

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS *REPORT NO. 2: THE SOMALI REGION OF ETHIOPIA*



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study aimed to assess (a) the basic characteristics of, and nature of predominant instructional practices in, Islamic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia; (b) school personnel perceptions of educational quality; (c) the participant schools' approach to curricula; and (d) parents' involvement with the life of Islamic schools. Researchers visited 19 schools in three zones of the Somali Region of Ethiopia: Shinile, Godey and Jijiga. Classroom observations were used to collect data on the participant teachers' instructional practices and classroom interactions. The teachers and head teachers responded to questionnaires and selected members of the former group participated in individual interviews. Additionally, the participant schools were surveyed for infrastructural elements and the availability of teaching and learning resources.

The participant schools were generally extremely poorly resourced, with almost all of them conducting classes out of doors and only about half having as much as a blackboard for writing. Class sizes were large but not exceedingly so by sub-Saharan standards, and adequate space was not a problem provided the outdoor venues, but clearly being exposed to the elements can be an impediment to effective teaching and learning. Few schools possessed books or notebooks; in many cases, students used a wooden tablet called a *luh* to write. Teachers and head teachers repeatedly expressed a desire to receive support in the form of physical resources. The environment is clearly a very challenging one in which to teach and learn.

Instructional practices primarily reflected the tradition of Qur'anic transmission via memorization. Students generally sat on the ground as the teacher reviewed a Qur'anic passage and were then called on, individually or in groups (often the whole class together), to recite the passage themselves. Classroom observations show a significant amount of teacher-student interactivity, particularly between teachers and entire classes or groups of students. The cognitive level of these interactions was so consistently that of rote memorization that researchers chose to discontinue the use of an instrument designed to measure it. Teachers somewhat rarely offered praise and most often neither praised nor criticized the students with whom they interacted. That more innovative teaching methods were generally not used is not surprising, as the schools surveyed had not been introduced to such methods and teachers generally had only religious, and not pedagogical, training.

Most of the participant schools offer only religious subjects and the teachers and head teachers strongly emphasized the importance of religious education, often above that of education in secular subjects. A few interviewees expressed the desire to expand their curriculum to include more subjects. Teachers and head teachers further noted that parents do tend to have a relationship with the schools, but in some cases that relationship is limited to financial support.

It is concluded that Islamic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia, as local, community-supported educational institutions, could serve as a point of delivery for quality basic education, particularly given that they are not only open but eager to receive support from outside sources and that their pupils are generally not accessing such an education elsewhere. However, there are serious impediments to reaching that goal based upon the profile of these schools. Their

remoteness and lack of access to other basic infrastructure and services make them difficult to reach. Their needs are great, including material support in the form of shelters and learning materials, guidance in transforming their curricula to include secular subjects, and hiring and/or training teachers in order to provide teachers capable of effectively delivering such a curriculum. Precedents for this kind of support exist, however, and programming implications are presented in the report's conclusion.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Educational Quality Improvement Program 1—Classrooms, Schools, Communities (EQUIP1) Leader Award (Cooperative Agreement No. GDG-A-00-03-00006-00) is carrying out a series of pilot studies on perceptions and practices associated with educational quality in a variety of countries. EQUIP1 is a USAID-funded leader with associate award mechanism to support improvements in educational quality at the classroom, school, and community levels. The goal of this series of studies is to provide information to USAID and the wider international development education community that will assist them in designing relevant strategies and technical assistance packages vis-à-vis the improvement of educational quality. This report presents the findings from one of these studies.

The present report presents the results of the EQUIP1 study on educational quality in Qur'anic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia. The following sections present: (1) purpose, significance, and background of the study, (2) methodology used to conduct the study, (4) the results of the study, in particular analyses of data derived from the six instruments used in the study, and (5) conclusions and programming recommendations.

A. Purpose of the study

This study aimed to gain a better understanding of teachers' and head teachers' perceptions and practices associated with educational quality in the distinctive context of Islamic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia. Islamic schools world wide, despite the variation one finds from one country to another and even within countries, constitute a particular form of schooling, one with a long and distinguished history, a particular set of beliefs about education and learning, and distinctive pedagogical methods. As many parents in Ethiopia and elsewhere are availing themselves of a private Islamic school education for their children and as Islamic schools often constitute the only form of education available to very poor families, understanding the basic characteristics of these schools and what quality means to stakeholders in this context is critical if development assistance is going to reach these schools and their attendant student populations.

Nineteen schools participated in this study, carried out across three zones of the Somali Region of Ethiopia: Shinile, Gode and Jijiga. The initial intent of the researchers was to select primarily schools which had participated in a USAID-funded educational program called Interactive Radio Instruction for Somalis (IRIS), which provided interactive radio instruction lessons, teacher training, and some basic educational materials to schools, including Islamic schools, in the region from 2001 to 2004. However, this did not prove feasible, and the schools studied had not participated in the IRIS program. Most of the schools participating in this study only offered Islamic subjects.

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

- What are the predominant instructional practices in Islamic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia?
- What are some of the basic characteristics of the schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia in terms of class size and the availability of resources?
- What are teachers' and head masters' perceptions of educational quality in the participant schools?
- How do these schools accommodate both religious and secular curricula (or, if they offer only religious subjects, would they be interested in expanding their curriculum)?
- Are PTAs and community members active in the educational improvement process even in the absence of direct assistance from USAID projects?

B. Significance of the Study

It is not unusual for Islamic schools to be the most accessible, or only, form of education available to families in rural areas across much of Asia and Africa. Parents have long looked to these institutions as a source for the transmission of religious knowledge and, sometimes, a broader basic education. Governments are also increasingly considering Islamic schools as delivery points for learning and are seeking to understand whether and how they can be enlisted in the effort to achieve the mandates of Education for All. Thus, many governments have begun to consider how to define acceptable minimum standards for Islamic schools, often recognizing that, like public schools, Islamic schools are diverse and provide disparate levels of quality in education.

If the countries these governments serve are to achieve Education for All, one strategy is to ensure that Islamic schools, already educating millions of children, are providing a quality basic education. Where improved quality and/or an expanded curriculum (where schools offer only religious studies) are needed, these schools are often promising sites for donor assisted programs because they already embody many of the tenets of sustainable development. Islamic schools are community initiated, community supported, resource-lean institutions that are sustainable in their current contexts. Parents want their children to attend Islamic schools to memorize the Qur'an. Therefore, parents already trust the institution as a source of instruction for their children. Islamic schools are well positioned to make the most from small donor investments, as institutions with little bureaucracy, that are rooted in the fabric of their communities, and that are open to strategies to expand and improve the education provided to children, as long as this does not interfere with the principal mission of Qur'anic transmission (Abd-el-Khalick, et. al., p. 3). Indeed, despite their breadth, contemporary Islamic schools are "perhaps the most important example of indigenous education in today's world" (Wagner, 1989, p. 5-6).

Western donor agencies have little history working with Islamic schools, but USAID and others are interested in expanding assistance to Muslim countries and, in particular, Islamic schools, in places such as Pakistan, Indonesia, Morocco, and parts of East and West Africa. Therefore, increased knowledge of these schools and their communities will help donor agencies design

appropriate and effective assistance programs. This study explores the characteristics of a group of rural Islamic schools in the Somali region of Ethiopia, with possible implications for other schools in the Horn of Africa and in other rural areas in numerous countries where Islamic schooling is as readily or more readily available than government-sponsored education.

III. METHODOLOGY

This report summarizes the results of the analysis of the data collected during January 2006 by a team of four local researchers in three zones of the Somali Region of Ethiopia: Shinile, Godey and Jigjiiga. After the instruments for data collection were developed and revised extensively, two international EQUIP1 staff members trained the researchers in data collection techniques in general and how to use the specific instruments developed for this particular study. The team then conducted a school-based practice in using the instruments in a private institution offering both Islamic and secular subjects. The information obtained during the school-based practice was used to further revise and finalize the instruments. The researchers used the following six instruments to collect data for this study:

- The Classroom Observation Form, a 15-item instrument that requires observers to evaluate teachers on a 3-point scale¹ with respect to a list of teacher instructional behaviors related to classroom management and organization, active and student-centered teaching, gender equity, instructional materials and aids, and student evaluation;
- The Classroom Interaction Recorder, which requires observers to document the nature of teacher-initiated, student-teacher interactions during the class. For a portion of observed time, researchers measured the interactions' affective nature, noting whether the teacher's words and/or apparent attitude toward the student were positive, neutral, or critical. A similar recorder was designed to assess the interactions' cognitive level, but for reasons explained below, the cognitive recorder was developed and tested but not used. Researchers also recorded on this instrument how teacher-student interactions were distributed among boys, girls and groups as well as across different areas in the observed classrooms;
- A Teacher Questionnaire that inquires about teachers' background and experiences, in-service training, the make-up of the class and school day, and parent and community involvement in the school;
- A Teacher Interview that asks more in-depth, open-ended questions about quality and relevance of education, the difference between government and Islamic schools, etc.;
- A Head Teacher Questionnaire that inquires about the make-up of the school in terms of students and teachers, quality of education in the school, involvement of the head teacher and school teachers with international donor-funded activities, educational quality in Qur'anic schools in general, school curriculum, and parent and community involvement

¹ Teachers were rated on 15 individual behaviors using a 3-point scale as follows: 1 = "No," 2 = "Rarely," and 3 = "Yes", with all target behaviors stated in the positive. Rubrics were developed for each item. Observations were conducted by pairs with one individual using the Classroom Observation form and the other using the Classroom Interaction Recorder.

with school life; and

- A School Resource Checklist, which documents the physical structure of and resources available in the school.

IV. RESULTS

A. Classroom Observation Form

A total of 36 teachers (100% male) were observed using the classroom observation form. Each item on the classroom observation form lists a target teaching behavior in the positive and calls for the researcher to rate the teacher's success in applying that behavior as follows: 1="No", 2="Rarely", and 3="Yes". The list of target behaviors was developed to measure teachers' use of active, student-centered pedagogy, attention to gender equity, and preparation for class. Researchers were provided with rubrics and trained in recognizing the target behaviors.

Table 1 presents the overall rating distribution for the 15 individual classroom observation form items. The data show that the mean rating was above 2 on 11 of the 15 items. Teachers received unfavorable ratings, with a mean score below 2, on encouraging appropriate behavior in the classroom ($M=1.92$), ensuring the visibility of instructional materials around the classroom ($M=1.71$), ensuring that encouragement is used rather than criticism ($M=1.86$), and making use of the blackboard in an effective and useful way ($M=1.76$). On two additional items, providing a positive environment for girls and encouraging their participation and leadership ($M=2.06$), and using student-centered teaching strategies ($M=2.19$), teachers earned a mean score just above 2. On all six of these items, teachers were more likely to be reported as not performing or rarely performing the target behavior (earning a rating of 1 or 2) than to be reported as performing the behavior (earning a rating of 3). Thus, these behaviors might be particularly emphasized if a professional development program were developed for this group of teachers.

On the remaining nine items, more teachers received ratings of 3 than received a rating of 1 or 2; thus, the majority of teachers were considered to be performing these target behaviors. Teachers were most successful in devoting at least 40% of the lesson to student practice of what was learned ($M=2.83$), checking to see that students understood the material presented ($M=2.83$), providing specific feedback to assist students in finding or understanding the right answer ($M=2.69$), and ensuring that teacher-student interactivity occurred ($M=2.67$).

These means and distributions of ratings on the classroom observation form suggest that teachers are, indeed, using the targeted behavior to a significant extent. The nature of the lessons observed must inform the interpretation of that data. Since the participant schools generally taught only religious studies, the goal of most of the observed classes was students' rote memorization of the Qur'an. Student-centered teaching generally de-emphasizes rote memorization, so it might appear surprising that teachers were observed performing somewhat regularly the student-centered behaviors targeted by the classroom observation form. Several observations might help to explain this apparent tension.

First, elements of student-centered teaching are often included in traditional Islamic school pedagogy. In this case, for example, students practiced reciting the Qur'an in order to memorize passages, so teachers were observed devoting much of the lesson to student practice of what was learned as well as checking to see that students understood the material presented. Similarly, when students recited passages, teachers may often have offered feedback on the recitation, a form of interactivity, so teachers scored well on providing feedback and ensuring interactivity as well. While this pedagogy would generally not be described as student-centered teaching in its full form, a program of professional development aimed at encouraging these teachers to use student-centered pedagogy could build on these practices already in use.

Second, the ratings on some items relating to student-teacher interaction (i.e., calling on students individually, using praise rather than criticism) appear to be inconsistent with the anecdotal observations of the researchers and with the classroom interaction recorder data. This could be due to the fact that, on this instrument more than the others, researchers were called upon to “rate” the teacher, implying the imposition of a judgement not on one particular interaction but on the whole range of classroom behaviors and interactions. Hence, we are of the opinion that the raters, all local hires from the region, while competent, were probably more inclined to be generous in their assessment of the teachers when using this instrument. In addition, the researchers had not, as with the researchers working on *Educational Quality in Islamic Schools, Report No. 1: Nigeria*, previously used the instrument, and had limited practice time with the instrument due to the impending Eid Al Adha holiday.

B. Classroom Interactions

Thirty-five classroom interaction scans were completed. Using a classroom interaction recorder, researchers noted whether, when interacting with students, teachers used praise or criticism or whether the interaction was neutral. The interaction recorder originally included a measure of the cognitive level of student-teacher interactions, indicating whether the teacher asked a student or students to repeat or memorize information, recall information, or engage in a higher-level thinking task such as explaining information. After testing the recorder in a limited number of schools, the research team found that the interactions so consistently fell in the lowest category of thinking skill required—repeating or memorizing information—that there was little value in continuing to use such an instrument. Although the team discontinued use of that instrument, they observed the same pattern in the remainder of the classrooms. Thus, it is safe to assert that the great majority of teacher-student interactions in the observed schools required students to perform lower level thinking skills such as repeating or memorizing information.

The data show that a large majority of teachers (26 teachers, 74%) did not use praise even once during the observed sessions, and those who used praise did so less often than their own use of criticism. In comparison, about 86% of the teachers were critical of students at least once during their classroom interactions. It is important to note that more than 80% of all interactions were neutral. One possible explanation for this is the widespread use of memorization as a technique, as the recitation of a passage of the Qur'an, for example, would register as a neutral interaction (unless the teacher praised or criticized the student's performance afterward). Student-centered teaching aims to motivate and engage students in their own learning, and the use of praise and

encouragement when appropriate can help achieve that goal. In the schools visited, however, criticism prevailed and praise was a rare occasion during instruction. With only about one quarter of teachers using praise at any point during the observed lessons, it could be concluded that the observed classrooms were stressful or, at least, not favorable from the perspective of students.

Researchers also recorded how teacher-student interactions were distributed among boys, girls and groups as well as across different areas in the observed classrooms. As reported by teachers, the students in the participant schools were 63% male and 37% female. The interactions were in favor of boys over girls as a percentage of total interactions, with 43% of all interactions with boys, 29% with girls, and 28% with groups. Given the gender disparity in the observed student population, however, the data indicate a rather even distribution of interactions by gender. The students were 63% male, and 60% of the *individual* interactions were with boys, while the 37% of female students received 40% of the individual interactions.

In general, the interaction data show that, although teachers engaged both boys and girls, the types of interactions (both cognitive and affective) needed for active, student-centered teaching and learning to take place, were absent in the surveyed teachers' practice.

C. Teacher Interview

The teacher interview included detailed, open-ended questions and was completed by 19 teachers, one per participant school. The orally administered questions focused on the quality of education and the nature of Qur'anic schooling versus government schooling.

The teachers' responses demonstrate a strong emphasis on the value of religious education over that on secular education. When asked why they chose to become a teacher, the teachers provided 24 reasons, 13 of which (54%) expressed religious reasons. Sample responses from that group include, "I chose to become a teacher so as to uplift and honor the sacred Holy Qur'an," ". . . to spread Allah's religion and to educate my Muslim brothers," and "Allah said, 'He who is well versed in the Holy Qur'an and teaches it to others is the most blessed of all.'" Three responses described the choice of teaching as a way to help children or the community, while one teacher wanted to fight illiteracy. Among the eleven teachers who would not leave the teaching profession if given the opportunity and the three who would keep both their teaching job and another, ten specifically named religious motivations for remaining a teacher in a Qur'anic school.

When asked to describe the educational basics that are beneficial for the children in their region, ten teachers listed only religion or the Qur'an and another two stated that children should learn religion first and then other subjects as they grow older, accounting for twelve of the seventeen responses (71%) to that question. This data is consistent with the teacher questionnaire, where all four teachers responding stated that religious education is as important or more important than secular subjects.

Regarding the quality of education, teachers had a wide range of perception about what contributes to quality. Teachers provided 25 responses on the qualities of a good teacher. Three

described inputs--ethics, effort (the teacher “tries hard to teach the students”), and preparation--on the teacher’s part. Twelve responses named aspects of the teaching process, with five of those citing better teaching but not specifying what constitutes better teaching. Ten answers referred to outputs, such as students understanding the lesson (5) or getting high marks on tests (2).

Teachers provided 28 indicators that students are learning well, with the most common being high test scores (6) and successful answers to questions about the lesson (4). Accurate recitation from memory was named by three teachers and skill in reading, use of knowledge to the benefit of self and community, and punctual attendance were each named twice.

At the conclusion of each interview, teachers were asked if the interviewer had “missed any important questions” or if they would like to tell the interviewer anything else. The responses overwhelmingly addressed the schools’ desire for outside help, particularly with material resources. Of the 28 responses, 22 included requests for support, with fourteen of those being direct requests for material support. Seven teachers specifically requested a shelter in which to hold classes. Three teachers requested help to expand the classes offered, and three wanted help to improve the quality of the school’s education via training or some other outside support. Among those responses not directly requesting help, four more were related to the schools’ or the teachers’ financial situation. It is clear from these responses that teachers are very concerned about the extremely limited resources available to them.

D. Head Teacher Questionnaire

A total of 19 head teachers were asked a series of questions regarding their schools and their perceptions of educational quality. Head teachers reported that of the 42 teachers in the schools, only 6 are females and 32 are males, with the sex of 4 teachers not reported. An average of 106 students per school were reported (about 31% female and 59% male). The average number of teachers per school was about 2.2, with eleven schools reporting having just one teacher (nine schools reported this in response to a direct question about how many teachers the school has; two reported this in response to a separate question on how to measure teacher quality).

Even though all head teachers noted that their beliefs about educational quality have changed over time, they all expressed satisfaction with the quality of teaching in their schools. They attributed such satisfaction to a number of reasons, including the motivation of teachers to teach Qur’an (31%), the use of “good” teaching methods (31%), and the commitment of teachers to educating children (25%). When asked how they measured teacher quality, participant head teachers referred to a number of indicators including student performance (11%), teacher credentials (16%), and teacher talents, style or conduct (16%). Five head teachers (26%) responded to this question by reporting to be the sole educator in the school, while three other head teachers from single-teacher schools declined to answer the question, suggesting limited desire or capacity to engage in self-assessment.

All head teachers reported that Interactive Radio Instruction for Somalis (IRIS) radio programs have never been used in their schools; all of those who responded as to why that was the case reported being unaware of the program or unable to receive it. Additionally, 21% of them noted that their teachers never participated in any teacher training. As to whether their school

conducted any activities to improve the quality of education, 74% of head teachers indicated that their schools were indeed involved in different activities for that purpose: fundraising, building classrooms, including secular subjects in the curriculum, and assisting teachers with materials. When asked about the difference (if any) in teaching methods between Qur'anic schools and public schools, 84% of head teachers noted that there is indeed a significant difference which was attributed to the contrast between the general education provided in government funded public schools versus the exclusively Islamic education in parent/community supported Qur'anic schools.

All head teachers expressed a preference for the active involvement of parents and the community in school life, and all reported that parents and the community were indeed actively involved with the schools. Forms of parent involvement with schools included financial support and fund raising; monitoring and participation in decision making; provision of materials, supplies, and equipment; and school visits and assistance with discipline.

Just 37% of the head teachers reported that their students sat for governmental exams and indicated that only 5% of those received a passing score. A majority of head teachers believed that what their students learned was either "very beneficial" or "beneficial" to their lives while in school or immediately after leaving the school. In this regard, 88% of head teachers who responded to the question believed that what students learned in Qur'anic schools was more beneficial to their lives than what students in public schools usually learn.

E. Teacher Questionnaire

A small number of teachers (five) responded to the teacher questionnaire. This is the case largely because 11 of the 19 schools visited had only one teacher. In schools with only one teacher, the teacher interview and the head teacher questionnaire were used and the teacher questionnaire was not.

All five teachers who responded were males and had served in primary schools either 6 to 10 years (20%), 11 to 15 years (60%), or 16 to 20 years (20%). Four of these teachers had served in their current school between 6 and 10 years. Of the four teachers who responded regarding their pre-service education and training, three indicated that they had completed religious studies, while one named Arabic school. Only two had received in-service training, one in religious studies and one in both religious studies and Arabic.

Four teachers described the content of their schools' curricula, with only one of them reporting math as a curricular subject and three reporting having the history of revelation and Arabic in their curricula. All four teachers included Islamic studies, Qur'anic recitation and Qur'anic reading in their curricula.

When asked about the relative importance of secular and religious subjects to the school curriculum, four teachers responded, with three indicating that these were equally important and one stating that religious instruction is the most important of all. These teachers thought that Islamic studies contribute to the moral development of students while secular subjects equip them with knowledge and skills needed to become a productive member of our society.

Finally, four teachers reported that parent committees were present in the lives of their schools. One teacher reported that parents help with the supervision of students as well as with teaching some lessons and another reported receiving “moral support”, but in two cases their contribution was limited to financial support. It is important to note that the implementation of a parent/community participation strategy would guide parents and community members in that direction.

F. Resource checklist

The research team assessed the physical structure of and the instructional resources available in 17 Qur’anic schools. Table 2 summarizes the study’s findings based on this instrument. All the schools visited were poorly equipped as far as physical attributes. Data indicates that the overwhelming majority of schools did not have a structure: they were either under a tree, constructed of straw reeds and tweeds, or simply out in the open. One out of the 17 schools visited (6%) had walls, a floor, and classroom dividers to separate the classrooms. The vast majority of the schools (94%) lacked teacher and student toilets while such facilities dedicated for girls were simply nonexistent.

The situation is similar in the case of instructional resources: blackboards were available in 47% of the schools while only 24% of them had chalk. None of the schools had a radio and, as most schools were outdoors, there were no walls on which to hang educational or religious posters or to display student work. None of the 17 schools had desks available to their students; they sat on mats, cans or rocks, whichever was readily available. There was no secure storage in any of the schools surveyed. Wooden slates were used as notebooks in 71% of the schools, with writing implements available in only 24% and additional paper for writing in only one of them.

This data indicates that many very basic needs for a functional learning environment are not available to the students of Qur’anic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia.

V. SYNTHESIS

In this section, we synthesize the overall study results in light of the research questions and provide recommendations for programming based upon the findings and analysis.

- What are the predominant instructional practices present in Islamic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia?

In the schools visited, memorization and recitation are clearly the predominant instructional practices. In most classes, students sat on the floor or the ground as the teacher reviewed a Qur’anic passage. Students were then called on, individually or in groups (often the whole class together), to recite the passage themselves. This is demonstrated by the classroom interaction data, which indicates a large number of interactions with the whole group, as well as in the research team’s observations and its decision not to continue using the cognitive interaction

recorder given the near complete lack of any intellectual interaction other than memorization or repetition. The affective interaction recorder also reinforces this view, as most of the interactions between teacher and student involved neither praise nor criticism but were neutral, perhaps suggesting a preponderance of interactions in which a passage is simply recited and little or no further interaction takes place.

The items on which teachers received the highest ratings on the classroom observation also support this notion. One of the two items on which teachers received the highest rating was devoting at least forty percent of the lesson to opportunities for students to practice what they have learned. The recitation of a Qur'anic passage individually or in a group is such an opportunity, so it is possible that that activity accounts for many or most of such opportunities witnessed. Teachers performed equally well on checking to see that students understood the material presented, likely for similar reasons; a student's ability to recite a Qur'anic verse well would demonstrate how well the student is progressing toward the goal of memorizing the Qur'an. The next highest ratings, for providing feedback to assist students in finding the right answer and ensuring that teacher-student interactivity occurred, can also be explained by frequent interactions based on recitation and memorization of Qur'anic verses, with teachers helping students to recite correctly when they are called upon.

Some of the remaining items are ambiguous in terms of the teaching strategies used. For example, about equal numbers of teachers were rated as using pair work (19) and rarely or never using pair work (17), and 15 of the teachers were found to use student-centered strategies throughout the lesson as compared to 13 who rarely did so and 8 who did not. These numbers, when viewed together with other data, indicate some level of student-centered teaching, particularly in form as opposed to content. Student-teacher activity occurred, students practiced what they were learning, and teachers offered feedback. These actions were generally performed in the service of rote memorization, however, leaving the content of student-centered teaching, such as connecting new knowledge to students' existing knowledge and encouraging them to perform higher-level thinking skills, largely absent.

- What are some of the basic characteristics of Qur'anic schools in the Somali Region of Ethiopia, in terms of class size and the availability of resources?

Although researchers did not consistently indicate the number of students present in classes they observed, student-teacher ratio can be considered an accurate proxy of class size, particularly since many of the schools had only one teacher and only one had over four teachers. Thus, teachers can be presumed to be spending most or all of their time with pupils and class size can be expected to mirror student-teacher ratio. For the fifteen schools which reported both the number of students and the number of teachers, the student-teacher ratio is 41.8:1, a large class size, but not as large as has been witnessed in other sub-Saharan classrooms, particularly in countries such as Uganda and Kenya that have abolished school fees.

The schools visited were remarkably poorly resourced. Most classes were conducted outdoors, with the only available resource often being a copy of the Qur'an, wooden tablets for writing, and ink. Only one school had a floor, one had a toilet, none had desks, none had learning aids,

and eight of seventeen had blackboards. This severe lack of resources renders learning difficult regardless of the capacity of the teacher in both content knowledge and pedagogical skill. Teachers repeatedly noted this lack of resources and requested support from others via the provision of a structure and/or teaching materials.

- What are teacher and head teacher perceptions of educational quality?

Teachers and head teachers held a variety of perceptions as reflected in the questionnaire and interview data. The most consistent notion was the emphasis on religious education as central to educational quality. In many cases, they viewed religious education as having a higher purpose than secular education and therefore as being equally or more important than secular subjects. A small number of teachers and head teachers did, however, indicate that teaching subjects other than religious studies improves educational quality.

Participants viewed instruction as very important, but in very few cases articulated any particular methodology or approach. Instead, a number cited “good teaching” or “teaching styles”, and there was a strong emphasis on the outcomes of instruction such as students performing well on tests, understanding the lesson, or being able to answer questions about the material presented.

Head teachers expressed a belief that the quality of education can change over time and indicated that they take steps to improve educational quality. The most common steps taken had to do with making material resources available for teaching, from classrooms to books to chalk. Teachers also reflected an emphasis on material resources, in particular when asked an open-ended question about what topics had not been addressed in the interview. Teachers strongly expressed a desire for more resources, particularly school structures for the great majority of schools that did not have one. This suggests that teachers and head teachers find providing quality education to be a challenge amid the extremely limited material environment in which they teach.

- Are teachers utilizing the instructional strategies introduced through a USAID-supported program?

None of the participant schools had taken part in a USAID-supported program. Not surprisingly, then, their instructional strategies generally did not reflect the student-centered strategies introduced in other schools in the region by the IRIS and FOCUS programs.

- How do these schools accommodate both religious and secular curricula?

Most of the schools visited did not accommodate both religious and secular curricula but focused only on teaching the Qur’an and Islam, with some including Arabic as a foreign language. Of the five schools which provided specific information about their curriculum, only one taught math in addition to religion, three taught a foreign language (at least two of which were Arabic), while the others taught strictly religious material. In response to how he had improved the quality of education in the school, another teacher reported having introduced math and Arabic.

The teachers and head teachers interviewed strongly emphasized religious education compared to that in secular subjects. Very large majorities of both teachers and head teachers stated that the education in their schools is more relevant to students' lives than the education received in government schools. When asked to name the "educational basics" that are "beneficial" for children in their area, ten named religion or the Qur'an and two others said that religion should be taught first and other subjects later.

- Are Parent-Teacher Associations and community members active in the educational improvement process even in the absence of direct project assistance?

Just one head teacher mentioned the existence of a parent committee, but head teachers unanimously indicated that parents are involved in the life of the school and that they prefer such involvement. The most common mode of parent and/or community involvement in the life of the school was through financial contributions, while a small number of head teachers mentioned that parents make sure that children stay in school, one stated that parents participate in activities geared to improve the level of education, and one other stated that parents come to discuss how to improve learning the Qur'an. Thus, parents and community members are involved with the participant schools. However, their direct involvement in the educational improvement process is very limited.

VI. PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The Islamic schools studied in the Somali region of Ethiopia are significantly different in character from those EQUIP1 studied in three states of Nigeria, primarily in that these schools for the most part teach only religious subjects, that none of them have received support from USAID in the past, and that their resource base is even poorer. If USAID or other donors are to support schools such as these, some programming recommendations are quite similar to those made for the Islamic schools studied in Nigeria, but there are important distinctions in how these schools would need to be approached. Below are the possible programming implications of this study's findings.

Finding	Possible Programming Implications
Although the classroom observation form indicates some use of active, student-centered pedagogy, the other data and anecdotal evidence indicates that such teaching practices are limited in these schools. The predominance of memorization techniques may be largely attributable to the majority of the schools' status as Qur'anic schools only, with no secular subjects being taught, as the goal in those schools is transmission of the Qur'an via memorization.	Before pedagogy is addressed in these schools, the curriculum would need to be considered. If additional subjects such as reading or language arts, mathematics, science and social studies or history were introduced, teachers would likely need significant training and intensive support to develop new pedagogies appropriate to those subjects and based on current research.

<p>The schools surveyed have moderately large classes and are extremely poorly resourced, with only one of seventeen schools having a building with walls and a floor.</p>	<p>Material support would need to be included in any program to help schools like those surveyed. Donors would need to consider building schools or at least some kind of shelter or supporting communities to do so. Programs should also develop sustainable ways to provide books, writing materials, learning aids, etc. Surrounding communities have very limited financial resources to help with these efforts.</p>
<p>Teachers and head teachers hold a wide variety of perceptions about what constitutes a quality education, but they most commonly cited a basis in Islam, unspecified teaching techniques, and material resources as contributing to educational quality. Almost all agreed that the quality of education can change over time.</p>	<p>Any program support would need to be very respectful of the religious foundation and mission of these schools. While participants hold perceptions of quality in education, some of those perceptions—particularly those addressing pedagogy—seem not to be well articulated. Thus, there is an opening for inputs, such as in-service training in both teaching and school management, which encourage educators to further define their notions of quality and develop plans for achieving it.</p>
<p>The schools visited generally do not accommodate both religious and secular subjects; only religious subjects are taught. Religious subjects were widely described as the basis of the education that local children should receive, but one school had introduced math as a subject and a few interviewees expressed a desire to introduce other subjects. Most teachers, however, cited only religious studies as their pre-service training, meaning they may not be well qualified to teach other subjects.</p>	<p>As most students in the schools surveyed are receiving only a Qur’anic education, they cannot currently be counted as receiving a quality basic education. Any programming using these schools as delivery points for such an education would need to support the schools in the major transition from Qur’anic only to a hybrid curriculum. Whether the schools sought to incorporate the national curriculum or develop a new curriculum based on local needs, teachers would need to be trained in both content knowledge and pedagogy. Materials possibly including books, interactive radio instruction programs (which have already been developed in the Somali language), and other learning aids would also support such a transition.</p>
<p>Parents and community members are involved in the schools, largely through financial contributions, to some extent through checking on their children’s progress in school, and to a small extent through interaction with the educators concerning the educational process.</p>	<p>Parents and communities could be a valuable resource in supporting the schools, as there appears to be a level of commitment to the schools already in place. Though no data was collected on the educational level of parents, it is quite likely that parents could be included in the audience for any programming delivering</p>

	basic education to these schools, as this has been the case in other Somali regions.
Teachers and head teachers repeatedly expressed a desire for help, particularly material support, from outside sources.	These schools provide a possible delivery point for supporting improved access to quality basic education, particularly since the educators in them are not only open to outside support, but strongly desire it. In addition to supporting the construction of school structures, assistance programs could provide flexible, sturdy, low-cost kits of teaching materials, and professional development for teachers and head teachers (via radio if necessary to reduce the teachers' travelling in challenging circumstances; the Pas a Pas ² program in Guinea could provide a model).

The students in these schools, living in a remote region where these usually small, Qur'anic schools may be their only access to any form of formal or semi-formal education, represent a particular challenge to the mandate of Education for All. It would be difficult to integrate them into the formal, government school system rapidly, but the existence of these Qur'anic schools provides a possible service delivery point that is community-initiated, community-driven, and led by educators eager to receive support. If these children are to receive a quality basic education, then, governments and donors would do well to support schools such as these as they add basic education to their curricula. This support might take the form of the provision of structures and/or learning materials, training, or interactive radio instruction programs or other distance education methods.. It should be noted, though, that intensive attention would be required to support the transformation of these schools to where their students can graduate with a quality, relevant education including at least basic literacy and numeracy.

² “*Pas a Pas*”, or “Step by Step”, is a radio series developed for teachers through Guinea’s Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels (FQEL) program. “*Pas a pas*” is broadcast after school hours on Wednesdays exclusively for teachers. Listening and following the training programs, teachers from rural classrooms across Guinea have additional opportunities to learn how to provide their students with instruction that is meaningful and effective. For more information, see http://www.usaid.gov/gn/news/2007/070426_nfqe/index.htm.

VII. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: SELECT DATA ANALYSIS

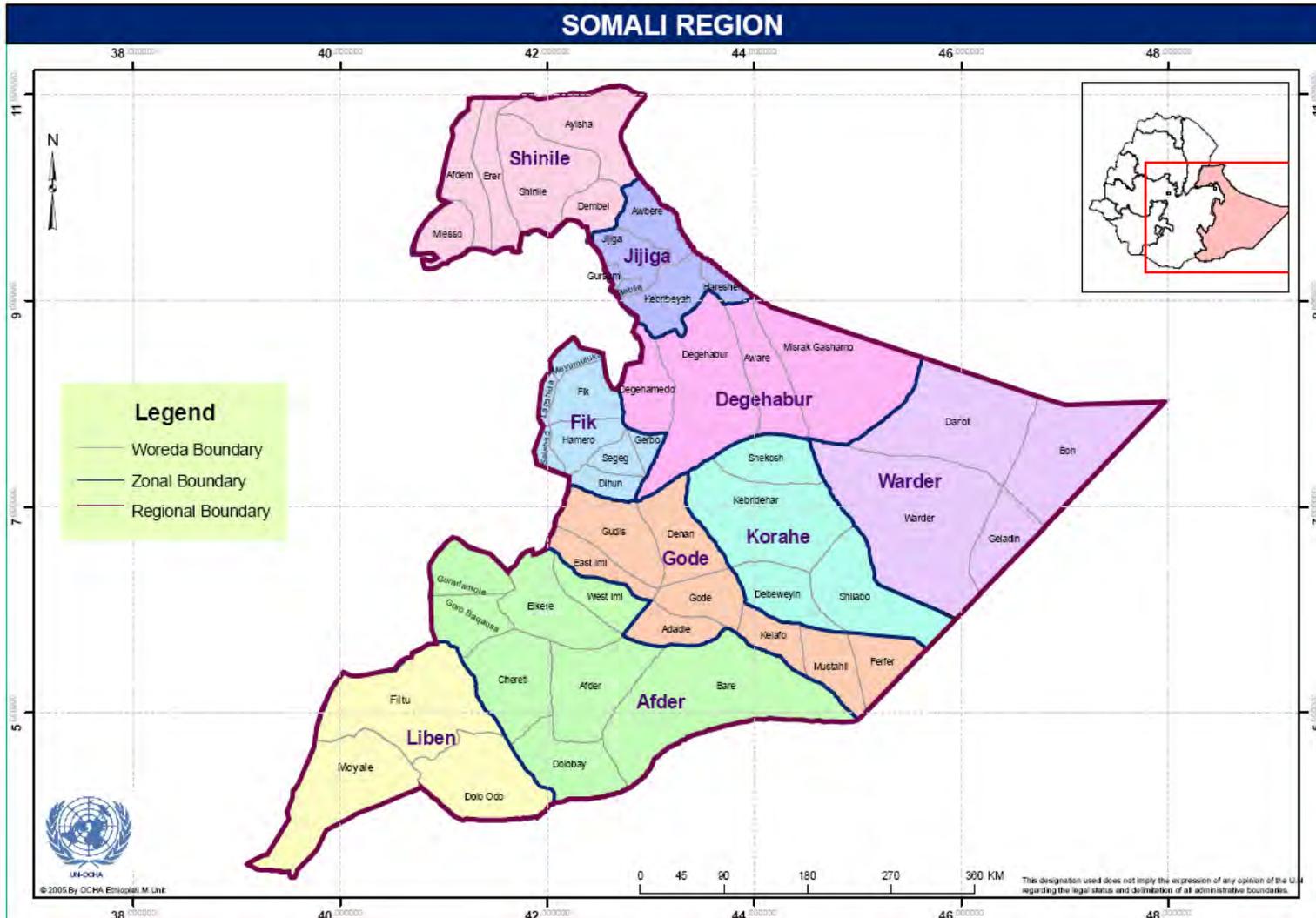
Table 1. *Distribution of Classroom Observation Form Ratings (N=36)*

Target Behavior	3-Yes		2-Rarely		1-No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. The teacher calls on the majority of the pupils individually during the lesson	28	78	3	8	5	14
2. The teacher encourages appropriate behavior in the classroom	10	28	13	36	13	36
3. Instructional aids are visible in the classroom	11	31	3	8	21	58
4. During the presentation phase of the lesson the teacher clearly models or explains new material	25	70	8	22	3	8
5. At least 40% of the lesson is devoted to allowing children the opportunity to practice what they have learnt	31	86	4	11	1	3
6. Interactivity occurs between the pupils and the teacher	27	75	6	17	3	8
7. The teacher uses pair work	19	52	6	17	11	31
8. Encouragement is used rather criticism	8	22	15	42	13	36
9. Student centered teaching strategies are used in support of the lesson objectives, throughout the lesson	15	42	13	36	8	22
10. The teacher poses questions of equal difficulty to boys and girls and provides equal opportunities for both girls and boys to answer them	19	53	6	17	7	19
11. The classroom provides a positive environment for girls and encourage their participation and leadership	14	39	6	17	12	33
12. The teacher's use of textbook or instructional materials supports lesson objectives	22	61	7	19	7	19
13. The teacher makes use of the blackboard in an effective and useful way	10	28	6	14	18	50
14. The teacher checks to see that students have understood the material presented	31	86	4	11	1	3
15. The teacher provides feedback that is specific and assists students in finding/understanding the correct answer	28	78	5	14	3	8

Table 2. Distribution of the Availability of Resources in schools (N=17)

Resource	Number	%	Resource	Number	%
<i>School building</i>			<i>Resources for students</i>		
Number of floors in school			Student desks		
No floor	16	94	Yes	0	0
1	1	6	No	17	100
2	0	0	Textbooks		
>2	0	0	Yes	2	12
Classrooms separated by dividers			No	15	88
Yes	2	12	Learning aids		
No	15	88	Yes	0	0
Classrooms separated by walls			No	17	100
Yes	0	0	Notebooks or tablets		
No	17	100	Yes	12	71
Teacher toilets			No	13	76
Yes	1	6	Writing paper		
No	16	94	Yes	1	6
Student toilets			No	16	94
Yes	1	6			
No	16	94			
Girls' toilet					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			
<i>Instructional materials</i>					
School radio					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			
Secure storage					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			
Blackboards					
Yes	8	47			
No	9	53			
Bulletin boards					
Yes	1	6			
No	16	94			
Chalk					
Yes	4	24			
No	13	76			
Religious posters on walls					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			
Student posters on walls					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			
Educational posters on walls					
Yes	0	0			
No	17	100			

APPENDIX B: MAP OF REGION STUDIED



The Somali region of Ethiopia (UN-OCHA 2005). Schools visited were in Shinile, Jijiga, and Gode.

APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

EQUIP1 Study: Educational Quality in Islamic Schools **Classroom Observation Form** Evaluator: _____

Name of School: _____ School Code: _____ State: _____ Location: _____ Date: _____

Head Teacher: _____ Teacher: _____ Class: _____ Subject: _____

Part I: Lesson Preparation	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
1. * The learning objectives are clearly stated in the lesson plan.					
2. The Learning activities are clearly listed and support the learning objectives in the lesson plan.					
3. All of the materials mentioned in the lesson plan are ready for use.					
Part II: Classroom Management and Organization	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
4. The teacher calls on all or almost all the pupils individually during the lesson.					
5. * The teacher both practices and encourages appropriate behavior in the classroom.					
6. The teacher uses an Attendance Book and a Pupil Evaluation Record.					
7. Instructional aids are visible in the classroom.					
8. The teacher arranges the classroom effectively for the activity (i.e. moves pupils, desks, or chairs to facilitate the activity in the lesson)					
Part III: Instructional Practices	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
9. During the Presentation Phase of the lesson, the teacher clearly models or explains new material.					
10. At least 40% of the lesson allows pupils the opportunity to practice what they have					

learned.					
11. The teacher uses games in teaching.					
12. * Interactivity occurs between pupils and the teacher.					
13. * The teacher uses pair work and/or group work.					
14. Encouragement is used rather than criticism.					
15. * The teacher uses thinking questions and does not just ask pupils to recall and/or repeat information.					
16. Student centred teaching strategies are used in support of the objectives throughout the lesson.					
Part IV: Gender	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
17. The teacher poses questions of equal difficulty to boys and girls.					
18. The teacher provides equal opportunities for both boys and girls to answer questions and gives equal attention to their responses.					
19. The classroom provides a positive environment for girls and encourages their participation and leadership.					
Part V: Instructional Materials	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
20. The teacher's use of textbook or instructional materials (including appropriate use of Resource Kit) supports lesson objectives and engages student interest.					
21. The teacher helps the pupils to use a textbook or instructional material effectively.					
22. * The teacher makes use of the blackboard in an effective and useful way.					
Part VI: Pupil Evaluation	1 seriously below average	2 below average	3 average	4 good	5 excellent
23. * The teacher checks to see that students have understood the material presented.					

24. * The teacher provides feedback that is specific and assists pupils in finding and/or understanding the correct answer.					
25. The Performance Phase of the lesson is student centred.					

Notes: _____

Signature of Evaluator

Date of Classroom Observation

Classroom Recorder—Affective Interactions

Teacher _____ M F
 Subject _____
 School _____ small school__ big school__

	Praise = P			Neutral = N	Critical = C						
1	P	N	C	26	P	N	C	51	P	N	C
2	P	N	C	27	P	N	C	52	P	N	C
3	P	N	C	28	P	N	C	53	P	N	C
4	P	N	C	29	P	N	C	54	P	N	C
5	P	N	C	30	P	N	C	55	P	N	C
6	P	N	C	31	P	N	C	56	P	N	C
7	P	N	C	32	P	N	C	57	P	N	C
8	P	N	C	33	P	N	C	58	P	N	C
9	P	N	C	34	P	N	C	59	P	N	C
10	P	N	C	35	P	N	C	60	P	N	C
11	P	N	C	36	P	N	C	61	P	N	C
12	P	N	C	37	P	N	C	62	P	N	C
13	P	N	C	38	P	N	C	63	P	N	C
14	P	N	C	39	P	N	C	64	P	N	C
15	P	N	C	40	P	N	C	65	P	N	C
16	P	N	C	41	P	N	C	66	P	N	C
17	P	N	C	42	P	N	C	67	P	N	C
18	P	N	C	43	P	N	C	68	P	N	C
19	P	N	C	44	P	N	C	69	P	N	C
20	P	N	C	45	P	N	C	70	P	N	C
21	P	N	C	46	P	N	C	71	P	N	C
22	P	N	C	47	P	N	C	72	P	N	C
23	P	N	C	48	P	N	C	73	P	N	C
24	P	N	C	49	P	N	C	74	P	N	C
25	P	N	C	50	P	N	C	75	P	N	C

Classroom Recorder—Level of Cognitive Interactions

Teacher _____ M F

Subject _____

School _____ small school__ big school__

Memorize/Repeat Information = M Recall Information = R

Figure out/Explain Information = F

1	M	R	F	26	M	R	F	51	M	R	F
2	M	R	F	27	M	R	F	52	M	R	F
3	M	R	F	28	M	R	F	53	M	R	F
4	M	R	F	29	M	R	F	54	M	R	F
5	M	R	F	30	M	R	F	55	M	R	F
6	M	R	F	31	M	R	F	56	M	R	F
7	M	R	F	32	M	R	F	57	M	R	F
8	M	R	F	33	M	R	F	58	M	R	F
9	M	R	F	34	M	R	F	59	M	R	F
10	M	R	F	35	M	R	F	60	M	R	F
11	M	R	F	36	M	R	F	61	M	R	F
12	M	R	F	37	M	R	F	62	M	R	F
13	M	R	F	38	M	R	F	63	M	R	F
14	M	R	F	39	M	R	F	64	M	R	F
15	M	R	F	40	M	R	F	65	M	R	F
16	M	R	F	41	M	R	F	66	M	R	F
17	M	R	F	42	M	R	F	67	M	R	F
18	M	R	F	43	M	R	F	68	M	R	F
19	M	R	F	44	M	R	F	69	M	R	F
20	M	R	F	45	M	R	F	70	M	R	F
21	M	R	F	46	M	R	F	71	M	R	F
22	M	R	F	47	M	R	F	72	M	R	F
23	M	R	F	48	M	R	F	73	M	R	F
24	M	R	F	49	M	R	F	74	M	R	F
25	M	R	F	50	M	R	F	75	M	R	F

Classroom Recorder – Space and Gender

G=girl B=boy

Front Row Students	
Middle Row Students	
Back Row Students	
Whole class interactions	

Equip 1 Study
EQUIP1 Study: Educational Quality in Islamic Schools
Teacher Interview

Name of School: _____ School size: _____Small _____Big

Teacher's Name: _____

Date: _____

Interview conducted by: _____

The objective for this interview is to find out various conditions and constraints affecting Qur'anic Schools in order to find ways and means to cope with them.

I'm interested very interested to find out about your opinion and thoughts regarding the importance of education for your students.

1. Why did you choose to become a teacher? Why did you choose teaching?
2. If you find another job and/or an opportunity to change your teaching career, would you accept it?
3. Do you think teaching is an arduous task? Yes or No and Why?
4. Is the learning objective level in this school enough to prepare the students for the next level of education and for employment/Marriage for that matter?
5. What are the qualities of a good teacher?
6. How do you determine the student who is a good learner? What do you expect from him to prove that he is a good learner?
7. Can you talk about the educational basics that are beneficial for the children of this Region?
8. Are parents satisfied with the level education of their children in this school?
9. How often do parents come to the class to find out about what their children are learning? How do they get your feedback to know about their level of education?
10. Do you think I have missed any important questions? Do you have anything else you would like to tell me?

EQUIP1 Study:
Educational Quality in Islamic Schools
Proprietor/Head Teacher Questionnaire

1a. How many pupils are there in the school? How many teachers?	_____ pupils _____ teachers
1b. How many of the teachers are men and how many women?	_____ men _____ women
1b. About how many of the pupils are boys and how many girls?	_____ boys _____ girls
1c. Are the classes mixed in terms of gender?	_____ yes _____ no
2a. Are you satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school?	_____ yes _____ no
2b. Why or why not?	
* 2c. How do you measure the quality of a teacher in your school?	
3a. Have your classes ever used the LEAP radio programs?	_____ yes _____ no
3b. Do your classes still use the LEAP radio programs?	_____ yes _____ no
3c. Why or why not?	
*4a. Have your teachers ever received training through the program?	_____ yes _____ no
*4b. Are your teachers still being trained using program materials?	_____ yes _____ no
*4c. Why or why not?	
*4d. When was the last training your teachers attended or held?	_____

<p>*4e. If your answer to 4b was yes, when is the next training scheduled?</p> <p>* 4f. Have you engaged your school in any other activities to improve educational quality?</p> <p>4g. If yes, what other activities?</p>	<hr/> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>5a. In your opinion, has the quality of teaching in your school improved due to the program?</p> <p>5b. If yes, how has the quality of teaching improved?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>6a. Are teaching methods different in Qur'anic schools than in public schools?</p> <p>6b. If so, how are the methods different?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>7a. Do you prefer that the parents and community be active and involved in the life of the school?</p> <p>7b. In your opinion, are the parents and community active and involved in the life of your school?</p> <p>7c. If yes, how are the parents and community involved?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>* 8a. What is the one thing you would do in order to improve the quality of education in your school?</p>	

<p>* 9a. Have your beliefs about what quality education is changed over time?</p> <p>* 9b. If yes, how have your beliefs changed?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>10a. Are the parents of your pupils satisfied with the quality of the school?</p> <p>10b. How do you know how satisfied they are?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>11a. Does the school follow, although with some changes, the government curriculum?</p> <p>11b. Do your pupils sit for government tests?</p> <p>11c. If so, about what percentage of the pupils usually pass the tests?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____ %</p>
<p>12a. About what percentage of the pupils who complete their studies at your school continue with the following?</p> <p>12b. How relevant are your pupils' studies to their lives while in school and immediately after leaving?</p> <p>12c. In your opinion, are the pupils' studies in your school more, less or equally relevant to their lives than public school pupils' studies are to their lives?</p>	<p>Work _____ %</p> <p>Marriage _____ %</p> <p>Preparatory School _____ %</p> <p>Vocational School _____ %</p> <p>Other _____ %</p> <p>_____ Very relevant</p> <p>_____ Relevant</p> <p>_____ A little bit relevant</p> <p>_____ Not at all relevant</p> <p>Our school's studies are:</p> <p>_____ More relevant</p> <p>_____ Equally relevant</p> <p>_____ Less relevant</p>

EQUIP1 Study:
Educational Quality in Qur'anic Schools
Teacher Questionnaire

<p>1a. How long have you been teaching primary school?</p> <p>1b. How long have you been teaching at this school?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">_____ years</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____ years</p>
<p>2. What grade and subject or subjects do you teach?</p>	<p>Grade _____</p> <p>Subjects:</p>
<p>3a. How many pupils are in your class?</p> <p>3b. How many pupils are of each gender?</p> <p>3c. Is your class segregated by gender?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">_____ pupils</p> <p>_____ boys _____ girls</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p>
<p>* 4a. Have you used the radio programs in your class in the past?</p> <p>* 4b. Are you still using the radio programs in your class?</p> <p>* 4c. Why or why not?</p> <p>* 4.d. Have you participated in the BTWs or received training from the LEAP master trainer at your school?</p> <p>* 4.e. What was the topic(s) of the training?</p>	<p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>* 5a. What level of education and/or teacher training did you complete before you began teaching?</p> <p>* 5b. Have you received in-service education and/or additional teacher training since you began teaching?</p> <p>* 5c. If so, what kind of education and/or teacher training have you received?</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____ yes _____ no</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

* 6. What is the curriculum of this school?	Math Science Social Studies/History Language Reading Foreign Language (English) Foreign language (Arabic) Physical education Arts/Music Islamic Studies Qur'anic recitation Hadith Tafsir Tajweed Fiqh Philosophy
7. a. How many class periods make up a day for the students?	_____
7.b. What portion, roughly, of children's studies are devoted to religious subjects?	Religious _____
7. b. To secular subjects?	Secular _____
8. a. Are the religious or secular subjects more important or equally important, in your opinion?	Religious _____ Secular _____ Equally important _____
8. b. Why?	_____ _____ _____ _____
9. a. Is there a PTA at this school?	_____ yes _____ no
9. b. Are parents involved in the running of this school?	_____ yes _____ no
9. c. In what ways?	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

EQUIP1 Study:
Educational Quality in Qur'anic Schools
Resource Checklist

School has:

1 floor
2 floors
more than two floors

dividers between classrooms
walls between classrooms

blackboards
bulletin boards
chalk
religious posters on the wall
children's work on the walls
educational posters on the walls
student desks

Toilets for teachers
Toilets for students

Textbooks
Learning Aids

Radio
Cupboard

Students have:

Notebooks
Writing implements
Paper
Textbooks
Adequate desk space