrasa education etc), national and international NGOs/donor agencies (Save the Children and BRAC) that partners in public social protection programmes or have their own programmes, and principal/headmasters of madrasas (List of Key Informants in Annex D).

3.3 Data sources, gathering technique and analysis

In the following table the types and sources of data/information and the data collection techniques have been presented for each of the key researcher questions.

Table 3.1: Research questions, information set, data sources and data/information collection method /techniques

Research Questions	Information Set	Sources	Data/information Gathering Technique
1. 1. What forms of social provisioning are provided by the religious community- qwami madrasas for orphan and vulnerable children?	<p>Enrolment of orphan children, types of goods and services provided, sources of fund, etc;</p> <p>Whether the children in madrasa-based orphanages get these benefits or not;</p> <p>Whether the madrasas at all need these benefits or not;</p>	<p>Previous Studies;</p> <p>Teachers/members of governing body of madrasas;</p> <p>Social protection programme implementation manual of the (18) programmes;</p> <p>National Social Security Strategy of Bangladesh</p>	<p>Literature Review;</p> <p>Key Informant Interview/Focus Group Discussion with madrasa teachers/governing body members</p> <p>Semi-structured Madrasa Information Format</p>

Research Questions	Information Set	Sources	Data/information Gathering Technique
	If they need, did they try to get these benefits?		
2. 2. What are the specific State policies and social protection programmes for the wellbeing of children in Bangladesh and do they extend coverage to the children in the madrasa-based orphanages?	<p>Specific articles of the Constitution, specific Acts for protection of children such as Children Act, Orphanage Act, Social Security Strategy asserts about provisioning of children, particularly the poor and vulnerable children;</p> <p>Programme/project context, target group, targeting criteria, coverage, benefit, budget etc</p>	<p>Key state policies such as Constitution, Acts and Strategies;</p> <p>Social protection programme implementation manuals;</p> <p>Previous studies and reports on the 18 existing social protection programmes focusing children;</p> <p>Budget documents of the programmes of various ministries</p>	<p>Policy review/analysis;</p> <p>Programme mapping using a semi-structured Programme Mapping Format;</p> <p>Key Informant Interview Ministries/Departments, NGOs, researchers;</p>
3. 3. What are the barriers (both in state policies and recipient end) to reach the poor children in madrasas (orphanages) with social protection benefits?	<p>How the specific social protection programme policies excluded the children in Qawmi madrasa-based orphanages;</p> <p>Whether the Qawmi madrasas themselves have any reservation in receiving supports from the state?</p>	<p>Key state policies such as Constitution, Acts and Strategies</p> <p>Ministries/Departments implementing child-focused social protection programmes;</p> <p>Agencies funding child-focused SP (e.g., Save the Children partnering the ROSC II)</p> <p>Madrasa Teachers/governing body members</p> <p>NGOs working for child rights</p>	<p>Policy review/analysis;</p> <p>Key Informant Interview with officials Ministries/Departments, NGOs, researchers;</p> <p>Focus Group Discussion with madrasa teachers/governing body members;</p> <p>Key Informant Interview with madrasa teachers/governing body members</p>

3.3.1 Data collection instruments

A number of four different kinds of data/information collection instruments have been used for data/information collection from various respondents and participants (see in Annex B). They are as follows:

1. Programme mapping format for mapping the 18 existing children focused social protection programmes
2. Madrasa information format for collecting information on madrasas such as enrolment of orphan children, types of goods and services provided to children, sources of fund, etc
3. Focus Group Discussion with madrasa teacher and governing body members on issues such as sources of fund, social protection benefits outreach, necessities and efforts to get such benefits etc
4. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Relevant government/NGO/donor officials, researchers

3.3.2 Data analysis

The data/information have been analyzed in line with the research questions and the conceptual framework. The analysis of both primary and secondary data has been done simultaneously. Data obtained from various techniques have been triangulated in line with the research questions. Microsoft Excel has been used for analysis and presentation of the quantitative data/information collected through the two different instruments.

3.4 Methodological justification

During literature review, a good number of secondary resources on madrasa education in Bangladesh have been reviewed. The major studies⁴, for instance, Abdalla et al. (2004), World Bank (2010), Barkat et al. (2011), Asadullah and Chaudhury (2016) were carried out more than a decade ago with a focus on madrasa education in general⁵. Some of them used exclusively survey method and some used mixed method with emphasis on quantitative perspective. Some studies, for instance, Bhattacharya (2006), Al Hasani et al. (2017) used historical method. However, most of the studies leave hints on further studies on various aspects of madrasa education, particularly on Qawmi madrasas. Some of the aspects of Qawmi madrasa education, e.g., views of the teachers/member of governing body on Qawmi madrasa education, their isolation from the state and government etc are essentially more qualitative. In addition, during personal communication with some researchers on madrasa education the researchers also put emphasis on qualitative studies. They suggested that since it is very isolated and conservative area, only qualitative method will depict the real scenario. However, since the importance of some numeric presentations cannot be undermined, the researcher decided to use a mixed approach for this study.

About combining qualitative approaches with quantitative or vice versa, O' Leary (2014) argues that combination of the two approaches helps the researcher taking the best essence

⁴ In terms of sample size and geographic locations.

⁵ Although World Bank (2010) and Barkat et al. (2011) were published in recent times, the actual data collection took place few years earlier.

from the both traditions (O' Leary 2014:147). Using a combined method can also help overcome the limitations of using only one method (O' Leary 2014:147). For example, a combined method also has the flexibility to use both inductive and deductive reasoning. Adding some relevant quotes, description and pictures, for example, along with some numbers gives a broader and holistic picture of the subject matter (O' Leary 2014:147). Similarly, some figures and statistics make the story more accurate (O' Leary 2014:147). Using a mixed method also allows the researcher to change or modify the research objectives, rationale, design, i.e., the research protocols, at various stages of the research (O' Leary 2014:147). While exclusively quantitative or exclusively qualitative method looks at the matter from a single, a combination of the both provides multiple views of the subject matter (O' Leary 2014:147). Since triangulation is important for social science research, only a mixed method allows consideration of different perspectives of the respondents and participants (O' Leary 2014:147).

O' Leary (2014) also defines three main possible positions a researcher can take while adopting a mixed method: “(1) Quantitative perspective with acceptance of qualitative data; (2) Qualitative perspective with acceptance of quantitative data; and (3) Question-driven perspective “(O' Leary 2014:148-149).

For valid reasons, the researcher has chosen the second position—'Qualitative perspectives with acceptance of qualitative data'. On this perspective, O' Leary (2014) argues that despite the nervousness of some qualitative researchers on using numbers, many of them today recognizing and accepting numbers in their studies without jeopardizing their main approach (i.e., qualitative) (O' Leary 2014:148). The author points,

Conducting a series of in-depth interviews and coding some of the data for tallying/ statistical analysis; e.g. you decided to explore the church community through a series of 50 interviews. As you look for themes, you realize that with 50 respondents it might be of value to produce a few pie charts or bar graphs to visually represent some of your findings (O' Leary 2014:149).

Although merely the use of some descriptive statistics was proposed during the proposal phase, a similar thing has happened to this research. The respondents/participants were mentioning numbers, rates, percentages such as the number of students in the madrasas, proportion of students who can pay full tuition fees and living costs, proportion of students who pays a fraction or who cannot pay anything in all discussions and interviews. On top of that, while working with the data it was realized that there are about 3500 students in the 8 madrasas visited. Although the main approach was qualitative, the number 3500 has led the researcher presenting various issues based on data collected from the madrasas in quantitative manners.

3.5 Challenges faced and overcoming strategy

Since the Qawmi madrasas are not under the administration of any government department, getting access to the madrasas for research is not an easy task. Because of their isolation from the government system as well as rigidity about their curricula, the madrasas apparently maintain a distance from any government entity. The madrasas are administered under various independent organizations called board and none of them is located in the study district. Therefore, it was not possible for the researcher to seek permission from the boards before approaching the madrasas. The first strategy adopted by the researcher was visiting madrasas in person along with a semi-official letter from the administration of the organization the researcher works for. The letter included the identity of the researcher and the purpose of

the study. However, due to lack of confidence, the madrasas did not seem willing to give access to them. Finally, the researcher took help from his colleagues and relatives who has close contact with the madrasas. This strategy worked well since the madrasa authority were confirmed about the motive of the researcher. In every place the objective of the study and the motive of the researcher has been explained to the respondents of the study.

3.6 Limitations

The study has been carried out in limited scope. Therefore, the selection of the study location and the sampling have entirely been purposive. Only 8 madrasas in two sub-districts do not adequately depict the entire picture of the issue. Therefore, overall generalizations on Qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh cannot be made on the basis of the findings of the study.

3.7 Ethical issues considered

Study on Qawmi madrasas as well as any religious belief is a challenging task in Bangladesh. The issue is also very sensitive. During the field work, data analysis and report writing, the researcher has tried his level best to remain cautious about the ethical issues such as consent, anonymity and confidentiality. The issues considered has been described below in brief:

Consent: All the data collection instruments and the request letter to the respondents and offices have clearly described the research objective and identity of the researcher. Yet, the identity of the researcher has been confirmed, and the objective of the research described in person to all the respondents and participants during interview and focus group discussion. As the official designation of the researcher was an issue to influence the respondents and participants, the researcher adequately has made it clear that the purpose of this research was purely academic, and it was not a part of his official duty. He explained to all the respondents that he has come to them merely as a graduate student of ISS and participation in the interview/focus group is completely voluntary. He also explained that there is no obligation to take part in the interview/discussion and any respondent/participant can withdraw from the session at any time and point. Since the researcher planned to record the responses/discussions electronically, he has explained the necessity and sought permission of the respondents/participants before starting the record. Only upon full consent of the respondents/participants the researcher has recorded responses/discussions.

Anonymity and confidentiality: The respondents/participants have been ensured about keeping their identity anonymous. They have also been ensured about confidentiality of their opinion. In no part of the research report the opinion and identity of the respondents has been used. The list of respondent/participants in the annex has been prepared with consent of the individuals.

Chapter 4

Social provisioning of child protection by the Qawmi Madrasas

This chapter starts with an overview of the Qawmi madrasas visited for this study highlighting their modus operandi based on the interviews and focus group discussion. It also discusses their eligibility, profile of the children, and goods and services provided in the madrasas. Discussion further follows on the opinion of the non-madrasa key informants on the growth of madrasas, Qawmi vs state-owned orphanage and on why do madrasas get children while the state-owned orphanages still have vacant seats. The chapter also includes view of the madrasa teachers on how madrasas are contributing to the society and on modification/updating the Qawmi madrasa education.

4.1 An introduction to the madrasas visited

The 8 madrasas visited for the study were established between 1951 and 2010. Seven out of the eight madrasas are under the board of Befaqul Madarisil Arabia Bangladesh popularly known as Befaq. This is the largest Qawmi madrasa board in Bangladesh. Half of the madrasas are situated in rural areas and the remaining half of them in urban areas. The average land area of the madrasas is 44 decimals. However, some of the madrasas have large amount of land (e.g. 104 decimals) while some of them are in small holdings (e.g., 14 decimals). Most of the madrasas are situated on their own land. None of them is on any rented property. A few of them situated on donated land (waqf estate). All the madrasas are situated in multi-storied brick-built buildings. Some of them have multiple large establishments. Compared to many nearby primary schools (of mainstream education), the buildings of the madrasas appeared to be better in terms of size.

Photo 4.1: A madrasa with large establishment



On average the madrasas have over 400 students each. However, some of them have over one thousand students and some have less than one hundred students (see Annex E). Depending on the madrasas size, on average 20 to 200 new students are enrolled in the madrasas every year. Generally, the new students are admitted during the month of Ramadan in the lunar calendar.

Most of the students in the madrasas are residential. Only a few madrasas have some non-residential students. Residential students stay in the madrasas all the time except during vacation and leave for special circumstances. The non-residential students, who are only a few, come to the madrasas in the morning and go home in the evening when the studies are over for the day.

4.2 Admission and tuition fees, and living costs

All the madrasas charge a fixed amount of admission fee to be paid annually and a monthly tuition fee and living costs (basically food). Some madrasas charge BDT 500 (€5) as admission fee and orphan and vulnerable children are waived from this. The tuition

All children are not orphan in Madrasa-Orphanages

Although most of the madrasas have the word *Yateemkhana* (meaning orphanage) after them, none of them admit exclusively *yateem* (orphan). Poor and vulnerable children without any of the parents, vulnerable children from single parent families, and such vulnerable children having both parents alive are eligible for admission. To the madrasas vulnerability and reality of the child is important, not his or her parent. Therefore, when asked about number of orphan children studying in the madrasas, the researcher had to consider all children taking support from the Goraba fund.

fee and living costs varies between BDT 2000 and 2500 (€20 and 25) per children per month among the madrasas. However, most of the madrasas informed that only a small number of students can afford to pay the total amount. Madrasas do not charge anything to the orphan children for food. When asked about the per capita monthly expenditure, the madrasas reported that it should be between BDT 3500 and BDT 4500 (€35 and €45). Some madrasas claim that only food expenditure is around 3000 BDT (€30) per month. Primary education in the mainstream Bengali medium is free in Bangladesh and students get free books, and monthly stipends. Yet, considering everything, education in Qawmi madrasas is still cheapest. On the other hand, for the orphan and vulnerable children it is totally free.

4.3 Income source of Qawmi madrasas

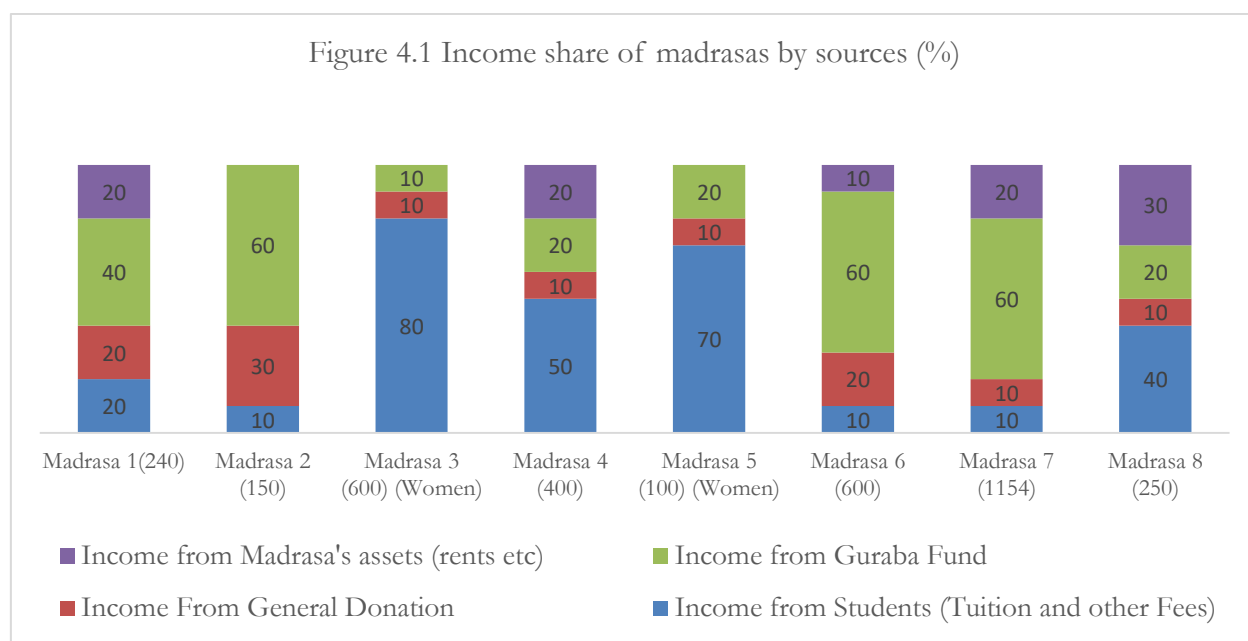
Most of the madrasas rely completely on people's donation. Madrasas employ various means to collect funds from the people. One of them is the donation box. All the boys' madrasas are situated beside busy roads and they have a donation box in front of them. Old and large madrasas have some sources of income such as shops, ponds etc. They get some income renting out these assets. New and small madrasas do not have income sources of

"We receive no help from the government or any other NGO. No one else visit us except the people from the intelligence departments of the government. Their intention is to know if we teach the students militancy or anything subversive to the state". [A key informant at a madrasa]

their own. The income share of the madrasas from tuition fees and living costs is negligible except in the girls' madrasas. Girls' madrasas reported that tuition fees and living costs paid

by the students are their major source of income. The girls' madrasas generally situated inside the hamlets and far away from roads. They also do not send girls for fund collection from the people. This has been mentioned as a reason for girls' madrasas receiving less donations from the people. Only two madrasas reported of receiving financial support under the Capitation Grants for Orphan children in non-government orphanages programme of the Department of Social Services. However, the number of grants recipient children compared to eligible children has been reported to be very minimal. None of the madrasas reported of receiving any support from NGOs.

Figure 4.1 Income share of madrasas by sources (%)



The madrasa often receives food donations. This increases a lot during the month of Ramadan. When asked the about the reasons for such increase, the informants and FGD participants mentioned in several places that there are some direct verses in the Quran on the significance of the month of Ramadan in the life of the Muslims. There are also some hadiths on the significance of the month as well as rewards for alms giving or donating. In the Quran the month of Ramadan has been mentioned as 'better than 1000 months' and some hadiths say donating during the month of Ramadan increases the rewards 70 folds. Some expiations also tend to multiply the '70 folds' by 1000 (since the Quran says Ramadan is better than 1000 months) and say whatever virtue you practice during the month of Ramadan, you will get returns of 70,000 times. Therefore, Muslims in general tend to donate more during this month. Donating to madrasas, particularly meaning for the orphan and vulnerable children in madrasas is the best choice for many Muslims since madrasa students recite the Quran, learns the hadiths and are on the 'path of *deen*' (Islam). Madrasas also look forward to this opportunity and make particular efforts to collect the donations.

Some of the cash/kind donations are entirely meant for the orphan and vulnerable children. If food is meant for the orphan/vulnerable children, it is provided to them. Recitation of the full Holy Quran (popularly known as Khatam e Quran) is a common religious ritual in Bangladesh. This is offered particularly when a family member dies, or during death anniversaries or any other such events. The Khatam e Quran is generally performed by the madrasa students and orphan/vulnerable children in madrasas get preference for this kind of

prayers. A good amount of cash gift is provided to the madrasas along with meals called dawat(meaning invitation).

Box 4.1: Badr E Kafila: An Example of Volunteerism and Donating in Madrasa

In one of the madrasas visited, a committee consisting of about 120 members called *Badr E Kafila* was found. When asked about the meaning of this, one of the members of the governing body of the madrasa told that this is a committee of donors of the madrasa who themselves donate on regular basis and also collect donations for the madrasa voluntarily. The target of the committee is to combine 313 such donors and volunteers. The name of the committee has been given after the warriors of the Battle of Badr. It is believed that because of special blessing from the God, the prophet Mohammed beat the mighty Meccan Quraishi army with a team of only 313 companions. Therefore, they believe the number 313 is number of blessings. The member of the committee thinks that such name and formation of the committee inspire people to donate voluntarily believing that such a team will succeed because of blessing from the God (Rahmah).
[source: FGD in a madrasa]

Foreign aid in madrasas

None of the madrasas reported any regular or significant income from abroad through any individual or agency except a few casual donations. For instance, one madrasa reported that last year (2017), on a day during the month of Ramadan a group of people⁶ from Turkey provided Iftar to all students of the madrasa.

Using children for collection of funds

The issue of using madrasa students for fund collection was discussed during FGDs and in interviews. Using children and teachers for collection of funds is common in Qawmi madrasas. However, not all madrasas use students for collecting funds from the people of the locality. Particularly, girls' madrasas do not send girls for fund collection. Some madrasas send their students for collection of funds only if there is any mahfil (Islamic seminar) etc in plan. Sending students and teachers to people's house during the month of Ramadan and before the Eid ul Azha is also common.

4.4 Eligibility criteria of Qawmi madrasas

For new student enrollment some of the madrasas, particularly the large madrasas, have their printed leaflets with academic curricula and fees. There is also plea for sending children to madrasas to attain 'true knowledge' in the leaflets as well as on donating in marasas. Interestingly, the arrangement of teaching general subjects is mentioned with importance in the leaflets of madrasas. Some of the madrasas have no formal way of advertising. For them, the communications take place in the social arena. The interested families get to know about the madrasa through interpersonal communication and bring their children.

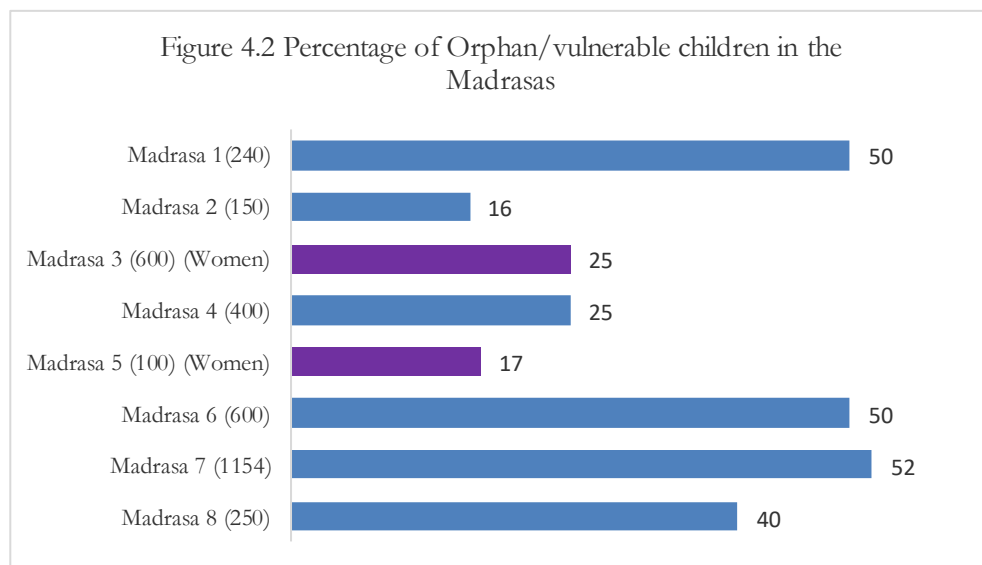
Age eligibility: Qawmi madrasas do not use any strict and uniform age specific criteria (lower or upper) at the time of enrolling new students. The minimum age varies between 5 and 8 years. However, in practice they see if the child can take bath and other self-cares on its own. Since bedwetting is a concern in the madrasas, generally children younger than 5 years are not taken. Madrasas need to consider some precautions since the children need to

⁶ The respondent could not provide any further detail of their identity.

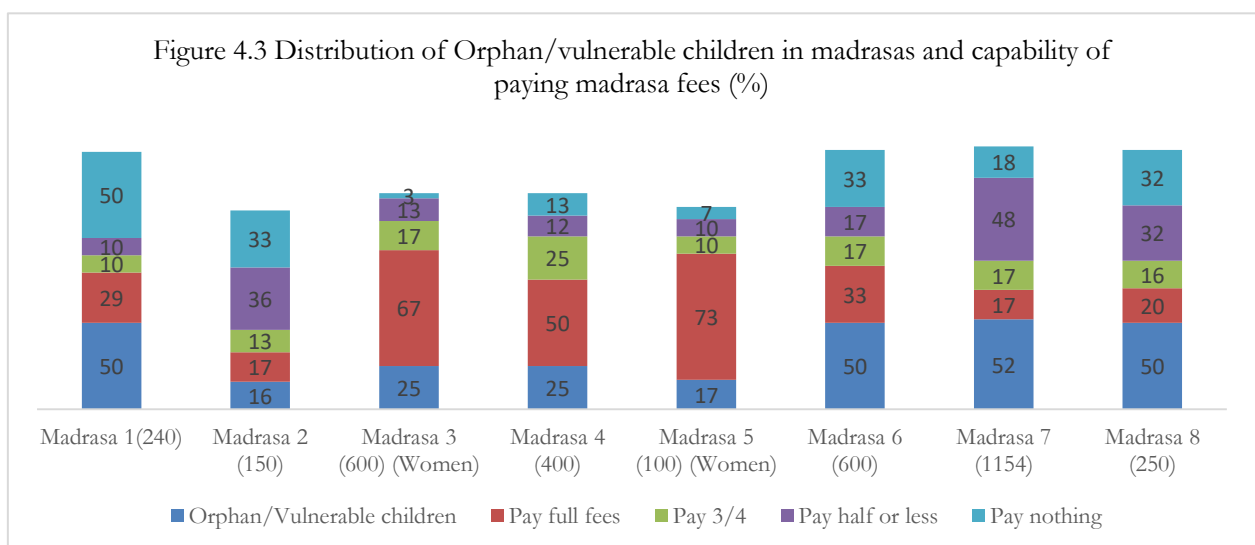
stay here all the time. Some madrasas take undertaking/get signed a consent form from the parents/guardian that if the child runs away from the madrasa, or if there is any accident, the madrasa authority will not remain liable. However, these things are not omnipresent and are not so strict. There is also no upper age limit for enrolment in Qawmi madrasas. Any child at any age can get admission.

4.5 Profile of the children in the Qawmi madrasas visited

As shown in Figure 4.2, from 16 to 52 per cent of the children in the madrasas are either orphan or vulnerable children. With some exceptions, the proportion of orphan and vulnerable children is relatively less in the



girls' madrasas. The two sample girls' madrasas have 17 and 25 per cent orphan or vulnerable children. Another noticeable finding is that, the larger the madrasa is, the higher is the proportion of orphan and vulnerable children in it.



The figure 4.3 presents the percentage of orphan and vulnerable children in the Qawmi madrasas, and the capability of all the children in paying the tuition and living costs

of the madrasas. From minimum of 16 per cent to a maximum of 67 per cent of the children pays the full amount of tuition fees and living costs charged by the madrasas. Interestingly, students in girls' madrasas seem to be more capable in paying the full fees and costs (see madrasa 3 and madrasa 5). On average, about 24 per cent of the children in the madrasas cannot pay any fee or cost of tuition or living. However, the percentage of such students vary between 3 and 50 per cent across the madrasas. Such students are observed less in the girls' madrasas. Although only two madrasas visited, while discussion with the madrasa teachers, it has appeared to the researcher that the socioeconomic background of the girls in Qawmi madrasas are better compared to boys in Qawmi madrasas. It has been discussed earlier that girls' madrasas receive less donations because they are not situated in busy places. However, some previous studies claim that girls' madrasas are growing faster. If it is so, increase of girls' madrasas does not indicate poverty. There may be any other reason behind the growth of girls' madrasas in Bangladesh.

4.6 Eligibility criteria for madrasa-based orphanage

No fixed or written conditions are applied for enrolment into the madrasa-based orphanages. The process is basically self-targeted. The madrasas have a fund called 'Goraba' fund (could be translated as poor fund). Students who cannot afford to pay the tuition fees or living costs such as food, clothing, books, medicine etc get support from this fund. This fund is raised from various donations of the people and organizations. The madrasas are not strict about the definition of orphan children like the government orphanages. For enrolment into a state-owned orphanage, the child has to be an orphan as per definition of orphan provided by The Orphanages and Widows' Homes Act, 1944 which says, "orphan" means a boy or girl under eighteen years of age who has lost his or her father or has been abandoned by his or her parents or guardians" (GoB 1944). That means if the father of the child is alive, he or she will not be allowed in the state-owned orphanages. On the other hand, the madrasas target students for receiving support from the Goraba fund based on their vulnerability. That is why the official definition of orphan is not applied in the madrasa-based orphanages.

Some of the madrasas ask for an 'orphan and vulnerable child' certificate from the respective local government office (popularly known as Chairman Certificate) of the locality of the child intended to enrol in the madrasas with support from the orphan fund (goraba fund). One madrasa teacher shared his experience about fraudulent cases. It happened that they admitted a student trusting the family that the child is an orphan. However, later on it was revealed that he was not. Therefore, they ask for certificate from the local government. As the teacher said, "*we try to investigate if the child is a genuine needy*". However, some madrasas do not ask for this as they think forged certificates can easily be obtained from the local government offices. To them trust and their own 'reality assessment' is the main tool to judge whether the child is an orphan or vulnerable child.

State-owned orphanages have age bracket
In the state-owned orphanage, the minimum and maximum age at enrollment is 6 and 9 years respectively. Any orphan crossing 9 years will not be enrolled in the orphanages. During FGD this has been viewed as one of the reasons why state-owned orphanages miss out many orphan and vulnerable children. According to them, since the mothers or guardians do not know about this age bar, many children are left behind because of this small age bracket. One official of a state-owned orphanage said, "Children in our society cross 9 years just playing. When the family realizes the child should be sent to school/orphanage, he or she is over 9."

4.7 What do madrasas provide to the children?

Madrasa provides same food and similar accommodation to all the students and teachers. The orphan and vulnerable children get these free of cost. Books and treatment are also provided based on their needs. Sometimes they are also provided dresses. Sometimes they also get clothing free of cost. In the following section the goods and services children in Qawmi madrasas receive have been discussed in brief:

Food

Madrasas provide three cooked meals every day. All children eat the same food. There are 1 to 3 cooks or cooking assistants in each of the madrasas who cook the three-time meals for the children. Rice is the main food and served in all three meals of the day. Vegetables, and dal (lentils) are the main dishes at breakfast and supper. Meat, fish and eggs are served at lunch. All students and teachers eat the same food in same arrangement. Even if there is a guest in the madrasa, for instance a member of the governing body, he also eats the same food.

The food may appear to be very basic at first look. However, the children do not look malnourished. When

asked about this ‘non-correlation’ of the food and the health of the children, the madrasas informed that this meal list is the one they provide to the children. However, the

“All else are equal here”
“In the madrasa, all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status—rich or orphan, paying or full-free, senior or junior; all teachers, any guest visiting the madrasa, share the same food and similar accommodation. We also strictly maintain the same uniform. All else are equal here”.
--member of a governing body of a madrasa in an FGD

children eat lot more than that. In addition to cash, very often the madrasas receive kind donations such as cooked food, sweets, cookies, fruits, meat and even full goats and cows. The cooked food and sweets are distributed among the students. The meats are cooked and fed. As an example, on the volume of donation, one madrasa informed that they have received 600 kilograms of beef during the Eid ul Azha (celebrated 21 August 2018) from the people of this area. The respondent also added that every week they get at least one goat as donation for the students.

One of the members of the governing body of a madrasa who is a retired teacher of a renown public school said that the quality of the food in the madrasas are better than that in the public university hostels in Bangladesh. The claim by the retired teacher cannot be undermined as there are often news on the poor quality of food in the hostels of Dhaka University, the oldest public university in Bangladesh. One leading newspaper reports recently states,

“Around 300 students are being served with just one kilogram of cooked dal (lentils) at the canteens of the university. The same goes for other food, too. A piece of meat or fish weighs around 20 to 25 grams and tastes horrible, alleged students of the age-old university” (Zayeeef and Rahman 2016).

In this sense, the Qawmi madrasa students are endowed with better food. One FGD participant supports this claim saying,

“It has happened so that during the vacation when children went home, many parents/guardians fell into trouble because they were not being able to feed them like they got used to with the quality of food at the madrasa. Therefore, we can say we are providing at least better food to many of the children than they eat at home” [Source: FGD participant in a madrasa].

Donating goat for the orphan children: A common phenomenon in madrasas
<p>During visits, the researcher himself has witnessed such donations. One evening while the researcher was in a discussion with a headmaster of a madrasa, a local gentleman sought permission to the headmaster very politely. When the headmaster asked him about his visit, the gentleman in a more polite manner gave BDT 5000 (€50) to the headmaster requesting him to buy a goat and feed the meat to the children in the madrasa. The headmaster received the money and quickly gave him a receipt and said him goodbye in Islamic manner. The way the headmaster received BDT 5000, it appeared to the researcher that such donations are very common to the madrasa. The researcher also witnessed donated goats are being processed in the madrasa premise for cooking.</p>

Invitation is a very good incentive for the madrasa students and teachers
<p>Teaching in Qawmi madrasas has been viewed as one of the least paid jobs even by the madrasa teachers. The salary of the teachers ranges from BDT 3000 to BDT 11000 (€30 to €110) per month across the madrasas. However, invitation to people’s house (called <i>dawat</i>) is considered as an incentive. While waiting for a focus group discussion in one madrasa, the researcher followed a telephone discussion between one of the madrasa teachers and another person at the other end of the telephone. The issue was a vacant teaching position in the madrasa. The teacher in front of the researcher was convincing the other person for joining in the madrasa.</p> <p>After initial greetings, the conversation was as follows:</p> <p>The madrasa teacher: “You can think about this position in my madrasa”</p> <p>The other person on the telephone: (probably he asked about salary and other incentives)</p> <p>The madrasa teacher: “Initially you’ll get BDT 7000 a month plus food and accommodation”</p> <p>The other person on the telephone: “BDT 7000? “(The amount might seem below his expectation)</p> <p>The madrasa teacher: “Yes salary is a bit lower, I agree. But there are lots of invitation in the locality. They give good amount of <i>badia</i> (meaning cash gift when such people attend any invitation). You can bear your communication costs including cell phone costs from that. Don’t worry.”</p> <p>[Source: observation during interview with a madrasa teacher]</p>

Accommodation

Almost all the madrasas visited are fully residential. Although a small portion of very young non-residential children come to the madrasas in the morning for lessons on the Arabic language and the Holy Quran, the large majority students in Qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh are residential. Generally, when new students are admitted, they are instructed to bring clothing, basic utensils (e.g., glass, plate) and basic beddings along with them. The madrasas generally do not have a separate dormitory accommodation arrangement. The floor of the classrooms is used for sleeping. The students make their own beds on the floor in rows. The

beds are folded and kept in the corner of the room during study and prayer times. One or more teachers also sleep in the same room either in the same arrangements or on a cot. Generally, the sleeping arrangement is very congested. However, there are ceiling fans in all madrasas and basic carpets to be used during the winter.

Photo 4.1: The accommodation arrangement in madrasas is very basic and congested. Generally, the classrooms are used as their place for sleeping



Education

It has been discussed in the introduction chapter that the curricula in the Qawmi madrasas are not approved by the government and hence their diplomas/certificates are not recognized elsewhere in the country, except in the Qawmi madrasas themselves. However, very recently, the government of Bangladesh has agreed to recognize the highest degree of Qawmi madrasas as equivalent to masters in Arabic or Islamic Studies from a university (The Daily Star 2018a).

Table 4.1: Academic Structure of Qawmi Madrasas

Class	Curricula	Duration
Nurance	Learning the Arabic Alphabets, phonetics, punctuation, words etc	1 year
Nazara	Learning to reciting the Quran thoroughly	6 months to 1 year
Hifz ul Quran	Memorizing the Quran	3-5 years

Kitab Level	Class 1 to <i>Daora e Hadis</i> (masters) and <i>Ifta</i> (Islamic Shariya Research—PhD*)	10-15 years Those who come to the madrasas after memorizing the Quran, generally completes class 1-5 of the Kitab section in one year. Then they start class six and proceed. It is not essential to become hafez (memorizing the Quran) for studying in the Kitab level.
(Source: FGD and Interview at various madrasas) *As interpreted by the informants/participants		

Not necessarily all the madrasas visited teach up to the highest level. One of them only teaches up to class 8 (Hedayetun Nahu), one up to class 10 (Panjom). Two of them teach up to the Higher Secondary level (Hedaye Jamat/Sher e Jami). One of them teaches up to undergraduate (Mishqat) and three of them offer education up to post-graduation/PhD (*Daora e Hadis & Ifta*). Hardly in any of the madrasas visited, existence of skills development training has been reported except in one of the girls' madrasas. The madrasa has reported of having sewing and cooking training for girls in madrasas. Although the use of computer has been emphasized in one FGD, no arrangement of this was found in any of the madrasas.

Photo 4.2: Students taking lesson in a Qawmi madrasa



Clothing

All madrasas have a fund for the orphan and vulnerable children. Some madrasas provide at least one set of clothes to the orphan and vulnerable children from the fund. Sometimes, wealthy people also donate clothes for the students, particularly the orphan/vulnerable children.

Support after graduation

The madrasas are also aware that students graduated from Qawmi madrasas are not likely to get job in the government or any formal sector. The most common jobs for Qawmi madrasa students are teaching in Qawmi madrasa, Imam (who leads the prayers) or muezzin (who summons the prayer calling five times) in mosques etc. However, they expect jobs in private organizations. The madrasas sometimes help their graduates/senior students to get such jobs. Particularly they help them to get job during the month of Ramadan to lead the Tarabih prayer as an Imam. Tarabih prayer is a special prayer offered every night during the month of Ramadan. In many mosques, the entire Quran is recited in prayers in one-month time. Therefore, the hafez (who memorized the Quran) from Qawmi madrasas get this one-month employment. In return they get a good amount of money from the community who offer prayer in that mosque (information obtained during an interview of madrasa principal).

4.8 Opinion about the growth of Qawmi madrasas

What are the reasons for growth of Qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh? Almost all the key informants outside madrasas have been asked about this. The reasons have been recorded as follows:

- **Social inequality:** The lower-income people cannot integrate themselves with the economy and the politics of the country. In the existing social, economic and political system, they find themselves in the bottom of the society—almost untouchable. To get out of this deprivation, marginalization and stigmatization and cultural alienation, they tend to find an identity of their own. Religious education is one of the ways for them. Before them the easiest way open is to send their children to Qawmi madrasas for religious education. To them madrasa is a social security. This is their social safety net.

The number of Qawmi madrasas will continue to grow
<p><i>“I think the number of Qawmi madrasas will continue to grow in the next decade although poverty is declining. The absolute number of poor people in Bangladesh is still very high. The number of poor people in Bangladesh is more than the entire population of many countries in the world. Therefore, the millions of families still living below the poverty line will create demand for more Qawmi madrasas. You cannot see the impact of poverty reduction here.”</i></p> <p>--Professor ASM Amanullah, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka (key informant)</p>

- **Accessibility:** Qawmi madrasas are open to everybody. The availability of madrasas is also a reason.

- **Food security:** For a portion of the people in the society food security of the children is also another reason.

- **Perception of education:** According to one of the key informants, “it Doesn’t matter we recognize them or not, large number of people strongly think going to the Qawmi madrasas is also getting educated. They don’t think their children are reminding illiterate after so many years in Qawmi madrasas. This is also education for them”.

- **Perception about qualification:** To many families, memorizing the holy Quran or Hafez is also a quality and identity. This could be a means of livelihood as well. Hardly there

is any job for secondary or higher secondary passed persons. However, an hafez which takes only about 3 years can find a living such as Imam/muezzin.

- **Perception about the benefit of having a *Hafez* in the family:** Many people believe that a hafez will help them for succeeding in the afterlife. He will pray for their salvation after their death. Parents think if they make one of their children a hafez, they are leaving behind a religious asset who will help them in the afterlife. This is one of the thoughts that inspire the parents/guardians to send their children to Qawmi madrasas. This is why a good portion of children from non-poor and even well-off families are also going to the Qawmi madrasas

- **Education free of cost:** Qawmi madrasas do not charge anything from the poor children. Poor families think if their children go to the mainstream education, they cannot go further. Soon they will drop out from school. Therefore, Qawmi madrasa is the better choice.

“Qawmi madrasa itself is a social protection. The madrasas have been providing food, accommodation, education and protection to more than a million children free of cost. It is a huge support to the society and to the state. The madrasas have full participation of the community”

[A key informant]

- **Search for values:** The declining social values also push some families send their children to Qawmi madrasas. Such families think, if the children go to the general schools, they will get polluted. The prevalence of drug addition, alcoholism etc is almost nil in Qawmi madrasas. Therefore, sending the children to the madrasas will protect them from being deviated. Children will learn and maintain the good virtues there. Some of the key informants also agreed that Qawmi madrasas have been successful in maintaining certain values. They are indeed helping the children grow up as good human. To them, Qawmi madrasas are functional in the society and that is why society is running them.

- **Soft corner of people:** The Qawmi madrasas are surviving on people's donation. Since people have soft corner about religion, they donate in religious institutes. There is a tendency of people in general to donate for the orphan children in Qawmi madrasas. As one of the key informant views that exclusion from state benefits such as MPO of teachers, social protection schemes etc could not hinder the growth of Qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh. According to him, they even do not know what kind of provisioning the government has.

“We cannot make any binary division whether they (Qawmi madrasas) are good or bad, backward or forward. However, there is no way to say them unnecessary or bad. If they were non-functional, then they wouldn't have grown so much”.

[A key informant during interview]

4.9 How madrasas are contributing to the society and the state: views of the madrasa teachers

Previous studies, for instance, Asadullah and Chowdhury (2016), admit that despite limited scope for unemployment and opportunity cost, there are important non-market returns behind Qawmi madrasa education (2016:68). The authors also argue for further studies involving Muslim communities. To this, this study has made some attempts to see the perception of the teachers of Qawmi madrasas about their contribution. The following are the arguments made:

Qawmi madrasa help reduce child poverty

Madrasa teachers/governing body members think that madrasas are helping fight child poverty and vulnerability providing them the basic needs. One teacher during an interview claims,

“Were there no Qawmi madrasas, large majority of the orphan and vulnerable children would have become street children and be exposed to exploitation and threats. The madrasas are providing them with food, clothing, accommodation, education—all basic needs”. [A madrasa principal]

Building strong moral character of the children

That madrasas are creating persons with good moral character and human quality has been claimed by many of the madrasa teachers. They have claimed the education to be essential to the society. Some of the statements made by them are as follows:

“The education in the Qawmi madrasa is solid education and the most essential education for the society. The education we provide them certainly makes our students good citizen. Those who study here do not demand anything to anybody. They don’t demand for job, they don’t demand for food. They don’t want anything to the government. Their demand is to the Almighty” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

“There is no practice of corruption in the education system. Nobody can raise any question against them on corruption issue. General education, on the other hand, is the ‘storehouse’ of corruption. It’s the general educated people are related with all wrongdoings” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

“My question is—who is running the country? Of course, the people with general education. The country has become champion in corruption in the whole world consecutively. So, the general educated people made the country corruption champion” [A governing body member during FGD].

“Leakage of Public examination has become a regular phenomenon in Bangladesh. We also operate a huge education board and arrange public examinations. There has been no evidence of question leakage in Qawmi madrasas. We have 14/15 thousand madrasas in Bangladesh” [A madrasa teacher during interview].

“Drug has become a serious social problem in Bangladesh. Do you see who are the addicts? You’ll not find a single case of Qawmi madrasa student taking drugs. You’ll not get any complaints of hijacking, stealing, extortion, violence etc among Qawmi madrasa students” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

“How far is the general education giving you the lessons on morality? If they were enough, the moral condition of the society has not gone so worse” [A governing body member during FGD].

Creating social equality

“We have students from rich families, middle class families and very poor families. We all eat the same food, share the same accommodation arrangement, wear exactly the same dress. Is there any such instance of equality? I don’t think even the state-owned orphanages provide what we provide” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

Negative branding

Some of the teachers, governing body members even researchers/scholars interviewed criticised the gross negative branding of madrasas. Some of the statements have been presented below:

“When we say we give free food, accommodation and education to the orphan, poor and vulnerable children, the so-called intellectual people say, we manipulate the poor people. They don’t see we are turning the poor people as leaders (imam)” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

“Please analyse the news on a public university in a given year. See what you find—cheating, forgery, torture, violence, partisan politics, and what not? Now analyse the news on Qawmi madrasas. You will not find 1% of that. The recent initiative to give government recognition of the Qawmi madrasa degree has created itching among the so-called intellectuals. They say Qawmi madrasa are breeding centre of militants” [Principal of a Qawmi madrasa during interview].

One of the key informants outside madrasas also criticised the negative branding of madrasas. According to him,

“A section of the intellectual people of the country are under serious influence of the Western hegemony. They reject the Qawmi madrasas and so do the Qawmi madrasas about them. I believe in the committees of Qawmi madrasas malpractices, corruption etc are very less than such committees in the other similar institutes. Countries like Russia and China have failed to run orphanages because of sexual violence. However, in Bangladesh they are running. In my view, it is a success. The recognition of the Qawmi madrasa degree by the government will bring a serious change in this thinking” [Professor ASM Amanullah, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka (key informant)]

On modification/updating the Qawmi madrasa education

Although not directly an objective of the study, yet it has made attempt to record the opinion of the madrasa teachers and other relevant people on the issue of modification/updating of their curricula. All Qawmi madrasa teachers rejected the issue of modification/updating of curricula. However, they mentioned about inclusion of general subjects such as Bengali and English language and literature, general mathematics etc in their curricula. One of the madrasa principal views,

“We don’t think our education needs any modification/update. Rather I’d say, modification is essential in the general education. What is the objective of education? If it is to make the children good citizens, then see who is playing the perfect role. How far the general education is helping them become good citizens? Would you please show the elements of a good citizen in the curricula of general education? I’d rather strongly argue that Qawmi madrasa education has everything of that”.

Following this conversation, the researcher out of curiosity went through the preamble of the National Education Policy of Bangladesh 2010 and found that the policy reads, *“The primary objectives of this policy are directed toward the cultivation of human values”* (GoB 2010).

What do the stakeholders at the other end say? Despite agreeing that the madrasas work as social protection for the poor, some of the non-madrasa respondents has expressed that the total system is producing liability to the state. One education officer concludes,

“They have knowledge exclusively in one area—religion. Change is very much necessary here. If the curricula could be updated, their support to the state would be fruitful. Now they are producing liability. They are not fit anywhere. They have no job in the market except the imam of mosques. They cannot even mix with the society”.

4.11 Why do madrasas get children while the state-owned orphanages still have vacant seats?

The food, accommodation, education, recreation and future job facilities in the state-owned orphanages are undoubtedly better than madrasas (see Annex F). However, there is often vacant seats in the orphanages as reported by the officials of Department of Social Services (DSS). The researcher has discussed this with the officials of DSS. The reasons are as follows:

- **Definition of orphan:** Madrasas do not only take orphan children. They take orphan and also vulnerable children whose parents are still alive. There is no age bracket in madrasas.
- **Lack of Publicity:** People do not know about the state-owned orphanages and their system.
- **Availability of madrasas:** Qawmi madrasas are available everywhere. There is no bureaucratic procedure to get enrolled, no eligibility criteria. Their door is open for all. Therefore, it is very easy for a family to send them to the madrasas.
- **Religious influence:** Another reason to send children to madrasas is the assurance of the heaven. People think, if they send children to the madrasas, the children will earn rewards for the afterlife. It is said that One hafez (who has memorized Quran) can recommend for 10 close relatives/family members for the heaven.

“The Qawmi madrasas are taking orphan and vulnerable children for their own interest, survival and existence. Madrasas earn people’s sympathy adding the word yateemkhana after them”

[A DSS official during interview]

Chapter 5

Social provisioning of child protection by the State and exclusion of the Qawmi Madrasas

This chapter presents some evidences on how the existing child focused public social protection programmes exclude Qawmi madrasa students setting specific eligibility criteria. Opinions of the relevant departments implementing the major child focused social protection programmes on this exclusion have also been recorded.

5.1 State programs of social protection and children in Qawmi madrasas

As part of secondary data and information analysis, the study reviewed available resources on the 18-child focused social protection programmes. The resources include, programme implementation manual/guidelines and other published documents. One of the key focus of the review was to investigate into the eligibility criteria of the programmes. Simultaneously the coverage, eligibility and targeting of the programmes has been discussed with the officials of the relevant departments. Based on review and discussions a matrix has been prepared to show how many of the programmes include children in Qawmi madrasas and their share in the total beneficiary children (see Annex A).

Overall the 18 programmes mapped target more than 21 million children (Annex A). Majority of the programmes target children following an institutional arrangement (i.e., schools, learning centre, orphanage and hospital) (Annex A). The larger programmes such as education stipend, use registered institute and government approved curriculum as two main inclusion criteria (see Annex A). Children from Qawmi madrasas are almost excluded from the programmes by their design (i.e., eligibility) (Annex A). For instances, stipend programmes only target children in institutes that offer education following government approved curricula. Having registration of the institute is also essential. Programmes targeting disabled and orphan children also follows the same criterion—government recognized education. Therefore, children in unregistered and unrecognized institutes are not targeted by these programmes. As a result, children in such are denied rights of food, rights of shelter, rights of clothing and rights of protection. Even the large number of orphan children in such institutes are excluded from all public social protection programmes targeting children. For instance, the primary education stipend programme benefits 13 million primary school students including the students in Aliya madrasa. However, it excludes the Qawmi madrasa students (including the orphan children). The same is true for programmes such as school feeding programme, reaching out of school, secondary education sector investment programme, secondary education stipend programme, higher secondary stipend programme etc. The Orphanages and Widows' Homes Act⁷, 1944 defines "orphan" as "a boy or girl under eighteen years of age who has lost his or her father or has been abandoned by his or her parents or guardians". The Act defines "orphanage" as "an institution, by whatever name it may be called, where orphans are kept or intended to be kept". In the light of this Act, madrasa-based orphanages are legal orphanages. However, children in such orphanages are

⁷ An Act to provide for the better control and supervision of orphanages, widows' homes and marriage bureaux, in Bangladesh

excluded from almost all public social protection benefits because they do not register themselves and they do not follow the curriculum approved by the state.

The Orphanages and Widows' Homes Act also requires for obtaining a license to opening and carrying on an orphanage (GoB 1944). Section 5 of the Act also asks for such institutions to be in health location and to have healthy accommodation for the target group (i.e children). Failure to comply with these has also indicated cancellation of the license. The Act also made provision of District Magistrate (or his or her representative) to inspect any orphanage. However, no such inspection has been reported by the madrasas. The madrasas do not require to inform any authority (e.g., Police Station, Local Government, Local Administration) about enrolment of orphan and vulnerable children. The reality is, they do not have license because they are not registered. Since they do not have license, the issue of inspection on the rights of the children does not arise. Everything mentioned in the Act is strictly maintained in the state-owned orphanage. The conclusion is that children in Qawmi madrasas are remaining out of the umbrella of the state.

One main reason for not getting social protection or any other benefits is that the madrasas do not have registration with the Department of Social Services. The registration process is also very complicated, and the institutes must fulfil many criteria. The madrasas sometimes think that if they come under a system, they must go through rules, regulations. Therefore, they keep themselves aside from the system. The DSS registration requires a report from the Intelligence Departments of the government. If the report is not positive, we also do not give them registration even if they apply.

The Ministry of Social Welfare in Bangladesh every year provides capitation grants to non-government orphanages under a social protection scheme⁸. There are 22 different criteria for the education institutes for getting Capitation Grants for the Orphan children in their institutes (DSS 2015:2-4). One of the criteria for getting such grants is that the orphanage should provide education to the children following the government approved curriculum or the children must be admitted in a general school. In the study area, only about 300 Qawmi madrasa-based orphan children are receiving grants in 17 madrasas under the programme making special arrangement for the grant recipient children. However, the two madrasas visited reported that such arrangements contradict with the objective of madrasa education and hence they are not satisfied with the programme. Even they were not satisfactorily doing the paper works for them which in most cases are fake or forged. Since, the Qawmi madrasas do not follow the government approved curricula, the orphan and vulnerable children in such orphanages are excluded from this grant despite their relatively more vulnerability.

When asked about whether the Qawmi madrasas can fulfil these criteria (particular general education), the DSS official in one of the sub-districts said, *"No, it is not possible for them. The 10 madrasas have been receiving the grant since long. We have already given them ultimatum about the new criteria. One of the criteria is admission of all children in general primary/secondary schools. If they cannot fulfil this, we shall not provide them the grant"*.

⁸ From the Financial Year 2014-15 under the Capitation Grant each orphan child in the selected orphanages receives Tk. 12000/- per year. The Government budget Taka 864.00 million for this purpose in fiscal year 2016-17. About 72000 orphans has so far been benefited out of this fund.

Department of Secondary Education and Department of Primary Education are the two major departments dealing with the stipend and other programmes supporting school going children. During programme mapping as well as interviews with the officials of the primary and secondary education departments, it was revealed that all the education stipend programmes, including the stipend for the Students with disability, Reaching Out-of-School Children, school feeding programme etc exclude Qawmi madrasas. For instance, one sub-district education officer has said, *“Qawmi madrasas do not receive anything from us. They are not my stake” (education department)”*.

Reaching Out-of-School Children (Phase-II) is another social protection scheme of the government being implemented at various parts of the country in partnership with several national and international NGOs. The programme targets the school dropout children and help them complete the primary education in NGO run learning centres along with stipend. After graduating, the 15-18 years old children receive 6-12 months of market-relevant skills training on various trades such as tailoring & garments machine operation, hand embroidery, electrical house wiring and solar system, motor cycle repair and maintenance, mobile phone servicing, beautification, petrol and diesel engine mechanics. However, for participating in this programme children must be dropout from eligible schools (not Qawmi madrasas) (Rosc-bd.org, 2018; interview with Save the Children). An official from Save the Children during interview also informed that they cannot include Qawmi madrasa students because of the programme design. However, it appears that some of trades do not require any academic background. A report of the programme also comments that due to student selection criteria, enough students could not be enrolled for skills training (ROSC II 2017).

Education is one of the basic needs of a child. There are also even more significant needs such as food, shelter, protection, sanitation etc. Such exclusion criteria undermine the other needs of the orphan and vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasas. It is important to note that the Constitution of Bangladesh in Article 15 (d) asserts that it shall be a fundamental responsibility of the state to provide social security or public assistance to certain vulnerable groups of people where the orphans have been mentioned particularly (GoB 1972).

The National Social Security Strategy of Bangladesh (NSSS) (a strategy formulated in 2015 to build a social security system in Bangladesh) identifies that the social protection coverage for the children 0-4 years is very small in Bangladesh (GoB 2015 xix). Identifying this as a gap in the lifecycle of the children, the strategy has proposed a child grant programmes for all children belonging to poor families (GoB 2015:66).

Chapter 6

Reasons for exclusion or rejection of social protection

This chapter discusses the factors responsible for exclusion of Qawmi madrasas from the state social protection based on the opinion of stakeholders at both ends. It has recorded both the limitations at the government end as well as the restrictions at the qawmi madrasas in receiving support from the state. It has also described how tension of being control as well as ideological reservations of the madrasas putting them to rely solely on donations for their survival.

6.1 If Qawmi madrasas deserve social protection benefits

All the key informants of the social services, education and primary education department, the two university professors and the NGO workers agreed that students in Qawmi madrasas are poorer than that in the mainstream primary and secondary schools. Therefore, they think if the socioeconomic condition of the families of the children is considered most of the children in the Qawmi madrasas deserve support from the state. Some of them has said, since they are citizens of the country, they have rights to get everything. However, the officials of the government department have clearly mentioned about the policy of the government (e.g. eligibility criteria). One of the officials concludes, *“They do deserve to get benefits when they comply with the policies of the schemes. Unless they follow the rules, they don’t deserve it. Doesn’t matter how needy they are”*.

Another official from the education department rejects the notion of exclusion of children in Qawmi madrasas. According to him, the families of the children can get benefit from all the general social protection schemes such as old age/widow allowance, workfare programmes etc. However, schemes that are provided through an institutional arrangement (i.e., education), then only the criteria of education or approved institute or curricula is being used. *Therefore, he does not see any policy gap to include the most deserving.*

One officer of DSS also informed that the number of participating qawmi madrasas as well as beneficiary students of the Capitation Grants for Orphan Children in Non-government Orphanages programme is very few compared to their numbers. According to her, the madrasas are not interested to participate in the programme. They do not communicate with the DSS office for this grant. The participating madrasas are also not interested to continue with the programme. One basic challenge for them to include the orphan children in the madrasas is that the madrasas do not want to get registered with any government department.

Madrasas do not want to get registered with DSS

“In Dayapur Yateemkhana (Orphanage) there are more than 200 orphan children. It very close to the sub-district office. They don’t want to get registration under the DSS. They don’t even want any support from the government”.

--Sub-district Social Services Officer (Key Informant)

Some of the key informants however, has viewed that there should be an accountability of the things the madrasas have been receiving from the society. They are surviving on people's donation and the people are not alien. They are also citizens of the country.

An Education Officer's Effort to Include the Qawmi Madrasas

I have been working in the education department for more than two decades and my entire service was spent in rural areas. I have worked in different parts of the country. While I was working in a sub-district of Sylhet (a northeastern district of the country), due to my personal interest about the Qawmi madrasas I decided to visit one madrasa close to my office. I am the head of the Education Department in the sub-district. After three attempts I succeeded to meet the principal of the madrasa. When I introduced myself with him, the principal's response was, "we do not want anything from you". They don't even prefer to give any information about them. I visited about 15-20 madrasas. No one wants to get included.

I tried a lot to include them. However, they were not interested. There are many Qawmi madrasas in the neighboring sub-district where I worked as the head of the education department for three and a half years. During that time, I tried to communicate with the madrasa principals sometimes personally, sometimes through close ally of the principals and sometimes even through the sub-district administrative officer. I found no interest in them. They want to go according to their own way. They even don't want to share what they teach in the madrasas. The Education Statistics department of the government (BENBEIS) made several attempts to make a census of the Qawmi madrasas few years back. We had to take help from the local administration of get access to the madrasas. Even they were not willing to share with us the two basic information such as the number of teachers and number of students.

If you say that we are depriving the children in Qawmi madrasas from state benefits, my answer will be that the government must know about the activity of the sector before financing. Therefore, Qawmi madrasas should come forward and inform us what they need. However, they do not do it. They always keep a distance from the government system. The teachers of Qawmi madrasas are also former students of similar madrasas. They live in a different paradigm.

It's a large number of populations. If this huge number of children can be turned into human resources, it would have been great for the country.

6.2 Support from the government: reservation at the madrasa end

One of the key queries of the study was to investigate into the reservations at the Qawmi madrasa end to receive support from the government such as social protection benefits for the children. During interviews and focus group discussions, some of the major child focused social protection schemes of the government were discussed in brief with the participants (madrasa teachers and members of governing body). In most cases they have some sort of awareness of the schemes. Particularly, most of them appear to know about the stipend benefits received by the school going students. When they were asked why the children in the Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphan and vulnerable children do not receive such benefits,

"There is no scope to get the education stipend. The conditions of the education stipend programmes are not favourable for us. They are meant for the general schools and colleges".

--A madrasa principal during interview

the issues such as registration, non-recognition, unapproved curricula etc have been raised. The respondents and the participants also provided explanation to the reservations at their end:

On following government approved curricula: Most of the madrasas viewed that their own syllabus is very vast, and they cannot curtail those since students need to study everything in the curricula. Therefore, they cannot include anything beyond that. There is also similar instruction from their board (Befaq).

On the registration issue: The madrasas think registration with any government department is a process of controlling and influence. According to them, being registered means accepting some unnecessary bindings. In more than once place, it was mentioned that through registration, the madrasas have to accept serious unwanted interference at the cost of merely a little benefit.

6.3 Will the madrasas accept support/benefit from the government?

None of the madrasa said they will not welcome anything from the government. However, all of them raised the same issue—the support must be unconditional. If the government wants to help the madrasas, the children in the madrasas, they do not have any reservation. However, they will not accept anything beyond their own curricula and Islamic Shariyah (religious law). The government has to agree with the policy of Befaq. One of the madrasa principals, for instance, said,

“We cannot follow such instruction that we have to keep relationship with general education, or we have to send students in various national ceremonies etc which is very common in schools and colleges. We cannot do this. We shall accept help from the government when it will be unconditional. If it is conditional, we say no”.

When asking about what kind of control or influence the madrasas will not accept, in addition to curricula and teaching methods some of them also mentioned coeducation. One of the FGD participants in a madrasa said,

“These are all our basic things. We will not allow anybody to change our basics. We have been surviving without the help of the government for centuries. We can survive in the future as well. However, we shall not bend to get some money”.

Male teachers in Female Madrasas: prudah and lesson
Although madrasas strongly oppose coeducation, most of the teachers in the women’s madrasas were male. However, the practice of ‘purdah’ was found to be very strong in those madrasas. The girls study in separate rooms. Some lady teachers also stay with the students in the same room. Male teachers are not allowed to enter the female study rooms. In case any student needs to communicate with any male teacher (e.g., for study, lesson etc), the communication takes place through a very small window in the wall. The teacher calls the students one after another by their names and the students come near the window and present lessons. The lady teacher inside monitors the process.

Another madrasa principal viewed that to get government benefits it is very common in Bangladesh that one has to please the officials. According to him, *“We teach our students to*

acquire knowledge to please Allah only. Pleasing an official for some benefits will deviate me from shariyah. We do not employ unfair means. We do not want to be a part of any unfair means”.

On this issue this gentleman quotes Tagore,

“Onnay je kore ar onnay je shobe tobo ghrina jeno tare trinoshomo dobe” (Those who commit injustice and those who forbear it, Let them blaze like hay in the fire of your indignation)

(Rabindranath Tagore, Nyayadanda, 1901)

The principal further said,

“We do not want to employ unfair means to get help from the government. Accepting their help means employing unfair means, meaning accepting their wrongdoings. If we all follow this quote of Rabindranath Tagore, there will be no chaos”.

The researcher himself was astonished when a madrasa principal quotes Tagore, the Bengali Polymath and the Nobel Laureate in Literature in 1913. Tagore has always been very popular to the people of Bangladesh. However, there has been serious efforts to stigmatise Tagore to be Islamophobic by the Pakistan government. For instance, Tagore’s works were ordered banned in Pakistani media in 1967 (Emad 2009). Therefore, it is not unlikely to take it for granted that a person graduated from a very conservative madrasa and teaching in a madrasa for more than two decades will also be anti-Rabindranath. However, this notion appears to be wrong when the principal of the madrasa himself quoted Rabindranath Tagore.

According to one of the key informants, they are people living in the deserted islands. They keep themselves away from the mainstream and do not participate in any kind of state functions. They think their children will get polluted, westernized, deviated. That is why they keep away. They even do not want to get registered with any formal government authority. They do not want to receive anything from the state. They still do not trust the state/government. They have been keeping themselves away from the state long since. Although the colonial rulers are no more, they do not even want to mix with the home-grown government functionaries. They believe they will get polluted. It will take about a quarter century for them to drive this mistrust away.

The reflection of this notion of pollution has been found in the opinions of teachers of the madrasas during discussions. For instance, while talking about the historical development of Qawmi madrasas one madrasa principal mentioned that the Qawmi madrasas was created as movement against the colonial rulers rejecting their curricula as well as support. He interpreted the meaning of Qawmi meaning of the qawm or community. The madrasas are also known as *kharizi* madrasas meaning outside the government. That means, their birth was outside the government. The principal comments, *“The British colonial rulers left the country. However, we have not given up their system, their education, their policies. Therefore, they do not need to stay here to get us polluted. Their system and curricula are more than enough”.*

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Given the existing very limited provisioning of the State for the poor and vulnerable children such as the orphans, Qawmi madrasas in Bangladesh have been playing a vital role in providing basic necessities to a large number of children. There is no scope of undermining this community supported social protection for the children. However, the future of the children in Qawmi madrasas should also be a concern of the state. In the present situation, Qawmi madrasa graduates have very limited scope of job. They need to choose a career within the same arena—teaching in Qawmi madrasas, imam or muezzin in mosques. Most of the available jobs for them are very low paid. The graduates again need to rely on the community and it is hard for them to break this cycle of dependency and poverty.

About children in Qawmi madrasas the country's key policies (e.g. Constitution, Children Act) are inclusive in broader term but excluding children when specified. For instance, constitution is inclusive. However, specific policies on education, social protection etc are excluding this particular group. The policies cannot immediately be criticized in the ground that the key policies (e.g. Constitution) also argue for establishment of uniformed and universal system in the social sector such as education. It is not objectionable if state defines the goal of education line with its human resource plan. The state may objectively try to shape its citizens to achieve greater interest as a nation. Therefore, interest of the particular groups such as Qawmi madrasas is ignored. However, when assessed on the ground of child sensitivity, despite having many programmes and a large number of beneficiaries, Bangladesh's social protection schemes cannot be treated as child sensitive. Their quantitative coverage is good. However, qualitative coverage of the programmes (e.g., child sensitivity) is not satisfactory.

A serious policy gap, as identified by this study, is that the rights of a large number of children are ignored (not denied) because the institutes do not have registration and they follow an unapproved curriculum. No requirement to inform any government entity about keeping vulnerable and orphan children, and seldom visit by any of the government departments except the intelligence, indicate that the children in the Qawmi madrasas are not a concern of the state. Its concern is religious fanaticism. If the children are citizens of the country, the state is legally responsibility to see them. 'We won't follow the state because we don't take anything from the state'—cannot be an end. If the state really wants to intervene, the logic that the children belong to the state—is sufficient to convince the madrasas. However, there has been no such initiatives except blaming them to be obsolete and uninterested. As a result, these people historically remained isolated and hence they are not aware about the wider systems.

'What should be the positionality of the state about the children in Qawmi madrasas?' is now a moral philosophical question. From the secular point of view, a particular religious education should not be patronized by the state. Otherwise, such education of all the other religious minority groups should also receive equal patronization (e.g. temple/pagoda-based education).

Since the madrasas lack resources and they have demand for support (without condition), social protection for children can be a useful means to mainstream the Qawmi madrasas. If the government liberally include the Qawmi madrasas under the child focused social protection programmes, at least a sense of belongingness about the state may create among the children.

Qawmi madrasas do not receive fund from the state. Therefore, they are not accountable to the state. From the standpoint of the state this is not a desirable situation. They should be brought under any accountability. What they are receiving from the society also belongs to state.

The madrasas have aspiration about skills training although they cannot afford it within their limited resources. State can intervene here through vocational and skills development training. The growth of madrasas cannot be stopped. Therefore, it will be wise to try to make this population skilled and productive. If skills development trainings are provided to the madrasa graduates, they can be good entrepreneurs. They have a potential market in the Arabic speaking countries (Middle East) because of their Arabic language proficiency.

In Bangladesh there is no universal or targeted child grant scheme under the social protection programmes. The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) in 2015 proposed a child grant programme for all children 0-4 years of age belonging to poor households. However, the programme has not been implemented yet. Since poverty, to a great extent, is a determining factor for children's going to Qawmi madrasas, such programmes may influence the families' decision to choose the education institute of the children.

Following the recognition of the highest degree of Qawmi madrasas, it is now a very relevant debate whether the other degrees, for instance, primary, secondary and tertiary, of Qawmi madrasas will remain unrecognized. Recognition of the highest degree without any reform in the curricula logically recognizes the previous degrees. If so, then the Qawmi madrasa education, as it is today, is part of the education policy. Hence, they deserve to get all state entitlements such as salaries, allowances for teachers and social protection benefits (i.e., stipend etc) for students. Even if in the near future the children are targeted by the existing programmes, it should not be seen negatively. There are two reasons. First, the children in Qawmi madrasas are really poor. Therefore, they should be given state benefits without any condition. Secondly, social protection as a symbol of state's belongingness will have some impact on the madrasas and the children. This sense of belongingness may decrease their conservativeness towards the state.

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Appendices

Annex A: List of public social protection programmes focusing children and their budget share and beneficiaries (FY 2015-2016)

Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Programme type (target group and benefit)	Does the programme include orphan children in Qawmi madrasa-based orphanages?	Social Protection budget share in % (FY 2015-2016)	Number of Beneficiaries (in million)
1. Child Development Center (CDCs)	Services for neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents 0–16 years of age within government medical college hospitals (urban areas)	Yes. Any children aged 0-16 with such disorder can take this service	0.01	0.002
2. Enabling Environment for Child Right	Children and their families in urban slums receive BDT 2,000 per month on fulfilling three particular commitments - children must attend school; they must be withdrawn from any form of child labour; and they must not marry before reaching the age of 18 years.	No. This benefit is only for children in government approved education institutes	0.11	0.009
3. Early Learning for Child Development	This centre-based project provides age-appropriate learning such as playgroups and pre-primary education for the most disadvantaged children who are least likely to develop school preparedness skills.	No	0.04	--
4. Secondary Education Sector Investment Program	ADB supported programme for quality secondary education including stipend	No	0.80	2.3
5. Secondary Education Stipend	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for secondary level students	No	0.72	1.0
6. Higher Secondary Stipend	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for higher secondary students	No	0.29	0.68
7. Primary School Stipend Programme	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for primary school students	No	2.50	13.0
8. School Feeding Programmes	WFP supported project that provides high energy biscuits to about 3 million pre-primary and primary school	No	1.54	3.5

Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Programme type (target group and benefit)	Does the programme in- clude orphan chil- dren in Qawmi madrasa-based or- phanages?	Social Protection budget share in % (FY 2015- 2016)	Number of Beneficiar- ies (in million)
	children during school hours (20,000 of them receive a hot meal)			
9. Reaching Out of School Children	Provides a second chance to education for the disadvan- taged children aged 8-14 years who never had the chance to enroll in the primary schools or who had to drop out from school	No	0.45	0.36
10. Grants for Resi- dents in Govern- ment Orphanages and Other Institu- tions	Grants provided to 85 government orphanages all over the country where 9000 orphan children live	No	0.12	0.018
11. Capitation Grants for Orphan Stu- dents in Non-gov- ernment Orphan- ages	Annual lump grants for registered non-government or- phanages that provide educa- tion following government ap- proved curricula	Yes	0.21	0.076
12. Stipend for Disa- bled Students	Monthly stipend for stu- dents with disability at differ- ent government recognized education institutes (e.g., pri- mary, secondary, higher sec- ondary schools)	No	0.11	0.060
13. Grants for the Schools for the Disabled	Lump grant for govern- ment approved schools for disabled children	No	0.03	0.025
14. Child Sensitive So- cial Protection in Bangladesh	Rehabilitation/reunion of children living on street without parental care	No	0.05	0.001
15. Construction of Hostel for Govern- ment Orphanages	Construction project for government orphanages	No	0.07	0.009
16. Services for Chil- dren at Risk	Drop in centre for street children including food, awareness raising, entertain- ment of children, primary edu- cation, legal support and reha- bilitation within family and society.	No	0.07	0.008
17. Establishment of Hostel for the Vis- ually Impaired Children	Construction project for visually impaired children's residential schools	No	0.05	0.001
18. Construction of Facilities at Dhar- marajika Budha	Construction project at pagoda-based orphanages	No	0.03	--

Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Programme type (target group and benefit)	Does the programme in- clude orphan chil- dren in Qawmi madrasa-based or- phanages?	Social Protection budget share in % (FY 2015- 2016)	Number of Beneficiar- ies (in million)
Maha Bihar for Orphans and Dis- advantaged				
Total			7.22%	21.049+*
Note: This list only contains the public social protection initiatives. There are also NGO funded social protection initiatives which have not been considered for this research.				

Annex B: Data Collection Instruments Used

Data Collection Instrument #1: Programme Mapping Format

Exclusion of Poor and vulnerable children in Islamic Religious Schools (Madrasas) from Public Social Protection in Bangladesh

(with this format the existing child focused social protection programmes will be mapped to assess if they can/cannot benefit the poor and vulnerable children in Qawmi madrasa-based orphanages)

(To be filled from the programme implementation manual/project documents or officials of the local level of the implementing Department)

Objective of the Study

This study is a requirement to complete the degree mentioned at the bottom of the page. Through this the researcher will make efforts to know why the Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphanages in the Qawmi madrasas, do not receive/do not accept any public social protection benefit meant for the poor and vulnerable children such as the orphans. The objective of this research is merely gaining knowledge.

Taking part in the study is completely voluntary. There is no compulsion to take part in the study. You may deny giving information. However, if you agree to take part in the study, your name, designation and any other identify information will be kept anonymous. In no part of the study they will be used.

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A research study in partial fulfilment of the degree of M.A in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Mapping Issues:

1. Name of Child Focused Social Protection Programme:
2. Agency (Ministry/Division/Department):

3. Background and Objective:
4. Local Implementation: (who implements the programme at the local level):
5. Budget in BDT million (FY 2017-2018):
6. Coverage (Geographic) & Beneficiary Number (girl/boy) (Latest record, indicate year):
7. Eligibility Criteria (who are eligible for this programme):
8. Targeting (how beneficiaries are targeted):
9. Benefit (what is delivered—cash, kind, employment), for what duration & outline frequency (at what interval the benefit is delivered, i.e. monthly, quarterly etc.):
10. If there is any criterion that excludes Qawmi madrasas/Qawmi madrasa students (particularly orphan children) from the programme:
11. Does this criterion contradict with the key national policies such as The Constitution, Children Act, The Social Security Strategy? How?
12. Source of information:

Data Collection Instrument #2: Madrasa Information Format

Exclusion of Poor and vulnerable children in Islamic Religious Schools (Madrasas) from Public Social Protection in Bangladesh

(To be filled in with the help of the madrasa authority)

Objective of the Study

This study is a requirement to complete the degree mentioned at the bottom of the page. Through this the researcher will make efforts to know why the Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphanages in the Qawmi madrasas, do not receive/do not accept any public social protection benefit meant for the poor and vulnerable children such as the orphans. The objective of this research is merely gaining knowledge.

Taking part in the study is completely voluntary. There is no compulsion to take part in the study. You may deny giving information. However, if you agree to take part in the study, your name, designation and any other identify information will be kept anonymous. In no part of the study they will be used.

Name of the Institute (Madrasa):
 Address: Village/Hamlet/House No:
 Union/Municipality/Ward/Road No.:
 Upazila: Sadar South (Comilla)=1; Kasba (Brahmanbaria)=2
 Contact Phone No.:

Name of the Respondent:
 Fater/Husban's Name:
 Designation in the madrasa (teacher/official/member of governing body):
 Address: Village/Hamlet/House No:
 Union/Municipality/Ward/Road No.:
 Upazila: ; District:
 Contact Phone No.:

Name of the Researcher: Abdullah Al Hussain
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A research study in partial fulfilment of the degree of M.A in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

A. Basic Information on Institute (Madrasa)				
101. Year of Establishment:				
102. Affiliation with Education Board (Formal/Non-formal):				
103. Taught up to what level:				
104. Location of the Madrasa (Rural/Urban):				
105. Total Land area (Madrasa premise):decimals				
106. Ownership of the Land Madrasa situated: Own=1; Not own=2				
107. Type of the house madrasa situated: Mud-built=1; Semi brick-built/mixed=2; Brick-built=3				
108. Further description of the madrasa houses (single/multistoried, small/large etc) <i>(Please use separate paper if necessary)</i>				
109. Total Students:	Students	Total	Resi- dential	Non-resi- dential
	Boy			
	Girl			
110. Average number of new students enrolled/admitted every year:				
111. Total number of teachers: Male.....; Female.....; Both.....				
112. Total number of staff/officials: Male.....; Female.....; Both.....				
113. Management system of the madrasa: Private management=1, Community management=2				
114. Number of management committee members:				
115. Existence of written and formal management policy? Yes=1; No=2				
116. Source of income of the madrasa:	Income sources	Share of income (%)	Comment	
	a. Admission, Tuition and other fees (e.g., Examination fee) from students			
	b. Personal Donation (specific persons/family)			
	c. Government Grants <i>(Please specify in detail)</i>			
	d. Non-government aid (NGO, Trust etc)			
	e. Zakat/Fitra/Sadakah/Manat			
	f. Money from selling animal skins donated during Eid festival			
	g. Income from madrasas own resources: crops/rents			

	h. Foreign Aid/Donation		
	i. Others..... (please specify)		
	Total	100 %	

117. Does the madrasa receive any regular/lump grant from the government [e.g., Monthly Payment Order (MPO) as salary of teachers, Test Relief allocation for construction or repair works etc)? Yes=1; No=2

118. If yes to Q117; please explain what that is (Name of the grant/payment, purpose, frequency, amount etc)

(Please use separate paper if necessary)

B. Information on the Orphanage:

201. Year of establishment of the orphanage:

202. What are the conditions/eligibility for admission into the orphanage? (Demographic, Social, Economic, Religious)

203. Number of orphan students at present: Boys.....; Girl.....; Total.....

204. Average number of orphan children asking for admission every year:

205. Average number of orphan children admitted every year:

206. Do you need to inform any government authority to admit the orphan children in the orphanage? (E.g., Local Government, Police, Department of Social Services etc)
 Yes=1; No=2

207. If Yes in Q206, please explain your answer
(Please use separate paper if necessary)

208. What do you provide the orphan children at the orphanage? (E.g., shelter, clothing, education)
(Please use separate paper if necessary)

209. How much (BDT per month) is the average expenditure on an orphan child at this orphanage?
BDT per month

210. In your opinion, is the expenditure enough to meet the needs of the orphan children?
 Yes=1; No=2

211. Do you also give any kind of skills development training to the orphan children? If yes, please tell us about that.
(Please use separate paper if necessary)

212. Do you help the orphan children in getting work after graduation? If yes, please tell us about that.
(Please use separate paper if necessary)

C. Public Social Protection Benefits to the Orphanage		
301. There is a good number of social protection programmes/projects/schemes etc of the government to benefit the poor and vulnerable children such as orphan. Do children in your orphanage get those benefits?		
Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Programme in brief	Does any child in the orphanage get this benefit? Yes=1; No=2
19. Child Development Center (CDCs)	Services for neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents 0–16 years of age within government medical college hospitals (urban areas)	1 2
20. Enabling Environment for Child Right	Children and their families in urban slums receive BDT 2,000 per month on fulfilling three particular commitments – children must attend school; they must be withdrawn from any form of child labour; and they must not marry before reaching the age of 18 years.	1 2
21. Early Learning for Child Development	This centre-based project provides age-appropriate learning such as playgroups and pre-primary education for the most disadvantaged children who are least likely to develop school preparedness skills.	1 2
22. Secondary Education Sector Investment Program	ADB supported programme for quality secondary education including stipend	1 2
23. Secondary Education Stipend	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for secondary level students	1 2
24. Higher Secondary Stipend	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for higher secondary students	1 2
25. Primary School Stipend Programme	Government of Bangladesh supported stipend project for primary school students	1 2
26. School Feeding Programmes	WFP supported project that provides high energy biscuits to about 3 million pre-primary and primary school children during school hours (20,000 of them receive a hot meal)	1 2
27. Reaching Out of School Children	Provides a second chance to education for the disadvantaged children aged 8-14 years who never had the chance to enrol in the primary schools or who had to drop out from school	1 2
28. Grants for Residents in Government Orphanages and Other Institutions	Grants provided to 85 government orphanages all over the country where 9000 orphan children live	1 2
29. Capitation Grants for Orphan Students in Non-government Orphanages	Annual lump grants for registered non-government orphanages that provide education following government approved curricula	1 2

Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Programme in brief	Does any child in the orphanage get this benefit? Yes=1; No=2
30. Stipend for Disabled Students	Monthly stipend for students with disability at different government recognized education institutes (e.g., primary, secondary, higher secondary schools)	1 2
31. Grants for the Schools for the Disabled	Lump grant for government approved schools for disabled children	1 2
32. Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh	Rehabilitation/reunion of children living on street without parental care	1 2
33. Construction of Hostel for Government Orphanages	Construction project for government orphanages	1 2
34. Services for Children at Risk	Drop in centre for street children including food, awareness raising, entertainment of children, primary education, legal support and rehabilitation within family and society.	1 2
35. Establishment of Hostel for the Visually Impaired Children	Construction project for visually impaired children's residential schools	1 2
36. Construction of Facilities at Dhar-marajika Budha Maha Bihar for Orphans and Dis-advantaged	Construction project at pagoda-based orphanages	1 2
Others ... (Please specify)		

302. Did the madrasa ever try to get these social protection benefits?		
Child focused Public Social Protection Programmes	Did the madrasa try to get this benefit for the orphan children? Yes=1; No=2	
1. Child Development Center (CDCs)	1	2
2. Enabling Environment for Child Right	1	2
3. Early Learning for Child Development	1	2
4. Secondary Education Sector Investment Program	1	2
5. Secondary Education Stipend	1	2
6. Higher Secondary Stipend	1	2
7. Primary School Stipend Programme	1	2
8. School Feeding Programmes	1	2
9. Reaching Out of School Children	1	2
10. Grants for Residents in Government Orphanages and Other Institutions	1	2

11. Capitation Grants for Orphan Students in Non-government Orphanages	1	2
12. Stipend for Disabled Students	1	2
13. Grants for the Schools for the Disabled	1	2
14. Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh	1	2
15. Construction of Hostel for Government Orphanages	1	2
16. Services for Children at Risk	1	2
17. Establishment of Hostel for the Visually Impaired Children	1	2
18. Construction of Facilities at Dharmarajika Budha Maha Bihar for Orphans and Disadvantaged	1	2
Others ...(Please specify		
19.		
20.		
21.		
22.		
303. If you had tried and yet did not get any benefit for the orphanage, what was the obstacle to get them? <i>(Please use separate paper if necessary)</i>		
304. If you did not try for those benefits for the orphanage, why did not you try to get those benefits meant for the poor and vulnerable children? (Possible answers might also be, 'government policy does not allow', 'madrasa is self-sufficient', madrasa does not want to be governed by state authority etc). <i>(Please use separate paper if necessary)</i>		
305. Do you think orphan children in madrasas should also get social protection benefits of the government like the students in primary and secondary schools and state-run orphanages? Please tell us something to support your answer. <i>(Please use separate paper if necessary)</i>		

**Thank you very much for your valuable time. The information you have provided will help the study a lot. If necessary, we shall communicate with you again.
THANK YOU!**

Data Collection Instrument #3: FGD Checklist for FGD with Teachers/members of governing body of madrasas

Exclusion of Poor and vulnerable children in Islamic Religious Schools (Madrasas) from Public Social Protection in Bangladesh

<p>Objective of the Study</p> <p>This study is a requirement to complete the degree mentioned at the bottom of the page. Through this the researcher will make efforts to know why the Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphanages in the Qawmi madrasas, do not receive/do not accept any public social protection benefit meant for the poor and vulnerable children such as the orphans. The objective of this research is merely gaining knowledge.</p> <p>Taking part in the study is completely voluntary. There is no compulsion to take part in the study. You may deny giving information. However, if you agree to take part in the study, your name, designation and any other identify information will be kept anonymous. In no part of the study they will be used.</p>
<p>Name of the Institute (Madrasa): Address: Village/Hamlet/House No: Union/Municipality/Ward/Road No.: Upazila: Sadar South (Comilla)=1; Kasba (Brahmanbaria)=2 Contact Phone No.:</p>

Participants Identification:

S l. #	Name	Home address Upazila & District		Designation (Teacher/Governing body member)
		Upazila	District	
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				

Name of the Researcher: Abdullah Al Hussain
 Contact Address: Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD)
 Kotbari, Comilla, Bangladesh
 Phone: +88 01715320716

A research study in partial fulfilment of the degree of M.A in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Issues of Discussion at FGD

1. As we know, orphan children study in this madrasa. Let us discuss how orphan children are admitted here. Discuss the entire process.
 - ✓ How the families know about the madrasa
 - ✓ What eligibility criteria used
 - ✓ Any fees paid for admission
2. Let us discuss about the goods and services the madrasa provides to the orphan children:
 - ✓ Food: types, frequency, quality etc
 - ✓ Accommodation: types, quality, adequacy etc
 - ✓ Clothing
 - ✓ Education: up to what level, any skills development training etc
 - ✓ Supports after graduation: e.g., employment support etc
 - ✓ Average expenditure per student per month in BDT
3. Let us now discuss how does the madrasa meet these expenditures?
 - ✓ Discuss various sources of income
 - ✓ If there is any government support (e.g., grant under any social protection scheme)
 - ✓ If there is any government support (donation/aid etc)
4. We often see, madrasa students help the madrasas earn (in collecting donation at various places). Would you please tell us how students in your madrasa, particularly the orphan students, help in your earning processes?
 - ✓ What are the sources of income students are employed
 - ✓ If this is mandatory for them to help madrasas earn
5. Is the income of the madrasa sufficient to meet all its expenditures?
 - ✓ Discuss why they think income is sufficient/not sufficient
6. The government has been providing various social protection benefits to the poor and vulnerable children such as stipend, grants, food supplements, services etc. Do you know about those benefits?
 - ✓ Note the types of programmes/projects/schemes the participants can mention
 - ✓ Note if they know the eligibility and amount
7. Did the madrasa apply for such benefits to the relevant department of the government?
 - ✓ Discuss if they did and the outcome of their efforts
 - ✓ If they did not, try to know why they did not
8. What are the specific benefits of the government children in your madrasa get?
 - ✓ Note if they mention any benefit
 - ✓ Note if they know the eligibility and amount
9. Is there any reservation from the madrasa end to receive such benefits from the government?
 - ✓ Discuss if there is any reservation
 - ✓ Discuss if the madrasas do not want to get these benefits
10. Please discuss if there is any suggestion about the existing child focused social protection schemes?

Thank you very much for your valuable time and cooperation

Data Collection Instrument #4: Key Informant Interview Checklist

Exclusion of Poor and vulnerable children in Islamic Religious Schools (Madrasas) from Public Social Protection in Bangladesh

Objective of the Study

This study is a requirement to complete the degree mentioned at the bottom of the page. Through this the researcher will make efforts to know why the Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphanages in the Qawmi madrasas, do not receive/do not accept any public social protection benefit meant for the poor and vulnerable children such as the orphans. The objective of this research is simply gaining knowledge.

Taking part in the study is completely voluntary. There is no compulsion to take part in the study. You may deny giving information. However, if you agree to take part in the study, your name, designation and any other identify information will be kept anonymous. In no part of the study they will be used.

Name of the Key Informant:

Designation:

Name of the Office:

Address:

Contact Phone No.:

Name of the Researcher: Abdullah Al Hussain

Contact Address: Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD)

Kotbari, Comilla, Bangladesh

Phone: +88 01715320716

A research study in partial fulfilment of the degree of M.A in Development Studies at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

Key Informant Interview Checklist for Department of Social Services

1. Department of Social Services (DSS) is one of the key agencies of the government to provide services to the vulnerable groups of society, the poorest of the poor, the marginalized and the disadvantaged groups. DSS has been implementing a large number of social protection programmes, projects, schemes for such vulnerable people. As we know, the Department has some programmes particularly meant for the poor and the vulnerable children. Would you please tell us about those programmes in brief including their target groups, eligibility and benefits?
2. As we have learnt from the implementation manuals of some of the programmes of DSS that they deliver the programmes to students at different education institutes such as school, colleges and orphanages. Do you know whether these programmes include/exclude students in Qawmi madrasas, particularly the orphan children in those madrasas? Please tell us about their inclusion/exclusion in the light of the programme policy.
3. Do Qawmi madrasas ever approach you for getting social protection benefits of the DSS?
4. Do you think orphan children in Qawmi madrasas also deserve to get benefits of some of the social protection schemes of DSS? If, yes, then which schemes? If no, then why not?
5. Did you ever consider orphan children in Qawmi madrasas for any of the schemes implemented by DSS? Did you ever send request to higher authority to consider them in the programmes' policies?
6. DSS also has some orphanages in different parts of the country. We have learnt that their capacity is only about 9000. If you know about the situation of the orphan children in Qawmi madrasas, would you please make a comparison between the Qawmi madrasa-based orphanages and the state-run orphanages under DSS?

Key Informant Interview Checklist (Department of Primary Education/Secondary Education)

1. Besides mainstream secular education system such as the Bengali medium/English medium and Aliya madrasas, there is another stream, the Qawmi madrasas. Many of the Qawmi madrasas have orphanages called yateemkhana. Do you have any statistics on the number of Qawmi madrasas and their students in your administrative unit (district/sub-district)?
2. Your Department implements the largest social protection schemes for children (e.g, Primary Education Stipend/Secondary Education Stipend). Would you please tell us if the programmes include/exclude the Qawmi madrasa students?
3. As we know Qawmi madrasas provide free food, accommodation and education to orphan children in the madrasa-based orphanages without support from the state. Do you think this is a support to the state? Please tell us your opinion about the orphan children and the orphanages in Qawmi madrasas.
4. As we have learnt that poverty is one of the main criteria for inclusion into the major stipend programmes. Some of the programmes use poverty map for targeting their beneficiaries. Some use the proxy means test (PMT) score for selecting beneficiaries. How would you see the orphan children in Qawmi madrasas if you compare them with the children in primary and secondary schools?
5. Do Qawmi madrasas ever approach you for getting social protection benefits under your Department?
6. Do you think orphan children in Qawmi madrasas also deserve to get benefits of some of the social protection schemes of your department? If, yes, then which schemes? If no, then why not?

7. Did you ever consider orphan children in Qawmi madrasas for any of the schemes implemented by your Department? Did you ever send request to higher authority to consider them in the programmes' policies?

Key Informant Interview Checklist for NGOs working for Child Rights/Implementing child focused social protection programmes

1. As we know, your organization has many programmes for the well-being of underprivileged and vulnerable children. Some programmes target children in various education institutes. Would you please tell us in brief about your child focused initiatives?
2. Besides mainstream secular education system such as the Bengali medium/English medium and Aliya madrasas, there is another stream, the Qawmi madrasas. Many of the Qawmi madrasas have orphanages called yateemkhana. Do you have any programme that includes the Qawmi madrasa students, particularly the orphan children in Qawmi madrasa-based orphanages?
3. If your child focused programmes include/exclude the Qawmi madrasa students, please tell us about their inclusion/exclusion
4. Do you think orphan children in Qawmi madrasas also deserve to get benefits of some of the social protection schemes of your organization? If, yes, then which schemes? If no, then why not?
5. What is your opinion about the orphan children in Qawmi madrasas? Are they getting enough support, or they also need support from NGOs like you?
6. Do Qawmi madrasas ever approach you for getting social protection benefits implemented by your organization?
7. Did your organization ever consider Qawmi madrasas/orphan children in Qawmi madrasas for any programme implemented by your organization?
8. Do you have any plan to include them under any existing/new programme in the future?

Key Informant Interview Checklist for Donor agencies funding child focused public social protection programmes

1. Besides mainstream secular education system such as the Bengali medium/English medium and Aliya madrasas, there is another stream, the Qawmi madrasas. The most conservative estimates show the number of students in Qawmi madrasas is more than a million. Studies also reveal that a large number of students in Qawmi madrasas are from the most disadvantaged segments of the society including orphan children. Do your organization have any statistics on them?
2. Your organization supports some of the key social protection programmes of the government that benefit the primary/secondary level students in the country. Some of the programmes use poverty map for targeting their beneficiaries. Some use the proxy means test (PMT) score for selecting beneficiaries where poverty is one of the key eligibility criteria. Do you know if your programmes include/exclude Qawmi madrasa students, particularly the orphan children in Qawmi madrasas in the country?
3. If Qawmi madrasas are excluded from your programmes, would you please explain why they are excluded?
4. Do your organizational policies exclude children in faith-based institutions such as madrasas from its development initiatives? Please tell us about it.
5. Did you ever get any proposal from the government/organization of madrasas to fund programmes supporting Qawmi madrasa students, particularly the orphan children?
6. Do you have any plan to include them under any existing/new programme in the future?

Key Informant Interview Checklist for Social Policy/Education/Social Protection Researchers

1. Besides mainstream secular education system such as the Bengali medium/English medium and Aliya madrasas, there is another stream, the Qawmi madrasas. The most conservative estimates show the number of students in Qawmi madrasas is more than a million. Studies also reveal that a large number of students in Qawmi madrasas are from the most disadvantaged segments of the society including orphan children. It is also estimated by studies that this number is increasing every year. What is your opinion about the growth of such madrasas parallelly with mainstream education?
2. As we know, the government has a large number of social protection programmes targeting poor and vulnerable children. Some of them transfer cash (e.g., stipend programmes), some of them transfer services or goods. Over 7% of the social security budget goes directly to the children. However, students in Qawmi madrasas are excluded from these benefits. Will you make any comment on this?
3. The Constitution of Bangladesh asserts that it shall be a fundamental responsibility of the state to provide social security or public assistance to certain vulnerable groups of people where the orphans have been mentioned particularly. However, most of the child focused programmes of the government (e.g., primary and secondary stipend programmes) exclude the Qawmi madrasa students, even the orphan children in those madrasas. What is your opinion about their exclusion?
4. Despite exclusion from all state supports, the number of madrasas and number of children in madrasas are increasing. Do you think exclusion of Qawmi madrasas could not hinder their growth? Please comment.
5. Do you think exclusion from state benefits such as MPO of teachers, social protection schemes etc, negatively impact the Qawmi madrasa students?
6. What is your opinion about Qawmi madrasas students and public social protection benefits?
 - a. They should get them.

- b. They should not get them (because they do not follow state recognized curricula)
- c. They should not get them (because they get lot of community/foreign support)

Please explain your opinion.

- 7. Do you think Qawmi madrasas are working as a social protection because they are providing free food, accommodation, education and protection to a large number of poor and vulnerable children (e.g., orphans)?
- 8. Do you think government should increase the capacity of the state-run orphanages (present capacity is only 9000)?

Thank you very much for your valuable time. The information you have provided will help the study a lot. If necessary, we shall communicate with you again.

THANK YOU!

Annex C: List of FGD Participants

Name	Designation/Office
1. Hafez Maolana Waliullah	Muhtamim (Principal), Nandanpur Ashraful Uloom Madrasa and Orphanage
2. Hafez Md. Munir Hossain	Teacher, Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
3. Maolana Abdul Bari	Shaikhul Hadis (Professor), Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
4. Maolana Abdul Kuddus	Jamia Arabia Kasemul Uloom Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
5. Maolana Abdur Razzaq	Muhtamim (Principal), Jamia Arabia Kasemul Uloom Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
6. Maolana Abul Kalam	Teacher, Nandanpur Ashraful Uloom Madrasa and Orphanage
7. Maolana Alauddin	Teacher, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
8. Maolana Mizanur Rahman	Headmaster, Kotbari Mura Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
9. Maolana Noman	Vice Principal, Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
10. Maolana Nur Mohammad	Professor, Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
11. Md. Amir Hamza	Teacher, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
12. Md. Kabir Hossain	Member of Governing Body, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
13. Md. Mohsin	Teacher, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
14. Md. Nesar Uddin	Teacher, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
15. Md. Rafikul Islam	Assistant Director (Education), Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
16. Md. Wasiullah	Teacher, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
17. Mr. Abdul Khaleq	Member of Governing Body, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
18. Mr. Abdul Matin	Member of Governing Body, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
19. Mr. Abdur Rashid	Member of Governing Body, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
20. Mr. Lutfar Rahman	Members, Governing Body, Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
21. Ms. Alea Begum	Khalamma (Assistant Teacher), Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Orphanage (Girls), Sangraish, Comilla
22. Ms. Morjina Khatun	Khalamma (Assistant Teacher), Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Orphanage (Girls), Sangraish, Comilla
23. Ms. Rosy Begum	Assistant Superintend, Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Orphanage (Girls), Sangraish, Comilla
24. Ms. Shahnewaz Begum	Khalamma (Assistant Teacher), Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Orphanage (Girls), Sangraish, Comilla
25. Mufti Shoaib	Secretary (Education), Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
26. Mufti Sultan Ahmad	Muhtamim (Principal), Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla

Annex D: List of Key Informants

#	Name	Designation/Office
1	Atik Anwar Chowdhury	Project Director, Skill to Succeed Programme, Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) Programme, Child Poverty Sector, Save the Children, Dhaka Bangladesh
2	Hazrat Maolana Abu Musa	Nayeb e Amir (Vice Principal), Khadizatul Kubra (R) Girls' Madrasa and Orphanage
3	Maulana Murshidul Islam	Muhtamim (Headmaster), Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
4	Md. Abdul Mannan	Field Supervisor, Upazila Social Services Office, Adarsha Sadar Upazila, Comilla
5	Md. Muntasir	Programme Manager, Bridge School Education, BRAC, Dhaka, Bangladesh
6	Md. Shah Jalal	Upazila Secondary Education Officer, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla
7	Mr. Abdur Rashid	Member of Governing Body, Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa, Comilla
8	Dr. Masudul Haq Chowdhury	Director (Rural Education), Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Kotbari, Comilla
9	Ms. Helena Nur	Superintendent, Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Orphanage) (Girls), Sangraish, Comilla
10	Ms. Shamima Sharmin	Upazila Social Services Officer, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla
11	Ms. Suraiya Akter	Upazila Assistant Education Officer, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla
12	Mufti Mozammel Hossain	Muhtamim (Principal), Gondhomoti Islamia Madrasa and Orphanage
13	Mufti Sultan Ahmad	Muhtamim (Principal), Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage, Comilla
14	Professor Abul Barkat	Department of Economics, University of Dhaka;
15	Professor ASM Amanullah	Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka

Annex E: Madrasas at a Glance

Name of Madrasa	Year of Est	Total Students	Address	Contact	Highest Level Taught
1. Gondhomoti Islamia Madrasa & Orphanage	1975	240	Kotbari, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Mufti Mozammel Hossain (Principal) +88-01818797920	Hedaye Jamat (HSC)
2. Kotbari Khankaye Salehia and Mohabbatia Dinia Madrasa	2010	150	Kalirbazar Road, Kotbari, Comilla	Maulana Murshidul Islam 8801818797920	Panjom (Class 10)
3. Khadizatul Kubra Women's Madrasa & Orphanage	1995	600	Rampur, Kotbari, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Hazrat Maolana Abu Musa (Vice Principal) +88-01923654139	Al Hayatul Uliad-Daora e Hadis
4. Nondanpur Madrasa & Orphanage	1992	400	Kotbari Road, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Hafez Maolana Waliullah (Principal)/Maolana Abul Kalam +88-01710-804146/+88-01813020565	Sher he Jami (HSC)
5. Nandanpur Women's Madrasa & Orphanage	1992	73	Kotbari Road, Sadar South Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Hafez Maolana Waliullah (Principal)/Maolana Abul Kalam +88-01710-804146/+88-01813020565	Mishqat (Undergrad)
6. Jamia Arabia Kasemul Uloom Madrasa & Orphanage	1951	600	Laksham Road, Adarsha Sadar Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Maolana Abdul Kuddus 8801813020565	Daora e Hadis & Ifta (Islamic Research/PhD)
7. Ranirbazar Madrasa and Orphanage	1972	1154	Ranir Bazar, Adarsha Sadar Upazila, Comilla, Bangladesh	Mufti Sultan Ahmad 8801817513531	Daora e Hadis & Ifta (Islamic Research/PhD)
8. Kotbari Mura Madrasa and Orphanage	1998	250	Kalirbazar Road, Kotbari, Comilla	Maolana Mizanur Rahman 8801720423533	Hedayetun Nahu (class 8)

Annex F: The State-owned orphanage in Bangladesh

<p>Sarkari Shishu Paribar (Government Children's Family) (Girls) (The State-owned orphanage in Bangladesh) Comilla, Bangladesh</p>
<p>Established in 1972 the orphanage is called Sarkari Shishu Paribar (in English it should be Government Children's Family). There are one hundred seats in this orphanage. In the past all the seats were meant for the orphan children. However, the government has made a provision for accommodating 5 elderly vulnerable male or female (depending on the type of the orphanage i.e., boys' or girls') in each of the orphanages. Since then the orphanage can accommodate 95 girls and 5 elderly women. At present there are 91 orphan girls and 5 elderly women in the orphanage. That means there are still 4 vacant seats. Generally, vacant seat is not a common phenomenon in any public institute in Bangladesh, be it a school, a college or university, a hospital or even a prison. During key informant interview or focus group discussion with the officials of the Department of Social Services it has been clear that several seats are always vacant in most of the orphanages and it is more evident for the boys' orphanages.</p> <p>In most cases, the mothers bring the children. There is sub-district Social Services Office in each of the sub-districts. The office helps the families bring their children if eligible.</p> <p>The post of the residential teachers in the orphanage is called Khalamma (it is a Bengali word meaning sister of mother). In the culture of Bangladesh Khalamma is a very near relation which next to mother. There are also non-residential teachers who stay at the orphanages during the day.</p> <p>Campus, security, Sports and Recreation: The institute is situated in large campus (2.28 acres) with enough security. There are separate office, hostel, and class buildings. Sports and recreation facilities are also very good. There is a large playground, garden, and other sports facilities and equipment. Children need to work in the garden as well.</p> <p>Accommodation: Eight girls live in each of the rooms in the hostel. There are 4 beds in every room and two girls share one bed. There are separate table, chair and cupboard for all of them.</p> <p>Food: The children get 4 times food every day—breakfast, lunch, evening snacks and supper. The menu is determined by the Department of Social Services.</p> <p>Visits by High Officials: The designated civil servants of the district, the members of the parliament often visit the orphanage and give the children food and other gifts.</p> <p>Education, Skills Training and job Reservation: Children study in neighboring education institutes. There are pre-primary schools up to class 2. From class three onwards, they go to outside institutes. In addition to general education, the children also receive vocational training on different trades. The government also has a reservation policy for certain job for the children who grow up and educated in the state-owned orphanages.</p>