



INTERNATIONAL CENTER for
Religion & Diplomacy



UNITED RELIGIONS
INITIATIVE
Great Lakes

The Madrasa Education System in Uganda:

Status, Institutional Capacity, Impact and Proposed Enhancements



Learners of Nabweru Community Nursery & Islamic Primary school

December 2022

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Foreword | 3 |
| Foreword | 4 |
| 1. Executive Summary | 5 |
| Overview and Objectives of this Study | 5 |
| Key Findings | 5 |
| Recommendations | 5 |
| 2. Introduction and Background | 6 |
| a. Objectives of the Study | 6 |
| b. Explanation of Key Terms According to this Study | 7 |
| c. Historical Context of Madrasas in Uganda | 7 |
| d. A Note on Uganda’s Broader Education System | 8 |
| e. Overview of Study Methodology | 8 |
| 3. Key Findings | 9 |
| a. General Benefits and Challenges of Madrasa Education | 9 |
| b. Institutional Capacity, Administration, and Infrastructure | 11 |
| c. Curriculum Management and Pedagogy | 13 |
| d. Community Relations & Roles | 18 |
| i. Muslim-Christian Relations: | 18 |
| ii. Student Roles in Society: | 19 |
| iii. Values Taught and Resilience Against Negative Influences: | 19 |
| e. Teacher Training and Professional Development | 21 |
| 4. Conclusions and Recommendations | 22 |
| 5. About the Organizations and Researchers which Conducted this Study | 26 |
| 6. Acknowledgements and Disclaimer | 27 |
| Appendix 1: Key Institutions in Uganda’s Islamic Education System | 28 |
| Appendix 2: Technical Notes on the Methodology of the Study | 29 |
| Study Approach | 29 |
| Sample Design | 29 |
| Quantitative Study Component | 29 |
| Qualitative Study Component | 30 |
| Non-response and Incomplete Interviews | 30 |
| Qualifications for Statistical Significance of Quantitative Data | 30 |
| Qualifications for Inclusion of Qualitative Data | 31 |
| Data Collection Team and Data Quality Control | 31 |
| Limitations of the Quantitative Study Component | 31 |

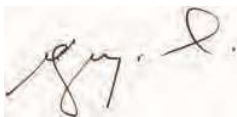
Foreword

There is an urgent call for recognizing and regulating Madrasas by the education system of Uganda. Madrasas (or the Quran schools) are the equivalents of Christian seminaries. Madrasas should be seen as an essential element in the education trajectory of the country. Nevertheless, they were established in Uganda as early as 1830s as informal schools before Western education was introduced in Uganda. To date, Madrasa education has taken shape in a formal way right from pre-primary, primary, secondary and at university levels. The graduates from these Madrasas are the Mosque Imams, County Sheikhs, District Kadhis, Regional Assistants to Mufti and Muftis of this country including other professions like lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers and social scientists among others, all of whom are critical stakeholders in the development process of Islam and our country. Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) has profound information that radicalism and extremism exists in all faiths but particularly Muslim extremism in this country has been fueled by political and economic drivers. This study provides significant evidence to demystify such existing narratives and it is an eye opener to the profound contribution that Madrasas play in shaping our children.

Basically, following Muslim faith traditions, Communities feel that Madrasas are serving their interests, as students are taught to become God fearing and morally upright members of their community. Responses from teachers and community members indicate a strong association of learning the Islamic religion and becoming a citizen who contributes to improving his or her community and the country, while exhibiting good morals and behavior. There is no significant evidence that radicalization or violent extremism is nurtured in the Madrasa education system in Uganda, and evidence suggests that the Madrasas serve important roles in communities. This particular study on Madrasa Education in Uganda bears witness to the above fact.

Uganda Muslim Supreme Council which is the umbrella body of Muslims of Uganda, in conjunction with other Muslim education service providers and Muslim scholars, have carried out yet another Study on the Madrasa education system in Uganda in partnership with United Religions Initiative-Great Lakes (URI-GL) and the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD) supported by the U.S. Department of State. This study was based on a survey of 1626 Madrasas across the country, conducted between June and September 2021. The study was aimed to assess the status, institutional capacity, and impact of the Madrasa education system and to facilitate better understanding of it in terms of infrastructure, curriculum, instructional material, and resource persons.

It is my prayer that UMSC's initiative to issue relevant policies, guidelines and standards be supported by our partners and the government of Uganda so as to improve the quality of Madrasa education in the country by focusing on structural development, teacher training programmes, instructional material and improvement in curriculum for a balanced mind.



Dr. Mugalu Ramadhan
Honorable Secretary General
Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC)

Foreword

I seek refuge from the accursed Shaitwan, in the Merciful and Beneficent name of Allah.

I am grateful for the Blessings and Bounty of Allah without whose infinite mercy and guidance, this noble work of making an honest inquiry and evaluation of the state of Muslim education in general and Madrasa instruction in particular, would never have seen the light of day.

In a Special way, I would like to thank the fraternity of Muslim educationists, scholars, Sheikhs, professionals and leaders who came together under the Expanded Platform on Muslim Education to provide direction on how to approach the process leading up to the commencement of the research on Madrasa Education in Uganda. Special thanks go to the under listed for their guidance and wisdom which informed the entire process: Sheikh Imaam Idd Kasozi Ibbans, Dr. Abbas Kiyimba, Counsel Lubega (R.I.P), Hajji Abdulazziz Ssenoga T. Ssalongo, Dr. Harouna Jjemba, Sheikh Yahaya Lukwago, Hajji Nasser Kiwanuka, Sheikh Muhammad Abdul Weli, Dr. Abdul Hafiz Walusimbi, Hajji Ddungu Ismail, Hajji Muhammad Kibirige Mayanja and Dr. Muhammad Kiggundu.

I greatly wish to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the United Religions Initiative (URI) Great Lakes for their dedication, patience and professionalism, especially their openness to open and participatory consultation and consensus building which made it easy on our part as Muslim leaders to be a part of this Whole process.

I would also sincerely acknowledge our development partners, the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD) and the U.S. Department of State, for sharing in our passion to add value to the Madrasa Education System and to allow a bottom up process that allowed grassroots views to prevail in a local context yet providing opportunities for realization of gaps and opportunities at our disposal.

For a beginning, the outcome of this research provides us as Muslim leaders and educationists with a strong basis and reference to improve and strengthen the Ummah through informed Muslim education curriculum growth and development to meet the needs and challenges of the current and future generations.

It remains a duty on all Muslims to strive for knowledge – Islam encourages and promotes the idea of learning, asking questions, and striving to better oneself through acquiring knowledge. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: “Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.” He is also reported to have stated: “You must seek knowledge from birth till death.”

Research is a powerful tool in achieving this objective. May the Almighty Allah accept the contribution of all that came together to make this research possible.



Sheik Twaha Kezaala
Secretary General Office of the Supreme Mufti (OSM)-Kibuli

1. Executive Summary

Overview and Objectives of this Study

This report presents key findings from a study of Uganda's Islamic education system conducted by the United Religions Initiative-Great Lakes (URI-GL) in partnership with the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD). The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) & the Office of the Supreme Mufti (OSM)-Kibuli collaborated in the design of this study. The findings are based on a survey of 1626 Madrasas across Uganda, 31 Key Respondent Interviews (KRIs), and 11 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) which were conducted between June and September of 2021. The study aimed to facilitate greater understanding of the structures, strengths, and needs of these schools to inform subsequent educational enhancement initiatives.

Key Findings

1. **Challenges identified in the Madrasas** included lack of resources, dissatisfaction with government relations, and need for teacher training and other enhancements. More than 90% of all Madrasa survey respondents reported not having received professional development 'refresher' training in more than 30 years.
2. **Madrasas vary widely in structure, curriculum, level of formalization, capacities, and affiliation with Islamic or governmental bodies.** Formal Madrasas (those registered with the government) were far more likely to have certified and/or formally trained teachers than informal (unregistered) Madrasas. Formal Madrasas also tended to receive more funding and textbook support from the government than informal Madrasas.
3. Slightly more Madrasas surveyed teach a dual curriculum of both **secular and religious subjects** (57%) than those that teach only religious subjects (42%). However, 74% of surveyed informal Madrasas provide less than 1 weekly hour of non-religious studies to their students, as compared to only 7% of formal Madrasas.
4. Surveys suggest that **Madrasas and their teachers have a significant level of influence on their students and command their trust**, particularly in shaping students' understanding of Islam and in providing an outlet for students to air their concerns and grievances.
5. **The majority of Madrasas reported engaging in joint activities with Christian schools and expressed satisfaction with Muslim-Christian interactions in their communities.** At the same time, most Madrasas also indicated **room for improvement in Muslim-Christian relations** and advocated collaboration between these groups to address common problems.
6. **The majority of Madrasas (84%) consider tolerance a very important Islamic value and cited ways their teachers promote tolerance**, such as in classroom guidelines/ rules. At the same time, a sizeable number cited **challenges to promoting tolerance**, such as lack of quality resources, teachers' lack of knowledge, and intolerant personalities outside the schools that mislead students. Half of the Madrasas felt that better support from their school would help teachers to address such challenges.
7. **The majority of Madrasas (82%) viewed critical thinking positively in relation to the classroom; however, only 33% reported that teachers try to promote critical thinking.**

Recommendations

The study findings yield recommendations for addressing Madrasa concerns and enhancing Madrasa education. Implementation could empower students to achieve their personal goals and contribute to their communities. This is significant given that many Madrasa students feel little ability to achieve desired

changes or improvements in their community, according to nearly half of responding Madrasas (44%). Feeling unable to address problems around them can increase students' vulnerability to manipulation by extremist groups that promote violence as a more effective means of change. Elaborated in the report, these recommendations include the following:

Recommendations to be Supported through Pilot Programming as a Follow-on to this Study:

- 1) Strengthen structures to enable greater communication, knowledge transfer, resource sharing, and adherence to quality standards among Madrasas, and between Madrasas and other Islamic and governmental institutions;
- 2) Facilitate a system of regular and standardized teacher training including a Madrasa Teacher Training School with affiliation to recognized universities;
- 3) Develop additional teaching materials to enhance education in areas where gaps have been identified;
- 4) Provide additional support to Madrasas for improving tolerance and social cohesion—building on their existing strengths in these areas;
- 5) Enhance Madrasas' capacity to promote desired critical thinking skills among students;

Recommendations to be Supported through Other Mechanisms:

- 6) Deepen students' Arabic skills to support authentic religious understanding of the Qur'anic verses they are memorizing;
- 7) Engage Madrasa students in community activities through which they can develop leadership skills and contribute to community development;
- 8) Enhance cooperation and co-existence between Madrasas and the various Islamic sects, religious groups, or cultures;
- 9) Provide critical infrastructure to Madrasas most in need (particularly washroom facilities for female students and fire safety equipment)
- 10) Promote improvement of Madrasa-government relations to address wide spread perceptions of unfair treatment and to support collaboration for the benefit of students and society; and
- 11) Establish a model Madrasa for benchmarking and school practice purposes.

2. Introduction and Background

This report presents key findings¹ from a national study of Ugandan Madrasas conducted by the United Religions Initiative-Great Lakes (URI-GL) in partnership with the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD). The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) & Office of the Supreme (OSM)-Kibuli collaborated on the research design of this study, facilitated outreach about the study, and provided access to Madrasas that were invited to take part. The study was funded by the United States Department of State.

a. Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to (a) facilitate greater understanding of Uganda's Islamic education system—including structures, strengths, and needs of its formal and informal Madrasas—by Ugandan Muslim, educational, and government stakeholders as well as international stakeholders; and (b) provide recommendations for enhancing the capacity of Uganda's Madrasa education system.

¹ The findings of the study have been edited for length in this report. For a further breakdown of responses for each survey question, please visit www.urigreatlakes.org.

b. Explanation of Key Terms According to this Study

A Madrasa is an educational institution focused on teaching Islamic theology, core beliefs, and religious practices (e.g., reading/ memorizing the Qur'an), instructing Muslims on how to practice their faith. Within Uganda, Madrasas fall into two categories: formal and informal.

Formal Madrasas possess an official operating license with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and follow a set curriculum, including a dual syllabus incorporating both secular and Islamic subjects. Formal Madrasas typically include facilities like student residences, prayer halls, formal classrooms, and sometimes faculty housing, restrooms, a library, and an attached mosque.

Informal Madrasas, in contrast, do not always follow a national curriculum and are not officially registered with the government. They tend to focus on teaching Islamic theologies popular within their local communities or as practiced by their founding body, and may teach only Islamic studies without including secular subjects. The physical spaces of informal Madrasas can vary greatly—e.g., within private homes or community mosques.

Students, for the purposes of this report, means learners at all levels (pre-primary, primary, and secondary).

c. Historical Context of Madrasas in Uganda

After Islam arrived in Uganda, Madrasas were increasingly established by local Muslim communities to preserve religious teachings for the next generations². For many Ugandan Muslims, Madrasas became a key institution providing religious education for young children, free from real or perceived discrimination faced in secular schools. (Under British colonialism, Muslims were often not admitted to secular schools. Moreover, the education system was supervised by Christian missionaries known for forcible conversions.)

Madrasa education in Uganda began as early as the introduction of Islam in Uganda. By 1936, Madrasa education had become fully entrenched and focused on teaching Islamic theology.³ Prince Badru Kakungulu then established the Uganda Muslim Education Association (UMEA), which was critical to achieving comprehensive religious and secular education in Uganda Partnering with Catholic and Protestant educational secretariats, UMEA helped establish and manage schools across the country. However, UMEA was shut down with the nationalization of education in 1964. In 1972, when UMSC was established, it founded an education department that took over the Muslim education program in Uganda. However, in 1995 UMEA was revived. The Uganda Qur'an Schools Association (UQSA) was also established in 1994, aiming to create a standardized way of teaching Islamic theology and the Arabic language at primary and secondary education levels.

At present, formal Madrasas are widespread across Uganda, and often work in tandem with local government authorities to provide both secular and Islamic instruction. According to the Education Policy Review Commission Report (1992), the goals of religious education in Uganda include enabling learners to: discover their own uniqueness and act with responsibility; acknowledge God as Creator and Almighty; develop awareness of God and knowledge of His Presence in the world; develop a positive attitude toward living with others; and learn respect and tolerance in the face of differences. The organizations below provide key Islamic leadership for Madrasa education:⁴

² Sulaiman Lujja, Mustafa Omar Muhammed, and Rusni Hassan, "Islamic Education in Uganda: Challenges and Prospects of Islamization of Knowledge," *Tawarikh, International Journal for Historical Studies* 7, no. 2 (April 2016): pp. 141-156, 143.

³ Kasozi, A. B. K. *The Life of Prince Badru Kakungulu Wasajja: The Development of a Forward-Looking Muslim Community in Uganda, 1907–1991*. Kampala, Uganda: Progressive Publishing House Ltd. (1996).

⁴ Appendix 1 provides a flow chart for an expanded look at various stakeholder organizations involved in Uganda's Islamic education system and their relationships.

Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (USMC) Education Secretariat: The primary objective of this Secretariat is to supervise and aid the operation of its affiliated Islamic educational institutions. Secondly, USMC works to train educational professionals to further the missions of Madrasas. The foundational beliefs of this organization are derived from the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Secretary for Education and Social Affairs, under the management committee, is charged with overseeing all educational affairs and institutions.

Uganda Muslim Education Association (UMEA): UMEA operates as an independent faith-based Muslim education secretariat in charge of its founded and affiliated educational institutions across the country. In practice, the organization acts and works to ensure accessibility to both secular and religious education for Ugandan Muslims. Historically, UMEA was a secular, non-profit organization founded by the late prince Badru Kakungulu and his colleagues to preserve Islamic education during British colonialism.

Uganda Qur'an Schools Association (UQSA): This is an independent Qur'an education organization which oversees curriculum and examinations of private Qur'anic schools.

d. A Note on Uganda's Broader Education System

Uganda's educational system includes pre-primary, primary, secondary, and university education. Typically, primary schooling adheres to a basic educational curriculum and is the first level of formal education. Secondary schooling is divided into two phases: lower and upper secondary school, which collectively last six years. Three year-long technical school craft courses function as an alternative to secondary school. Alumni of Uganda's Certificate of Education program have four possible outlets post-graduation: 1) pursue a higher certificate of education, 2) join a two-year advanced crafts course in a technical institute, 3) join a two-year grade III primary teaching program, or 4) join a government departmental program. After receiving a higher certificate of education, graduates can join a two-year course leading to an ordinary diploma in teacher education, receive technical or business education, or join departmental programs.

e. Overview of Study Methodology

This nationwide study of the Islamic education sector was conducted by field teams across Uganda. They sought to gain insights into the Islamic education sector's size, the range of educational materials and pedagogical tools used, local communities' perceptions of Islamic education, and issues like student outcomes and community relations. The quantitative survey of 1626 Madrasas across the country was conducted from Aug.-Sept. 2021, and the qualitative data collection process of Key Respondent Interviews (KRIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was conducted from Jun.-Sept. 2021. The specific details of the study approach, sample design, and data collection methods can be found in Appendix 2.

3. Key Findings



A Madrasa in Central Uganda

a. General Benefits and Challenges of Madrasa Education

This section provides an overview of how stakeholders perceive key benefits Madrasas provide to Ugandan society, challenges that Madrasas face, and key needs and concerns voiced by Madrasas.

Benefits of Madrasa Education: The KRIs and FGDs provided insights into the perceived individual, communal, and national benefits of Madrasa education, particularly:

- a) Job Readiness**—A number of KRI and FGD participants reported that formal Madrasas provide students with skills needed to compete for high-level jobs, such as doctors and lawyers.⁵ However, the same level of confidence was not expressed regarding the informal Madrasa system.⁶
- b) Teaching Positive Values**—Several KRI and FGD participants indicated that Madrasas provide students with positive outlets for airing potential grievances, providing an alternative to violent extremist behavior by teaching tolerance and other Islamic values⁷.
- c) Social Assets for Females**—Several Key Respondents reported that females who have studied at Madrasas are valued for their religious education and are perceived to have higher moral standards, making them desirable as wives and mothers.⁸

Challenges Faced and Key Concerns of Madrasas: Madrasa survey respondents identified various challenges they face, as well as support they desire to address their needs, including:

- a) Lack of Resources:** When 1626 Madrasas were asked to select the most pressing problems they faced, they identified the following key challenges: i) lack of funding (92%), ii) lack of/ quality of textbooks

⁵ KRI 2, Education Professional, formally worked with MOES, UMSC, UMTA; KRI 8, Education Professional at IUIU; FDG 2 Arua.

⁶ KRI 4, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 16, Education Official, Lango; KRI 20, Opinion Leader, Kibuli;

⁷ KRI 6, Opinion leader, UMSC, Old Kampala; KRI 6, Education Official, Koboko District; FDG 8 Mbarara.

⁸ KRI 11, Muslim Leader, Old Kampala; KRI 12, UMEA Education Professional, Kibuli; KRI 29, Muslim Leader, Kayunga.

and teaching materials (80%), iii) insufficient facilities (78%), iv) insufficient number of/quality of teachers or personnel (64%), v) insufficient technology (62%), vi) insufficient student support and/or services (46%), and vii) large class sizes (39%). (Smaller percentages cited problems with the environment outside the school (15%) and with the environment within the school—e.g., violence, bullying, intolerance—8%.)

- b) Dissatisfaction with Government Relations:** When asked whether they feel fairly treated by the government as a Muslim-founded school regarding resource allocation, infrastructure, employment/scholarship opportunities, and other services, 54% of the 1626 schools reported that they ‘rarely’ (14%) or ‘never’ (40%) feel treated fairly by the government, 17% felt ‘sometimes’ treated fairly, and 24% ‘usually’ or ‘always’ felt treated fairly. Private schools were 4.1 times more likely to feel that they were not treated fairly.
- c) Desired Educational Enhancements:** Among the 1626 Madrasa respondents, the following enhancements were identified as most desired for helping students achieve better outcomes after they graduate: i) additional teacher training (cited by 71%), ii) additional curricular materials or subjects (61%), iii) enhancements to religious education (57%), and iv) additional extracurricular activities for students (47%).

Similar to the surveys, a primary concern expressed in KRIs and FGDs was the lack of, or unequal access to, resources for Madrasas.⁹ Additionally they mentioned the following challenges:

- d) Lack of Teacher Training Institutions:** Lack of teacher training institutions, particularly Islamic teachers who are responsible for both secular and religious syllabi, was seen as a key challenge impeding the success of Madrasas.¹⁰ Several KRIs/FGDs felt lack of training had resulted in weak management, disorganization, or poorly qualified teachers (mostly in informal Madrasas or Madrasas working to newly implement a dual curriculum)¹¹.
- e) Regulating and Monitoring Madrasas:** Many KRI/FGD respondents reported a lack of support from UMSC and the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) regarding the monitoring of Madrasa curricula and Madrasa success.¹² This was due in part to ideological and institutional divides within the Madrasa system, as well as a lack of resources.¹³ The ability to regulate Madrasa curricula changes depending on a Madrasa’s relationship with the institutional regulators and its ideological background. The fragmented relationship between governing Islamic institutions has caused tensions between Madrasas, between the government and Madrasas, and between communities and their Madrasas.
- f) Perceptions about Madrasas:** Many Key Respondents felt there is widespread bias within the government, as well as the broader communities, against Madrasas. In particular, the negative stereotype of Madrasas as breeding grounds for extremism was seen to impact the Islamic education community.¹⁴ The Key Respondents pointed toward other factors—such as poverty, exposure to intolerant ideologies,

⁹ KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli; KRI 7, Education Official, Koboko; KRI 11, Religious Leader, Old Kampala; KRI 12, Teacher, Kibuli; KRI 15, Education Official, Mbale; KRI 25, Teacher/School Director, Busembati.

¹⁰ KRI 31, Muslim Leader; FGD 2, Arua; FGD 9, Butambala, FGD 10, Iganga.

¹¹ KRI 2, Education Professional, Masaka; KRI 4, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli; KRI 10, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 11, Religious Leader, Old Kampala; KRI 17, Education Official, Northern region; KRI 18, Opinion Leader, Natete; KRI 31, Muslim Leader; FGD 1 Kibuli; FGD 2 Arua; FGD 6 Kasese; FGD 9 Butambala; FGD 10 Iganga.

¹² KRI 1, Education Official, Butalejja; KRI 2 Education Professional, Masaka; KRI 4, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 7, Education Official, Koboko; KRI 12, Teacher/Education Official, Kibuli; KRI 14, Education Official, Kanungu; KRI 19, Education Professional, Bilal; KRI 22, Muslim Leader, Wakiso.

¹³ KRI 3, Education Official, Butambala; KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli; KRI 21, UQSA Education Professional, Old Kampala.

¹⁴ KRI 1, Education Professional, Masaka; KRI 4, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli; KRI 6, Opinion Leader, Old Kampala; KRI 10, Education Official, Mukono; KRI 12, UMEA Education Professional, Kibuli; KRI 14, Education Official, Kanungu; KRI 15, Education Official, Mbale; KRI 16, Education Official, Lango; KRI 21, Education Official, Old Kampala; KRI 22, Muslim Leader, Wakiso; KRI 24, Muslim Leader, Tororo; KRI 28, Islamic Cleric/Teacher, Kayunga; FGD 1 Kibuli; FGD 2, Arua; FGD 4 Gulu; FGD 5 Kampala; FGD 8 Mbarara.

unemployment, and illiteracy—as more potent drivers of extremism than Madrasas. It was also repeatedly expressed that there is a perception among some members of the Madrasa community that outside parties, such as Western countries, are against Islam and working to undermine Islamic education, which may contribute to distrust of international educational initiatives.

Finally, there were varying opinions among KRI/FGD participants about whether there is a gender imbalance in the opportunities and challenges experienced by male vs. female Madrasa students. While 24 KRIs/FGDs highlighted similar opportunities and/or challenges across gender, 13 KRIs / FGDs reported different opportunities and / or challenges. For example, despite the social desirability as wives afforded to female Madrasa graduates, “Male Madrasa students are in a much better position to get opportunities for employment than females.”¹⁵

b. Institutional Capacity, Administration, and Infrastructure

Years of Operation: On average, the 1567 Madrasas who responded to this question have been operating for 21 years. However, 60% of the 854 responding informal Madrasas were founded in the last ten years. Only 9% of all 1567 responding Madrasas were founded in the last 2 years (13% of informal Madrasas).

Licenses and Regulating Bodies: A total of 43% of sampled Madrasas reported having a license. This included 90% of formal Madrasas,¹⁶ 9% of informal Madrasas,¹⁷ and 25% of other types of Madrasas. The central regulating bodies that the surveyed Madrasas were most commonly affiliated with were UMSC (44% of respondents) and the MoES (39%), while 20% of the sampled schools are not affiliated with a central regulating body.

Governance Committees: The majority of the 1626 surveyed Madrasas (73%) reported having a governance committee,¹⁸ while 27% did not have one. The formal Madrasas regulated by the government were more likely to have such a committee.

Classification and Ownership of Madrasas: Sampled Madrasas were mainly classified as either for-profit (business), non-profit (charity), or non-profit (other). A total of 68% of the 1623 Madrasas who answered this question were reported as non-profit (see table below).

Figure 1: Madrasa Profit vs. Non-profit Status

| Profit Status | Formal Primary | Formal Secondary | Informal Primary | Informal Secondary | Informal Unknown level | Other | Grand Total |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| For-profit business | 30% | 56% | 24% | 48% | 7% | 17% | 25% |
| Non-profit (charity) | 25% | 17% | 43% | 26% | 64% | 41% | 39% |
| Non-profit (other) | 36% | 21% | 30% | 17% | 23% | 30% | 29% |
| Other | 9% | 7% | 3% | 9% | 6% | 11% | 6% |
| Grand Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Private-community-owned Madrasas accounted for 41% of the total sample, followed by private-personally owned at 35%, government-aided at 18%, and private-institutionally-owned at 6% (see table below). Almost 41% of all formal Madrasas were government-aided, in contrast to only 1% of informal Madrasas. A total of

¹⁵ KRI 14, Education Official, Kanungu.

¹⁶ The other 10% of such Madrasas are currently in the process of registration and so were categorized as formal Madrasas under this study.

¹⁷ These informal Madrasas were attached to (i.e., operated out of the same compound or facilities as) a formal Madrasa. Thus, it was the formal Madrasa itself that was officially registered with the government.

¹⁸ Madrasa governance committees are meant to set goals, give direction, and set limitations and accountability frameworks for the school. They are charged with day-to-day administration and enforcement of school regulations and policies that encompass the teachers’ commitment to teaching, and monitoring and regulating the management of schools generally. A governance committee is called a Board of Governors (BOG) at secondary schools and a School Management Committee (SMC) at primary schools.

57% all informal Madrasas were reported as private-community-owned and 35% as private-personally-owned.¹⁹

Figure 2: Madrasa Ownership

| Ownership Type | Formal Primary | Formal Secondary | Informal Primary | Informal Secondary | Informal Unknown level | Other | Grand Total |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Government | 45% | 27% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 2% | 18% |
| Private-community-owned | 21% | 14% | 51% | 26% | 67% | 43% | 41% |
| Private-institutionally-owned | 5% | 2% | 8% | 9% | 6% | 11% | 6% |
| Private-personally-owned | 30% | 56% | 40% | 65% | 26% | 44% | 35% |
| Grand Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Numbers and Credentials of Teachers: The average number of teachers at a sampled Madrasa is ten, with almost 47% of the schools having five teachers or less. The most frequently reported (mode) number of teachers in sampled Madrasas is one, and the median number of teachers is six. Approximately 47% of informal Madrasas operate with one or two teachers; in many cases this leads to a high student-to-teacher ratio exceeding 250/1. Additionally, 49% of informal Madrasas reported that their teachers were not certified, and 47% reported their teachers had not received any teacher training, compared to 2% and 2% of formal Madrasas, respectively.

Gender and Madrasas: More than half the 1571 responding Madrasas reported that female students account for more than 50% of their registered students, where they attend classes in co-educational classrooms. Only 128 Madrasas (8% of responding Madrasas) reported that female and male students are taught in separate classes.

Infrastructure and Facilities: The data indicates a wide discrepancy regarding infrastructure and functionality among different types of Madrasas. While respondents reported functional classes in 60% of the total sample, this broke down into 98% of formal Madrasas reporting such functionality vs. only 34% of informal Madrasas and 41% of other types of Madrasas. Smaller portions of the total sample reported having functional libraries (22%) and labs (7%). On the other hand, mosques were functional in 82% of the total sample. (One KRI respondent mentioned: “In the formal schools, during theology teaching, they move to the mosques.”²⁰) One highlighted infrastructure need was for sufficient sanitation facilities, which are often lacking. According to the surveys, 66% of the total Madrasas operate with between one and five stances²¹ of latrines, and 3% have none, even though in some cases students may exceed 300. There is a strong connection between the availability of sanitation facilities and students’ school enrollment in Uganda, especially for girls.²²

Funding for Madrasas: Of the 639 formal Madrasas who answered this question, 48% reported receiving support from the Uganda national government, 19% from community donations, and 19% from the local government. Only 5% of the responding formal Madrasas reported receiving foreign support; such support was mainly allocated for infrastructure, scholarships, teacher training, and competitions/prizes. Among formal Madrasas, government-aided Madrasas were 4.7 times more likely to have received foreign support, while those privately-owned were 80% less likely to have received foreign support.

In contrast, only about 10% of 536 responding primary and secondary informal Madrasas declared that they received external funding or in-kind support, from either local or foreign sources. Informal Madrasas may thus face greater financial constraints and be more reliant on self-funding and individual charitable donations.

¹⁹ Calculation for these percentages was done on all sampled formal Madrasas (primary and secondary) and all sampled informal Madrasas (primary, secondary, and other); thus, they are different from what is provided in Figure 2, which calculates percentages for each school type.

²⁰ KRI 1, Education Official, Butaleja.

²¹ Partitions separating one latrine from another.

²² “It’s all about the water.” (2022). UNICEF Uganda. <https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/its-all-about-water>

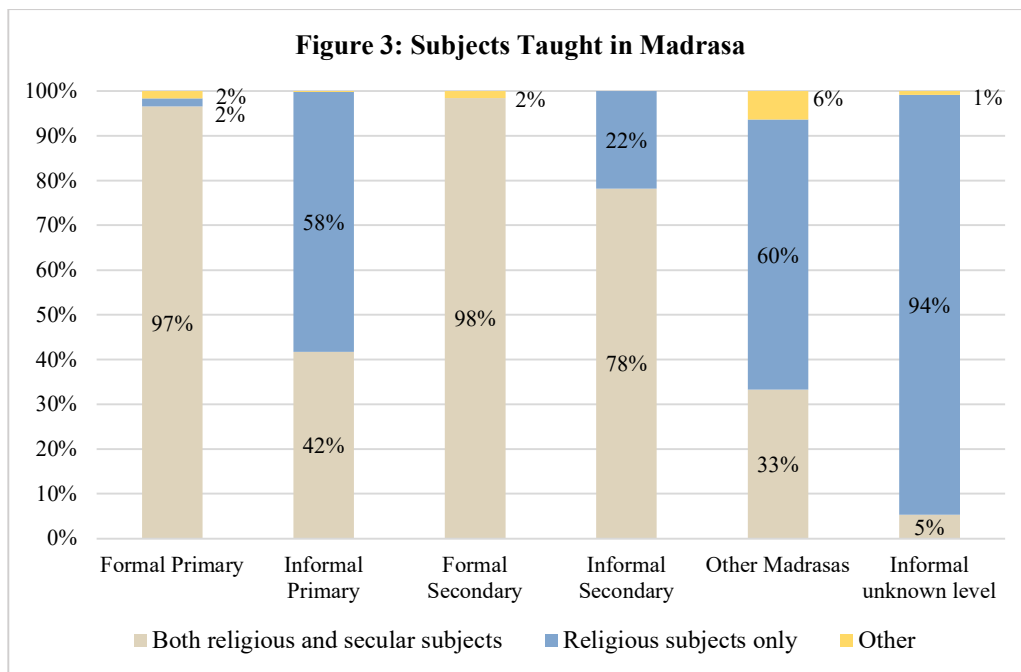
Overall, 8% of total surveyed Madrasas reported receiving other kinds of foreign support, including less than 1% who reported receiving foreign support for religious textbooks. (The low disclosure on donations and foreign support may be understandable given the sensitivity of this subject as well as Islamic traditions of protecting the privacy of sources of charitable donations.)

Safety Measures: Security and safety measures varied among surveyed Madrasas, with the majority of them using locks on doors, along with additional measures, such as guards in 45% of cases. Security and safety trainings are quite limited with only 12% of teachers and 9% of students trained. Surveys indicated a need for better fire safety procedures and equipment, with a lack of fire extinguishers and/or emergency exits in almost 90% of the sample.

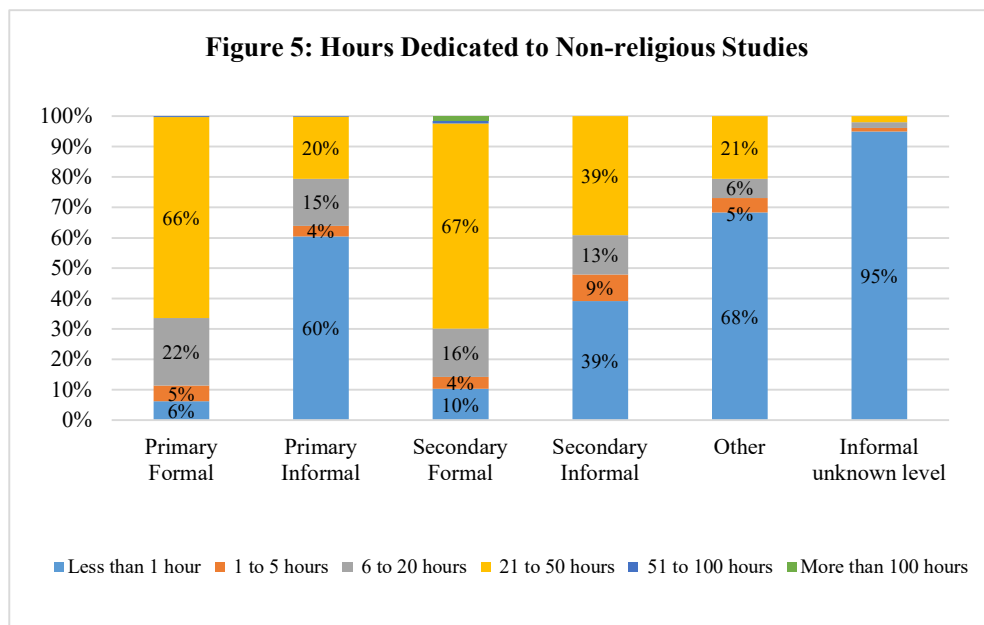
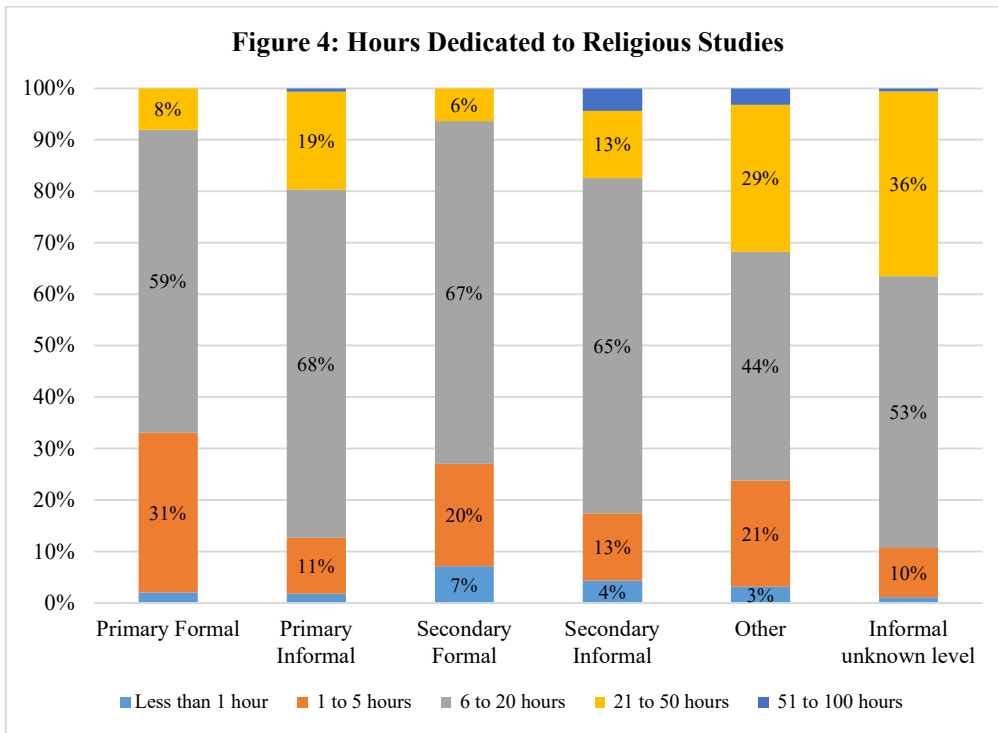
c. Curriculum Management and Pedagogy

The research indicates that Madrasas adhere to varied curricula depending on ownership, type of education provided, and which regulatory body if any they affiliate with.

Religious and Secular Studies: When asked whether they teach both secular and religious subjects (a ‘dual curriculum’), 57% of the total surveyed Madrasas confirmed teaching both, compared to 42% who teach religious subjects only. More than 97% of formal Madrasas—both primary and secondary—reported teaching both subjects, while 42% of primary-level informal Madrasas and 78% of secondary-level informal Madrasas teach both (see Figure 3 below).



Many Madrasas, in general, place more focus and hours on religious studies compared to non-religious studies. Figures 4 and 5 below illustrate the number of weekly hours dedicated for each kind of studies according to the 1626 Madrasas surveyed. Notably, 74% of surveyed informal Madrasas provide less than 1 weekly hour of non-religious studies to their students, as compared to 7% of formal Madrasas.



While Madrasas with a dual curriculum were generally thought to produce competent graduates like secular schools, some Key Respondents expressed concerns about the workload placed on such students and the challenges in balancing both, especially with A-levels. One Key Respondent also felt that while respect for other religions is part of Islamic principles, the time/depth with which this could be covered was limited under the dual curriculum.²³

Curricula Used: Several different curricula for secular subjects were reported as being used by the 1475 primary-level Madrasas who responded to this question, such as the UMSC LINK²⁴ curriculum (by 23%), the mainstream IRE²⁵ (NCDC) curriculum (18%), and the UQSA curriculum (3%). Additionally, 20% of the respondents reported relying on the Qur’an only for their curriculum, and 27% reported using other curricula

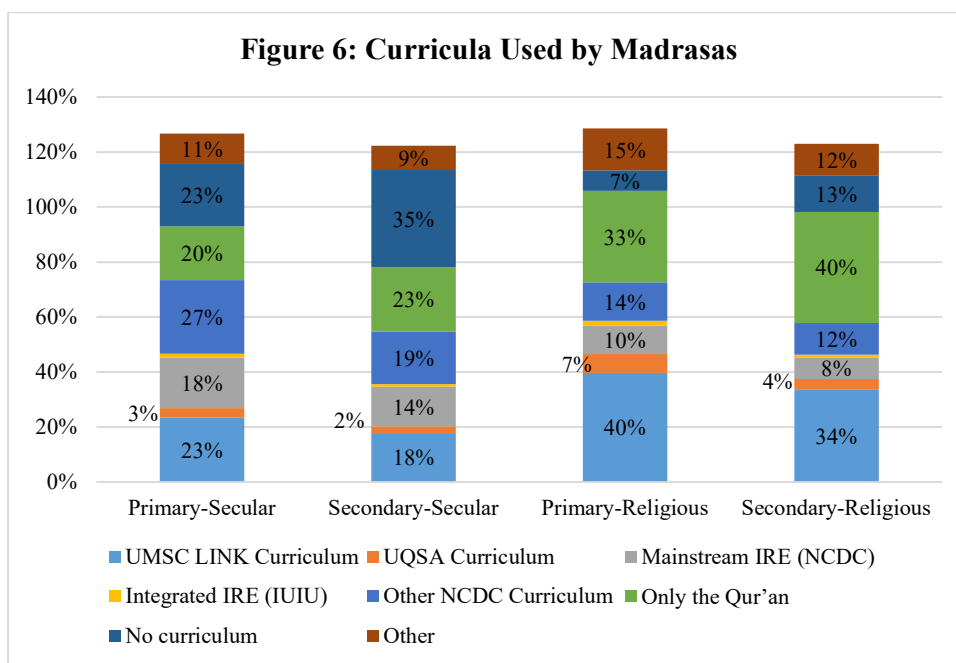
²³ KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli.

²⁴ LINK is the theological examination body that operates under the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council.

²⁵ Islamic Religious Education.

developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). For religious studies, 40% of the 1475 responding primary-level Madrasas relied on the UMSC LINK, followed by 33% who reported using only the Qur'an. The UQSA curriculum, mainstream IRE (NCDC), and others developed by the NCDC were also used by 7%, 10%, and 14% of this sample, respectively. Additionally, 5% of the respondents reported using their own curriculum for religious studies.

Some similar trends are observed in secondary-level Madrasas. For secular education, 18% of the 598 Madrasas who responded to this question reported using the UMSC LINK curriculum, followed by 14% using the mainstream IRE (NCDC) and 2% using the UQSA curriculum. A total of 23% reported relying on the Qur'an as their curriculum, and 19% use other curricula developed by the NCDC. For religious studies, 34% of the responding secondary Madrasas use the UMSC LINK curriculum, 40% use only the Qur'an, and 4% use the UQSA curriculum. Five percent of secondary Madrasas reported using their own curriculum for religious studies. Figure 6²⁶ illustrates this data, which indicates that some Madrasas use more than one curriculum:



Concerns about the variety of curricula used by Madrasas and the lack of unity among them were raised on various occasions by KRI and FGD participants. For example, according to one participant, “Disunity in the community cannot make [monitoring and regulating] happen since the Madrasa[s] are spread everywhere with different affiliation[s] and the disunity coupled [with] intrigue . . . can create a lot of in-fight[ing] within the community. Uniting the Muslim community under one umbrella will help come up with a uniform curriculum which can be easily monitored and regulated.”²⁷ Another participant declared, “The Madrasa curriculum is not unified and doesn’t teach so much about tolerance. This is because different scholars and sheikhs promote their own learning agenda, and this agenda is followed by all learners in the Madrasa.”²⁸

Curriculum Selection Decisions: When asked who decides the curriculum that the Madrasa follows, 40% of the surveyed Madrasas said the MoES, 29% said UMSC, 25% said individual teachers either solely (20%) or among other bodies, 24% said the school administration either solely (13%) or among other

²⁶ ‘Other’ includes the following answer options: blended curriculum, the school’s own curriculum, other curriculum, and no answer. The survey data used to create this graph allowed respondents to choose more than one answer to the question. The percentages represented are calculated using the number of respondents rather than the number of responses.

²⁷ KRI 5, Teacher, Kibuli.

²⁸ FGD 3, Busia.

bodies, and 4% said UQSA. The rate of individual teachers deciding the curriculum solely is higher in informal primary and unknown-level Madrasas.

Subjects Taught: Math, English, and Arabic are the most taught subjects in Madrasas offering secular curricula. Other subjects include social sciences and natural sciences, among others. Theological subjects cover topics about the history of Islam, beliefs and practices of Islam, introduction to the study of Qur'an, and introduction to Hadith and Fiqh (Jurisprudence), among others. Gender roles and norms were reported to be commonly discussed in Madrasas, with some variations depending on the school type and level. However, 45% of the total sample reported discussing perceptions of gender, while 10% reported no discussion of gender in the curriculum.

Teaching about Other Religions and Islamic Schools of Thought: Half of the 1626 surveyed Madrasas reported that their curriculum taught about the differences in theology among the various Islamic schools of thought/sects and other religions, while 44% reported that they taught about similarities in theology. Additionally, 30% said the curriculum teaches about the history of these other groups, 23% reported that it teaches tolerance toward these groups even if one disagrees with them, and 16% reported that it teaches protection from the threat or negative influence of these groups. Each type of Madrasa reported tolerance in the curriculum at a higher rate than protection from perceived threats.

When asked what they thought was important to understand about these other religious groups, more than 50% of sampled Madrasas reported the importance of students understanding other religious groups' practices and history. More Madrasas placed emphasis on the importance of understanding similarities with other religious groups compared to understanding differences (45% vs. 35%). More Madrasas also highlighted the importance of understanding tolerance toward different religious groups compared to understanding threats (24% vs. 9%).

Languages of Instruction: The most-used languages in religious education in Madrasas are Arabic (84% of the total sample), English (49%), and local languages (45%). In secular education, English is used in 97% of the 922 Madrasas who responded to this question, and local languages in 30%. The main textbook languages used, according to the 1530 Madrasas who responded to this question, are Arabic (92%), English (46%), and local languages (15%). A total of 87% of survey respondents reported that Arabic is 'very important' or 'essential' in order to memorize the Qur'an. However, when asked what level of Arabic language study is provided to students at the school in order for them to study the Qur'an, 84% of the total sample indicated a 'Beginner' level. This raises the question of whether students are able to understand Arabic at a sufficient level to truly understand the meaning of what they are memorizing. One KRI participant similarly raised this concern: "the . . . problem is that the language of instruction is Arabic yet these children do not know Arabic."²⁹

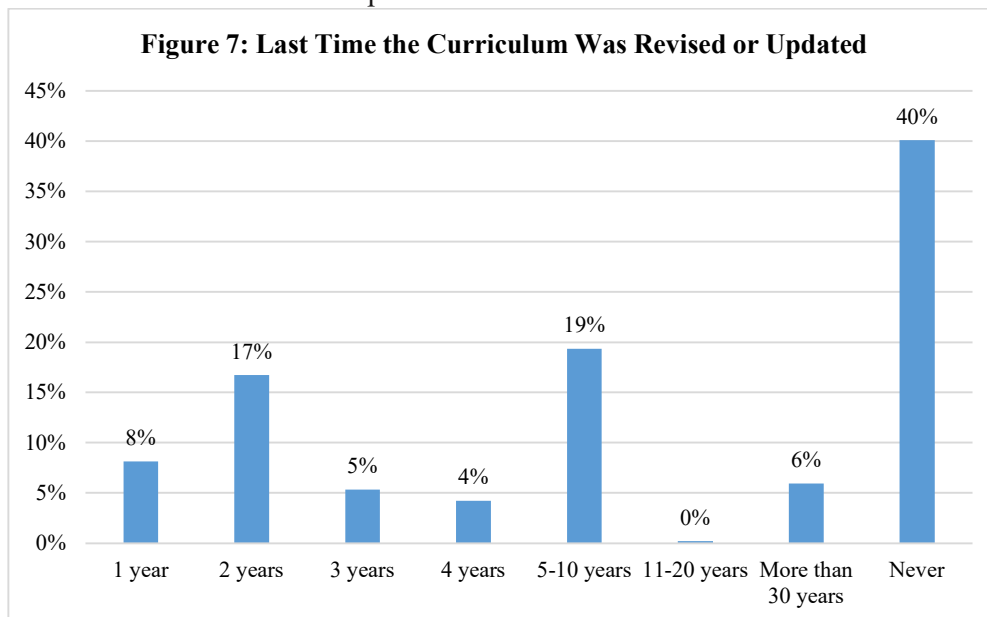
Textbooks: Formal Madrasas tended to receive more government support (both national and local) for acquiring textbooks than informal Madrasas. Fifty-one percent of formal Madrasas reported getting textbooks through the government for secular subjects, while 28% reported the same for religious subject textbooks. Student fees are also used to fund textbooks for secular (50%) and religious subjects (38%). Community donations are more commonly used to support religious textbooks (23% of formal Madrasas) than secular textbooks (9%). While the percentage of Madrasas reporting foreign support for textbooks was small, more formal Madrasas reported receiving foreign support for religious textbooks (4%) than for secular textbooks (2%).

Both government and foreign support for textbooks in informal Madrasas was relatively lower than in formal Madrasas, with only 14% of informal Madrasas receiving government support for secular textbooks and 3% for religious textbooks. Secular textbooks are provided through student fees in 70% of informal Madrasas, followed by community donations in 14% of the sample. Religious textbooks in these schools are funded equally by student fees and community donations (30% each). Additionally, individual philanthropists from

²⁹ KRI 1, Education Officer, Butaleja.

Uganda contribute to religious textbook provision in 11% of the sampled informal Madrasas. Almost no informal Madrasas reported receiving foreign support for secular textbooks, and only 2% for religious textbooks.

Updates to Curricula: The graph below illustrates the last time the 993 responding Madrasas reported that their curriculum was revised or updated. A total of 34% of these Madrasas reported that their curriculum was revised or updated within the last four years. Almost 6% of Madrasas reported that their curriculum hasn't been revised or updated within the last 30 years—including 4% of formal primary, 10% of informal primary, 3% of formal secondary, and 6% of informal secondary Madrasas. Notably, 40% of responding Madrasas answered that their curriculum was never updated.



Exams: Both primary and secondary Madrasa students sit for non-uniform³⁰ standardized exams created either by one of the affiliation bodies or by the Madrasa itself. However, 20% of the 1475 primary Madrasas who responded to this question declared that their students don't sit for any exams. Formal primary Madrasas who responded reported that their students sit for some sort of formal exam, including the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) (80%), Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEb) exams (20%), or Islamic Religious Education (IRE) exams (19%). In contrast, a significant number of informal primary Madrasas reported using “exams created by the individual school” (31%) or “no exams” (22%). Of the 598 secondary Madrasas who responded to this question, 18% reported that their students sit for UNEb exams, 18% for O-level exams, and 13% for A-level exams, among other exams/means of assessments. However, 25% of secondary Madrasas reported that their students do not undergo any exams; this was mainly from respondents representing informal unknown-level Madrasas and ‘other’ types of Madrasas.

Pedagogy and Classroom Management: Overall, Madrasas mentioned memorization and interactive activities as most often-used teaching methodologies, followed by lecture, and discussion. However, interactive activities were reportedly used more often than student memorization in formal Madrasas, and informal secondary Madrasas. Use of student discussions was used less frequently in primary Madrasas than in secondary Madrasas.

Eighty-nine percent of the total Madrasas felt students sharing their own ideas and asking questions should be generally encouraged. A smaller portion (57%) felt students should be generally encouraged to share their concerns if they disagree with the curriculum, the educational content, or the teacher, while 25% thought this

³⁰ Different examining bodies set exams according to their specific standards.

should only be encouraged in certain situations. Madrasas that produce their own curriculum were 2.2 times more likely to generally discourage students from sharing their own ideas and asking questions.

In dealing with misbehavior or conflict, Madrasas reported using methods such as counseling (91%), dialogue and conversation (53%), punishment (50%), and peer mediation (28%).

Student Outcomes in Graduation³¹ and Employment: Of 1572 responding Madrasas, the majority (78%) reported that no male seniors graduated in the previous year, with nearly the same percentage reported from the 1587 responding Madrasas regarding female graduates. However, the remaining respondents collectively reported more than 13,000 male graduates and more than 10,000 female graduates in total. A rate of no more than 10% male dropouts was reported by more than half of 1599 responding Madrasas, with the same rate reported for female dropouts by more than half of 1596 responding Madrasas. However, 12% of these Madrasas reported their male dropout rate to be within 11-30%, with 13% of the respondents reporting the same for female students. Higher dropout rates were reported by 6% of the 1599 responding Madrasas for male dropouts and 8% for the 1596 responding Madrasas for female dropouts.

A total of 44% of 143 responding secondary Madrasas reported that male graduates most commonly enter secular employment, with 43% of 147 responding secondary Madrasas reporting the same for female graduates. Only 14% reported that male graduates most become imams or religious leaders, 12% reported that male graduates most become religious teachers, and 12% reported that female graduates most become religious teachers.

Many KRI and FGD participants provided positive perspectives on Madrasa graduates in general. For example, one mentioned that in certain communities, Madrasa graduates are treated with more respect than those who did not complete religious education.³² Another added that female Madrasa graduates are often regarded as role models in their communities.³³ On the other hand, other participants raised concerns that (a) students who focus only on Qur'anic studies will have limited job opportunities³⁴ and (b) those who go on to teach or preach Islam are not paid well and do not develop economically at the same rate as their counterparts.³⁵

d. Community Relations & Roles

The survey included an opportunity for Madrasas to assess relations between their schools and other community/societal actors, students' roles in society, and how certain concepts that can help shape students' roles are being addressed in their schools. Key findings include the following:

i. Muslim-Christian Relations:

Community Interactions: Of the 1626 Madrasas surveyed, 65% reported that they were 'very satisfied' with interactions between Muslims and Christians in the area where the school is located, while 26% were 'moderately satisfied'. A total of 42% of all respondents also mentioned that their Madrasa sometimes engages in activities (e.g., educational, extracurricular, cultural) with Christian schools, while 29% 'always' engaged in such activities and 27% 'never' did. Only 2% of schools reported being moderately or very dissatisfied with Muslim-Christian interactions. Schools which felt students face risks related to violent extremism were 2.1 times more likely to express dissatisfaction with Muslim and Christian relations.

Effect of Interfaith Relations on Students: Similarly, 55% of the 1626 schools felt that Muslim-Christian relations 'contribute to positive student attitudes toward Christians', and 39% felt relations 'motivate students

³¹ Graduation here refers to completion of the level of education enrolled in—e.g., primary or secondary. Given the time frame of the study, graduation rates were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions.

³² KRI 11, Muslim Leader, Old Kampala.

³³ KRI 20, Opinion Leader, Kibuli.

³⁴ KRI 20, Opinion Leader, Kibuli.

³⁵ KRI 14, Education Official, Kanungu.

to engage in interfaith activities.’ Only 10% of the schools felt that Muslim-Christian relations contribute to negative student attitudes towards Christians, create anger among students, or decrease students’ motivation to stay in school.

Desired Improvements: Along with the positive trends above, most Madrasas still indicated a need for improvement in Muslim-Christian relations, as detailed in the table below:

| Figure 8: ‘What, if anything, do you think is needed to improve relations between Muslims and Christians in the community?’ | |
|--|---|
| 62% | Collaboration among Muslims and Christians to address common problems |
| 50% | Joint collaboration in community events |
| 50% | Increased dialogue between Muslims and Christians |
| 32% | Greater understanding among Muslims and Christians about each other’s religions |
| 15% | Healing from past conflicts |
| 5% | Nothing is needed |

ii. Student Roles in Society:

Belief in Ability to Achieve Desired Change: The degree to which young people feel they have personal agency, or the ability to help bring about desired changes/improvements in their community, can impact their self-esteem and self-confidence, how they choose to address grievances or challenges, and even their future career or life paths as adults. Nearly half (44%) of the 1626 respondents reported that students feel they can contribute to desired changes or improvements in their community to a ‘small’ or ‘very small’ extent, while 30% reported a ‘moderate extent’ and only 25% reported a ‘large’ or ‘very large’ extent.

Influence of the School on How Students Address Concerns: A total of 61% of respondents indicated that if their school’s students have a grievance about something affecting their community, they are likely to address it through talking to teachers or bringing it up in class. This indicates the degree of trust that teachers perceive students have in their teachers and their school. Thus, the classroom may be a space where teachers can help students to discuss concerns and constructive ways of dealing with them—contributing to students’ personal development and their ability to play a positive role in their communities.

Several of the responding schools reported that teachers teach students how to deal with violence, including reporting acts of violence (51%), using dialogue or non-violent conflict prevention/resolution strategies (50%), and emotion or anger management (45%). A total of 5% of responding schools said that teachers do not teach their students about dealing with violence.

Schools’ Level of Satisfaction with Graduates’ Roles: When asked about graduating student outcomes, 41% of 149 responding secondary schools reported that they were ‘very satisfied’ with students’ roles in society after they graduated, while 46% were moderately satisfied.

iii. Values Taught and Resilience Against Negative Influences:

Values Taught in Madrasas: Teachers in all types of Madrasas reported that they try to instill a variety of virtues in their students, including honesty (reported by 93% of the sample), love for God and His creatures (88%), generosity and charity (74%), and humility (67%), among others. It is worth noting that such values are often shared by Christian communities, providing a potential entry point for further interreligious activities or relationship-building. A smaller portion of Madrasas reported teaching their students the values of “stopping others from violating the teachings of Islam” (24%), and “protecting themselves from negative influences of other religions or schools of thought” (18%).

Tolerance as an Important Value: Additionally, 84% of the schools identified tolerance as a ‘very important’ value of Islam, while 10% felt it was ‘somewhat’ important, 4% did not know or did not answer, and 2% felt that it was either not related to Islam or was ‘somewhat’ or ‘very’ against the values of Islam. Schools that

produce their own curriculum were 2.4 times more likely to believe that tolerance is somewhat or very against the values of Islam.

Given the particular emphasis on tolerance included in the Ugandan state’s goals of religious education,³⁶ the important role for education in promoting tolerance, and the stereotypes that sometimes exist about Madrasas, the survey included several questions to better understand how Madrasas address the issue of tolerance and the extent to which they prepare students to resist intolerant influences that may be present outside the school.

Views of the Meaning of Tolerance: When asked what tolerance meant to them, 68% of the 1626 schools said, ‘Acceptance of differences among people, such as differences in ethnicity, religion, or sect.’ Smaller numbers said it means that ‘People of any faith have the right to freely practice their religion’ (32%), ‘People have the right to hold different values or beliefs without being forced to change them’ (24%), ‘People have the right to change their religion if they wish’ (20%), or ‘People have the right to practice their religion in the ways that they choose’ (14%).

Roughly 1/3 of respondents felt that tolerance means accepting the status quo and trying not to change it (34%), weakening the practice of one’s own religion due to accommodating others (1%), or giving up one’s own values or beliefs if they contradict others (1%). These schools were 70% less likely to think that nothing is needed to improve Muslim-Christian relations.

Students’ Level of Tolerance Toward Differences: When asked to assess how tolerant their students generally are toward people of different identities or opinions, 63% of the total schools said ‘very tolerant’, 29% said ‘moderately tolerant’, 6% said ‘neutral’, did not know, or did not answer, and only 1% said ‘moderately’ or ‘very’ intolerant.

Risks to Students Identified by Madrasas: At the same time, 37% of the total schools reported that students face at least one risk of being influenced by intolerant actors, while nearly the same number of schools (39%) felt their students do not face any risks of being influenced by intolerant actors, and a sizeable minority (23%) did not know or did not answer. Risks identified by the schools included the following:

| Figure 9: ‘Do students at the school face any of the following risks of being influenced by intolerant religious personalities or other intolerant personalities?’ | |
|---|--|
| 20% | Being exposed to intolerant ideologies |
| 5% | Becoming a victim of violence perpetrated by an intolerant group |
| 5% | Supporting an intolerant group even if they were not a part of it |
| 4% | Being threatened/mistreated by others with ties to an intolerant group |
| 2% | Being recruited by an intolerant group |

Teacher Discussions of Intolerant Groups with Students: When asked whether/how teachers discuss intolerant groups with their students, 50% of all respondents said teachers help students understand the risks of danger from these groups, 37% said they help students understand the negative impacts of these groups, and 23% said they help students become resistant to these groups’ influence. At the same time, 19% said teachers do not discuss such groups with their students, 17% did not know or did not answer, and 10% said they help students understand the positive impacts of these groups. Thus, a sizeable number of Madrasa teachers appear to be actively trying to counter the influence of intolerant groups among their students; their knowledge-sharing with Madrasas who are not doing so could be beneficial in inspiring the latter.

Efforts by Teachers to Promote Tolerance: When asked if and how teachers promote tolerance among their students, the majority of respondents (57%) said they promote it as part of the classroom guidelines/rules. Smaller percentages said they promote it as part of the curriculum (41%), through modeling tolerant behavior as a teacher (41%), and through classroom discussions or materials (28%). A small percentage reported that teachers do not promote tolerance among the students because it is not their job as a teacher or it is against

³⁶ Education Policy Review Commission Report, 1992.

Islam (3%). Additionally, 6% did not know if they promoted tolerance or did not answer, 2% reported that teachers would like to promote tolerance but they don't know how, and 1% answered 'I do not understand what is meant by tolerance.' Private schools and schools that produce their own curricula were about 2 and a half times more likely to report that teachers do not promote tolerance among students.

Challenges faced by Teachers for Promoting Tolerance: Alongside the above, many schools also mentioned challenges that make it difficult for teachers to promote tolerance. While a sizeable minority of the 1626 reported no challenges (39%), challenges identified by others included:

| Figure 10: 'Are there any challenges that make it difficult for teachers at the school to promote tolerance among the students?' | |
|---|--|
| 23% | Lack of quality resources and knowledge for teachers |
| 22% | Resistance to new ideas/misinformed beliefs among students |
| 20% | Familial or community pressure to maintain intolerant beliefs |
| 20% | Intolerant personalities outside the school mislead students |
| 15% | Lack of knowledge or skills by teachers for teaching tolerance |

Half of all the schools felt 'Better support from the school' would help teachers address these challenges.

Efforts by Schools to Promote Tolerance: When asked what efforts the schools themselves have taken to promote tolerance, respondents reported the following initiatives:

| Figure 11: 'What efforts, if any, has the school taken to promote tolerance among students and teachers in the school?' | |
|--|---|
| 46% | Training specifically on topics of tolerance |
| 45% | Facilitating activities where teachers or students interact with people who are different from them |
| 35% | Discussing the role of tolerance in Islam |
| 34% | Interfaith dialogue |
| 13% | None |

Influence of the Teacher in Shaping Religious Understanding: Respondents felt the teacher plays the most influential role in shaping students' understanding of their religion:

| Figure 12: 'If exposed to different sources on interpretations of Islam, how do the students decide what interpretation to believe?' (1580 respondents) | |
|--|--|
| 60% | Consult teachers |
| 57% | Consult the imam at the most often used mosque |
| 42% | Consult family members |
| 24% | Consult community leaders |

Critical Thinking: Critical thinking skills can affect students' educational development as well as their interactions outside the school—e.g., how they engage with information (or disinformation), problem-solving situations, and interpersonal relations. It is encouraging to see that the majority of the 1626 Madrasas surveyed (82%) viewed critical thinking in relation to the classroom positively. However, 33% reported that teachers try to promote critical thinking.

e. Teacher Training and Professional Development

Education Received Prior to Becoming a Madrasa Teacher: Madrasa teachers reported varying levels of formal education received prior to becoming teachers. Of 288 responding teachers or former teachers, the most common responses were that they had completed: primary education (24%), secondary education (38%), and university education (25%). Nearly equal numbers reported that their prior education was religious (34%)

or secular (35%), while a slightly smaller number (27%) reported having received both religious and secular education prior to becoming Madrasa teachers. Four percent received no formal education.

Teacher Training and Certification: Of 288 responding teachers/former teachers, 88% reported receiving teacher training in Uganda, while 7% received no teacher training. About two-thirds (67%) had to pass an exam or receive a certification to become a teacher, while one-third (33%) did not.

The survey asked if respondents had received ‘refresher training’ (e.g., training to update one’s skillsets and knowledge in the field of education) for professional development/continuing education as a teacher. All 1626 respondents (i.e., teachers as well as other education professionals) responded to this question, with 90% responding that their most recent refresher training was more than 30 years ago. This indicates the rarity of such training for both teachers and administrators.

According to the 288 respondents who identified as teachers or former teachers, topics covered in refresher trainings were: classroom management (cited by 41%), student learning processes (41%), how to teach the curriculum (40%), interactive learning methods (39%), how to design lessons (34%), critical thinking (30%), and pedagogy (18%). A total of 44% of the 288 teachers/former teachers had also used a training manual for sheikhs on teaching Qur’an, while 13% had used such a training manual on pedagogy, and 39% had not used any training manual for sheikhs.

Desire for Teacher Training: When asked in what areas they would like to develop their skills as teachers, the most common desires expressed by the 288 Madrasa teachers were as follows:

| Figure 13: ‘What skills, if any, would you most like further training in, in order to further develop your skills as a teacher?’ | |
|--|--|
| 57% | Preparing students to be successful when they graduate |
| 55% | Developing classroom activities and teaching materials |
| 48% | Helping my students to deal with challenges they face outside the classroom |
| 47% | Teaching religious principles to students |
| 44% | Helping my students to think creatively in solving problems |
| 44% | Managing conflict and behavioral problems |
| 29% | Increasing understanding between my students and students of other religions |
| 28% | Teaching non-theological subjects |

4. Conclusions and Recommendations



A School Toilet in Central Uganda

Ugandan Madrasas can vary widely in their structure, level of formalization, affiliation with Islamic, international or governmental bodies, curriculum used, and capacities. Regardless of these differences, Madrasas are frequently cited as playing an important role in their communities and larger society.

Survey responses suggest that Madrasas and their teachers have a significant level of influence and trust with their students, particularly in shaping students' understanding of their Islamic religion and in being a place where students bring their concerns and grievances. Madrasas and their teachers thus have a deeply important role to play, not only in educating students intellectually but in shaping their spiritual and moral development and their contributions to society.

Many Madrasas report participating in initiatives that can positively impact their students' development as well as social cohesion in their larger communities—e.g., interactive teaching methodologies, promoting principles of tolerance, and engaging in interfaith activities with Christian schools. At the same time, many Madrasas express desire for various educational enhancements to support key needs, including additional teacher training, greater access to educational materials, enhanced infrastructure/facilities, and other support.

Efforts to enhance Madrasa education should build upon the positive initiatives that many Madrasas are already undertaking, and facilitate mechanisms to enhance these initiatives and share best practices with other Madrasas. The following are recommendations based upon the study findings.

Recommendations to be Supported through Pilot Programming as a Follow-on to this Study:

- 1. Create/Strengthen structures to enable greater communication, knowledge transfer, resource sharing, and adherence to quality standards among Madrasas, and between Madrasas and other Islamic and governmental institutions.*** This could include building mechanisms through which: Madrasas can share educational materials and lesson plans (and perhaps conduct exchange visits), Madrasa governance committees can share good practices and enhance their capacities, and Madrasa communication with regulating bodies such as UMSC and OSM can be enhanced to address concerns when they arise. Utilizing such structures to improve collaboration and relations between UMSC and OSM would also benefit the Madrasa community by reducing divisions that hinder knowledge-sharing and mutual support. Particular effort should be made to help informal Madrasas engage with such structures so that they can benefit from those resources and relationships. The following enhancements to existing structures should also be considered:
 - The NCDC should work with key stakeholders possessing technical expertise in areas such as Islam and Arabic for the development/revision and adoption of the IRE Madrasa curriculum. A unified dual curriculum should be offered to all Islamic schools, along with a uniform examination system, and a process for ensuring regular updates to the curriculum.
 - To support Madrasas in maintaining quality standards, there should be a uniform regulating authority and monitoring & evaluation system. Inspection and accountability should be strengthened by involving key stakeholders like the government, regulating bodies like UMSC and UMEA, UQSA, school proprietors, sheikhs/imams, and parents.
- 2. Provide systematic and regular teacher training, including through establishing Teacher Training Schools with affiliation to recognized universities, for Madrasa teachers.*** More teacher training was the top educational enhancement desired by the sampled Madrasas (71%), with more than 90% of respondents not having received 'refresher' training in more than 30 years. Teachers expressed desire for training in teaching both religious and secular subjects and in developing classroom activities/materials, as well as training in how to help students develop what may be called 'life skills'. These include skills in how to deal with challenges outside the classroom, think creatively and critically in solving problems, and prepare to be successful post-graduation, as well as social skills like conflict

management and promoting interreligious understanding. With the advent of the digital age, teachers could also benefit from training to build requisite skills for fostering learning using technology.

Development of a uniform national Madrasa teacher training system and one or more formal Teacher Training Schools for Madrasa teachers—perhaps in collaboration with the Islamic University in Uganda and regional theological colleges in addition to UMSC and OSM—could provide access to regular training for more Madrasas. Again, particular effort should be made to provide such access to informal Madrasas, 47% of whom reported that their teachers had not received any teacher training as opposed to 2% of formal Madrasas. Such a School could also help reintegrate foreign-trained sheikhs into the local Ugandan context.

3. ***Develop additional teaching materials to enhance education in areas where gaps have been identified.*** A full 80% of the Madrasas cited lack of/quality of teaching materials and textbooks as the most pressing problem facing Madrasas. Curriculum developers and key Madrasa stakeholders should work together to develop new materials that will serve the needs of these schools, and ensure that Madrasa teachers have access to these materials and training on how to use them. Some topics that should be addressed in such materials are outlined in the subsequent recommendations.
4. ***Enhance Madrasas' capacity to improve tolerance and social cohesion***—building on their existing strengths. Madrasa respondents widely cited tolerance as a very important value of Islam, and many reported ways they are actively working to promote it—e.g., training or discussions on tolerance, interfaith/ diversity activities, and discussing the dangers of intolerant groups with students. At the same time, respondents identified various challenges they continue to face in this regard, including a lack of quality resources and of teacher knowledge/skills for teaching tolerance. Half of all Madrasas surveyed felt that ‘better support from the school’ would help teachers to address such challenges.

Provision of educational materials and teacher training specifically on issues related to tolerance, as well as wider sharing of best practices and methodologies for teaching tolerance among Madrasas, would likely be very beneficial. Since less than half of Madrasa respondents (41%) said that teachers promote tolerance as part of the curriculum itself, supporting Madrasas and curriculum developers in incorporating tolerance more widely into the curricula could be particularly useful in addressing the concerns of these schools.

5. ***Enhance Madrasas' capacity to promote critical thinking skills among their students.*** The surveyed Madrasas overwhelmingly have a positive view of critical thinking (82%); however, a much smaller percentage (33%) reported that teachers try to promote critical thinking. This indicates that providing greater resources and support to Madrasas for teaching critical thinking would be beneficial to, and welcomed by, these schools. Thus, a specific focus on critical thinking skills should be included in Madrasa teacher training, new educational materials, and the curriculum itself.

Recommendations to be Supported through Other Mechanisms:

6. ***Support Madrasas in enhancing students' Arabic capacity.*** When asked what level of Arabic language study is provided to students at the school for them to study the Qur'an, 84% of the total sample indicated only a ‘Beginner’ level. This indicates that many students may not actually have the requisite Arabic skills to truly understand what they are memorizing. This may not only limit the depths of students' religious learning, but can also make them more vulnerable to the influence of intolerant personalities outside the school trying to manipulate students with extremist interpretations of the Qur'an. Thus, enhancing Madrasa students' ability to fully understand what they are memorizing in Arabic will deepen their religious development and increase their resilience against misinterpretations.
7. ***Promote initiatives to engage Madrasa students in community activities through which they can develop leadership skills and contribute to community development.*** Nearly half of Madrasa respondents (44%) believe that Madrasa students feel they can contribute to desired changes or

improvements in their community to a ‘small’ or ‘very small’ extent. This can result in lack of self-confidence to take on leadership roles in their communities, discouragement from trying to solve problems or achieve certain life goals, and increased vulnerability to manipulation by extremist groups that promote violence as a more effective way of achieving change. Additionally, nearly half of all Madrasa respondents expressed a desire for additional extra-curricular activities for their students.

There would be great benefit from initiatives that, for example, help Madrasa students identify a need in their community, develop a plan for addressing it, and implement that plan. This might entail receiving extra credit for community service and/or a school contest where creativity and positive impact on the community are rewarded. Implementing their own community projects, and seeing firsthand the positive impact of their efforts, can help students develop the skills, confidence, and pride in personally contributing to their community’s development. They will then be likely to sustain these outcomes in the future.

8. ***Support initiatives to help promote co-existence and cooperation among different Madrasas and various Islamic sects, religious groups, or cultures.*** While a majority of Madrasas reported satisfaction with Muslim-Christian relations in their communities, most also indicated room for improvement in these relations, with the largest portion (62%) advocating collaboration among Muslims and Christians to address common problems. Additionally, 16% of Madrasas surveyed said that their curriculum teaches ‘protecting ourselves from threats or negative influence’ of other Islamic sects or other religions.

Thus, efforts should be made to support positive interactions and collaborations between Madrasas and other identity groups, through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Lessons and benefits from interreligious activities already conducted by some Madrasas could be shared with other Madrasas to encourage those who have not undertaken such interreligious activities (27%) to consider doing so, and to support improvement of relationships in communities where Madrasas feel that Muslim-Christian relations have had a negative impact on students (10%). Increasing collaborative activities between Madrasas and other religious groups or sectors of society can also help to reduce negative stereotypes or narratives about Madrasas where they exist.

Stakeholders also identified a perception among some members of the Madrasa community that outside parties—e.g., Western countries—are against Islam and working to undermine Islamic education, which may contribute to a feeling of being under threat and a distrust of the ‘other’. Supporting dialogue or mutual learning initiatives between Ugandan Madrasas and citizens/institutions in Western countries could help to enhance mutual understanding and alleviate misperceptions among parties in both countries. Virtual dialogues or in-person exchange visits between Ugandan Madrasas and Muslim schools in Western countries could increase cultural understanding while also exchanging good practices about how Islamic education is implemented in both countries.

9. ***Facilitate provision of critical infrastructure to Madrasas most in need***—particularly for fire safety equipment (which 90% of sampled Madrasas lacked), latrines (of which a lack can prevent girls from going to school), and reducing classroom crowding (given that some Madrasas have a ratio of 250 students to one teacher).
10. ***Promote the improvement of relations and strong cooperation between Madrasas and the government of Uganda, including its education and security bodies.*** The finding that more than half of all Madrasa respondents (54%) feel ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ fairly treated by the government as a Muslim-founded school indicates significant room for improvement in Madrasa-government relations. This might begin with dialogue between the MoES and key Madrasa leadership on issues raised by Madrasa participants in this study, exploring how they could collaborate to address them for the benefit of all. Madrasas with better relations with the government (most likely among the formal Madrasas) may be able to serve as ‘bridges’ in communicating Madrasa concerns to key government actors and helping Madrasas feeling most estranged from the government to access educational support being offered.

Cooperation between Madrasas and the government's education and security bodies will help to alleviate suspicion about what happens in Madrasas by enabling MoES to have the firsthand information needed to adequately supervise Madrasas. This is key to building the mutual respect and trust necessary for enabling a Madrasa environment truly conducive to teaching and learning. Increasing such mutual respect and collaboration between Madrasas and the government will likely ultimately enhance the education received by Madrasa students and the positive contributions to society of Madrasa graduates, to the benefit of all Uganda.

11. *Establish a model Madrasa for benchmarking and school practice purposes.*

5. About the Organizations and Researchers which Conducted this Study



Classroom block in Western Uganda

The United Religions Initiative - Great Lakes (URI-GL) is based in Kampala, and also coordinates the global URI's peacebuilding and advocacy work in Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, and South Sudan. URI-GL collaborates with different partners to bridge differences between people of all faiths to create community, and to solve local and global challenges in Uganda and this region. URI-GL has addressed hate speech, discrimination, and bullying in local communities. As people of diverse cultures, faiths, and backgrounds, URI-GL is committed to taking specific steps to work for a world where every person, regardless of their ethnicity, race, religion, culture, gender, or ability, is treated with respect and is safe to be themselves.

The International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD) is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization based in Washington DC whose mission is to bridge religious considerations with global peace building policy and practice. ICRD is not itself affiliated with any religion, but works in various contexts around the world to empower and enhance the role of religious individuals, institutions, and values in the resolution and prevention of conflict. ICRD has a long history of experience in educational enhancement, teacher training, and peace education around the world.

Key Personnel for the Implementation of this Study:

Lead Researcher: Dr. Muhammad Kiggundu Musoke—Senior Lecturer and Chair, Department of Humanities and Language Education, School of Education, College of Education and External Studies, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. Contact: kimumuha@gmail.com

Assistant Researcher: Henry Emoi Gidudu - Research and Training Consultant

Data Analyst: Sam Kagongwe

Technical Team: i) Sheikh Juma Bakhit Cucu, Secretary for Education, UMSC; ii) Dr. Haruna Jjemba, Secretary General, UQSA; iii) Sheikh Twaha Mubiru Kezaala, Secretary General, OSM-Kibuli; iv) Haji Kiwanuka KA Nasser, Assistant Secretary General, UMEA; v) Musigire, Rashid, Researcher, UMSC; vi) Dr. Abdalla Idris Serwadda, Deputy Principal, Islamic Call University College; vii) Mr. Omar Wasswa, UMSC Education Committee; viii) Musa Ntambi, Executive Director, Organization for Muslim Social Development and Innovations; ix) Hajji Abdala Azziz Ssenoga, Personal Assistant to the Secretary General, OSM-Kibuli; x) Hajji Lwanga Aliyu Kayongo, Educational Officer, Inspection, UMEA; xi) Sheikh Muwonge Yakubu Lubega, District Secretary, AWQAAF, UMSC Entebbe; xii) Florence Mirembe; xiii) Fatuma Nakazi.

URI Team:

- i. Despina Namwembe, URI Regional Coordinator and Project Manager;
- ii. Hannington Wako, Project Consultant;
- iii. Zaria Ddamulira, Project Consultant;
- iv. Nakyejwe May Mwanje, Project Consultant

Field Data Collectors:

Abubaker Malagala, Amina Najemba, Bashir Madambo, Bikhado Arafat, Cissy Nabajja, Charles Masumbuko, Dan Waiswa, Dr. Aluonzi Burani, Fgiridasi Namusoby, Florence Mirembe, Getrude Nowomugisha, Godfrey Bwambale, Hakim Kibedi, Innocent Turyatempa, Ivan Joel Bafunze, Joy Kemirembe, Juliet Nansubuga, Kayondo Francis, Kyabanji Rafaida, Maganda Bukhari, Mohamedi Isabirye, Musa Wamala, Muslim Kateregga Wasajja, Musigire Rashid, Muzamiru Kamukama, Nageeba Hassan Tegulwa, Nagibu Malinzi, Nerinda Aidah, Nanyange Loy, Namaganda Racheal, Obilan Abubakar Umar, Salafa Batambuze, Sharif Abdul Hakim, Solomon Ssevume, Sumaya C. Nagudi, Swalleh Osman, Tibrichu Habib Amin, Tiisa Sumayah, Winnie Apolot.

6. Acknowledgements and Disclaimer

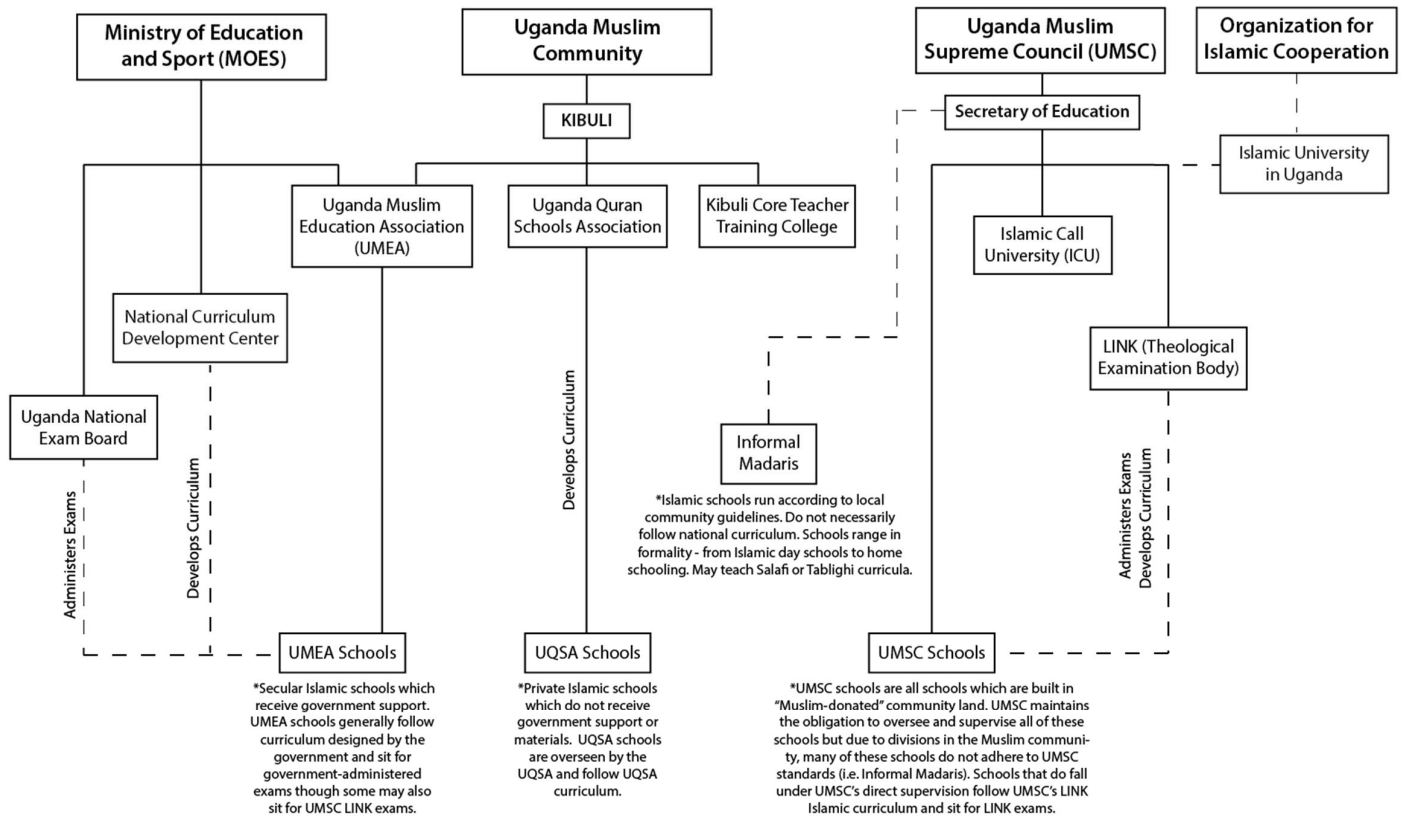
This publication was produced with the support of the United States Department of State. This report does not reflect the views of the United States Government.

Appendix 1: Key Institutions in Uganda’s Islamic Education System

The chart below provides an overview of key institutions in Uganda’s Islamic education system and their relationships. (The Arabic ‘madaris’ is used here as the plural of ‘Madrasa’.)

Figure 14:

UGANDA EDUCATION SECTOR ANALYSIS



Appendix 2: Technical Notes on the Methodology of the Study

Study Approach

This study employed a methodological approach in which quantitative data was supplemented by qualitative data. Data was collected via quantitative surveys, qualitative KRIs and FGDs, participant observation, and literature reviews. The survey was designed in collaboration with UMSC and OSM.

Sample Design

In collaboration with UMSC and OSM, URI-GL identified and mapped the varying influence of key Muslim leaders. This mapping was used to inform the selection of Key Respondents, Focus Group participants, and a representative sample of schools to be surveyed out of the estimated 3,200 Islamic primary schools and 200 Islamic secondary schools currently in existence in Uganda. A total of 1626 surveys were conducted, and the religious ideologies represented in the surveyed Madrasas reflected a range of Islamic ideologies/sectarian affiliations.

Quantitative Study Component

The sample size for the quantitative surveying was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan³⁷ sample size formula, which is as follow: $s = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{[d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)]}$, where

s = sample size required

X² = table value of a chi-square distribution with 1 degree of freedom (with $\alpha = 0.05$, X² = 3.841)

N = the population size

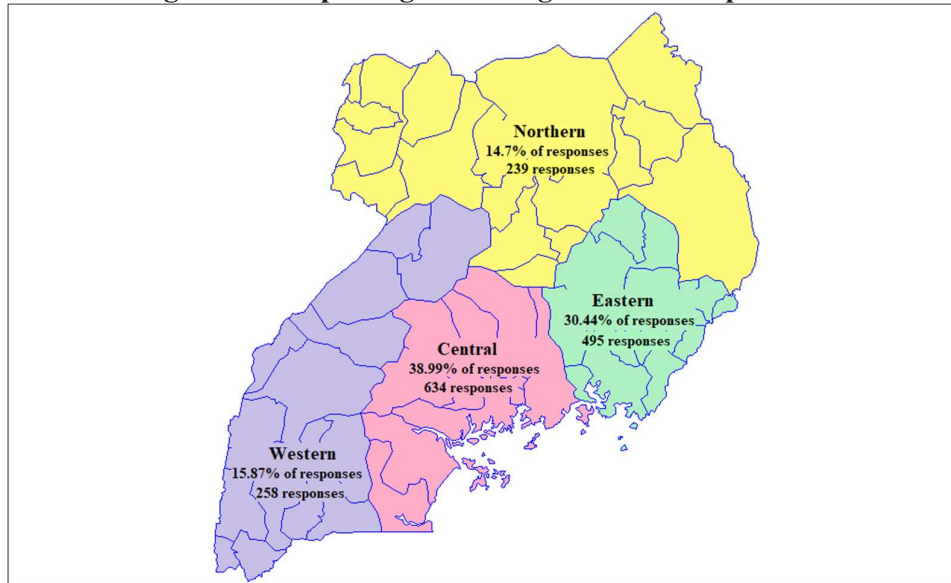
P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50) d = the degree of precision expressed as proportion (0.05)

A total of 1626 survey responses were collected, each from a unique Madrasa. The survey targeted four broad categories of schools, including: formal schools associated with UMSC, formal schools associated with UMEA, formal schools associated with UQSA, and informal schools. A total of 1,058 primary Madrasas, 149 secondary Madrasas, 63 'other' Madrasas, and 356 informal unknown-level Madrasas were surveyed. Formal Madrasas at the primary and secondary level formed 41% of the total sample; informal Madrasas including primary, secondary, and unknown levels formed 55%; and other types of Madrasas formed 4%. A total of 1571 mixed-gender, 28 male-only, 25 female-only, and 2 gender affiliation-unknown Madrasas were surveyed.

Survey respondents in the schools included main stakeholders/decision makers such as: Director/ Proprietor, Director of Islamic Studies, Teacher of Islamic Education, or Head Teacher. The research team selected the survey sample using a mixed approach, including stratified, purposive, and random sampling. These strategies were selected based on the incidences and prevalence rates of different curricula and types of schools previously collected by URI-GL. The regional breakdown of the surveyed Madrasas is provided below.

³⁷ Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D.W., (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement.

Figure 15: Map of Ugandan Regions and Sample Sizes



Qualitative Study Component

A total of 11 FGDs and 31 KRIs were conducted with stakeholders such as individuals affiliated with UMSC and OSM, government officials, District Kadhis³⁸, imams and Muslim scholars, civil society organizations working on Islamic education issues, retired education practitioners and consultants, and recent graduates. The KRIs/FGDs sought to explore the views, perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes of these stakeholders and assess the extent of their influence.

Non-response and Incomplete Interviews

The sensitive nature of the survey led to some respondents refusing to participate, despite introduction letters and guidance provided by relevant Muslim leadership like UMSC and OSM. Similarly, some respondents were reluctant to answer certain questions they considered to be sensitive. Additionally, from June 2021 a presidential directive banned travel between districts, restricted gatherings, and suspended schools and communal/religious gatherings for 42 days to slow the spread of Covid-19, which affected researchers' access to respondents.

Qualifications for Statistical Significance of Quantitative Data

Some of the quantitative data reports key trends and correlations between variables of interest. Such characteristics, correlations, and trends were only included if they met the qualifications listed below:

- Sample size/number of respondents greater than 10
- Prevalence Ratio greater than 2.0 or less than 0.5

A note on percentages: Some of the survey questions were not asked to, nor answered by, all 1626 respondents (e.g., questions asked to only primary or only secondary schools). The percentages included are the percentages of total responses collected and do not include the surveys in which the given question was not answered. In cases where the number of total responses was other than 1626, this is noted in the report. The percentages were also rounded to the nearest whole number for ease of reading; because of this rounding, in certain instances percentages of answers to a given single-response question may add up to slightly more or less than 100%.

³⁸ In this context, District Kadhis are Muslim leaders who perform various leadership functions at the district level.

Qualifications for Inclusion of Qualitative Data

Select findings from KRIs and FGDs have been included in this report to elaborate on survey findings and/or to offer insights or opinions deemed particularly significant. Trends identified from KRIs/FGDs were substantiated by a minimum of three KRIs or FGDs. In certain cases where individual KRIs/FGDs were deemed to provide particularly relevant information, these are cited individually.

Data Collection Team and Data Quality Control

Field teams—through which the surveys, FGDs, and KRIs were conducted—consisted of a field manager, field supervisors, field coordinators, and local facilitators. The teams utilized a computer-assisted personal interviewing method of data collection. Field team members underwent a three-day training, which included a pre-testing of survey and interview materials, and followed strict quality control procedures.

To ensure that the study was conducted according to appropriate standards, and to avoid human bias in the execution of the study, an independent team was commissioned to oversee the supervision and quality control of the data collection process, and worked alongside the project supervisors. Measures such as back-checks of a portion of the surveys were part of the quality control measures. Prior to the main survey fieldwork, a complete pre-test of all field procedures including data collection tools was also carried out. The pre-testing was done in settings within intended survey areas. Pre-test results were used to modify the survey tools. As a quality control measure, the research assistants and supervisors also maintained a close consultative relationship with URI and ICRD to ensure that indicators, tools, and procedures were up to standard.

Limitations of the Quantitative Study Component

The quantitative survey was designed to focus on the perceptions and opinions of Madrasa stakeholders themselves; it thus relies on self-reporting and self-assessment by the respondents rather than third-party verification. Also, the respondents were Madrasa administrators and teachers rather than students; thus, survey data reflects these respondents' own perceptions and assessments of student attitudes rather than direct responses from students. An additional limitation is that the full number and location of informal Madrasas in the country, which are unregistered, is unknown. Thus, representation of informal Madrasas in the survey was influenced by the locations where these schools were known and where access—typically through previous relationships, new introductions facilitated by District Kadhis, and subsequent snowball sampling—was possible.

To access “The Madrasa Education System in Uganda: Status, Institutional Capacity, Impact and Proposed Enhancements” online, please scan the QR code.





P.O. Box 72190,
Kampala - Uganda



: +(256) 414 531066/ 0705 524613 / 0760 460410



: Website: www.urigreatlakes.org, www.uri.org

: Email: info@urigreatlakes.org