Article

Indonesia's Orphanage Trade: Islamic Philanthropy's Good Intentions, Some Not So Good Outcomes

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Abstract: In 2011, Indonesia commenced an orphanage deinstitutionalization strategy known as the paradigm change in child protection. The strategy responded to human rights protocols emphasizing institutional care of children as a last resort. Orphanage based social workers were trained by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) to implement the paradigm change, increase parenting capacity and strengthen local supports to enable children's reunification with their families. The paradigm change intended to reduce children coming into institutional care; however, we found a persistent growth of non-orphaned children being recruited to orphanages since 2011 and more orphanages being built to accommodate them. Islamic philanthropic activities were identified as supporting and contributing growth to the orphanage trade. Despite the paradigm change, social workers were financially incentivization to recruit children to orphanages. There were no similar incentives to deinstitutionalize them. This paper uses selective quotes from the larger study, of social workers interviewed, to assist with theorizing the high potential of Islamic philanthropy in supporting Indonesia's growing orphan trade. We propose that philanthropy, including where there are good faith and good intentions, may be contributing to some not so good outcomes, including trafficking and modern-day slavery.

Keywords: Indonesia; orphanage; institutional care; social work; child protection; Islamic philanthropy; trafficking; incentivization

1. Introduction

The latest reports available indicate that more than 44.3 million children in Indonesia are considered poor, with 8.4 million of these children experiencing extreme poverty (Isdijoso et al. 2013; Badan Pusat Statistik 2011). Child poverty is sustained by the inability of families to provide basic resources for their children, and poverty is a barrier to accessing birth registration sites (Butt et al. 2015; Bennouna et al. 2016). Having no national birth certificate automatically precludes children in Indonesia from school (Qonitah 2018). Both poverty and educational preclusion are known to have direct associations with the development of cognitive function (Maika et al. 2017). Children who are stateless by virtue of no birth registration, not educated and with diminished cognitive function have vastly increased vulnerability to disadvantage across their life course (Hong et al. 2018; Pinsker et al. 2010; Caroll Chapman and Wu 2012). Some parents may engage in negative poverty coping, such as failure to educate, domestication of the girl child, child labor and trafficking (Lee and Hwang 2016; Roelen 2014). Many parents, otherwise, are known to relinquish their children to orphanages and Islamic boarding houses in hope for their children's education and future life chances.

It was following the Aceh tsunami in 2004 that an enquiry uncovered that approximately half-a-million children living in more than 7000 orphanages and Islamic boarding houses across Indonesia's archipelago (Martin 2006; Martin and Sudrajat 2007). The vast majority were not orphans,

but instead children from rural and remote families in poverty, of single or imprisoned parents, children left behind by migrant domestic workers (Martin and Sudrajat 2007), stateless by virtue of no birth registration and children who could not otherwise access education. In Indonesia, many children from families experiencing adversity are recruited by orphanage owners and their employees under the promise of food, shelter and education. This type of benevolent responding to poverty and to other social problems is embedded in a long-standing history of philanthropy, informed by Islamic religion and of philanthropy itself. Both the reliance on orphanages and benevolent funding of orphanages[1] has made it difficult to dismantle the expansive orphanage trade and deinstitutionalize the children.

Indonesia has made significant child protection efforts where orphanage deinstitutionalization and community development is aimed at reducing the reliance of poor parents and disadvantaged families on orphanages. However, difficulties arise where child poverty is extreme, where poverty is socially constructed as a form of child abuse, where education is valued, but not equitably accessible, and where traditions of Islamic philanthropy reinforce the gift[2] to orphans (Kochuyt 2009; Manan 2017; Latief 2015) and sustain the orphanage trade. The Qur'an beckons caring for the poor and obliges believers of Islam to give alms to orphans. It says, " ... be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and the needy, and speak kindly to mankind; and establish worship and pay the poor-due ... " (Qur-an, 2: 83). To be faithful to this imperative, many Muslim Indonesians offer their benevolence to orphanages without realizing that their *poor-due* may be sustaining and also giving rise to growth in an exploitative orphanage trade (Beazley 2015; Lyneham and Facchini 2019). Benevolence is offered in many ways; via food or monetary donations directly to orphanages, or to benevolence organizations that re-distribute the gift, or through kind acts of community members who may take children from orphanages to the mosque or other community events.

Many orphanages, Islamic boarding houses and local community members operate in good faith, care for and educate their children. However, in a country where extensive poverty exists (Isdijoso et al. 2013) and institutions are known for their corruption (Duncan 2007; Wedel 2012), receipt of the gift or other financial rewards opens opportunities for dishonesty. Traditionally the gift was paid directly to the poor and to orphans, whereas, modern practices have increasingly shifted payment of the gift to organizations (Fauzia 2010). Some orphanage operators recruit children for their own profit-making from the gift, there is also a financial incentive system that remunerates employees for recruiting children to orphanages, and others may profit from orphanages that are sites of transition for traffickers in child labor, child marriage and sexual exploitation (Lyneham and Facchini 2019; Jabeen and Jabeen 2018; Benthall 2019; Van Doore 2016). Similar phenomena of benevolent harm has been raised by researchers identifying unanticipated outcomes with orphanage voluntourism (Freidus 2017; Carpenter 2015; McGloin and Georgeou 2016; Richter and Norman 2010; Phelan 2015), such as when children in developing countries are trafficked to orphanages to likewise generate business for orphanage owners and monies for institutional staff.

Beazley (2015) declared that orphanages are an inappropriate aid solution. We contend that the gift to orphanages is an example of inappropriate aid that may be contributing risk of harm to children. However, the Indonesian mindset that orphanages provide better care for children than impoverished parents means that the gift to orphanages is constructed as a good deed. This despite long-standing evidence of associations between orphanages and harm (Bryson 2015; Choate and Engstrom 2014;

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[1]　Fauzia (2013) estimated that 71 percent of Islamic philanthropic organizations supported orphans, with benevolence specifically to orphans/orphanages being the third most popular charity among Muslim Indonesians. Around 29 percent of Muslims donate to social institutions, such as orphanages, 94 percent donate to mosques and religious institutions, 68 percent to neighbourhood associations, and 45 percent to educational institutions. There is, however, no official or accurate data available on philanthropy in Indonesia. Nor is there data on the percentage of orphanages compliant with or resistant to deinstitutionalisation.

[2]　The term gift is used in this paper generically for Islamic philanthropy. This may include the practice of *zakat* which involves Muslims giving a set percentage of one's wealth to charity (cash or equivalent staple food) annually during Ramadhan month; *zakat fithra* is given directly to individuals and *zakat maal* is given to institutions. However, Islamic philanthropy also includes *infaq* and *shadaqah* in which it is not specified when or how much to give.

Scott 2009; Beazley 2015). When these beliefs are socially entrenched, it has enabled the practice of outreach missions in which orphanage providers and others (e.g., people who think they are doing good deed, to employees seeking income, and to child labor and sex traffickers) travel to rural and remote regions for the purpose of recruiting children (Qonitah 2018). Many transport children vast distances away from their communities to orphanages (Van Doore 2016; Lyneham and Facchini 2019) and some transit children to exploitative situations that they cannot escape.

The intention of this paper is not to criticize the gift. Instead, we draw some examples from our interviews with social workers for a larger research study. This study was on the efforts of Indonesia's Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) to implement a paradigm change to child protection; a change in favor of deinstitutionalization over orphanage-based care. These examples assist in theorizing the dilemmas when other social-cultural institutions or employment practices are not likewise challenged and changed.

Deinstitutionalization is consistent with the United Nations and other international aid organizations requests to the governments of developing countries to phase out orphanages (Huseynli 2018; Hamilton-Giachritsis and Browne 2012; Eapen 2009; Ariyadasa et al. 2017). The paradigm changes that are involved training of orphanage based social work and care workers to strengthening local community supports, reunify children with their families and prevent others from unnecessarily coming into care. However, competing systems and institutions have inhibited deinstitutionalization. There has been ongoing persistent growth in non-orphaned children at orphanages and Islamic boarding houses and increasing numbers of new orphanages built to accommodate them. Some children were known to be living poorer in orphanages and at greater risk to their safety and wellbeing than before. This is despite the Indonesian government's efforts aimed at increasing social protection of households in poverty, on the one hand, and the child protection paradigm change favoring denationalization on the other.

Before discussing ways in which "be good . . . to orphans and the needy" (Qur-an, 2: 83) could be reconceptualized so as not to keep *feeding* the orphan trade, we clarify the methodological framework for the larger study. This is followed by a presentation of research findings on barriers to the implementation of the paradigm change, which is then discussed in relation to the role of Islamic philanthropy in competing against child protection change.

2. Methods

Twenty government and non-government orphanage-based social workers and care workers were recruited to participate in the study. They were drawn from a sample case of 150 workers trained by MOSA, region III Yogyakarta from 2011 to 2015, to implement the paradigm change in child protection in their respective regions. There regions were located across six provinces in Indonesia: Yogyakarta, Central Java, East Java, Bali, West Nusa Tenggara and East Nusa Tenggara. Sampling workers from different regions enabled a cross-section of views to be collected that traversed Indonesia's diverse socio-cultural and political contexts.

Data collected via semi-structured interviews sought participants' perceptions related to system challenges they experienced with the implementation of the paradigm change to child protection. Analysis of data used a two-step approach using interpretive phenomenology and systems theory. Interpretive phenomenology enabled meanings to be generated from patterns identified across interview data. Systems analysis enabled the interaction of broader social pressures interacting with the social workers' experiences in attempting to implement the paradigm change and to compare this over time.

A small quantity of interview data is reported in this paper. Statements made are not specific to the social workers' current workplaces. Instead, they represent perceptions and experiences of the child protection paradigm change and its conflicts with broader socio-cultural drivers (e.g., the gift) that are sustaining the orphanage trade.

Standard ethical considerations included informed consent, voluntary participation and right to withdraw, confidentiality and anonymity. Ethics approval was obtained from the Social and Behavioural

Research Ethics Committee, Flinders University (approval No. 6949). The research was completed in 2018.

3. Results

The paradigm change beckoned a system-based approach in which parents, families and communities would be supported by social protection mechanisms to alleviate poverty and strengthen parenting capacity. Sustainable system change, however, requires coordination between child-focused agencies and collaboration both within and across socio-cultural and political systems (Delaney and Quigley 2014). Undergirding the need for a paradigm change in Indonesia drew upon research evidence on child development and human rights philosophies informing that institutional care of children should be the last priority in child protection. While the few quotes provided here are not evidence of Muslim philanthropy's contribution to the orphanage trade, they provide insights for discussion into the difficulty of dismantling children's orphanages when religious drivers are not also managed. They provide a basis for theorizing of where good intentions of philanthropy may, in fact, be sustaining a localized version of voluntourism, orphanage trafficking and modern-day slavery.

3.1. Recruitment of Children to Orphanages

Interview data indicated that the paradigm change had little effect on orphanage-based social work in Indonesia, particularly since the practices associated with orphanage recruitment and Islamic philanthropy sustaining practices associated with orphanages has not significantly changed. Competing systems have served to sustain pre-paradigm practices; one such example is of the ongoing practice of travelling to rural and remote villages to recruit children to orphanages. Many participants who had been trained in the paradigm change to child protection spoke of their own ongoing engagement in recruitment practices, for example:

> . . . *we usually plan the outreach in June, just before the school year ends. The eligible clients include neglected or abandoned children, children of poor families, and those living in remote areas, those who can barely access schools . . .*

While social workers were trained to engage in strengthening families and communities to care for their own children, there were pressures upon them to contribute to meeting orphanage capacity quotas. Quotas were often in contradiction to human rights, professional social work values and the paradigm change itself. Many participants felt pressured to fill orphanage beds irrespective of the children's family and community circumstances. They prioritized conformity to pre-training practices and meeting quotas as opposed to the new paradigm in child protection that sought reductions in children living in orphanages. For example,

> . . . *we do outreach every year to fill the vacancies. We even go to villages to advertise our open recruitment . . .*

> . . . *sometimes we have just done it to meet the capacity target, which is 80 people. If it does not meet the target . . .*

In addition, the employee remuneration system of orphanages competed against the paradigm change. In Indonesia, orphanage employees receive small base-pay and additional incentive payments for specific tasks performed. Financial incentives are paid for each child recruited to orphanages; hence, orphanage trafficking is a legally incentivized practice. While both orphanage recruitment and deinstitutionalization activities are social work roles, the vision of earning additional income means that staff vie for the opportunity to do orphan recruitment. For example:

> . . . *the center's head has distributed the task of the outreach programs to all staff members . . . the head would like us to share, so that everyone could get some benefits . . .*

> *. . . the structural people [middle management] often ask for a place in the outreach [recruitment] program team . . .*

Concerns were raised by some of the interviewed social workers regarding recruitment incentives. Two main reasons were offered. First, incentives encouraged some orphanage-based social workers to abandon aspects of the paradigm change and prioritize recruitment, especially since no incentive payments had been likewise allocated to deinstitutionalization related activities. Second, the incentives drove some social workers and other orphanage employees to abandon intake criteria and admit *any* child from poor or rural areas to meet orphanage capacity. It was considered important to meet capacity as fewer children could impact government funding allocations, the receipt of the gift from philanthropy and the individual incentive remunerations to be earned.

3.2. A Changing, But Not Subsiding, Orphanage Phenomena

As a result of their training, many participants held different views about the institutionalization of children. This included supporting parents in their own communities to care for their own children, for example,

> *. . . they [children] are better around their family. If the parents are financially inadequate, we should assist the parents. If the children live away from their parents, it could affect their relationships . . .*

Some recruitment process had been changed, especially in government orphanages. Changing priority was to admit children with specific care needs and not simply children who are orphans by virtue of having only one parent or through relinquishment by families in poverty to orphanage recruiters. As well, government orphanages were trending towards children's short-term rehabilitation, followed by reunification with families or transfer to a mainstream institution, for example:

> *. . . our institution has changed . . . from a regular residential care for children to a rehabilitation center . . . focus is no longer on orphans only, or children of poor families, but is more on children facing certain risks . . . many children have specific challenges and needs, such as being difficult to follow the rules or with disabilities like intellectual disability . . .*

> *. . . the center is required to admit referred children only, who most of whom have problems that affect their behavior . . .*

One way or another, the volume of children entering orphanage life did not appear to be subsiding. While some orphanages were still recruiting children, as they had done so before, others were operating as short-term therapeutic maltreatment and referral centers. Participants advised that when working with children with disabilities or street living children, that attempts to refer these children to orphanages were often refused. This frequently led to these therapeutic centers keeping the children long-term, as they had done so before the paradigm change, for example,

> *. . . we eventually have to admit those kids for undetermined length of time, as many centers that we refer to refuse to admit them . . .*

> *. . . It leads us to such dilemma . . . we eventually have to admit those kids for undetermined length of time . . .*

The paradigm shift has encouraged government orphanages to work on child rehabilitation, parenting capacity, empowerment programs and community development, then refer the children. However, with the refusal of other orphanages to take children with behavioral issues or disability, this meant that short-term accommodation sites were still accommodating children indefinitely. Coincidentally, this alleviates other orphanages and Islamic boarding houses to continue operating as they had before. Participants working for non-government orphanages advised how orphanage owners and administrators did not necessarily agree with or support the paradigm change. Some

participants advised how their orphanages did not apply to the government to employ additional social workers, as potentially the easiest way to resist the paradigm change was not to employ people equipped to implement it. Orphanage administrators' reportedly maintained beliefs about benevolence and philanthropy, and what was good for "*children from families like them [poor families].* Participants suggested that their managers were often challenged deinstitutionalization and resisted the social workers who attempted to implement it.

3.3. A Noble Deed of Philanthopists

Participants expressed beliefs that the provision of shelter, basic needs and education access for children of low-income families satisfied the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). They advised how the orphanages where they worked had become more home-like, so that social workers were available to support children around-the-clock, and there was more play time. While the quality of their orphan-based life and service provision improved with the paradigm change, religious teachings continued to have a stronghold over the value of orphanages generally.

One participant talked about the need to have children in orphanages for a long duration to ensure Islamic character building, and that returning children to poor parents (who were blameworthy for their own poverty) would be meaningless. Being at the orphanage enabled people in the local community to take children to the mosque during Ramadan, to other festivals or to other community events. Many of the orphanages' community members were thought to volunteer these acts of being kind to orphans because it was heaven rewarded. The strong belief in God's rewards, and in the obedience to the Prophet's tradition stating that "the best Muslims are those that bring most benefit to the rest of mankind" (Fahrudin et al. 2016, p. 51) were strong motivations for community altruism towards orphans and social work practice in Indonesia.

Philanthropy has led to a vicious cycle of increased donations, government support and increasing numbers of orphanages. The culture of entrusting children to orphanages in hope for better food and education, and religious faith resulting in values of helping orphans, has ensured a strong, sustained orphanage trade. Participants proposed that most Indonesians consider orphanages as doing honorable actions that need to be supported; therefore, encouraging them to deinstitutionalize children is against religious teaching. As a result, three of the social workers interviewed expressed difficulties convincing the orphanage owners and the local community to understand deinstitutionalization and family-based care as being in the best interests of the children—more-so among those who were associated with religion-based institutions. Participants suggested that religious leaders needed persuading that, while helping orphans was a noble deed, that this could be achieved without institutionalizing children who were not orphans.

Muslim Indonesians identify children living in children's institutions as orphans, irrespective whether the children have parents or family. There is faith in religious teaching that helping orphans is a noble deed and rewarded with a place in heaven, and beliefs that orphans' prayers go directly to God. Orphan's prayers become evidence of the noble deed. Religion, therefore, provides a purpose of life for many people. It provides fundamental motivation and goals in life, as well as guidance to live a good life (Park 2005). Living a good life, with the belief in eternal life, inspires people to engage acts—such as food, money and volunteering-based philanthropy to orphans. Of concern was the resounding voice of, '*being good to orphans means being heaven rewarded.*' One could interpret from such statements that Islamic philanthropy is sustaining the orphanage trade through serving the interests of donors' and carers' over the best interests of the child.

4. Discussion

National census data in 2011 documented Indonesia's population as approximately 237.6 million, with more than one quarter of the population known to be of compulsory school age or younger (e.g., 0–14 years) (Badan Pusat Statistik 2011; Isdijoso et al. 2013). Approximately half of Indonesia's children are thought to have no birth registration (Badan Pusat Statistik 2011; Isdijoso et al. 2013),

despite Indonesia's efforts to address this. As many as 30 million children may not be attending school, based on them having no birth registration (Qonitah 2018). Of children who have birth registration and are eligible for school, many live where they have no access to schools, or where local corruption under Indonesia's decentralization has diminished spending on and access to education (Suryadarma 2012; Bambang et al. 2014). Children in these circumstances are at risk of significant exploitation.

Based on 2010 census data, Kusumaningrum (2011) estimated that three million of Indonesia's children were engaged in hazardous child labor, such as in the mining and construction industry, off-shore fishing and the commercial sex trade. Thirty percent of females exploited in commercial sex work were thought to be under the age of 18 years, with many being as young at ten (Kusumaningrum 2011). About 12 percent of girls were believed to be forced into marriage before 15 years of age (Kusumaningrum 2011). The combination of household poverty, parental illiteracy, overall social ignorance, and poor access to education inevitably locates children in Indonesia as the most vulnerable members of society (Tolla and Singh 2018; Nur et al. 2018; Lu et al. 2016; Ball et al. 2017). The shame and silence surrounding poverty and parental engagement of children in exploitation, in their act to survive, serves to increase the power of orphanage recruiters over them. When promises of food and education coerce parents to relinquish their children to orphanages, and the orphanages fail to deliver, this exploits the children, families and communities from where children have been recruited.

Martin and Sudrajat (2007), in their report on orphans following the Aceh tsunami, expressed concerns with the standards of care in children's institutions. Their investigation found that non-orphaned children were being placed in orphanages vast distances away from their communities, having no contact with their families and not receiving quality of care. In more recent authorship, Lundine et al. (2013) noted that little has changed. They observed that orphanages were violating children's rights, and that the orphanage providers had either little awareness of the negative impact of institutionalization on children, or did not want things to change for the reason of the income they could earn. The authors expressed concerns about orphanage recruitment processes, the parents who had placed blind faith in orphanages, growth in orphanages due to Islamic philanthropy, and the risk of developmental harms to and exploitation of the children. Many orphanages were found to be exploiting the well-intended Muslim offering of the gift to orphanage-based children.

In the current study, many of the participants expressed some resistance to the paradigm change, indicating their own participation in discursive public mindsets of ill-informed benefits of orphanages generally. Regarding deinstitutionalization, resistance was evident in the ongoing recruitment practices. Some participants seemed to have difficulty conceptualizing orphanages as a last resort for vulnerable children, which was hindered by their constructions of poverty is an act of parental child abuse and orphan life being a superior option. Most of the participants understood the role of the State to care for children in accordance with the CRC, but not the position of the CRC on the role of the State to support parents to care for their own children. Broader societal attitudes towards parents who were poor, and religious beliefs in favor of benevolence, reinforced that placing children in institutions was a noble deed. This is regardless of the evidence of institutionalization's risk to children's development, wellbeing and life chances (Bryson 2015; Choate and Engstrom 2014; Scott 2009; Beazley 2015). Societal practices, however, are not in alignment with research.

Several studies in Indonesia on child wellbeing indicate a perception that orphanage life is a positive intervention for abandoned, street living or poverty-stricken children (Anasiru 2011; Asmorowati 2008; Rizzana 2013; Setijaningrum 2008; Fatony 2011). However, every one of these studies indicated little improvement to child wellbeing as a result of orphanage-based care. They display an institutionalization culture informed policy that assumes children from low-income families need institutional support, and that the State can care better for these children than their own families. However, the missing variable under consideration in research on Indonesia's orphanage system is the influence of Islamic philanthropy on the public mindset of giving.

Over the last decade, Indonesia has implemented a series of strategies aimed at increasing birth registration, school attendance and improving women's and children's social protection

(Barrientos et al. 2014; Butt and Ball 2018; Sumner 2015). Education has been promoted as a pathway out of poverty and exploitation. However, a deep entrenched Indonesian social mindset that orphanages can care better for children than poor parents (Anasiru 2011) has encouraged growth in orphanages and Islamic boarding houses promising education and a better life. This is thought to have further contributed to a rise in the gift to orphanages (Suryadarma et al. 2009; Wanat et al. 2010). The growth in Indonesia's orphanages is not subsiding. The sheer volume of orphanages makes it difficult for the State to manage quality in accordance with human rights, or difficult to identify which ones are transition sites for trafficking children to child marriage, labor and the sex industries. While there are many good deeds that can help orphans and other children in need, we propose that there are many more risks associated with an overwhelming orphanage system and uncontrollable orphanage trade.

5. Conclusions

As the number of orphanages grow in Indonesia, this is not necessarily because families are poor or because people are giving. Children are being recruited and trafficked to the orphanage trade because the financial incentivization supports it. The high potential of Islamic philanthropy in supporting orphans contributes to the orphanage trade being sustained, and not necessarily because children or their families need orphanages. Some philanthropists, it appears, may be gifting to orphanages to undertake acts of being good to orphans for being heaven rewarded. Sustaining orphanages as acts of good deed by kind-hearted Muslims, which can be argued akin to kind-hearted tourists going to developed countries and volunteering at orphanages because it makes them feel good to do good things; both, arguably are forms of modern-day slavery. The link between policy and public minds need to be addressed so that philanthropy works in the best interests of children, not donors.

The most favored form of Islamic Philanthropy worldwide is to orphans, and the central tenet of the Muslim faith is for social justice through caring for the poor and disadvantaged (Yumna and Clarke 2011). However, the good deed of 'rescuing' economically disadvantaged children to orphanages is well known to be counterproductive and more likely to result in children's exploitation and amplified inequalities (Athoillah 2013; Benthall 2019; Yumna and Clarke 2011). The gift does not need to go to orphanages to fulfil the central tenet to alleviate poverty, but instead could be better directed towards helping parents and communities strengthen capacity to care for their own children, building and resourcing schools in regions where they are needed, and providing equal life chances for all Indonesia's people. As Athoillah (2013, p. 3) wrote, 'the Islamic purpose cannot be realized until ... all forms of exploitation—social, spiritual, political and economic—assured.' Contemporary authors argue that (Kailani and Slama 2019) Islamic philanthropy and charities have lost its association with social justice and welfare, and increasingly interested in economic gain. According to Fauzia (2013), however, it is likely that Islamic institutions are simply ill-equipped to respond to some of the hardest challenges of societies characterized by entrenched inequity and dysfunction. One of these challenges being how to support the deinstitutionalization paradigm change. Beliefs associated with Islamic faith have historically not been integrated with development agendas (Yumna and Clarke 2011).

We contend here that the paradigm change to child protection must call upon 21st century Muslim thinking about how to " ... be good to parents ... and to orphans ... " (Qur-an, 2: 83) differently. Needed is the departure from financially feeding the orphanage trade and the unintended consequences of the gift that is increasingly known as detrimental to children. Redirecting philanthropy towards supporting parents in poverty to care for their children, in their own communities is critical. This is consistent with research identifying that children are better off with their families, even in adversity, than orphanages (Bryson 2015; Choate and Engstrom 2014; Scott 2009; Beazley 2015). The paradigm change is in favor of deinstitutionalization and involves supporting family empowerment, capacity building and community development to enable children to remain with their parents, kin or communities of origin. Philanthropic gifting to these endeavors is more likely to result in good intentions that also achieve good outcomes.

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