DELVe Technical Report: Community Support to Learning (CStL) Scoping Study Report

June 2022

Executive Summary

Nigeria faces significant challenges in making any sort of educational provision for its more than 10 million out-of-school children. The problem is particularly severe in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) partner States in the North West of the country – Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano – where well-documented economic, social and cultural issues combine with insufficient government funding to deprive children of the opportunity to acquire the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy. In response to this, FCDO has embedded Community Support to Learning (CStL) in its Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (PLANE) programme – Window 3.

This Scoping Study was commissioned to: (i) survey the landscape of CStL provision in these three States and to identify gaps in and challenges to that provision; (ii) describe the governance structures of CStL provision, including the interaction between state and non-state actors; (iii) identify other stakeholders and donors with whom the Window 3 Implementing Partner (IP) should engage; and (iv) identify key issues for programme implementers to consider in greater detail.

The following themes provide the general framework through which CStL is considered in the main report:

1. **Conceptualisation and understanding of CStL**

2. **Scope of CStL provision with regards to Community Learning Interventions (CLIs) and Behavioural Change Interventions (BCIs) and the gaps to provision identified**

3. **Challenges to CStL provision**

4. **Governance**

5. **Issues to be considered for implementation**

The main findings of the study are presented below.

1. **Conceptualisation and understanding of CStL**

Overall, **there is considerable CStL provision in the three States** ranging from large-scale donor-funded programmes to locally supported ad hoc initiatives. The government and non-government representatives taking part in the Study all understood the concept of CStL – including the CLIs and BCIs incorporated into it – and were keenly aware of its need. The scale of the problem of out-of-school children is a major factor in CStL provision throughout the three States. This fundamental context for provision has critical ripple effects in the successful implementation and sustainability of interventions. The main stakeholders are mapped out in Annex A (which is attached as a separate spreadsheet) but the typically temporary nature of the local initiatives, which often depend on voluntary donations, meant it was not possible to record them here.

2. **Scope of CStL provision**

Many of the CLIs incorporate aspects of BCIs. These BCIs – referred to as 'sensitisation' throughout the Study – are essential to the successful implementation of CStL. They are not only needed to engage out-of-school children in learning opportunities but to recruit the local volunteers and/or raise the local funds on which so many CLIs depend. Means of encouraging behavioural change addressed in the main report include encouraging children and their families to **recognise the value of education**, which includes the need to **make foundational skills relevant to them**, and the importance of **advocacy**. The types of CLI identified in the Study are illustrated through the examples of support to the Tsangaya schools (which offer Qur'ranic teaching) and the range of provision that can be made through learning centres.

3. Challenges to CStL provision

The **gaps in CStL were identified** as stakeholders discussed the scope of provision, the challenges they face, and the governance structures they navigate. Many of the **CStL programmes focused on girls and on the Tsangaya and Almajiri Centres**. Stakeholders in Jigawa also highlighted support for **nomadic children**. There was some concern with orphans and vulnerable children but **very limited emphasis on children with disabilities**. Urban and rural poverty was typically implied rather than addressed directly.

Limited funding is inevitably a significant challenge to the successful implementation of CStL and limits many of its crucial aspects – from the equitable provision of learning materials to the appropriate training of volunteer teachers. Other concerns, including **social and cultural issues, highlight the necessity of contextualising the importance of foundational skills to the families and wider communities of marginalised children**. Changing prevailing negative attitudes to education is a complex process, and many marginalised children and their families do not see the relevance of education to their lives. Provision and implementation of appropriate CStL interventions is also affected by: political dynamics within communities – some Tsangaya schools may perceive CLIs as competing with them, for example, and diverting limited resources; as well as dynamics external to communities – the lack of political will from governments.

4. Governance

Communication within government agencies is generally good but **there are limited opportunities for cross-agency – and cross-sector – engagement and this restricts opportunities for multi-agency collaboration**. Communication within communities is less structured. Government representatives acknowledged the need to understand community needs but the Study indicates that **communication between governments and communities is very much top-down and one-way**. Communities may be invited to identify their needs – whether in response to programmes being implemented or in the hope that they may be initiated – but it is suggested here that governments do not always listen to them.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) create a critical bridge between governments and communities but the additional link in the chain can slow communication and increase frustrations at the community level that their needs are not being met. Nonetheless, communities often turn to NGOs to share their needs and concerns, with the NGOs using their greater leverage to present them to governments. To strengthen the quality of interactions, NGOs also provide communities with advocacy training. However, underlying concerns remain. **Findings suggest that the educational focal points – School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) and the Community Based Management Committees (CBMCs) – fail to properly represent the most marginalised families in their communities**.

NGOs are an important link to the ad hoc and informal local CStL initiatives, and it is important to engage with them (as well as with the main stakeholders), to facilitate the successful implementation of its CStL provision. Annex A also notes the NGOs working on CStL provision in the three States, as well as federal-level connections, identified during the Study.

5. Considerations for implementation

This Study identifies some of the successful strategies that have enabled the implementation and expansion of CStL programmes. They are presented as key issues and recommendations for the implementation of CStL initiatives. While the points summarised below focus on CStL (Window 3), they are also more widely applicable to interventions seeking to improve engagement with learning opportunities (i.e., Windows 1 and 2):

1. To build on the provision of education interventions, **partnerships to leverage synergies may offer sustainable outcomes**. The scope of programmes identified in the stakeholder mapping (Annex A) offer

opportunities for collaboration with ongoing programmes supported by local philanthropists. These include CStL programmes designed to be sensitive to the needs of children with disabilities.

2. **Successful BCIs (and CLIs) will increase the numbers of out-of-school children wanting to learn** and so government and communities need to be supported (with training as well as improved infrastructure and facilities) to manage the impact of increased enrolment into education systems.

3. **Ownership of CStL initiatives is critical to the success of programmes**. CStL programmes need to ensure that governments as well as communities are a central part of the design process and have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.

4. To spread out the costs of establishing and running local learning centres, **a "matching grants" approach by government may help leverage donations from local philanthropists and focus them on effective CStL provision**. This can help combat the funding fatigue stemming from overreliance on the goodwill of communities and individuals.

5. Some of the identified opportunity costs that hinder learning may be addressed by **positioning CLIs as pathways to economic opportunities within local economies** e.g., components of the intervention can feed into the acquisition or development of vocational skills.

6. **NGOs play a vital role in bridging communication gaps between the government and communities**. Support to, and continued engagement with, NGOs can help to ensure clear, responsive two-way communication for CStL interventions.

7. **Remote and e-learning opportunities** developed in response to the closure of schools because of the COVID-19 pandemic can be maintained/expanded to meet the learning needs of marginalised children.

8. **Integrated Qur'anic Tsangaya Education (IQTE) schools provide a useful model as they are valued by community members**. CStL interventions can leverage on this system and support programmes that incorporate foundational skills while also retaining the historical and cultural values of communities.

Additional issues and more specific recommendations drawn from the findings of the Study and literature reviews are provided in section 4.

CStL Scoping Study

Contents

Acronyms

BCI	Behavioural Change Intervention
BESDA	Basic Education Service Delivery for All (World Bank/GPE programme)
CBMC	Community Based Management Committee
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CLI	Community Learning Intervention
CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CStL	Community Support to Learning
DELVe	Human Development Evaluation, Learning and Verification Services
DFID	Department for International Development
DSM	Department of Social Mobilisation
ENGINE	Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (DFID/FCDO programme)
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (DFID programme)
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GEP3	Girls' Education Project Phase 3 (DFID/UNICEF programme)
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HiLWA	High Level Women Advocates
IP	Implementing Partner
IQTE	Islamiyya, Qur'anic and Tsangaya Education
KaLMA	Kano Literacy and Maths Accelerator (DFID/FCDO programme)
KII	Key informant interview
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
MAF	Mutual Accountability Framework
NEG	National Education Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIPEP	Nigeria Partnership for Education Project
NMEC	National Commission for Mass Education (National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education)
NOGALSS	Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
PERL	Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (DFID/FCDO programme)
PLANE	Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (DFID/FCDO programme)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RANA	Reading and Numeracy Activity (DFID/FCDO programme)
SAME	State Agency for Mass Education
SANE	State Agency for Nomadic Education
SMILE	Support Mainstreaming Inclusion so all Learn Equally (DFID/FCDO programme)
SMoE	State Ministry of Education
SBMC	School Based Management Committee
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Committee
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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Acknowledgements

1.0　Introduction

The Human Development Evaluation Learning and Verification Service (DELVe) has been commissioned by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and is responsible for providing monitoring, evaluation and learning services to the Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (PLANE) programme. PLANE is FCDO's flagship education programme in Nigeria and is structured in three windows:

i.　Window 1 centres on improving education systems (Getting the Foundations right),

ii.　Window 2 supports Education in Emergencies, and

iii.　Window 3 concerns Community Support to Learning (CStL) in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States.

The DELVe consortium is led by Ecorys which holds ultimate responsibility for the contract and provides monitoring and evaluation expertise. The DELVe consortium also comprises two other consortium members: Itad, which provides evaluation and learning expertise; and Preston Associates, providing Nigeria-based data collection services. This Scoping Study of CStL was requested under DELVe Work Package 3: Formative Evaluation.

1.1　Education context

The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) estimated that some 10.5 million Nigerian children of primary school and junior secondary school age (5 to 14 years old) were out of school before schools closed (on 19th March 2020[1]) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This accounted for one in three children in Nigeria, pre-pandemic. Initial reports suggest the situation has become worse now that schools have re-opened.

The problem is particularly severe in FCDO's partner States in North West Nigeria in which PLANE Window 3 is to be delivered: Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano. Government-provided basic education in these States is under-funded and over-stretched. Educationally harmful social norms and cultural practices prevent too many children from attending school and early marriage and motherhood continue to disadvantage girls and young women. A third of Muslim children in these States attend Islamic schools delivering Islamic, Qur'anic and Tsangaya Education (IQTE). This does not necessarily incorporate the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy and these children are officially considered to be out of school. Rural and urban poverty, the remoteness of many communities, including nomadic populations, security concerns and limited opportunities to show that formal education can lead to improved life chances all contribute to this problem and add to the number of out-of-school children.

Considerable efforts, including programmes funded by DFID/FCDO and other donors, have been made to make foundational skills available to children in these States and to encourage them and their families to engage with them. However, the problem remains significant.

1.2　Purpose and use of the Scoping Study

The Scoping Study intends to: (i) provide FCDO and the implementers of CStL interventions with a concise overview of provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States; and (ii) highlight key issues to be considered in greater detail. While this Study focuses on Window 3, many of the findings are relevant to IPs in Windows 1 and 2. This is further discussed in section 4.

It provides an overview of:

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[1] NCDC Report on National Survey on School Closure due to COVID-19.

- the range and types of CStL-focused projects – including Community Learning Interventions (CLIs) and Behavioural Change Interventions (BCIs) – in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States and the organisations providing them;

- the social barriers to education they are intended to address and the social groups affected by them;

- the gaps in CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States and the most effective types of CStL needed to fill them.

- what helps and hinders the provision of effective CStL in and beyond the three States; and

- the governance of CStL including the links between state and non-state actors and their links to schools and communities.

It also provides an evidence-based starting point for the programme implementer to deliver PLANE Window 3 and a list of key issues to be considered for implementation.

The issues highlighted above are addressed across six sub-sections of the main report. To ease navigation, a guide to the report structure is provided in section 2.1.1 (and specifically, Table 1) below.

2.0   Methodology

2.1   Overall approach

As requested by FCDO, the Scoping Study took a high-level approach, identifying and illustrating key issues for programme implementers to consider in greater detail. This included: (i) an initial literature review of CStL provision in the three States to identify key issues and inform the next stages; (ii) key informant interviews (KIIs) with major stakeholders in CStL to document the extent of its provision in the three States and to highlight what facilitates that provision and the challenges faced in providing CStL; and (iii) an international literature review to identify further issues concerning it.

2.1.1   Research questions

The Study addresses the topic areas and research questions agreed with FCDO and set out below in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of study topics and research questions

Topic Area	Specific Questions	Report Section
1. CLI provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States	1a. What CLI provision is there in these States and who is providing it? 1b. What CLI provision works/does not work and why? 1c. How is CLI conceptualised by stakeholders? 1d. What gaps are there in CLI provision in the three Window 3 States and how can they be filled?	1a. Section 3 and Annex A 1b. Sections 3.2 and 3.5, and Annex B 1c. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 1d. Sections 3.4 and 5
2. BCI provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States	2a. What BCI provision is there in these States and who is providing it? 2b. What BCI provision works/does not work and why? 2c. How is BCI conceptualised by stakeholders? 2d. What gaps are there in BCI provision in the three Window 3 States and how can they be filled?	2a. Section 3 and Annex A 2b. Sections 3.3 and 3.5, and Annex B 2c. Sections 3.1 and 3.3 2d. Sections 3.4 and 5
3. CStL governance	3a. What are the current governance structures of CStL between state and non-state organisations in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States? 3b. How is the need for CStL identified by state and non-state organisations and how do they respond to those needs? 3c. How do state and non-state organisations work together? 3d. How can working relationships be improved to enable better provision of CStL?	3a. Section 3.6 3b. Section 3.6.1 3c. Section 3.6.2 3d. Sections 3.6 and 5 and Annex B
4. Stakeholder mapping	4a. What are the key stakeholders involved in CStL in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States?	4a. Sections 3.1.1 and 3.2.2 and Annex A 4b. Section 3.1 and 3.6

| | 4b. What other stakeholders will be necessary to improve CStL in the three States?
4c. What other donor programmes are relevant to Window 3? | 4c. Sections 3.1 and 3.6, and Annex A |

The Report is organised to address these topic areas and research questions as follows:

- **Stakeholder perceptions of CStL** are considered in section 3.1 to give context to the rest of the Report.

- **The provision of CLIs and BCIs in the three States is addressed** in sections 3.2 and 3.3 which deal with the types of successful CStL identified by the stakeholders taking part in the Study. **Gaps in the provision of CStL** are also identified and discussed in section 3.4. The **range of current provision** is mapped out in Annex A (the stakeholder mapping). Previous provision, including programmes the stakeholders referred to throughout the Study, is addressed in Annex B (the local literature review of CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano).

- **The challenges to CStL,** as reported by the stakeholders taking part in the Study**,** are considered in section 3.5 and **challenges concerning governance issues** are considered in section 3.6. Challenges to previous programmes implemented in the three States are also addressed in Annex B and challenges to programmes implemented elsewhere in and beyond Nigeria are addressed in Annex C (the international literature review of CStL initiatives).

- **Governance issues** are reported in section 3.6 which also notes additional stakeholders and donors with which programme implementers should consider engaging.

- **A final overview of the main findings** of the study is provided in section 4.

- Section 5 provides a list of further **issues for programme implementers to consider**.

- **Current provision in the three States**, and its connections to organisations at the Federal level, is mapped out in Annex A which is attached as a separate Excel spreadsheet for programme implementers to add to and develop as PLANE Window 3 is implemented.

The literature review of CStL provision in the three States is presented as Annex B and the international literature review as Annex C. These highlight what helped and hindered the delivery of CStL in programmes in and beyond the three States and, as standalone documents, are attached separately.

2.1.2   Scope and limitations

The geographic focus of the Study was the three States in which PLANE Window 3 is to be delivered: Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano. The literature reviews were used to identify issues of potential relevance to the provision of CStL in those States.

The participants in the Study were government and non-government stakeholders in CStL at both Federal and State levels.

The majority of these stakeholders were government representatives, and this could have partially limited the Study to a presentation of official views on the need for and provision of CStL. This was addressed by including representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) – including Community Based Organisations (CBOs)

and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In this Study, the term CSOs are used when specifically referring to a civil society entity, and the term NGOs refers more broadly to the collective of non-state entities.

The timeframe of the Study limited the number and range of non-governmental representatives taking part in it. Those who did were identified through governmental representatives and/or recruited through the personal connections of the Study's researchers. Although a broad range of issues were identified, it is not known how far these non-governmental representatives do represent all those stakeholders engaged in CStL or their views and experiences of it.

The slow response rate from some governmental organisations also hindered the range of perspectives which could be feasibly included in the Study. In one case, an interview was only granted 5 weeks after the initial request. This delay limited the incorporation of all the views which the Study had aimed to include. Notwithstanding this drawback, at least one representative from all the key governmental stakeholders identified in the Concept Note participated in this Study.

The timeframe of the Study also limited the scope of the literature reviews. There is a considerable volume of literature that is relevant to CStL provision and researchers were only able to address some of it. The scope of the international literature review was further limited by the volume of literature relevant to the three States and, in consultation with FCDO, it was decided to focus on that. The international review therefore focuses mostly on literature concerning CStL provision in other Nigerian States and elsewhere in Sub Saharan Africa.

COVID-19 imposed further limitations on the Study. The practical and ethical concerns of conducting the Study during the pandemic are addressed below (sections 4 and 5). It had a direct impact as key personnel from both FCDO and the Study team contracted it. Additionally, one of the fieldworkers contracted malaria during the conduct of the Study. These illnesses caused delays in communication, to some of the fieldwork and to the reporting of the Study.

The biggest limitation was that the scope of the Study did not allow the participation of the communities benefitting from and/or lacking CStL provision. Their views and experiences were represented by those taking part in the Study, particularly the non-governmental representatives, but it is not clear how appropriately and accurately they represented the views and experiences of the communities.

2.2 Data collection and methods

The Study took a qualitative approach and used face-to-face and remote interviews with key informants.

2.2.1 Methods

Semi-structured individual and group KIIs were conducted with key stakeholders at the Federal level and in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States. State-based researchers were engaged to conduct these interviews in each of the three States and the Abuja-based Study Manager carried out the Federal-level interviews with remote support from the Study Lead. The Study Lead and Manager also carried out several remote interviews in the States when scheduling difficulties meant the State-based researchers could not conduct them.

The semi-structured approach to data collection gave all participants the opportunity to respond to the key issues and to address issues of particular interest and significance to them.

Key stakeholders identified in the Concept Note were asked to identify other stakeholders in CStL, including those providing it. This 'snowball' sampling ensured that as many participants as possible could be engaged and that the CStL provision could be as fully mapped as possible within the limitations of the Study.

KIIs were conducted face-to-face and remotely. It was intended that interviews would be conducted remotely to conform to COVID-related restrictions on meetings in place at the time the Study was being planned. However, these restrictions had been eased by the time the Study started. There is a strong culture of holding face-to-face meetings in Nigeria which, coupled to the practical problem of unreliable communication networks, meant most participants requested face-to-face meetings. The ethical implications of this are addressed below (section 5).

Contemporaneous notes were made of the interviews and/or they were recorded. Summaries of each interview were then written up in detail.

The researchers also generated lists of the other CStL stakeholders that had been identified to contribute to the mapping exercise.

2.2.2   Study participants

A total of 41 interviews were conducted with 58 participants. 27 interviews were conducted with 36 government stakeholders and 14 interviews were conducted with 22 non-government stakeholders (including representatives from FCDO) as shown below in Table 2.

Table 2 Interviews conducted during the Study

	Interviews		Participants	
	Government	Non-government	Government	Non-government
Federal	6	3	8	7
Jigawa	8	3	11	4
Kaduna	6	4	10	6
Kano	7	4	7	5
Total	27	14	36	22

Government stakeholders at the Federal level included representatives from: (i) the Federal Ministry of Education (FME); (ii) the Universal Basic Education Committee (UBEC), including the Department of Social Mobilisation (DSM) within it; and (iii) the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education, typically known as the National Commission for Mass Education (NMEC).

At the State level, government stakeholders included representatives from: (i) the State Ministries of Education (SMoEs); (ii) the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs), including the DSMs and the Education Secretaries to the Chairs of the School Based Management Committees (SBMCs), Community Based Management Committees (CBMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) within them; (iii) the State Agencies for Mass Education (SAMEs); and the State Agencies for Nomadic Education (SANEs).

The non-governmental stakeholders included representatives from FCDO (including the PLANE Window 3 lead and the Regional Coordinators in the three States). They also included religious and traditional leaders and representatives from seven different NGOs (taken to include CBOs and CSOs).

2.2.3   Data analysis

Each interview was analysed to identify key issues relating to the research questions. They were then categorised to document the range of different issues. Responses were then collated into groups: (i) responses from the Federal level participants and those from participants in each of the three States; and (ii) responses from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Comparisons between each of these groups provided insight

into how they each saw the issues (or whether they saw them). This facilitated the contextualisation and explanation of those issues.

The level of engagement and quality of interaction across these stakeholder groups were also an important consideration in this analysis. Figure 1 (Communication chains between key stakeholders) in section 3.1.1, Figure 2 (Select CStL Programmes in Kano) in Section 3.1.2, and Figure 3 (The progress of CStL provision) in section 3.6.1, are all informed by participant responses based on their perceptions and experiences.

2.2.4   Literature reviews

The first literature review focused on CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States. The reviewed literature included programme reports, DFID/FCDO Annual Reviews and the 'grey literature' of academic papers and presentations as well as newspaper reports. FCDO provided several reports and other literature was sourced from online sources.

The second review used public and academic online search engines to identify literature in and beyond Nigeria concerned with the issues raised in the Study (particularly governance issues) and other matters relevant to the successful delivery of CStL.

Key issues were identified and categorised with comparisons then made between different programmes to highlight, contextualise and explain what helps and what hinders CStL initiatives.

2.3   Ethics

The research was framed by the ethical imperatives of informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality and anonymity.

Participants were informed of the purpose of the Study before being asked to take part in it. Where interviews were recorded, researchers sought permission before recording them and advised participants that the recording could be stopped at any time if they so wished. No participants have been specifically identified in this report. As the Study engaged with very few non-governmental stakeholders in CStL, and as some of their representatives were highly critical of government responses to it, their organisations (with the exception of FCDO) have not been identified here.

As noted above, COVID-related restrictions on meetings were eased prior to the Study starting which made face-to-face interviews possible. The ethical response to this took place in three stages.

The first stage was to ascertain if the researchers were prepared to conduct face-to-face interviews. They were all happy to do this. Secondly, they were directed to offer participants the option of face-to-face or remote interviews. Some participants were subject to their organisation's own COVID-related protocols and so opted for remote interviews. Most, though, requested face-to-face interviews. The third stage was to provide guidance on the safe conduct of interviews. This included maintaining social distancing, wearing face masks and regular handwashing. The researchers were also requested to advise the Study lead of any COVID-related concerns arising from their work. No problems were reported.

2.4   Risks and mitigation

2.4.1   Risks

The Concept Note indicated the potential risks of: (i) limited CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and/or Kano; (ii) possible confusion between the CLIs and BCIs; (iii) stakeholders being reluctant to discuss sensitive issues; and (iv) the absence of communities from the Study leading to a distorted picture of the provision of and challenges to CStL provision.

As the Study started, there was also the further risk that COVID-related issues might disrupt it either through researchers or participants being willing to participate in interviews or illness causing delays to the conduct and reporting of the Study.

2.4.2   Mitigation strategies

An initial review of the landscape of CStL provision had highlighted its extent in these States. However, the Study had been designed to be sufficiently flexible for fieldwork to be conducted in other Nigerian States should this not have been the case and/or stakeholders were reluctant to discuss its provision. This flexibility was not needed.

There was some overlap between CLIs and BCIs as many CStL initiatives contain elements of both. To address any confusion, though, participants were given the Study's definition of these terms when they were invited to take part in the Study and they were repeated at the beginning of each interview. Participants were then asked to offer examples of CLIs and BCI with which they were familiar to ensure their understanding of the terms.

As noted above, the Study's biggest limitation was that its scope did not include the communities benefitting from and/or in need of CStL provision. This risked the Study possibly being one-sided and based on the 'official view' of government representatives. It was intended to mitigate this risk by including representatives from NGOs (including CBOs and CSOs) and religious and traditional leaders in the Study to speak on their behalf. Although this remains a significant limitation to the Study, 17 of these community representatives (as well as the five FCDO representatives) contributed to it. It should also be noted that most of the government representatives were also willing to acknowledge at least some of the challenges faced by communities.

The mitigation plan for addressing COVID-related disruption to the conduct of the Study included: (i) the flexibility noted above to engage other stakeholders in the event of potential participants being unwell; and (ii) sufficient resourcing to enable other team members to conduct interviews should any of the researchers be ill. The Study Lead and/or Manager stepped in on several occasions to conduct remote interviews when scheduling difficulties meant the State-based researchers could not conduct them. While this was not made necessary for COVID-related reasons, it does indicate the viability of the strategy.

3.0   Main Findings

3.1   Conceptualisation and Understanding of CStL

A broad definition of Community Support to Learning (CStL) is *education-focussed interventions to support marginalised children outside the boundaries of school and formal education*.

It includes:

- Community Learning Interventions (CLIs) intended to provide necessary and appropriate support to enable marginalised children to access and engage with educational opportunities; and

- Behavioural Change Interventions (BCIs) intended to address and dismantle the social barriers to those educational opportunities.

Community Support to Learning is not widely recognised as a specific term (online searches conducted for the literature reviews, for example, returned no direct matches) but the concept of CStL – including the concepts of CLIs and BCIs – was broadly understood by all stakeholders interviewed. As one SUBEB representative explained, it concerns the recognition that 'learning takes place both in and *outside* the classroom (emphasis added).' Their understandings of these concepts were typically illustrated through references to relevant programmes and projects. However, those references also highlighted several misunderstandings.

The most common misunderstanding concerned the focus on marginalised children *outside* the boundaries of school and formal education. Most stakeholders – referenced at least some school-based interventions. These interventions were wide-ranging and included: (i) financial support for: (a) teachers; (b) infrastructure; (c) learning materials; and (d) school feeding programmes; and (ii) community-based initiatives to encourage children to attend school.

This shift in focus, however, needs to take account of two key issues:

- The benefits to children of attending school (subject to the widely reported concerns of how formal schooling does benefit children) and therefore the desirability of encouraging children to attend school.

- The opportunities for PLANE Window 3 to make use of interventions encouraging the enrolment and retention of children in schools, including through close articulation with PLANE Window 1.

Further references to school-based education focused on Tsangaya and Almajiri Centres but these were consistently acknowledged as being outside the boundaries of school and formal education.

Other misunderstandings beyond this definition of CStL were related to the particular mandates of stakeholders. Projects cited by these stakeholders to illustrate their understandings of CStL included those concerned with:

- support for young people beyond basic education;

- the acquisition of vocational skills (as opposed to foundational literacy and numeracy skills);

- support for prisoners (highlighted by the SAMEs); and

- human rights education (highlighted by the providers of CStL).

Stakeholder understandings of CLIs reflected these different understandings of CStL.

Their understandings of BCIs were consistent: social barriers preventing the development of human well-being need to be dismantled and education – whether delivered in or outside of formal structures – is central to this process.

Despite these different understandings, all stakeholders recognised and understood the significance of the definition of CStL as: *education-focussed interventions to support marginalised children outside the boundaries of school and formal education*. This was summed up by one SUBEB representative who explained that it is concerned with: 'efforts in trying to bring communities to give a helping hand to education and receiving a helping hand from others to provide education to communities including schools.'

3.1.1   CStL Stakeholders

The stakeholder mapping exercise identified a wide range of current and recent donor programmes – from large-scale and internationally funded programmes to ad hoc locally funded interventions – that are relevant to PLANE Window 3. These are collated in Annex A.

FCDO is a major stakeholder in CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States. DFID/FCDO-funded programmes incorporating elements of CStL in these States include:

- Girls' Education Project Phase 3 (GEP 3) – (2012 to 2020)

- Support Mainstreaming Inclusion so all Learn Equally (SMILE) – (not known)

- Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (ENGINE II) – (2017 to 2020)

- Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) – (2008 to 2017)

- Kano Literacy and Maths Accelerator (KaLMA) – (2019 to 2021)

- Reading and Numeracy Activity (RANA) – (2015 to 2020)

The Nigeria Partnership for Education (NIPEP) (2015 to 2021) funded by the Global Partnership for Education was also included in this literature review. These programmes are also examined in greater detail in Annex B. Other major donor programmes beyond these three States are documented in Annex C. FCDO is aware of these Nigeria-based major programmes through its ongoing engagement with other donors.

The communication channels between key stakeholders – and the strength of information flows – is presented in Figure 1 below.

Channels of communication between SBMCs (as representatives of the community) and the government are somewhat limited. As illustrated in Figure 1, the pathways of communication from the top down appear to be separate from the flow of information from the bottom up. Marginalised communities are even more isolated and face severe challenges in communicating their needs. Intermediaries – in the form of NGOs – help to facilitate interactions between these groups.

Figure 1. Communication chains between key stakeholders
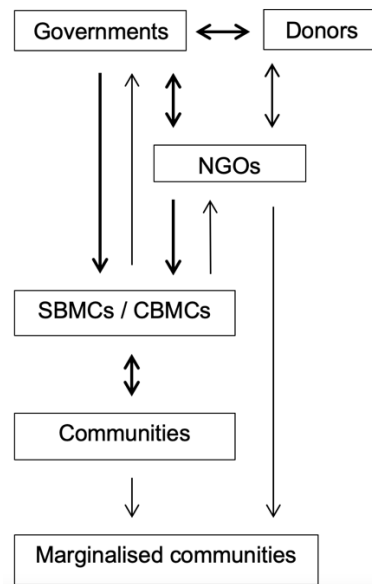
Advocacy groups, such as the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) and High Level Women Advocates (HiLWA), are important stakeholders because they help bridge the gaps between governments and communities. In many cases, it is clear that without this group of stakeholders to intervene, the needs of many communities would remain invisible. Some NGO representatives raised concerns that the most marginalised children and their families were not only overlooked by governments but also by their community representatives. Efforts need to be made to include them.

However, it is not enough to simply identify stakeholders: they need to be effectively engaged. Too many engagement processes – within governments and between governments and communities – are bureaucratic and cumbersome and can lead to communities, the most important stakeholders, feeling ignored. As such, efforts need to be made to engage them more fully in the identification of needs, the development and delivery of CStL initiatives and the monitoring and evaluation of projects.

This analysis highlights the importance of local donors – typically referred to as 'philanthropists' by local stakeholders – who support ad hoc community-based CStL provision ranging from financial support for learning premises and materials to the recruitment of volunteers to engage with and support out-of-school children. Government and non-government stakeholders considered these local philanthropists to be significant contributors to the provision of CStL initiatives. This was not simply because they offer necessary financial support but because they are often seen as role models promoting the benefits of acquiring foundational skills.

FCDO is already aware of most, if not all, of the formally constituted donor programmes operating in these three States and engages with at least some of these through its Regional Coordinators. The other donor programmes – accepting that the term 'donor programmes' is applied loosely here – are these ad hoc programmes supported by local philanthropists (recorded in Annex A). These States-based programmes have been collated based on the accounts of the stakeholders who participated in this Study. Details include the agencies involved, the target groups/issues, project titles, brief summaries of activities and contact details (where available). Many of the local agencies identified carry out activities on a rolling basis, as resources become available. Such activities do not have specific project titles or start and end dates.

Access to them may not be straightforward but governmental routes include the SBMCs (taken to include CBMCs) and PTAs. Non-governmental routes can be facilitated through closer liaison with NGO umbrella groups, including CSACEFA and the Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services (NOGALSS).

These local philanthropists potentially provide key insights into what communities want and need and, because they are willing to finance local initiatives, they also provide key insights into what CStL provision communities are willing to support. Programme implementers should therefore ensure that they are engaged with PLANE Window 3.

3.1.2   CStL Provision

The programmes identified in the States-based literature review offer some insights on what can facilitate the successful delivery of CStL. The following enabling factors emerged at various stages of CStL provision:

- Creating SBMCs with diverse membership and ensuring that influential community leaders, as well as women and children are included

- Building the capacity of SBMCs by training and coaching them in issues concerning access to learning and gender biases

- Contextualising learning resources and offering materials in both English and Hausa

- Creating platforms for the communities where they can safely express their opinions and offer suggestions

- Where financial support is provided, it is useful to develop long term plans to ensure sustainability of programmes after external funding ends. This entails strong engagement with local stakeholders from inception so that there is ownership and an understanding of their roles in providing support to learning

- Ensuring clear communication channels and engaging with the committees/communities when pivotal changes need to be made to programmes

- Sensitising communities to issues around access to learning for marginalised groups

- In some of the programmes, adaptations due to the pandemic (e.g., the use of technology to reach students and parents) have continued to keep families engaged even after schools have reopened

The international literature review indicates these other issues that support CStL:

- Engagement and empowerment of existing community structures and stakeholders by ensuring clear communication (text messaging platforms for parents) and providing training to SBMCs

- The distribution of information materials in local languages and clear explanations of roles and responsibilities pertaining to the programmes also helps to promote understanding

- Increasing the number of schools available to girls and incentivising girls to stay in school

- Providing community 'Safe Spaces' and establishing 'Safe Space Committees'. Campaigns – in particular, sporting events – to mobilise the community, raise awareness of gender-based violence and sexual abuse and facilitate the communities' engagement in interventions

- School feeding programmes are successful in improving participation in education systems and learning programmes

- Establishing Good Participatory Practice guidelines and setting global standards for stakeholder engagement

- Collaboration between government agencies and political will is necessary for the success of programmes

Many of the themes highlighted above are echoed in the stakeholders' accounts of how CStL is conceptualised and implemented across the three States.

The analysis of CStL provision in the States show a considerable range of interventions, from large scale federally approved and internationally funded programmes to locally organised projects carried out as funding becomes available. Figure 2 provides an overview of this range.

Figure 2. Select CStL Programmes in Kano State
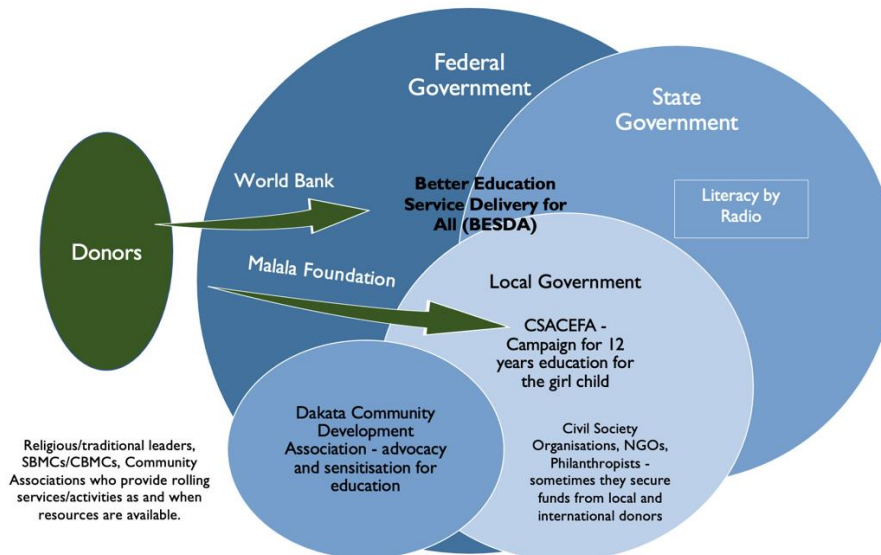
The figure above highlights the interactions between different stakeholders in CStL. It is illustrated with reference to provision in Kano State but provision in Jigawa and Kaduna is made through similar programme structures. It also provides (a simplified) demonstration of the multiple (and overlapping) pathways through which programmes are implemented across tiers of government.

Figure 2 provides a cross section of CStL provision highlighting two (out of the many) donors and associated programmes active at the federal and state and local government level. Initiatives such as the Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) cut through multiple layers i.e., a World Bank funded programme which involves the FME, SMoEs and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) for implementation – it operates through government systems. The state government itself also implements its own learning programmes e.g., literacy by radio which is designed and implemented by each state (and is sometimes supported by the federal government and/or donors). Some programmes exist exclusively at the community level e.g., the Dakata Community Development Association which carries out sensitisation and advocacy campaigns. Other programmes sit somewhere in between: NGOs such as CSACEFA have their own programmes but also secure funding from donors (such as the Malala Foundation) to implement programmes where priorities align. Here, partnerships often operate through non-state systems and work directly with local stakeholders at the community level.

The stakeholders mostly focused on CStL for girls and on the Tsangaya and Almajiri Centres. Stakeholders in Jigawa also highlighted support for nomadic children. There was some concern with orphans and 'vulnerable children but very limited emphasis on children with disabilities. Urban and rural poverty was typically implied rather than addressed directly.

Stakeholders were invited to outline educational provision developed and offered in response to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although children affected by these closures were not out of school as the term is usually understood, the types of provision offered may give programme implementers insight into the development of resources for marginalised children. The States-based literature review (Annex B) also supports this notion. It identifies the use of technology as one of the successful strategies adopted by many programmes (including RANA, KaLMA and GEP 3). After school closures, this approach – which was a minor component of

some interventions – was expanded to encourage learning through the pandemic. Moreover, social media platforms were also used to engage with families, as well as the community as a whole.

The interplay between CLIs and BCIs is clearly observed in most activities and projects typically incorporate elements of both. Given the context for such interventions, the need for some cohesion between CLIs and BCIs appears to be implicitly recognised by all stakeholder groups. The poor quality of education delivered in schools often undercuts goals around increased enrolment and by association, such negative perceptions may in turn diminish participation in CLIs. In this way, even well designed CLIs can fail because of insufficient support for BCIs and vice versa. This concern appears to be a pivotal point in many interventions as well as a recurring theme in this analysis.

3.2   Community Learning Interventions

The most effective CLIs often found ways of connecting with, and being flexible to, the sometimes changing needs of communities. By adapting to seasonal and commercial activities and demonstrating the practical benefits of these learning interventions – and the foundational skills they provide – in their lives, communities buy-in to programmes and feel a sense of ownership.

Many of the CLIs include support to return to school and provision of learning opportunities outside it. There is a clear need for learning interventions such as pedagogic support, materials, etc., but significantly, it is also necessary to support the conditions that would enable the successful delivery of those interventions. CLIs designed to be responsive to the (sometimes changing) needs of communities and marginalised groups report higher rates of success. These utilise a range of approaches including technology (as a tool for learning but also as a means of promoting BCIs) as well as innovative teaching practices. There is an important interplay between CLIs and BCIs in this context. Beyond providing access to learning opportunities, CLIs often also emphasise the importance of quality i.e., the acquisition of foundational skills. Demonstrable improvements in learning outcomes can have direct effects on the perception of the *value* of education in a practical way. For example, if children are acquiring foundational skills, it is feeds into positive perceptions on the purpose of education, while also encouraging shifts from some of the attitudes and practices that hamper engagement with learning opportunities. By creating such cycles, CLIs can leverage on the BCIs to improve enrolment, and BCIs can showcase the benefits of CLIs in a complementary way. This issue is also covered in section 3.3.

3.2.1   Teaching foundational skills through IQTEs

The stakeholders emphasised the work – some organised by State governments, some based on local initiatives – being done to encourage the teaching of foundational skills in the Tsangaya schools. These learning interventions typically include pedagogic support, the provision of learning materials and incentives for the mallams and their pupils to engage with these skills.

Many of these mallams are themselves products of Tsangaya schools and require pedagogic training and support, as well as appropriate materials, to teach foundational skills. The development of Learning Centres for Almajiris through the World Bank-funded BESDA programme in Kano state was widely acknowledged for encouraging the provision of basic literacy, numeracy, basic science and social studies.

However, stakeholders also highlighted local initiatives that supported the teaching and learning of foundational skills in these schools. These initiatives included pedagogic support, financial support and schemes enabling the almajiris to spend their time learning rather than begging. They are heavily reliant on the support from communities to carry out activities that can help to improve the quality of teaching (and learning). This support system is limited – dependent on how much resources community members can infuse into initiatives. It also operates informally.

In light of limited resources, government agencies encourage communities to take up responsibilities and support schools, however, there is no policy framework governing this process.

From the interviews conducted, the incentives communities provide were not perceived to cause competition among initiatives. Because funds are raised through a pooling of efforts, there is unlikely to be proliferation of completely different programmes in one community. However, these initiatives are not sufficient to encourage volunteer teachers to remain if other (better) opportunities arise. For instance, where actors external to the community (such as government funded or international programmes) provided support for a particular intervention, those programmes are viewed more favourably and are attractive because they offer greater incentives and even remuneration in some cases.

Several stakeholders explained that teachers from state schools are encouraged to provide support to the Tsangaya schools. Such engagement means the almajiris receive at least some formal education and their mallams have opportunities to observe, and so learn from, their pedagogic approaches to the delivery of foundational skills.

An NGO representative explained how community volunteer teachers are recruited to provide pedagogic support in the Tsangaya schools. These volunteers are not necessarily trained teachers but have had sufficient education themselves to be confident in delivering foundational skills. In the past, state governments – such as Kano – have recognised the importance of these volunteers by offering them formal employment, and then deploying them to Tsangaya and Islamiyya schools which are then integrated into the national curriculum. However, due to economic constraints, this has not happened in recent years. Local NGOs now play an important role in supporting these volunteer teachers by training them so that they can make use of and pass on their own education. Again, it provides almajiris with access to foundational skills and exposes their mallams to ways of teaching them.

The provision of financial and in-kind support – including basic teaching and learning materials such as chalk and paper as well as food – is important to keep children in an environment where they have the potential to acquire foundational skills rather than spending their time labouring or begging.

Communities often provide such support, but it was recognised, particularly at the local level, that it needs to be sustainable. The same NGO representative illustrated this problem and explained how it had been addressed:

'We realised that at some point there were some kind of distractions for the kids because of feeding time and all that. You know, feeding time for them means going out to look for food, so we usually give some token sum to the school as support… So we were now asking the mallams what we can do to make the children stay and learn because this is the problem we have identified since they have to feed. What can we do differently? And they said: 'Well, the basic thing is these children are going out to look for food. Food is the problem.'

The mallams went on to explain that many of them had farmland and the community agreed to show them and their almajiris how to manage it effectively so that the children could help produce their own food. This meant that their labour was scheduled, and they therefore had regular opportunities to study the foundational skills they were offered.

3.2.2   Learning Centres

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of learning centres (or hubs) in providing opportunities for marginalised children to engage with their learning. As used by these stakeholders, learning centres include a wide range of provision: from the large-scale establishment of centres focused on specific groups, such as BESDA-funded centres for out-of-school girls, to locally initiated centres established by communities.

These centres do not exclusively serve marginalised children – in this case, predominantly girls and almajiri children. Other potential beneficiaries reported by these stakeholders included adult women, particularly divorcees and widows, and adults with disabilities.

Some centres, especially those targeting particular groups, may offer stipends to encourage attendance and to redress the need to earn money by street hawking or begging. Others may offer other incentives, including meals.

The principle is that these centres allow teaching and learning to take place in the community without using formal classrooms. They can reduce the distances children in rural areas need to travel to access education. With rising concerns around insecurity, this can help to ensure children's safety while making education more attractive to parents who want to keep their children home – for example to help with household chores – rather than spending time travelling to more distant schools. They can also allay concerns parents may have about formal education. However, some learning centres are located in schools.

They all offer opportunities for children to acquire functional literacy and numeracy, but the quality of provision varies depending on the resources available to the centres. Some learning centres, particularly those established through large-scale programmes, make use of trained teachers or offer training to volunteer teachers. Volunteer teachers may be retired teachers, university or high school graduates or community members with sufficient skills to support the children. There is no single assessment process to consider the suitability of volunteer teachers and many are simply not formally assessed. Assessments that do take place rely on the capabilities of those conducting them.

NGOs may offer training for volunteer teachers and some programmes encourage qualified teachers to provide training and/or mentoring.

Stipends or other incentives may be offered to recruit trained teachers or suitably qualified volunteer teachers. However, as with so many CLIs, there is a heavy reliance on the goodwill of community members. Some of the stakeholders indicated high turnover rate of volunteers, especially younger volunteers moving into employment, and its potential to disrupt learning.

The quality and suitability of teaching materials varies. Many learning centres, though, incorporate reading hubs and provide opportunities for children to listen to educational radio broadcasts or even watch educational television programmes. Centres can also be used to provide classes for mothers to empower them to support their children's learning at home.

It was generally reported that children, volunteers and communities were all enthusiastic about the use of learning centres as an alternative to formal schooling. The closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have led to more learning centres being opened. The challenge for communities and governments will be to keep them open.

3.2.3   Financial Support

One issue keeping children out of school is the need to support their families at home or generate income. Some CLIs address this through the use of conditional cash transfers, paying stipends to the families of children who meet particular criteria, such as attendance or passing certain grades. Depending on the criteria, these transfers may require considerable monitoring to be effective.

As noted above, financial support may also be given to volunteer teachers to encourage their engagement with learning centres. This support is not necessarily dependent on their ability to teach.

Governments and communities provide additional funding for teachers – especially female teachers – working in remote or otherwise difficult areas. Unqualified female teachers in government schools may be given financial support to continue their own education while still teaching. The particular focus on funding female teachers is justified by the need to provide role models for girls in and out of school.

Financial support is required to incentivise marginalised children to engage in education whether through formal schooling or out-of-school provision. As noted above, some programmes provide stipends for attendance, but support may also be needed for learning materials, food and uniforms. This can influence behavioural change in others: 'In the beginning some of [the girls] use to be shy. Others feel it is not going to be possible. But as soon as they begin, they show their excitement and enthusiasm. Especially when given their school uniforms. At that point you begin to see other girls trooping in seeking enrolment' (NGO representative).

SBMCs may raise funds to pay for security and the upkeep of schools or encourage community members to provide in-kind support. This, as their representatives noted, can make formal schooling more attractive to out-of-school children and their families. Some similar support may also be offered to learning centres.

3.2.4   Remote Teaching and Learning

Learning by radio programmes – and, to a lesser extent, learning by TV programmes – is particularly important for out-of-school children as it does not require the interpretation of written material which can be difficult for illiterate or semi-literate parents and volunteers to negotiate. Learning through the medium of radio is well-established, such as the Learning At Home radio programmes organised by State governments with support from FCDO (via UNICEF), but it was accelerated in response to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. This also led to an increase in the use of television to broadcast educational programmes.

Radio recorded lessons are being developed to support nomadic children. There are also plans to distribute solar powered MP3 players, with recorded lessons in the SD card for the children to listen to. This approach has been demonstrated to be effective through programmes like KaLMA, and some NGOs expressed interest in adopting and expanding its use.

Programmes include training for parents and other community members on how to organise and supervise sessions. They help explain what is taught and encourage support for greater engagement with foundational skills. They also set timetables for children to follow. Successful programmes use local languages, including Hausa and Fulfulde, as the medium of instruction as well as English. Again, the use of local languages encourages the engagement of uneducated families and volunteers.

Community supervisors are urged to create listener groups so that children can learn together and to facilitate supervision. Children who do not have access to radios are encouraged to identify children who do and 'sit and listen together to what the lessons are [and] they are eager to listen to something' (NGO representative).

This highlights the obvious point that these interventions require children to have access to radios and televisions. It was reported that State governments distributed them to learning centres when schools were closed, and the challenge now is to ensure they stay in the learning centres.

Governments also worked with open and distance learning specialists, such as the National Teachers' Institute in Kaduna, to develop remote teaching and learning materials. These included paper-based materials and e-learning materials. Although developed to support children who would ordinarily be in school, there is the potential to develop such materials for out-of-school children. However, they will need to take into account the literacy levels of families and limitations on the use of e-resources, including cost and coverage.

A serendipitous effect – also discussed in the literature reviews – of remote learning programmes appears to be higher levels of engagement among women. There is some evidence that home-based programmes provide an opportunity for primary caregivers (often mothers or older female siblings) to become more involved and participate in learning. This in turn facilitates the provision of such programmes while also building a strong support base for CLIs as well as BCIs.

3.2.5   Other activities and community organisations

A common priority across stakeholder groups was to reduce school truancy and bunking. One initiative in Kaduna State addressed this matter by empowering individuals to be enforcement officers for education, known as EduMarshals. These are community members drawn from local organisations as diverse as Mothers' Unions and associations of taxi/motorcycle drivers engaged by SBMCs to 'go around town, looking for children that abscond classes in order to return the children to school' (Community and Religious Leaders representative). They may provide them with food if they are hungry or other small incentives. Some may also provide them with uniforms if necessary.

Some SBMCs offer 'refresher classes' at weekends. These initiatives recognise that even children who have access to education and are in school, do not necessarily gain the foundational skills they need i.e., as highlighted by the literature reviews (Annexes B and C), many children are simply schooling rather than learning. Refresher classes have also grown more popular since the COVID-19 school closures because they offer a way of supporting children so that they do not fall behind. They do this by bringing groups of children together according to the level of their classes to review and revise what they have been learning. These measures show that when communities perceive education to be of value, they take steps – as far as they are able – to create learning opportunities beyond that provided by the government. Such supplemental lessons address parental concerns about the weaknesses of the schooling system as they see improvements in children's foundational skills.

Informal community events are also an important space to showcase improvements in learning outcomes. Organised debates between children in school and those participating in informal learning generates excitement in communities as they see the progress children have made. The passion shown by the children during these activities helps to build the communities' commitment to support CLIs.

3.3   Behavioural Change Interventions

The importance of BCIs was clearly recognised by the stakeholders. Many of the BCIs they identified were embedded in the CLIs they noted.

According to respondents, the families of marginalised children need to change their perceptions of education and how it can benefit them. Societal norms are a powerful driver behind decisions to engage with learning opportunities – especially for girls. Caregiving and housekeeping responsibilities are perceived to be the primary priorities for girls and these gendered stereotypes prevent them from attending school (also discussed in Annexes B and C). In cases where domestic work is used to generate additional income, it is even harder to overcome the financial and opportunity costs of attending school. Traditional beliefs that define girls by their role as wives and mothers – and fears of pregnancy outside of wedlock – also push girls towards early marriages. This is further reinforced by associated economic benefits to the parents (i.e., the reduced financial burden of less children and funds from bridal payments/gifts) as well as the social capital to be gained from unions. In this way, poverty interacts with gender norms to create a cycle of exclusion.

In addition, reservations about western education are also an impediment to participation in schools. Where education neglects to instil religious values and principles in children, parents are likely to opt out. Moreover, the

poor quality of education and the inadequate conditions of provision – for instance the lack of sanitation facilities in, and long distances to – such schools often undercut interest in, and the perception of any value gained from school. All these factors increase the risk of children dropping out of school and prevent children (especially girls) from engaging with learning opportunities. Therefore, many BCIs are designed to address these issues by persuading communities (and marginalised groups) of the direct and meaningful benefits to be gained from the acquisition of foundational skills, rather than simply attending school. By integrating BCIs with CLIs, these initiatives can directly address barriers to education while also tackling societal concerns and misconceptions.

For example, in most communities, there is a strong preference for Integrated Qur'anic Tsangaya Education (IQTE) schools. These spaces are influential because they are viewed as imparting Islamic values and preserving cultural integrity. Direct engagement with families is important but the success of BCIs often rests on who those families listen to – religious and traditional leaders hold a lot of sway in this regard, however, role models closer to home (such as maternal figures) and advocacy groups can facilitate this process. As such, many BCIs can be designed to leverage the dynamics of this context. Persuading families of the importance of children acquiring foundational skills, and persuading them to share this message, is essential to encouraging families who may have reservations about western education to support their children to acquire foundational skills.

Government agencies have to recognise and respond to the educational needs of communities. However, they also have to match them to government priorities. Communities therefore have to persuade government agencies of the relevance of their needs – which may require government agencies to be clearer about their priorities – and of the importance of demonstrating their interest in what is being done at the community level.

3.3.1   Engaging families and communities

The need to reach out to families and communities to encourage marginalised children to engage with educational opportunities is clearly recognised. The means of doing this was less clear.

Government representatives typically asserted that they were conducting this outreach through town hall meetings and participatory research. However, some government representatives acknowledged that these efforts were not enough to fully engage with marginalised families. NGO representatives argued that communities were not being listened to and that there was a need for ways of making the needs of communities heard. Opportunities to bring communities and government agencies together to share concerns are therefore important as recognised in the literature reviews (Annex B).

The support of religious and traditional leaders was recognised as an essential key to unlocking the concerns of families of out-of-school children because they are typically willing to listen to their advice and guidance. BCI-related efforts to engage these leaders are therefore needed as the ripple out effects can generate greater and sustained support from the communities.

Several representatives of Community Leaders (inclusive of traditional and religious leaders) and SBMCs recalled the use of community-based theatre programmes to increase sensitisation to the benefits of education. Such programmes have been shown to be successful in promoting well-being initiatives, particularly health-related initiatives, but they also provide a forum for promoting BCIs.

The families of marginalised children may not be interested in more formal events intended to promote the education of their children. They may, though, be interested in attending social events – sporting activities, debates and quizzes were all noted – that provide the opportunity for such promotion.

It was suggested that other stakeholders would be more interested in such events. Government stakeholders may be reluctant to formally meet with community advocates but 'everybody will want to come and watch the football, even the politicians. So we get them there' (NGO representative).

The presence of governmental representatives at these community events, and their associated interest in community-based educational initiatives, can help legitimise the concerns of communities and embolden them to make their needs known.

3.3.2   Role Models

Role models were recognised as important contributors to behavioural change, but their activities were only broadly referred to and there was no clear sense of how their contributions could be enhanced. Most of the stakeholders saw them as the volunteers who demonstrated – or, in the case of some religious and traditional leaders, at least recognised – the benefits of education. Others linked them to advocacy groups.

Similar to the findings in the literature reviews (discussed in detail in Annex C), different levels of role model interactions are observed in the States. There are robust levels of engagement among networks of literacy champions (promoted through programmes such as RANA) and gender champions – typically men who are well known and respected in communities for promoting positive norms – and they are supported by NGOs (and donors) to participate in Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) campaigns. These often have a particular focus on rural communities where gender stereotypes are more deeply embedded.

However, it is also clear that less (formally) active role models can also have a powerful effect on shaping perceptions and countering restrictive beliefs and practices. Mothers and grandmothers in particular have a voice in the home and community. By acting as an example, they can 'influence positive change and also try to sensitise other members of the community to be like them' (NGO representative).

Mentorships with female role models – and even amongst peers in Girls' Learning Centres – also emerge as strong connections are formed through participation in BCIs.

3.3.3   Educational Pedagogies

There is a clear need to make learning opportunities relevant to the families of marginalised children. This is a central element of sensitisation processes: 'During sensitisation, we talk to the district heads to give us a room or shades or even if it is under trees, where we stay to teach and train the girls on things that will help them in future' (SMoE representative).

The need for appropriate sensitisation is addressed below but making educational initiatives relevant to marginalised children and their families is a key element of successful BCI. This requires appropriate pedagogic approaches that may be as simple as using local languages because this enables the engagement of parents in their children's education.

One NGO representative summed this up with reference to the pedagogic use of the song *Tsafta, tsafta, tsafta* [clean, tidy, clean]: 'Parents would say "You mean when you go to school and they teach you all this kind of things" [and] then for that parent who thought education had no base, education was meaningless, I have heard of situations where those kind of songs and those words change the mindset of those parents because they understand what it means instead of the children singing the song in English which didn't mean anything to them.'

3.3.4   Advocacy groups

SBMCs are expected to act as advocacy groups representing their communities. They are given training by NGOs on advocacy issues and, reportedly, by State governments. However, while government stakeholders referred to their role in identifying community needs and reporting them, the NGO representatives were typically more reserved. They indicated that SBMCs respond to government initiatives but are less active in taking their own

needs to government. Instead, whereas they should be presenting their own concerns and initiatives to government agencies, they go through the NGOs. The NGOs then become the advocates for the communities.

Strong and effective advocacy was demonstrated by HiLWA supported by UNICEF with funding from DFID/FCDO. They are groups of influential women who are indigenes of their States and who are or have been in positions of high authority at the State or national level. They engage in high level advocacy to increase girls' enrolment, retention, completion and transition in school and increase the number of women in education governance and management. They also act as mentors and role models to girls and women.

Their success in influencing behavioural change has been cumulative: they have 'become a recognised and reputable body on issues around women and girls in education' (NGO representative) because they have successfully encouraged change through: (i) a focus on key issues; (ii) acknowledgement of the social and cultural issues limiting change; (iii) recognition of relevant legal and political positions and using them to strengthen their arguments; (iv) evidence to support those arguments; and (v) engagement with key stakeholders in communities and government to persuade them of the benefits of change to girls and women and of their communities.

3.4 Gaps in CStL Provision

The scale of the problem of out-of-school children – and the poor quality of education provision – means that there are significant gaps in CStL provision in all three States. The gaps identified in this section are closely tied to many of the challenges further discussed in section 3.5. In summary, the gaps identified are as follows:

i. **Geographic gaps,**

ii. **Gaps in support for certain marginalised groups,**

iii. **Social and cultural issues, and**

iv. **Governance and communication gaps.**

Underlying all these gaps is the primary issue of insufficient funding. In most cases, stakeholders' responses centred on the financial limitations in implementing and sustaining programmes, with most of the other gaps stemming from this specific constraint.

There are significant gaps in rural provision and governments expressed their frustration that even large-scale initiatives, such as BESDA, cannot always be delivered in all LGEAs or to all communities. Non-formal learning centres can help address this problem as they are smaller than schools and so are also cheaper to establish and run. This means they can be built closer to communities. They require staffing, and volunteers may need pedagogic training, and materials and this leads back to the problem of funding gaps. However, it was reported that many more learning centres were established in response to school closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic and these need to be kept open to help fill these gaps.

The school closures also led to the development of e-learning materials. Although this was directed at children who would normally be in school, opportunities to use mobile technology and other forms of remote learning specifically targeting out-of-school children should be explored. This must take account of their circumstances, limitations and needs. Government agencies concerned with nomadic education were especially keen to promote digital teaching and learning and have had some success with it. However, even as these technological solutions were able to address some of the main challenges faced during the pandemic, they remain imperfect. The most remote rural communities are still underserved.

The stakeholders tended to focus on CStL provision for girls and almajiris. There was only limited concern for children with disabilities. Each of the three States has Special Needs schools and these should be approached for guidance on developing CLIs for children with disabilities.

Social and cultural gaps remain with many families still failing to recognise the value of education. The issue of relevance and prevailing cultural norms still hinder CStL provision as some concerns may not be adequately addressed. Pressures around marriage and motherhood compound with the high opportunity costs based on the need for immediate financial returns. The design of some programmes fails to effectively convey the benefits of the intervention, and/or does not provide support to facilitate children's participation. Where the concern appears to be delivering education, rather than delivering education for a reason, interventions fall short. These gaps can be filled with on-going BCIs. To make learning relevant, initiatives need to embed the teaching of foundational skills into the vocational skills that many out-of-school children want.

The absence of a cohesive policy framework for stakeholders to share information and coordinate activities in a timely manner greatly hinders the provision of CStL initiatives. Communication gaps within governments and between governments and communities also restrict opportunities to identify needs and develop responses to them. While larger donors are able to develop mechanisms and emphasise the necessity of such coordination for all government and non-government organisations tied to their programme delivery, broad governance structures with a guiding policy framework would better serve coordination for all stakeholders. Many of the less funded agencies are only made aware of relevant activities after the fact. The need for coordination is particularly relevant when considering the scale of support the education sector (and CStL initiatives) receive from CSOs and local community philanthropists.

A broader view of the education landscape shows that CStL programmes can and do benefit directly (or indirectly) from the federal and state governments efforts to integrate IQTE schools into the universal basic education programme across the country (investments in infrastructure or support to master trainers). This operates through the UBEC (and SUBEBs) which disburses funds by means of a special projects division. It directs funds (when available) to support OOSC (in this case via IQTE schools). However, it does not outline a regulation or policy framework to coordinate this process in a comprehensive manner for stakeholders across government, and outside of it. Moreover, while this is a relevant mechanism, the approach does not capture the range of CStL initiatives that exist outside of IQTE (e.g., learning centres and community activities discussed in section 3.2), nor does it engage on a systemic basis with other agencies with the same mandates to build on efforts. It is also noteworthy that this strategy highlights the importance of community support to sustain the schools i.e., the reliance on communities to sustain interventions financially underscores the persistent funding gap. The resultant implication for CStL programming is that individual agencies may develop their own strategies to address these challenges, thus creating a patchwork of support which may overlap in objectives but are loosely connected in practice.

These issues are addressed more fully in section 3.5 (Challenges to CStL provision) and in section 3.6 (Governance).

3.5   Challenges to CStL Provision

This section (i) highlights the main challenges identified in the State-based and international literature reviews, and (ii) discusses the challenges raised by the stakeholders.

The review of literature from Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States identified the following challenges:

1. Insufficient engagement with parents, women and the wider community hinders the impact of programmes

2. Technological solutions tend to exclude the poorest and most rural areas, and lack the flexibility to accommodate the schedules/activities of communities

3. A lack of trust between communities and their local governments impedes the long-term success of programmes

4. Contextual concerns including safety, security and poverty remain a significant challenge

5. Limited financial resources and insufficient capacity to sustain interventions and replicate successful initiatives in other communities

The international literature review identified further challenges to CStL provision, including:

1. Contextual gender bias in cultural attitudes and social norms around early marriage and pregnancy are barriers to inclusion

2. Extreme poverty – and associated factors such as high illiteracy rates – influences perception of value of schooling, especially when it is disconnected from reality of their lives

3. Many programmes do not adequately account for the lifestyles of nomadic or migratory groups

4. Lack of identification documents prevent the most vulnerable from accessing social protection programmes and educational opportunities

5. Lack of or poor-quality educational infrastructure, including sanitation facilities for girls and inadequate support for children with disabilities. This is exacerbated by overcrowding in classrooms

6. Conflict and general insecurity in communities where there are political or religious tensions undermines education systems and often generate misinformation and distrust of programmes

7. Gender-based violence, a lack of safe spaces, and poorly implemented monitoring and safeguarding policies

8. Changing priorities of new administrations and a lack of political support impedes implementation

The biggest challenge to the provision of CStL – the sheer scale of providing learning opportunities for marginalised children – was rarely highlighted by the stakeholders. This does not mean that they are unaware of it. It does, though, suggest an acceptance of the situation that may lead to sluggish responses in creating and expanding access to learning opportunities.

When considering the challenges to – and opportunities for – CStL provision, there was considerable overlap between issues affecting CLIs and BCIs (section 3.2). One of the main challenges to the successful delivery of CLIs remains the need for more BCIs. They are considered together here.

The relationships between stakeholders underlay many of the challenges noted in this section. This is further discussed in section 3.6 (Governance) which explores the dynamics of engagement in greater detail and echoes some of the themes highlighted in the literature reviews.

Security remains an issue in the three States, but it was not emphasised by these stakeholders. Some called for schools and learning centres to have security guards, but this was to stop children leaving early and to prevent vandalism. This is finding is striking because in the last year, Kaduna and Kano State governments closed a number of schools over fears of kidnappings and general insecurity. With many children (and parents) afraid to return to school, efforts to improve enrolment and attendance are undercut by concerns over safety and security. This issue was also identified as a significant impediment to learning in the literature review.

3.5.1   Funding

All of the stakeholders emphasised the problem of insufficient funding to support CStL initiatives (also a recurring challenge in the literature reviews i.e., Annexes B and C). There is too much reliance on the goodwill of communities and this can sour the necessary relationships between communities and governments. Non-government stakeholders typically blamed a lack of political will for the limited funding available for CLIs and BCIs.

Governmental stakeholders acknowledged the funding problem and argued that they were doing their best with the funding available to them.

The frustration this generated was summed up by one of the SUBEB representatives: 'The greatest challenge is funding. Cash backing. To gain quality education enough fund is needed. When BESDA started there was allowance for the proprietors of Qur'anic [Tsangaya] schools. Also, there was allowance for classroom teachers who left their personal activities to be in class, teaching the children on behalf of BESDA and others. The allowance kept coming but gradually it was withdrawn. The teachers mostly are family men who need cash to take care of their daily needs. As the allowance gradually stop, so do the effort of the teachers. As BESDA stopped supporting, teachers stopped coming to class and that became a big problem for the community as the entire project wind to a stop. All the Schools established by BESDA, some kept getting teaching aids and other instructional materials and they kept working. Others stopped due to lack of instructional materials and allowance.'

Stakeholders involved in other types of CStL provision reported similar concerns.

This analysis shows a great deal of support for CLIs and a willingness among community members to volunteer time and effort to delivering them. However, volunteers have their 'personal activities' – including family and work responsibilities – and simply cannot afford to give up too much of their time to these learning interventions.

The reliance on volunteers also means that that those supporting CLIs are not necessarily able to deliver it effectively. They need appropriate training, and they need suitable materials. Both have cost implications. Other support needed to encourage children to engage in learning activities, such as feeding programmes, require funding.

Similarly, many BCIs also have material costs: 'When producing your [radio] jingles you must… pay production cost and cost of airing and that of producer. And we know that money counts' (SAME representative).

The availability of appropriate – or any – premises for the delivery of CLIs was reported as a particular problem in rural communities. Often, the only state-owned premises suitable for children to use are schools. Many schools are already overcrowded and so it can be difficult to accommodate CLIs. There is also the issue that if marginalised children are out of school because of social and cultural concerns about western education, then their families may be reluctant for them to attend CLIs delivered on school premises. Community members may make private premises available but there is then a cost implication.

Monitoring interventions also have financial costs. Reflecting on the ENGINE II programme, one government stakeholder noted that: 'If there were no funding, the programme wouldn't have been successful. Because in some centres, the facilitators do not come to class, they remain at home. But if you are used to monitoring him, he will not miss class… Monitoring is an essential aspect, and it needs cash support' (SAME representative).

Such challenges may also be considered a down-stream effect of the funding dearth. Poor (and in many cases, the absence of any) remuneration undercuts the impact of programmes, while swelling the costs of delivery. For example, even programmes that are made possible due to the goodwill of volunteers may amass costs further down the line due to the arising need to monitor attendance and create incentives for facilitators.

Communities often self-fund projects but this is rarely a long-term solution and projects can be undermined by the 'nonchalant attitude of the community members towards education' (PTA representative). Several of the stakeholders described the problem of some parents refusing to contribute to such interventions. This not only limited the support available but led to other parents subsequently withdrawing their funding and, in turn, led to the end of the project.

This frustration echoes the concerns of the SUBEB representative, above, about the inequitable distribution of funding. This was seen as demoralising for those communities not receiving funding and had the potential to

undermine the goodwill typically reported towards CStL initiatives. Other government stakeholders noted the financial difficulties of bringing colleagues together for meetings to discuss, plan and deliver CLIs and BCIs.

In this context of limited funding, both government and non-government stakeholders recognised the tensions between meeting needs and supporting effective interventions. Most appeared concerned about their ability to maintain this difficult balance.

3.5.2   Sensitisation / community engagement

Much good work has been done to address these social and cultural issues through community engagement but it is clear that more needs to be done. Explaining and contextualising the importance of foundational skills to the families and wider communities of marginalised children is central to the successful implementation of CStL initiatives focusing on these skills. BCIs – typically referred to as 'sensitisation' by these stakeholders – were recognised as essential to the success of CLIs.

This sensitisation requires individuals 'to change the narrative of their circumstances, their environment and their situation [and] knowing well that their family, relatives and community could benefit from the initiative' (FCDO representative). It needs to involve local stakeholders including community, religious and traditional leaders who have the trust of communities. Their engagement was typically considered crucial to the success of CStL provision. The importance of CBOs and CSOs and of SBMCs, CBMCs and PTAs was also highlighted as they can provide bridges between communities and government offices.

Government stakeholders typically spoke in terms of formal engagement with communities such as 'advocacy, sensitisations, town hall meetings among others' (SUBEB representative). Radio and other media campaigns were also noted. However, printed media is of less use in reaching out to marginalised groups as many parents of out of school children are themselves illiterate.

Those closer to the communities – including the community and religious leaders and the representatives of NGOs – acknowledged the value of such engagement but also recognised the significance of less formal outreach. This included sensitisation at local social and sporting events and recruiting support from community members, particularly Mothers' Unions and local traders' associations, through the EduMarshals programme.

As one NGO representative noted: 'When you put the community first and when you put them in the lead it's more sustainable and you see results faster.' However, the communities need guidance and support to deliver these results and both are limited.

Sensitisation also takes place through modelling with several stakeholders commenting on the positive effects of marginalised children seeing their peers in school: 'Most of the children are motivated by senior pupils in the community. Plenty of them are stirred by Islamiya teachers. We sensitize the women that teach the children at Islamiya to open up to the children and show them the importance of learning in both Arabic and western education. Through such kind of sensitisation, we have been achieving positive behavioural change in the attitude of the children. Due to sensitization and awareness, a lot of the children have changed so well that you find children pleading with their parents to enrol them in school' (SBMC representative).

Although the stakeholders taking part in this Study were keen to highlight such positive examples, they all acknowledged that the lack of appropriate and sufficient sensitisation remains a major challenge. As one SAME representative stated: 'We need to widen the advocacy. All the remote communities need advocacy and sensitisation about the importance of what they are going to learn. When you don't know the difficulties I am going through and you offer me a solution, I may not take it.'

However, this is not just a problem for rural communities. One group of community and religious leaders described how 'everything worked well in the beginning' of one urban programme 'but then the children began to absent themselves at random. That attitude continued until the classes stopped completely.' The leaders had tried to encourage attendance but recognised that neither the parents nor the children had fully understood the potential benefits of the learning opportunities they had been offered: 'Most of the children started attending because of partial interest not because they know the advantage. Some attend because others are doing so… Their lack of motivation also discouraged the instructors.'

This illustration also highlights the need for on-going sensitisation. Concerns were raised by some non-government stakeholders that governments – and some NGOs – did not understand the importance of long-term BCIs. As these community and religious leaders explained, it is not enough to simply get children into learning environments: they need to be encouraged to stay in them. Other problems included the failure of learning interventions to include appropriate forms of sensitisation or, as illustrated above, to maintain it.

The shortage of sufficient funding for BCIs was recognised as a significant problem by all these stakeholders. However, those closest to the community raised concerns that formal government interventions often failed to even reach the most marginalised groups. This underlined their focus on informal outreach opportunities. Some also noted that governments were not interested in these concerns.

Changing attitudes to education is complex and the 'interlocutors we use in the communities should be educated on means of communication because often times the intention may be right, but the manner of delivery could distort everything and that creates more problems' (FCDO representative).

In communities where CStL programmes are active, families of out-of-school children are being told that education will benefit their children. They are being told this by their religious and traditional leaders, by their communities and by government. When their children are being offered CStL by an unemployed high school or university graduate, though, the message may not be clear. The contribution of foundational skills to improved life chances needs to be demonstrated and this remains limited by the wider economic context in which education is being promoted.

3.5.3   Perceptions of relevance

Despite efforts at sensitisation, it is clear that many marginalised children and their families do not see the relevance of education to their lives. Out-of-school children may need to generate income through street hawking or begging or carrying out work-based or household duties, and education is not necessarily presented as a viable alternative.

Current CStL provision is concerned with delivering education and making it more accessible to marginalised children. The Learning at Home radio broadcasts are a good example of this: lessons are provided in local languages, parents and community leaders are instructed on giving effective support to children, they do not require children to be in school and they are a cheap resource for parents. However, the concern from governments seems to be on delivering education rather than delivering it for a reason.

This issue was most clearly raised by the NGOs as they explained how older out-of-school children, particularly girls, were asking for training in vocational rather than foundational skills. They wanted to be able to make clothes or soap in order to make a living and did not understand how literacy and numeracy helped them.

There was some recognition of this problem from governments: 'The [CStL] initiatives will get better if entrepreneurships are included in the content of Girl Child Centres and Tsangaya syllabus… They want the skills that can help them produce items they could sell for self-reliance' (SUBEB representative). However, the proposed solution was to teach vocational skills alongside foundational skills and there was a great deal of evidence to

suggest that, without other incentives, children would engage with the former and disengage from the latter. They might acquire vocational skills – and these would potentially enhance their well-being – but not the foundational skills that are central to PLANE.

Stakeholder responses did not recognise the need to integrate the teaching of foundational skills into the training of vocational skills in order to encourage older out-of-school children to engage with education.

A further problem was that governments seemed content to leave this issue of making learning relevant to the communities. They emphasised the significance of communities generating solutions to problems they understood but overlooked two key matters. Firstly, generating learning opportunities that integrate foundational and vocational skills is complex and requires proper development. Secondly, the governance structures around CStL typically do not encourage communities to propose viable solutions to the problems they face. The current framing of education is often perceived as incongruent to their realities.

3.5.4   Training

Limited capacity to provide training remains a problem at all levels. Training needs were identified by respondents in a number of areas as set out below. In the communities, religious and volunteer teachers need training in how to deliver foundational skills within the limitations of their contexts. Qualified teachers engaging in CStL may also need training in how to effectively mentor these religious and volunteer teachers.

SBMCs need training in the identification of practical solutions to the problems they face in ensuring marginalised children – and their families – engage in educational opportunities. They also need training in advocacy so that these solutions can be presented to governments. NGOs provide such training, and governments claim they do, but it is clearly insufficient.

Government representatives repeatedly emphasised the importance of communities taking ownership of CLIs and BCIs and those communities therefore need training in project development and implementation.

Effective monitoring was recognised as an important element of CStL provision but it was clear that it is often lacking. Communities and governments alike need training to monitor projects appropriately and effectively.

Governments need training to more fully engage with communities and to listen to and act on the solutions they offer. Several government stakeholders noted the limited capacity of staff to generate, analyse and make use of reliable data required for planning and the need for relevant training to address this problem.

Communication between communities and government and within governments was recognised as a significant problem and the cost of organising the face-to-face meetings that are deeply embedded in the bureaucratic culture of Nigeria was consistently raised. Although there are clear benefits to staging face-to-face meetings, governments clearly require training to conduct effective remote meetings.

In the context of limited funding, all these stakeholders in CStL need training to properly cascade their own training so that it reaches wider audiences.

3.5.5   Politics

Several non-governmental stakeholders voiced concerns that governments were uninterested in CStL and lacked the political will to properly fund and implement appropriate projects. Some government stakeholders reflected this concern: 'So if [the donor] will come back and continue as intended, there can be success. But if left in the hands of politicians, it may last only for two years' (SUBEB representative). Limited funding was routinely blamed for limited provision but there were underlying issues that made matters worse.

The overly bureaucratic nature of governments was recognised as a significant problem that contributed to poor communication with communities and slow responses that increased the sense of government disinterest. This is addressed in section 3.6 (Governance).

Most of the non-governmental stakeholders described a lack of government interest in their work and the funding problems this generated. Some claimed they were simply ignored by government officials and that initiatives generated by communities were therefore unfunded. Communities 'should feel like their voices were heard and the interventions were designed to take all that they said into consideration. This is where there is a very large gap' (FCDO representative).

The reported lack of government interest can have negative impacts on CLIs and BCIs even when they are funded (whether by government or donors) because formal recognition is considered important. The lack of such recognition can undermine local support for CStL as it can imply the work is unimportant: 'You know one thing with the community and anybody doing this kind of work, especially when there is no financial benefit to it, you want some form of recognition [but if that is missing] then the community might say "What we are doing is not important." But if they see [government officials] they will know that it is a serious business' (NGO representative).

As indicated above, though, government stakeholders tend to attribute these concerns to a lack of funding rather than a lack of political will. They also noted the difficulties of accessing rural areas and the time and cost implications of visiting remote communities.

Speaking on behalf of the communities, NGOs raised concerns that governments were over-reliant on their willingness to volunteer services and support for free. There were further concerns that, by identifying needs that were not being met, governments viewed community groups as a challenge to their authority.

Government stakeholders noted that communities sometimes generated their own political issues that had the potential to undermine effective CStL. These focused on appointments to community-based positions with prestige and/or stipends attached to them. Although keen to explain that some traditional leaders 'are doing excellently well' as Chairs of SBMCs, one SUBEB representative expressed concerns that others believe that 'being a traditional leader, it should warrant a direct ticket to become SBMC chairman. But we need a committed SBMC chairman whether he is a title holder or not.' Another SUBEB representative noted the 'political interference in the selection of [Girl Child Centres] participants due to the stipends attached to it.'

It was clear that there is insufficient dialogue between government and non-government stakeholders in CStL. Government stakeholders typically did not recognise this as an issue and, subject to limited funding, felt they engage sufficiently with community stakeholders. Non-government stakeholders typically believed more engagement with a wider range of stakeholders is needed.

3.5.6 Socio-cultural factors

The stakeholders identified a range of well-known social and cultural challenges to the successful delivery of CStL provision.

Some families, even following sensitisation attempts, continue to 'see learning and education as something that will come to distort the culture and values they cherish so much' (FCDO representative). This was often seen as a greater problem in rural areas where families are less likely to have been educated themselves.

Illiterate parents may not value education which can lead to 'negligence and lack of concern by the parents, the children and the community members. They do not care to sit the children by the radio or television set to learn' (SUBEB representative). Impoverished parents may prefer their children to work, beg or carry out household chores instead of going to school or taking up other learning opportunities.

Early marriage and motherhood are still significant barriers to girls' education. Girls, especially under pressure from their families, may prefer to learn vocational skills with the potential to generate income rather than foundational skills. Gender inequality in this context is made worse by poverty, lack of education (and/or quality learning opportunities), and insecurity. The social norms framing such longstanding practices sometimes means that the only avenue for girls to gain status is as a wife and mother, while parents see early marriage as a way to protect their daughters.

Although many mallams acknowledge that Islamic and western education are compatible, particularly following their engagement with BESDA, some are still resistant to the incorporation of foundational skills in Tsangaya schools. One SUBEB representative also noted that some 'consider the trained facilitators as their rivals who may one day hijack the school from them.'

Traditions of families paying Islamiya teachers persist, even when they receive stipends, and the financial cost can keep children from impoverished families away from school.

Insufficient sensitisation and monitoring mean that 'some learners are careless about going to the centre for lessons. For example, they will prefer to go to the farm and on returning from the farm they will say: "Time for lesson has passed" and that they forgot about going to the centre' (SAME representative). This 'careless' behaviour may be coupled to financial need and/or social pressure as well as entrenched negative attitudes towards education.

Some of the committees (such as SBMCs) which are recognised as representatives of the communities lack diverse membership and women are often underrepresented which means their concerns may not be properly heard. In some cases, traditional leaders assume they have the right to chair SBMCs even if they have no interest in carrying out the role. Community members may also try to recruit family and/or friends to join initiatives, especially if there are financial rewards involved, even if they have nothing to offer those initiatives.

Some nomadic families move between countries which limits the support that can be offered to their children through mobile classrooms.

Other reported challenges to CStL in rural areas included poor mobile networks that hinder e-learning opportunities and dialogue between communities and government officials, the distance to schools and learning centres – for children as well as government officials and other stakeholders such as volunteer teachers – and the problem of trying to operate learning centres during the rainy season. The latter is typically addressed by scheduling learning opportunities so that they avoid the rainy season.

Such flexibility in the implementation of programmes is a necessary feature for CStL initiatives. While an awareness of community schedules will help programmes to prepare for routine activities, successful delivery is dependent on the ability to adapt and be responsive to changes. For example, the increasing variation in the duration and shifts of seasons will be an important consideration with practical impacts on CStL provision going forward.

3.6   Governance

The governance structures of CStL between government and community organisations in the three States align with those of the broader education sector. Government processes, despite the support of projects such as ESSPIN and PERL, remain overly bureaucratic and cumbersome. The effectiveness of community organisations depends on the effectiveness of the School or Community Based Management Committees (SBMCs and CBMCs). The Mutual Accountability Frameworks (MAFs) between FCDO and the States may offer a platform for state and non-state organisations to have dialogue and facilitate transparency and engagement. However, while these

frameworks have been co-created and are co-facilitated by these stakeholders, they are not backed by legislation and this suggests limited concern with governance.

The Federal and State Ministries of Education (FME and SMoEs) are responsible for the whole education sector and agencies within them have their own sectoral responsibilities. The Ministries of Education ensure government policies are addressed and maintain an interest in monitoring and evaluation.

As PLANE is concerned with the delivery of foundational skills in the basic education sector, the relevant government agencies are the Universal Basic Education Committee (UBEC) at the Federal level and the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) at the State level. However, other agencies may be responsible for CStL provision to other groups and their children. These include those with remits for continuing education, mass education and nomadic education.

They have a broad awareness of what other agencies are doing, particularly with the larger initiatives, but there appears to be little active engagement with each other on the specific matter of CStL or in general. One opportunity for agencies to share their activities was identified in the form of the National Education Group (NEG). However, this engagement appears to be directed by the interests and activities of top tier actors: the FME and donors. Other stakeholders such as the State-level agencies and NGOs were less aware and less engaged in the group's meetings and activities.

Outside of the NEG, there was limited evidence of formal mechanisms bringing the different agencies concerned with CStL together. This limits opportunities to share good practice and learn from work being done by other agencies. It also risks duplication (although the Study found no evidence of this) and, in the context of funding concerns, financial inefficiencies.

The MAFs aim to promote the development of intersectoral work and ensure that sectoral plans align with the larger state development plans. As such, they offer a potential model for the agencies concerned with CStL.

For the purpose of education, the focal points of communities are their SBMCs and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). SBMCs have a wider responsibility to their communities as PTAs are comprised of parents of schoolchildren. SBMCs may include religious and traditional leaders as well as representatives of other community organisations. They are – or are supposed to be – given training in governance, advocacy and other relevant areas by local and State governments. However, some NGO representatives indicated that advocacy training was inadequate.

There is some coordination of community groups through the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) and through the State-level Education Secretaries for SBMCs and PTAs. Further coordination may be through NGOs or their umbrella organisations. The Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) is the most prominent umbrella group in these States with a regional office in Jigawa and representation in each of the States. The Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services (NOGALSS) appears to have a more limited presence in Jigawa and Kaduna and no presence in Kano. Community groups may also coordinate through personal networks.

SBMCs are supposed to be the key educational link between governments and communities. Having functional and trained SBMCs – having a school development plan, for example, or demonstrating community engagement – may be a criterion for communities to access funds. The Nigeria Partnership for Education Project (NIPEP) was cited as a good example of this. GPE funding was disbursed to SBMCs through MoEs and: 'This approach worked because the community did not want to lose out. It strengthened their capacity and also helped with accountability and transparency' (MoE representative). However, SBMCs may be a weak link if they are not fully functional or representative of their communities; and several NGO representatives noted that they do not always reach out to the most marginalised members of their communities.

NGOs are important mediators between governments and communities (as shown in Figure 1). The SBMCs are supposed to be the main link between them but it seems they tend to turn to NGOs which then liaise with governments on their behalf. The relationship between governments and communities is supposed to be two way and, while acknowledging that better communication is needed, most government representatives appeared to think this is the case. The NGOs felt that the heavy top-down system, with too much bureaucracy and too many delays, often effectively silenced the communities.

Government representatives typically acknowledged the widely known concerns with governance – including insufficient training to properly monitor and evaluate projects – candidly summed up by one as: 'Government procedure, bureaucracy and all that. So delay in the intervention, you know, is one aspect of the challenges [CStL initiatives] face' (MoE representative). Whether initiated by governments or communities, interventions require government authority (although it was not clear how or if this worked with smaller, ad hoc interventions) so these delays can hold back the introduction of CStL.

There were frequent responses about the need to engage communities in all aspects of CStL initiatives – including development, monitoring and evaluation – to improve transparency and accountability. The government representatives indicated that more needed to be done in this respect. Several NGO representatives made clear their thoughts that much more needed to be done and some added that governments saw them as a threat because they want to make them accountable.

Communities often contribute to delayed action by working through NGOs instead of with governments. 'That back and forth sometimes takes time [but] most of the challenges we face is government response. Government just tells us "Okay, we've heard you, we're going to do that' and they don't' (NGO representative).

3.6.1   CStL Needs Identification

Broadly, there are two ways through which needs are identified: (i) top-down from government – which may be influenced by donor priorities, and (ii) bottom-up from communities – which are not always recognised if they do not align with the major concerns of government. NGOs often step in to facilitate this process by relaying information from communities to the government. The process through which needs are identified are summarised in Figure 3 below.
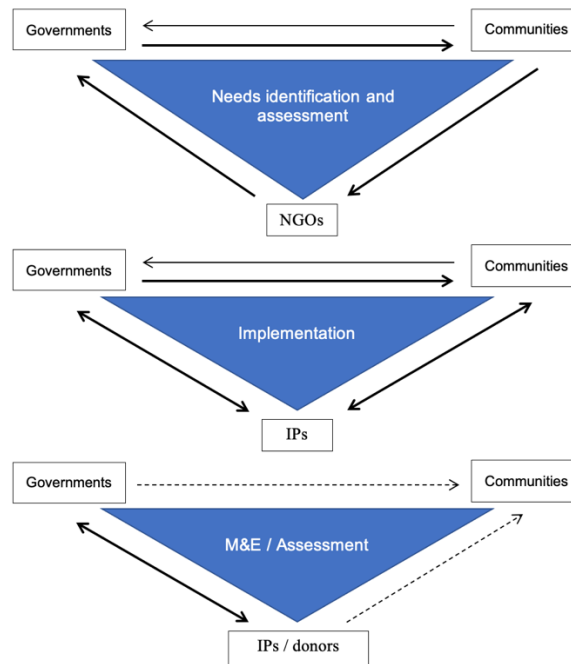
Figure 3. The progress of CStL provision

Figure 3 presents the typical stages of CStL provision, illustrating the flow of information between key stakeholders. In the early stages of needs identification and assessment, the communication pathways are strongest from the top down. Communities – especially marginalised groups – strongly rely on the support of NGOs to communicate their needs to the government. It is also important to recognise that often NGOs are themselves IPs, so the distinction in the diagram is not a strict division of roles.

There is greater interaction when implementation begins and IPs step in. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 highlight how successful CStL initiatives feature responsive engagement between stakeholders which is often facilitated by programme implementers. Post implementation, monitoring systems are weaker. On the government side, data from CStL may be captured through routine surveys (which are dependent on the availability of funds) rather than any specific follow up on the impact of programmes. Donors and IPs (especially where activities overlap with other initiatives) are likely to retain (a time-bound) awareness of the performance of projects and their impact on communities.

3.6.2 Government needs identification systems

Government at all levels identifies CStL needs from the data it collects. These include the Annual School Census, out of school surveys, analyses of literacy rates and the reports of previously commissioned research. Further research, mostly in the form of surveys but including other data collection methods, may also be commissioned. Government representatives also explained that they listen to the concerns of colleagues from the next level of government down: federal agencies listen to state agencies and state agencies listen to local government.

State and local governments engage with communities, typically through the SBMCs, and reportedly listen to their concerns (section 3.6.1 further discusses processes of engagement). This engagement may be to advise them of CStL initiatives and/or to identify what their communities need. It is carried out through: (i) regular meetings for SBMC Chairs convened and hosted by governments; and (ii) community visits to conduct town hall meetings and what is broadly referred to as sensitisation.

However, several government and non-government representatives noted the limited capacity of government to collect, collate and analyse data. This concern was highlighted by the account of a school in a neighbouring State with the capacity for 1,000 children and a roll call of thirteen (many of them the head teacher's children). Further concerns included duplication of effort and – perhaps most importantly here – the failure to properly engage with the most marginalised children and their families.

The need for technical support and training was generally recognised by government and non-government representatives.

Federal and state governments also take into account the priorities of donors. Donors may make use of government data and/or conduct their own needs analysis activities and preliminary studies to identify needs. Engagement with communities is through governments for permission and then SBMCs and/or NGOs. The larger donors have regular meetings with governments to align priorities and attempts are being made to include them in the MAFs to further this.

NGOs take similar approaches to the identification of needs but indicated they had a deeper reach and were able to engage more with the marginalised sections of society.

Communities have more informal approaches although they may try to engage NGOs for support: 'In the community, when issues are deteriorating and are getting out of hands, the need to intervene will arise. The community leaders normally hold meetings to deliberate on matters as they arise' (Community and Religious Leaders representative).

SBMCs and their sub-committees and PTAs are supposed to meet regularly to discuss educational concerns. They also liaise with other community organisations. The community leaders, including the Chairs of the SBMCs and PTAs, may then organise town hall meetings to share and discuss concerns, identify needs and consider how to address them. However, the reach of these meetings may be limited, and several NGO representatives voiced concerns that they failed to engage with the most marginalised families in the community.

Governments respond to these needs by assessing them and planning appropriate interventions. These responses, however, are constrained by limited funding and budgetary issues are therefore a major concern: 'Financial implications of the needs and resource available determine our responses' (SUBEB representative).

When communities identify needs, governments report engaging with them to focus on the issues raised and developing a better understanding of those needs. The following needs assessments consider these issues and their relevance to governmental priorities. If reported needs articulate with government priorities and can be met within existing budgets, then: 'We quickly plan and execute [them]. But when [they] require huge resources we move it forward and plan for it to be in the next round of budget. We also look for support from partners and CBOs and philanthropists in the community' (SUBEB representative).

The actions reported by these government representatives – engaging with the communities, assessing their needs and planning how to address them – mean that they are able to respond positively to donors when funding becomes available: 'That's how we derived the Second Chance initiative. We saw the need for married dropout adolescent girls to return to school and continue with their education… It was the UN that approached the State government [and] we were ready to work with them' (MoE representative).

Donors respond by ongoing dialogue with governments, as indicated here, and with communities to ensure their support articulates with governmental and community priorities: 'NGOs give funds to government and government implements. They ask us to write justified action plans [and] cash will be released. They continue to monitor as money is expended' (SUBEB representative). That support, particularly from major donors, is likely to include technical assistance to improve governance. This may be less of a concern to smaller and local donors (the philanthropists noted by the SUBEB representative).

NGOs respond through ongoing advocacy, liaising between governments and communities to press for appropriate government action to meet community needs. This may include training community leaders to articulate their needs more clearly. It may also include working within communities to support behavioural change, for example by encouraging religious and traditional leaders to champion educational causes.

The process of communities responding to identified needs was outlined by the SBMC and NGO representatives speaking on their behalf. They make formal and informal responses.

Formal responses involve writing a letter of request to local or State governments and waiting. Government representatives argued that they were responsive. NGO representatives were more guarded, suggesting that responses were slow and that in some cases requests were simply ignored. Requests are often made through NGOs as they have more leverage and, although SBMCs are trained in advocacy, typically have a better understanding of how to present persuasive requests.

Informal responses may be just that: 'Sometimes if organisations detect a problem, they contact the community for sensitisation and identification of that problem' and the community then deals with it (Community and Religious Leaders representative). Responses include:

- discussing the importance of education with parents (which may involve seeking support from religious and traditional leaders);

- encouraging engagement with local CStL provision (e.g., Learning at Home radio broadcasts);

- ensuring children stay in school through the EduMarshals[2] programme or other locally convened groups;

- providing financial or material support (and so liaising with the community to raise funds); and

- recruiting volunteers to support learning initiatives.

The NGO representatives also suggested that communities simply give up when waiting for formal governmental responses and deal with the issues as best they can without government authorisation and support.

Despite these frustrations, the responses from state and non-state organisations do lead to appropriate action as indicated by the CStL initiatives detailed in section 3 and in Annex A.

3.6.3 Engagement between state and non-state organisations

State and non-state organisations work together through regular and ad hoc meetings intended to align needs, priorities and resources and to monitor the progress of CStL initiatives.

Governments have structures that enable vertical engagement within agencies but there is limited horizontal engagement across agencies and between sectors. The MAFs are intended to address the issue of intersectoral engagement and bring in donor representatives.

Major donors have their own forum to coordinate priorities and resources. Smaller and local donors (often referred to here as philanthropists) may be linked through NGOs – CSACEFA was acknowledged as an important link – or community-based structures including SBMCs and PTAs as well as informal networks.

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[2] EduMarshals is a programme which brings together community members to prevent truancy among students. In some cases, these volunteers also engage with the parents of the children found to encourage them to improve enrolment, attendance and completion rates.

The main link between governments and communities is supposed to be the SBMCs and CBMCs. Regular meetings of the Chairs of these organisations are planned by local governments and government representatives make community visits to discuss needs and engage the community in planning responses to them. However, these meetings are subject to financial constraints (the costs of travel and subsistence) and logistical problems (particularly travel to and from remote communities) which limit the necessary engagement of governments and communities.

State stakeholders acknowledged the importance of working with communities from the outset and throughout the delivery of interventions and emphasised that: 'Education is the responsibility of all. When [communities] come up with any meaningful initiative, government will welcome it' (MoE representative). They highlighted efforts to engage communities through on-going sensitisation and 'complementing [community] efforts through funding, providing materials, training volunteers' (MoE representative).

They recognised that this sensitisation is necessary to the successful delivery of CStL initiatives. Communities need to know that projects are being implemented and how to engage with them, for example by identifying beneficiaries and recruiting volunteers. Government stakeholders also explained that the communities need to know that their concerns are being listened to and addressed.

However, while the successful implementation of initiatives points to effective engagement between governments and communities, there are problems: 'There are a lot of bottlenecks in how information is transmitted from the common man in the community to government. A lot of them work with civil society organizations' (FCDO representative). Communication from governments to communities is channelled through the SBMCs. This is supposed to be a two-way process, but government and non-government representatives acknowledged that it is not always the case.

SBMCs are supposed to be trained in advocacy so that they can represent communities and their needs to government. Instead, many turn to the NGOs to advocate on their behalf. This works as the NGOs have greater leverage and more experience of advocacy. However, it can lead to delayed responses from government which then lead to frustration in the communities and contributes to the belief that their concerns are not being heard. It was suggested that it can also lead to communities simply not sharing their concerns with government: 'If there is no feedback, people can become completely disenchanted by the whole thing and wonder what the point is when nothing will be done… creating a vicious cycle where people don't trust government, because they feel like their voices are not heard' (NGO representative).

This bleak picture, though, should be considered in the light of the CStL provision that is generated through successful collaborations between governments and communities.

4.0   Considerations for Implementation

Strategies adopted by a range of programmes have been identified as successful examples of what works in CStL programmes. They span CStL provision, the challenges faced, gaps identified and governance structures to be navigated. However, many of the strategies adopted can be viewed (and applied more broadly) to the provision of educational opportunities. Therefore, the key issues and recommendations presented below are structured in two parts: general points and CStL specific points. They are drawn from the findings of the literature review, and the interviews with stakeholders.

4.1   CStL Provision

General issues to be considered in education provision include:

1. Government schools and community learning centres need to be supported (with training as well as improved infrastructure and facilities) to manage increased numbers of out-of-school children wanting to learn because of successful BCIs (and CLIs).

2. To address some of the identified opportunity costs that hinder learning, educational programmes can be positioned as a pathway to economic opportunities within local economies e.g., components of the intervention can feed into the acquisition of vocational skills.

3. The Edumarshals initiative offers a useful example of a programme which attempts to monitor and ensure children who have access to learning systems participate in those systems. At the moment, this programme is active in Kaduna. Further evaluations on this initiative may provide insights on what works, as well as inform thinking with regards to expanding successful elements of this initiative in Jigawa and Kano States.

Programme implementers should consider the following issues to build on CStL provision:

1. The range of programmes identified in the stakeholder mapping (Annex A) offer opportunities for collaboration with programmes supported by local philanthropists. Taken in conjunction with the gaps (and challenges) to provision (identified in sections 3.4 and 3.5), partnerships to leverage synergies may offer sustainable outcomes. This also provides an opportunity to create (and for implementers to facilitate) links between government and the needs of communities. Through this process, it will be important to ensure that government remains engaged and aware of the education provision landscape.

2. To ensure that CStL provision is sensitive to the needs of children with disabilities, the design of CLIs and BCIs should be informed by lessons/approaches from Special Needs schools (Annex A identifies organisations that provide for this group).

3. CLIs can leverage on existing vocational training programmes by incorporating foundational skills.

4. Remote and e-learning opportunities developed in response to the closure of schools because of the COVID-19 pandemic can be maintained/expanded to meet the learning needs of marginalised children. A greater focus on low-cost and easy-to-access initiatives – such as the Learn at Home radio broadcasts – can also mitigate challenges to access.

4.2   Challenges to CStL

General issues around the challenges of education provision include:

1. Ownership of schools and informal learning centres is critical to the success of programmes. Programmes need to ensure that governments as well as communities are a central part of the design process and have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.

2. Assessment of (volunteer) teachers and mechanisms to encourage their support for learning programmes through continuous pedagogic training and professional development opportunities can help to ensure quality learning.

3. Partnerships between state and non-state organisations may generate economic opportunities linking educational opportunities very directly to other societal needs. For example, learning initiatives may be designed to feed into rural health worker employment schemes.

4. In light of the security context, a framework/system of 'threat assessments' which consider preventative and mitigative measures can be developed and embedded in CStL provision.

Issues specific to the challenges to CStL include:

1. To spread out the costs of establishing and running local learning centres, a "matching grants" approach by government may help leverage donations from local philanthropists and focus them on effective CStL provision. This can help combat the funding fatigue stemming from the overreliance on the goodwill of communities and individuals.

2. IQTEs provide a useful model as they are valued by community members. CStL interventions can leverage on this system and support programmes that incorporate foundational skills while also retaining the historical and cultural values of communities.

4.3   Governance

This section pertains specifically to governance issues for CStL as the devolved (and informal) dynamics of implementation may not apply directly in formal education systems.

1. NGOs play a vital role in bridging communication gaps between the government and communities. Support to, and continued engagement with NGOs can help to ensure need clear, responsive two-way communication for CStL interventions.

2. The needs identification processes for state and non-state organisations needs to be supported through training, (and partnerships with NGOs) to ensure the needs and challenges of marginalised children are addressed.

3. Initiatives such as PERL and the MAFs may be leveraged to improve correspondence about CStL across different government agencies.

4. The NEG may be a springboard for greater inter-agency and cross-sectoral communication about and collaboration for CStL provision at both Federal and State levels. Moreover, NEG can be used as a model for stronger partnerships (and coordination) for sub-national counterparts operating at the state or local government level.

5. Lessons from the successful interventions in the health sector can help to improve government engagement with education initiatives at the community level.

5.0 Conclusion

There is considerable CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States (Annex A) that ranges from large-scale internationally funded programmes to locally supported ad hoc initiatives. However, deeply entrenched negative attitudes to education – coupled to harmful socio-cultural practices and poverty – and insufficient funding mean the number of out-of-school children in these States remains a significant challenge to the Federal and State governments as they struggle to meet their obligations to provide education for all and deliver foundational skills.

This report draws on the first-hand accounts of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in CStL provision and the two literature reviews – of CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano States and beyond them – to highlight issues for programme implementers to consider as PLANE Window 3 is developed and implemented (section 4, above).

The main findings from this study are that:

1. CStL programmes need to be embedded in the local context and CLIs and BCIs need to go hand-in-hand to be most effective.

2. Clear, transparent and open lines of communication between government and communities are critical to the success of CStL.

3. While vertical engagement structures within agencies are well established, there is limited horizontal engagement across agencies and between sectors.

4. The needs of the most marginalised families are often poorly represented and may be overlooked by the community organisations, including SBMCs, who should be responsible for their educational needs. In such cases, NGOs are often the only link between these groups and the government.

5. Many of these interventions are dependent on the generosity of local philanthropists and donations from the communities themselves. Many also rely on community members being willing to volunteer their time and having sufficient capability to provide educational support. However, this does not sufficiently address the significant funding gap and the other gaps which stem from it.

CStL programmes need to be embedded in the local context. By supporting conditions that enable the successful delivery of interventions, CLIs and BCIs can leverage the dynamics of existing social systems to gain the buy in of stakeholders. Consequently, **CLIs and BCIs need to go hand in hand to be most effective**. This is a practical matter. As shown in sections 3.2 and 3.3, stakeholder understandings of these concepts are intertwined for an important reason – communities (especially marginalised groups) need to be persuaded of the relevance and benefits of CLIs in their lives. This is achieved through BCIs. In this way, the success of CLIs is tied to the effectiveness of BCIs, which in turn provide a stronger evidence base for those very BCIs.

Clear, transparent and open lines of communication between government and communities are critical to the success of CStL in terms of engagement with learning opportunities and the acquisition of foundational skills (section 3.2). The top-down, one-way communication channel highlighted by stakeholders undercuts sensitisation efforts and diminishes the quality of engagement between the government and the communities they serve. **One of the most effective strategies identified to promote stakeholder engagement was through outreach programmes**. When held regularly, townhall meetings offer a useful mechanism to share successes and discuss challenges with all members of the community – rather than just leaders and gatekeepers. Through such engagements, communities feel that their needs are being met, they were being listened to, and their challenges are being accommodated.

While vertical engagement structures within agencies well established, there is limited horizontal engagement across agencies and between sectors. This limits the interaction between parallel agencies which may share similar mandates and areas of interest, especially with regards to CStL provision. Top tier actors (such as the FME and donors) have strong mechanisms for engagement and coordination, however, this does not always extend to stakeholders closest to the ground.

The needs of the most marginalised families are often poorly represented. Multiple levels of stratification, even at the community level, means that many groups are severely isolated and unable to access CStL interventions. **In such cases, NGOs are often the only link between these groups and the government.** This ineffective approach leaves marginalised households in a difficult position as they are dependent on the chance that an NGO reaches them, and vice versa. The poor quality of engagement at this level can be improved by providing additional support to NGOs in the short term but stronger government systems and responsive mechanisms for needs identification are required for this to be sustainable.

There is also clear evidence that sadaqah – charitable giving – plays a role in the provision of many CStL. **Many of these interventions are dependent on the generosity of philanthropists and donations from the communities themselves.** In this challenging context, the goodwill of individuals, be they community members or administrative officers in the government (who may personally champion an issue and take on the associated costs), is a notable source of support to sustain or push forward interventions. **However, this does not sufficiently address the significant funding gap and the other gaps which stem from it.** These gaps include geographic disparities in provision (especially for rural communities), limited provisions for children with disabilities, and the challenge of addressing social and cultural norms that hinder engagement with CStL.

For CStL provision to have meaningful impact, all stakeholders all have a role to play. This Study demonstrates that programmes need meaningful engagement from all groups who are a part of education systems – government, NGOs, donors, IPs and of course, the communities – and even the children – themselves. Indeed, stakeholders recognise this and try to complement each other's efforts through their activities. In their own words: 'Education is the responsibility of all. When [communities] come up with any meaningful initiative, government will welcome it' (MoE representative). This is facilitated by organisations who support communities to 'voice their concerns' (NGO representative), thereby enabling those communities to 'take ownership of these kind of initiatives, to ensure sustainability' (SBMC representative).

6.0 Annexes

6.1 Annex A: Stakeholder mapping

Attached separately

6.2 Annex B: Local literature review of CStL provision in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano

Attached separately

6.3 Annex C: International literature review of CStL initiatives

Attached separately