

Addressing Quality Gaps in Jigawa's Non-State Schools: Insights and Policy Priorities from the 2024 School Self-Evaluation



Executive Summary

The 2024 Jigawa State School Self-Assessment, conducted under the UK-funded Partnership for Learning for All in Nigeria (PLANE) programme in collaboration with the Jigawa State Government, provides an evidence-based review of quality across the non-state education sector. Using the validated "Jigawa State School Self-Assessment Form," the study assessed 300 schools, comprising 84 Integrated Qur'anic schools, 52 Nomadic schools, 88 Conventional Private schools, and 76 unregistered schools. The assessment aimed to strengthen education quality, improve accountability, and promote continuous improvement by encouraging structured self-evaluation of school performance, governance, infrastructure, and learning outcomes.

The findings reveal significant systemic challenges. Approximately 73.5% of schools were graded "Emerging," with only 0.4% reaching "Excelling" standards. Sharp disparities in teacher-pupil ratios—ranging from 1:18 in conventional schools to 1:100 in nomadic schools—combined with widespread deficits in water, electricity, sanitation, and fencing, highlight deep inequities across school types. Without targeted and equity-driven reforms, these structural gaps risk entrenching quality disparities within the non-state sector.

This brief highlights the most policy-relevant findings from the evaluation and proposes priority actions for the Jigawa State Government to strengthen school quality assurance, improve learning conditions, and accelerate progress toward equitable education outcomes.



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Context/ Background

Non-state schools play an increasingly important role in expanding access to education across Jigawa State, particularly through Integrated Qur'anic, Nomadic, Conventional Private, and unregistered providers. As this sector grows in diversity and scale, ensuring consistent quality standards, regulatory compliance, and equitable learning conditions has become a pressing policy priority.

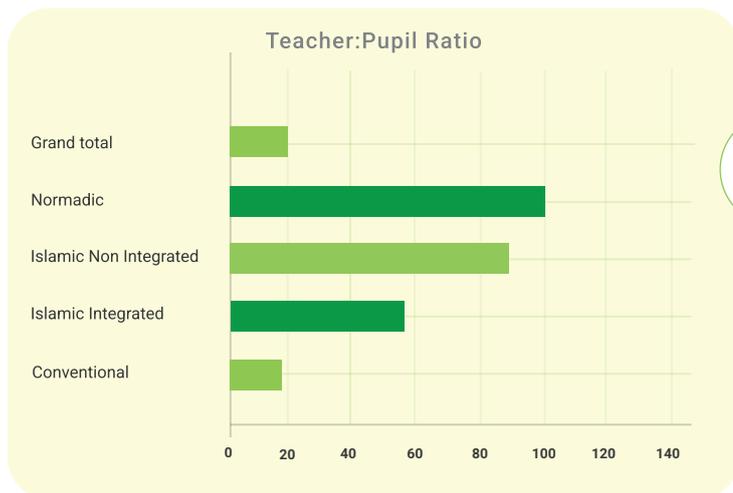
Globally and nationally, school self-assessment is recognised as a key driver of accountability and continuous improvement. Evidence shows that when schools systematically evaluate their own performance—particularly when supported by validation and

oversight—it strengthens leadership practices, improves governance, and enhances data-informed planning. In Jigawa, the adoption of a structured self-assessment and validation process represents an important step toward institutionalising quality assurance within the non-state sector.

However, self-evaluation alone is insufficient without alignment to regulatory enforcement, targeted investment, and coordinated state oversight. The 2024 assessment therefore provides a timely opportunity for Jigawa State to use evidence from non-state schools to inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and differentiated support across school types.

Excelling schools demonstrate strong compliance with quality standards; **Establishing** schools meet most standards with some gaps; **Enhancing** schools show partial compliance requiring improvement; and **Emerging** schools fall significantly below minimum standards. Classification is based on a weighted scoring system. Grades were assigned using a weighted scoring system: 80–100% (Excelling), 60–79% (Establishing), 40–59% (Enhancing), below 40% (Emerging)

Key Findings



Widespread Underperformance Across Non-State Schools

The overall grading distribution indicates systemic quality challenges. **Approximately 73.5% of assessed schools were classified as "Emerging,"** while only **0.4% achieved "Excelling"** status, suggesting that quality gaps are widespread rather than isolated. This distribution reflects structural weaknesses across multiple dimensions of school operations.



Severe Inequities in Teacher Deployment

Teacher-pupil ratios vary dramatically across school types. **Conventional private schools recorded a ratio of 1:18,** while **Integrated Qur'anic schools recorded 1:55,** **Islamic Non-Integrated schools 1:90,** and **Nomadic schools 1:100.** These disparities significantly affect instructional quality and learner support, particularly in vulnerable school categories.



Critical Infrastructure Deficits

Infrastructure gaps are pronounced across the non-state sector. **Over 54% of schools lack access to water,** **nearly 74% lack electricity,** and **65% lack perimeter fencing.** Sanitation conditions are particularly severe in nomadic schools, where toilet-to-learner ratios reach 1:4120 raising serious concerns for safety, hygiene, and attendance.

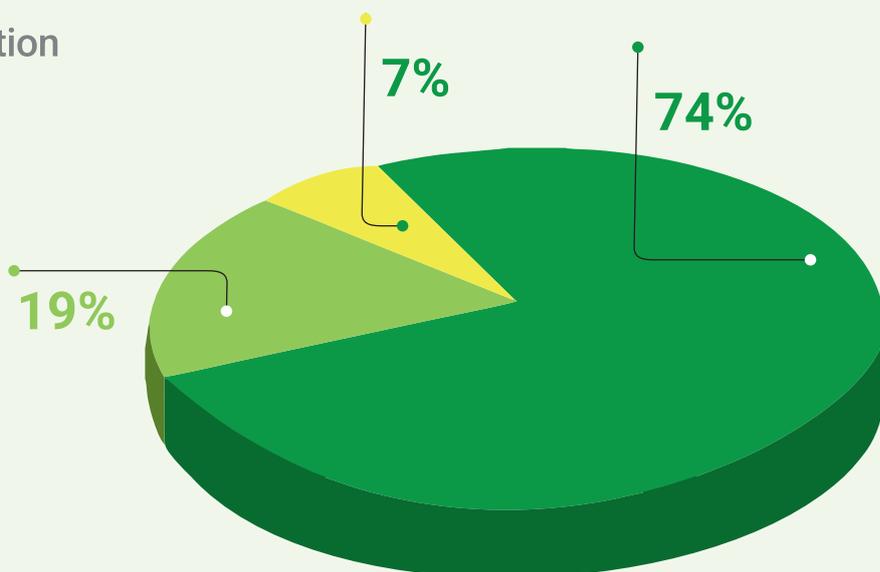


Unequal Learning Environments Across School Types

Classroom congestion varies significantly. **While conventional private schools record an average learner-classroom ratio of 1:22,** the ratio increases to **1:56 in Integrated Qur'anic schools,** **1:81 in Islamic Non-Integrated schools,** and **229 in Nomadic schools.** These disparities suggest that vulnerability is concentrated in specific school categories rather than evenly distributed across the sector.

School Self Evaluation by type of School

- Emerging
- Enhancing
- Establishing
- Excelling



Policy Implications

The grading distribution indicates that underperformance is systemic within the non-state sector rather than confined to a small subset of schools. Without deliberate and differentiated intervention, the majority of non-state schools risk remaining in the “Emerging” category, limiting progress in learning outcomes and quality assurance. Sharp disparities in teacher–pupil ratios across school types suggest inequitable access to instructional support. Schools serving more vulnerable populations, particularly nomadic and non-integrated providers, face significantly greater staffing pressures. If unaddressed, these disparities are likely to widen achievement gaps among different school categories.

Infrastructure deficits across a majority of schools—particularly in water, electricity, sanitation, and perimeter security—poses risks not only to learning outcomes but also to child protection, attendance, and regulatory compliance. Inadequate facilities undermine both quality improvement efforts and public confidence in non-state education provision. The evidence also suggests that uniform policy responses may be insufficient. The concentration of deficits within specific school types indicates the need for differentiated oversight, targeted resource allocation, and tailored technical support rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

While self-assessment provides a strong foundation for accountability and continuous improvement, its impact will depend on whether findings are systematically linked to planning, budgeting, enforcement, and follow-up support at state and local levels. Finally, it is critical to develop a robust monitoring and accountability framework to track the progress of these interventions. A transparent system for reporting school performance, with regular evaluations and public reporting, would promote accountability at all levels and provide insight into whether the interventions are achieving the desired outcomes."

Policy Options /Recommendations

01



Strengthen Regulatory Oversight of Non-State Schools

Enforce registration requirements, minimum standards, and compliance mechanisms across all categories of non-state schools (Integrated Qur'anic, Nomadic, Conventional Private, and unregistered schools) to improve accountability and quality assurance.

02



Address Infrastructure Gaps in Vulnerable School Categories

Prioritise addressing critical infrastructural gaps, including provision of water, sanitation facilities, electricity, perimeter fencing, and additional classrooms, particularly in Nomadic and Islamic Non-Integrated schools where deficits are most severe.

03



Rebalance Teacher Deployment and Support

Reassess and optimise teacher allocation, with targeted focus on ensuring equitable distribution of qualified teachers to underserved and rural schools. to reduce extreme pupil–teacher ratios and strengthen instructional delivery in high-burden schools. This could be achieved through teacher recruitment and retention strategy that offers competitive incentive packages (e.g., housing, transportation allowances, and performance bonuses.)

04



Institutionalise Data-Driven Planning and Monitoring

Use findings from the School Self-Assessment process to guide budgeting, annual operational planning, and targeted technical support for underperforming schools.



05 Strengthen Continuous School Improvement Mechanisms

Support schools to act on self-assessment findings through follow-up validation, coaching, and structured improvement planning to ensure that evaluation leads to measurable change.

Conclusion

The grading distribution confirms that quality constraints are systemic within Jigawa's non-state education sector. **With over 60% of validated schools classified as "Emerging" and none reaching "Excelling" status**, incremental adjustments will be insufficient to drive meaningful improvement. A structured and coordinated reform approach is required.

The concentration of enrolment within Islamic Integrated schools—combined with elevated teacher–pupil ratios—suggests that instructional pressure is unevenly distributed across school types. Without rebalancing staffing and strengthening classroom capacity, learning outcomes are likely to remain constrained in high-enrolment categories.

Persistent infrastructure and sanitation gaps indicate that compliance with minimum quality and safety standards remains inconsistent. Weak facilities undermine both effective teaching and child protection safeguards, limiting the impact of governance reforms.

Finally, the assessment demonstrates that self-evaluation can generate actionable evidence, but its effectiveness depends on systematic linkage to planning, budgeting, regulatory enforcement, and follow-up support. Without this alignment, the self-assessment process risks becoming procedural rather than transformative.



Consortium Partners:

