

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL REPORT OF NIGERIA**

BY

**THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
FOR THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION (ICE)
THEME: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: THE WAY OF THE
FUTURE GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
25-28 NOVEMBER, 2008**

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary	ii
1.0 The Education System facing challenges of the twenty first century: an overview	1
Introduction	1
1.1 Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system:	2
1.2 The organization, structure and management of the Nigerian education system	6
1.3 The aims and purposes of education of each level	9
- Early childhood pre-primary education	9
- Basic education	10
- Tertiary Education	12
Special Education	14
-1.4 Curricular policies, educational contents and teaching and learning strategies	21
-1.5 The legal framework of education	29
-1.6 Objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming Reforms	30
2.0 Major policies, achievements and lessons learned	31
-2.1 Access to education	31
-2.2 Early childhood intervention	35
-2.3 Learning achievements/outcomes and reduced inequalities	36
-2.4 Pre-service teacher training, recruitment, deployment, working conditions and in-service professional development	38
3.0 The role of the education system in combating poverty and other forms of social exclusion and cultural marginalization	51

4.0	Inclusive Education	53
4.1	Approaches, scope and content of inclusive education in Nigeria	53
4.2	The most important challenges in ensuring educational and social inclusion	55
4.3	Specific legal/regulatory framework of inclusive education issues	58
4.4	Public Policies	59
-	Current dimensions of the phenomenon of exclusion from and within education	59
-	Indicators and data used to inform inclusive education policies	60
-	Inclusive education issues relevant to current and future educational policies in Nigeria	61
-	Most vulnerable groups to various forms of exclusion from and within education	62
-	Current educational reforms and inclusive education in Nigeria	62
5.0	SYSTEMS, LINKS AND TRANSITIONS	64
-	The main barriers to inclusive education	
	Gender and inclusion	67
-	The challenge of the quality Imperative	68
-	The most important facilitators of inclusive education	69
6.0	LEARNERS AND TEACHERS	71
-	New approaches to teaching and learning being implemented to increase educational opportunities for all	71
-	Designing and organizing curriculum for responding to the diversity of learners	74
-	Instructional hours dedicated to learning reading in early primary education	74
-	Strategies for improving teacher training and quality to meet the diverse expectations and needs of learners	75
-	Strategies for effective organization and environments to ensure the inclusion of all learners	76
	References	78

Executive Summary

Since the forty-seventh session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) held in 2004, the development of education in Nigeria has taken a turn for the better with the introduction of far-reaching sector wide reform. Nigeria is the only E9 country in sub-Saharan Africa with equally the highest illiteracy rate in the sub-region. The most significant step towards comprehensive reform was the passing into law of the Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act 2004, which demonstrated the strong political will of the Nigerian government to drive national development through education sector-wide reforms by first ensuring universal access to educational opportunities at all levels: basic, post-basic, tertiary as non-formal, including special needs groups of children, youths and adults. Moreover, Nigeria has set herself a wide array of ambitious goals of several global and national frameworks that seek to promote inclusion and the fundamental right of her citizens to quality education. These include the Dakar Framework for Action/Education for All, the Millennium Development Declaration and Goals, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS I and 2) the United Nations Decade for Literacy (UNLD) the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development DESD; the National Policy in Education 2004; and the UBE Act 2004.

The period since 2004 has also witnessed the introduction several innovative policies that address specific needs and challenges of inclusive education. These include the National Policy on HIV & AIDS for the Education Sector in Nigeria; the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria 2007; The National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2007), the Guidelines for the Identification of Gifted Children (2006) and the Implementation Plan for Special Needs Education Strategy (2007).

The implementation of the education sector reform began in earnest in 2006 with the three other crucial initiatives. These were i) signing of the UNESCO

National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) for Nigeria 2006-2015 in May 2006 which was the outcome of the two-day UNESCO-Federal Ministry of Education Stakeholders' Round Table; ii) the launch of the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiatives (CATI), and, most importantly the publication of the National Action Plan based on the findings of Education Sector Situation Analysis which clearly reveal the serious dysfunctional state of Nigeria education. In order to address the crisis in the sector, the Federal Government approved a total restructuring of the Federal Ministry of Education and its agencies and parastatals to reposition them for the new vision 2020. This was backed up with the formulation of a National Framework in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders in order to "ensure consistency of direction in line with the national education vision" (FME, 2007). Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Education set up eleven task teams to critically examine three pillars of the inclusive education reform process: access, equity and quality. The task teams are for Education; economy and competitiveness; Curriculum, instruction and teacher quality; reform of the Federal Ministry of Education and its parastatals; Information and Communications Technology (ICT); physical infrastructure; standards, accountability and academic assessment examination ethics and campus safety; communications strategy; equity, governance and politics, and education finance.

The reform therefore is all embracing and covers a wide range of chronic issues and challenges in early childhood/pre-school, basic, post-basic and secondary, tertiary including open and distance learning, special needs education including the nomadic cattle rearing or fishing communities, the gifted and the challenged, and the disadvantaged youth including women and girls. The special needs sector has received increased attention in the past four years. For example between 2004 and 2006, the number of nomadic primary schools in Nigeria rose from 1981 to 2354 while enrolment rose from 363,553 to 389,073 respectively (NCNE 2008). Secondly, the Federal Ministry of Education has introduced

Guidelines for inclusive Education, including, a proposed implementation plan for the special Needs Education Strategy (Short term, medium-term and long-term), while the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC) has positioned its State Agencies to enhance access and quality of basic literacy, post-literacy, continuing education/extra-mural studies and vocational education.

Thirdly, the Quaranic/Islamiyah education system is being reformed to meet national or mainstream curriculum standards. Fourthly, the challenges of low enrollment and the fairly high drop-out rates among boys in the South Eastern States of Nigeria have been addressed in the last four years through the Gender Education Project which has been successfully implemented in the pilot states of Abia, Anambra, Oyo and Imo States, and extended in 2007 to many more schools.

However, qualitative reform of Nigerian education cannot be attained without highly qualified, competent and motivated teachers to actualize the vision and goals of education for individual, community and national development.

Nigeria fully recognizes this crucial fact; consequently, certain incentives have been introduced over the last four years that seek to promote quality, motivation, supply and retention of teachers at all levels. They include the regular payment of salaries and allowances, promotion, exposure to regular professional development programmes organized or facilitated by the State Universal Education Boards, the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Teachers Institute (NTI). The National Teachers' Institute (NTI) is also playing an active role in Teacher Professional Development (TDP) by organizing In-Service Training Programmers, seminar and workshops for teachers nationwide under the aegis of the Federal and state Governments. The nationwide training of teachers under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Capacity Building for Teachers and state-sponsored programmes for teachers are a few examples of professional training programmes(NTI, 2008); the

Federal Teachers' Scheme which is designed to recruit "40,000 fresh NCE (Nigerian Certificate in Education) graduates every year" (FME 2008: 20); the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC), The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) have been actively engaged in recruitment, training and status enhancement of teachers, instructors and supervisors respectively. Even tertiary education teachers are continually exposed to seminars and workshops on enhancing teaching skills as required by the National Policy on Education and the Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria Act. Above all, the crucial issue of motivation being addressed through recent initiatives such as the National Health Insurance Scheme, the Annual Presidents' Teachers' and Schools Excellence Award; and the Housing for All Teachers Scheme (HATS) (FME, 2008).

Since 2004, Nigeria has set in motion key reform measures and strategy to turn around the education system to meet the set goals and targets in line with the national needs and her commitment to global frameworks such as EFA and MDGs. It has evolved the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative (CATI) to address the need for due process and selfless commitment to service and national development. With inclusion and inclusive education, Nigeria faces further challenges of managing access as a fundamental right of all to at least basic education, as well as ensuring the delivery of quality education to a wide range of diverse groups with specific or special needs. Nonetheless, Nigeria has placed the right emphasis on creating learner-friendly, needs –based, flexible and functional curricula, enhancing guidance and counselling in schools, continuous assessment and monitoring of learning achievements, a reformed and empowered inspectorate system and public private partnership for the sustenance of the gains of the current initiatives and innovations. Perhaps the most enduring lessons learned are that government may have the strongest

political will, may enact legislation and mobilize to provide funding ,but cannot do it alone. Consequently, sustainable sector wide reform is only possible when education for all or universal free compulsory basic education has been accepted by all stakeholders as the responsibility of all.

1.0 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM FACING THE CHALLENGES OF THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY: AN OVERVIEW

Introduction

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa with a population of 140, 003, 542 is an active member of the E9 countries and among the “next eleven” group of potentially endowed nations. It has repositioned its educational system based on several factors and lessons learned over several decades of postcolonial development. The period 1999 to 2008 has been marked by several significant policy thrusts and programmes that seek to actualize the spirit of the Jantien Declaration (1990) and Dakar (2000) Education for All Plan of Action as well Nigeria’s own needs and goals for sustainable national development, using education as an “instrument par excellence”.

Perhaps the most critical factors that drive Nigeria’s educational aspirations are i) the politico-historical that have underpinned the remarkable imbalance in educational attainment between certain regions in the country; ii) the great and ever increasing social demand for educational opportunities for a population of over 140,000,000; iii) the economic wellbeing and development of individuals, communities and the nation and iv) Nigeria’s very important leadership roles on the international scene and, by implication, her serious commitments to a wide range of global frameworks, conventions, declarations, protocols and other normative instruments, which include Education for All, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNDD), and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). It is these commitments together with those targeted at national needs and emerging challenges that drive the ongoing reform process.

1.1 Major Reforms and Innovation Introduced in the Educational System

Two landmark events define the drive for comprehensive education reform in Nigeria since 2004. The first was the passing into law by the National Assembly of the compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Act, 2004. In 2006, the Federal Republic of Nigeria launched the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of the Universal Basic Education Programme to Achieve Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. These events are a clear demonstration of the Nigerian Government's commitment to provide a clear roadmap to 2015 and well beyond and required an intense period of country-wide advocacy, consultations, confidence and consensus-building among political and community stakeholders local and international partners, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

The National Action Plan "provides a situation analysis of Nigerian education and the initiatives taken by government to meet the challenges of the sector (...); was produced with the active consultation and participation of all critical stakeholders including governments at all levels..." Furthermore, the need for such an action plan arose among others from the telling results of the situation analysis of the education sector with clear implications for the existing structure and management.

The launch of the National Action Plan therefore, brought with it the reorganization of the structure and management of the Nigerian education system in the following areas:

- i) the harmonization of the National Action Plan (NAP) with the Universal Basic Education implementation plan to achieve the EFA goals and MDGs;
- ii) the separation of the Junior Secondary School from the Senior Secondary School; the former being now an integral part of the 9-year basic education

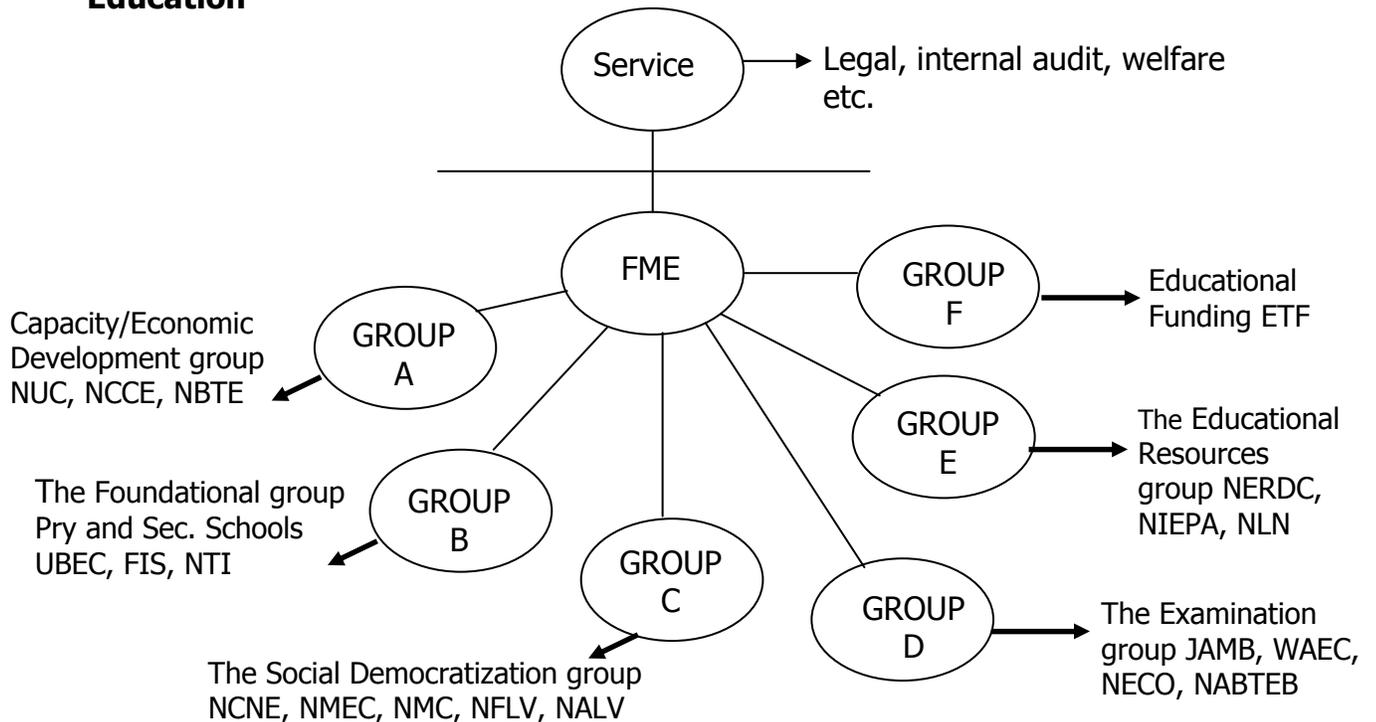
scheme (six years of primary and the first three years of secondary education the Junior Secondary);

- iii) the structurally-modified organogram of the Federal Ministry of Education and its parastatals and agencies;
- iv) the development of a communication strategy to promote the implementation of the Plan, notably the introduction of the community Accountability and Transparency Initiative-(CATI) targeted at:
 - Federal Government-owned secondary schools, otherwise known as Unity Schools;
 - Colleges of Education;
 - Polytechnics;
 - and Universities

For example, CATI led to the production and publication of the overhead expenditure of each type of institution, comprising personnel cost, overhead and meal subsidy in 2005 and 2006; and their Capital Expenditure for 2005 and 2006.

- v) establishment of the Public and Private Sector Partnership (PPP) and the introduction of private sector participation in the management of Unity Schools;
- vi) the Comprehensive Education Sector Situation Analysis which laid bare the grim diagnosis of an education system that needed substantial reform.
- vii) the launch of the 10-year Education Plan which would set Nigeria on course to remediating the state of the education system and meeting her commitment to EFA, MDGs, NEEDs and Vision 20/20/20.
- viii) the development of a National Framework which outlined “policies strategies and targets consistent with the Vision 20/20/20 and on which individual 10 years plans can build” through a holistic approach to change (FME 2006)”. Under this new national framework the Federal Ministry of Education regrouped its parastatals as shown in Figure 1.0.

Figure 1.0 New Grouping of Parastatals of the Federal Ministry of Education



Source: National Framework (2006).

The rationale for the structural reform was based on the need to “provide slimmer, streamlined and focused institutions, driven by ICT capabilities to deliver expected outcomes and services to the public they are called to serve...” This gave rise to six groups: for enhanced management, transparency and productivity of the education system (National Framework 2006):

- i) the *Capacity/Economic Development Group* which encompasses the parastatals that are responsible for the supervision of Higher Education;
- ii) the *Foundational Group* with Parastatals responsible for Primary and Secondary School Education;
- iii) the *Social Democratization Group* covering Parastatals that focus on equity issues;

- iv) the *Examination Group* with the mandate to manage examinations at the Secondary and Tertiary level;
- v) the *Educational Resource Group* made of Parastatals that focus on Planning and Research; and
- vi) the *Educational Funding Group* made up of Parastatals that focus on financial resources.

The implementation of the Universal Basic Education Scheme involves all 36 States of the Federation, including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, through the Universal Basic Education Commission, the State Governments of the Federation and the Local Government Authorities in the States. Notable features of this innovation are that the UBE programme has been domesticated in all states for effective UBE delivery, and that Local Government and States have assumed more visible roles in driving the UBE process and providing effective partnerships with Federal agencies charged with Basic Education delivery.

Another landmark reform initiative was the signing in May 2006, of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the maiden edition of the UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) 2006-2015, between Nigeria and UNESCO and is a very significant aspect of Nigeria's holistic approach to education sector-wide reform targeted at securing UNESCO's cooperation on Basic Education, Education Sector-wide Analysis (ESA), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and policy and strategic advice in the field of science and technology. The UNESCO high-powered mission, led by the then Assistant Director-General for Education, Mr. Peter Smith, was in response to the request made by the UNESCO Country Director for an integrated education sector mission to identify and detail the support needs in the following priority areas:

- EFA planning and implementation;
- Integration of the three new EFA initiatives within the national sector development framework;
- Technical assistance to enhance the profile of special education;
- Building capacity in Education statistics and the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring programme LAMP;

- Early child care development and education ECCDE;
- Donor coordination and harmonization; and
- Enhancement of the UNESCO Abuja Office's capacity to partner and provide leadership for EFA.

In addition, it was to further strengthen Nigeria's Education 10-year Strategic Plan, and promote full participation and prospects of meeting EFA goals and MDGs through the three UNESCO reform initiatives:

- The teacher training initiative for sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA);
- The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE); and
- HIV/AIDS preventive Education (EDUCAIDS)
- The publication of Nigeria Education for All (EFA) Report Cards for 2005, 2006, and 2007 are a significant development and provide is a critical evidence-based report on Nigeria's achievements, progress, challenges and prospects of achieving the six EFA goals and related MDGs by 2015.
- Equally significant is the publication of Nigeria's Macro-economic framework, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS 1 and II), which set the agenda for a medium to long term development using *access* and *quality education* as decisive factors. NEEDS is based on the following pillars: Empowering all Nigerians and creating a legal and financial environment that enables Nigeria to make the most of its natural resources as well as having a flair for business, and reforming the laws and the way the government works.

1.2 The Organization Structure and Management of the Nigerian Education System

- i) The extant 6-3-3-4 system comprises four distinct stages or components: 6 years of primary, 3 years of Junior Secondary, 3 years of Senior Secondary and 4 years of tertiary for most of the science, arts and social sciences programmes. The current reform started in April 2004 with the signing into

law of the Universal Basic Education Act 2004 and has introduced three components of basic education.

- Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE);
- 6 years of Primary Education, and
- 3 years of Junior Secondary Education

ii) The responsibility for the management of education involves the Federal, State and Local Governments of the Federation, as shown in the Table 1. While the Federal Government's role in the implementation of the UBE is to ensure quality control and maintenance of uniform standards and general co-ordination of programme implementation, the State Governments have constitutional and legislative responsibility to manage the UBE and get a 2% of the Federal Consolidated Revenue as grants in support of the UBE.

Table 1: Constitutional Responsibility for Education

	Federal	State	Local
Basic (Early Childhood Care and Education, Primary & Junior Secondary)	(i) Policy (ii) Allocation of resources through UBEC (iii) Maintenance of Standards (inspection & monitoring FIS)	Implementation through SUBEBs	Management of primary schools
Senior Secondary	(i) Policy	(i) policy	
	(i) Curriculum (ii) Inspectorate (iii) Examinations through WAEC & NECO (iv) Management of Unity Schools (v) Management of Federal Technical Colleges	(ii) Implementation (iii) Inspectorate (iv) Technical Colleges	
Tertiary education	(i) Policy (ii) Universities (iii) Polytechnics (iv) Colleges of Education	(i) Universities (ii) Polytechnics (iii) Colleges of Education	
Adult education	Policy Co-ordination Monitoring	Implementation	Implementation
Special education	Policy	Implementation	Implementation

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 10 Year Strategic Plan (2007).

The Federal Government has responsibility for policy design, strategy and management of all Federal Government-owned Unity Schools, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities as well as EFA, Literacy, adult and non-formal education and special education.

Specifically, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Chapter 2, Section 2) has vested in the Federal Ministry of Education powers to oversee policy development, data collection and management for educational and financial planning and quality control in the education sector” (FME 2006: 20). In terms of strategy, the Federal Ministry of Education “ensures cooperation, collaboration and coordination on educational matters at national and international levels. It has the additional responsibility of ensuring that Nigeria effectively participates in and benefits from the vast knowledge available globally and the ongoing ICT revolution” (FME 2006: 20). In the execution of these mandates, the Federal Ministry has education parastatals and agencies under its tutelage/supervision, which are supervised within the following operational departments, divisions and units:

- Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS);
- Education Sector Analysis Unit (ESA) of the PRS;
- The Department of Primary and Secondary Education
- The Higher Education Department;
- The Department of Technology and Science Education;
- The Department of Educational Support Services;
- The National Project Coordinating Unit (NPCU);
- The General Education Support Services Division;
- The HIV/AIDS Unit;
- The Special Education Department;
- The Federal Inspectorate Service Department.

1.3 The Aims and Purposes of Education at Each Level/Programmes

The aims, purposes and objectives of Nigerian education are detailed in the National Policy on Education 2004 (4th edition), the National Action Plan (NAP) 2006, and the 10 year strategic plan 2007 as framework for direction and priority action for both general education, UBE, and EFA.

(a) Early Childhood/Pre-Primary Education

Section 2, sub-sections 11 to 14 of the National Policy on Education define both the purpose and responsibilities of Government for pre-primary education which is now part of the basic education structure. The responsibilities of Government "shall be to promote the training of qualified pre-primary school teachers in adequate number; contribute to the development of a suitable curriculum; supervise and control the quality of such institutions, and establish pre-primary sections in existing public schools (sub section 12).

Section 13 states the purpose of pre-primary (or ECCDE) education as follows:

- effect a smooth transition from the home to the school;
- prepare the child for the primary level of education;
- promote adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farms, in the markets, offices, etc);
- inculcate social norms;
- inculcate in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and playing with toys, etc.
- develop a sense of co-operation and team spirit;
- learn good habits, specially good health habits, and
- teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc, through play.

Furthermore, the priority directions for EFA in Nigeria identified in the National Plan of Action (2006) prescribe the specific objectives of ECCDE by 2015:

- *increase* enrolment of children (in the age group 0-5+) in participatory early childhood programmes from the current 18% to 70% of eligible children;
- by 2010, 50% of parents will be sensitized and fully aware of prevention practices in relation to HIV/AIDS, (while) by 2015, 70% of parents will have been educated in comprehensive children practices”;
- *reduce* by 30% the number of children born with developmental delay and disability”;
- provide by 2010, an allocation and spending level of 3% of the National Budget to the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme, and comprehensive multisectoral family and care development policies and funding by 2015;

(b) *Basic Education Programme*

Primary Education

Basic education is made up of the 6 years primary/lower basic section and the 3 years upper basic or Junior Secondary section. As stated in Section 3, subsection 16 of the National Policy on Education (2004), basic education is compulsory, universal and free, and covers adult and non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels for adults and out-of-school youths. The National Action Plan articulated the reform agenda for basic education by 2015, with the following *seven* objectives:

- ensuring that by 2009, “100% of all children of official school age (6-11) will be enrolled fulltime in primary school or an equivalent education programme including all school entry-age girls;
- ensuring that by 2015, all children, girls as well as boys of primary school age, will be enrolled in primary school or its *equivalent*;

- *improve* by 2010 the school completion rate by 30% to an overall rate exceeding 90% of those in schools;
- *mainstream* 50% increase in the number of children with disabilities by 2015 into primary school;
- *ensure* a transition rate of 90% from primary to junior secondary school;
- *ensure* that by 2015, 80% of children up to the age of fifteen will be enrolled in school or an equivalent education programme; and,
- *reduce* by 80% by 2015, the percentage of working children of school age, while access to *relevant* basic education will be provided for children still working;

Junior Secondary Education

Perhaps Section 5 (22) of the National Policy on Education (2004) best summarizes the goal of secondary education in general in Nigeria which is to: raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens as well as prepare the individual for higher education. The Junior Secondary School, in the context of the National Policy on Education and the National Action Plan (2006), is “both pre vocational and academic... shall be tuition free, and compulsory and shall teach subjects which will enable pupils to acquire further knowledge and skills”

The National Action Plan priorities for Education for All by 2015 include the following four objectives:

- provide unfettered access for all children to primary school and junior secondary education, on an incremental basis of 50% up to 100% by 2009;
- ensure that by 2015, “80% of youth and adults aged 15+ will attain national standards set for literacy, numeracy and problem-solving with gender parity strategies”;

- ensure that by 2015, all young people and adults will have access to formal and non-formal life long education”
- ensure that by 2015, “90% of youth and adults will have access to information education and services necessary to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS” .

(c) *Senior Secondary Education*

Senior secondary school which is now disarticulated from the junior secondary school/upper basic has three main goals:

- “offer a diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles”;
- Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at the sub-professional grade; as well as
- Prepare potential middle level manpower for higher education and relevant professions and specialization in line with national needs.

(c) *Tertiary Education*

Tertiary education includes universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education. Perhaps the most significant aspect of higher education reform in the last decade is in terms of expansion of access and quality assurance; the establishment of an increasing number of approved private faith-based and state-owned universities in the past five years. These have grown from 80 in 2006 to 92 in 2007, and there are also 4 university centres. To properly address the issue of adequacy and quality preparation of teachers and education scholars and researchers, two universities of education were established: The Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED) (2005) and the University of Education Ikere-Ekiti (2008).

In terms of qualitative management and governance, there are dedicated National Commissions and Boards whose mandates derive from the respective

Acts establishing them. They have been reinforced under the ongoing reform process:

- The National Universities Commission (NUC);
- The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE); and
- The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE).

In addition to the conventional universities, the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)- the cornerstone of the reform to expand access to higher education, started academic programmes in 2005 and will produce its first graduates in 2009. The need to provide both access to and quality programme delivery is of utmost priority and this is amply reflected by the goals of Open and Distance Education in Nigeria stated under Section 9 of the National Policy on Education, 2004):

- provide access to quality education and equity in educational opportunities for those who otherwise would have been deprived;
- meet special needs of employers by mounting special certificate courses for their employees at their work places;
- encourage internationalization especially of tertiary education curricula;
- ameliorate the effects of internal and external brain drain in tertiary institutions by utilizing Nigerian experts as teachers regardless of their locations or places of work.

In anticipation of further expansion and the establishment of other private open and distance education institutions in Nigeria, the Federal Government will take the following measures to maintain standards and ensure that the goals of Open and Distance Learning are attained:

- establish an Open/Distance Education advisory body;
- promote ODL nationwide in collaboration with Federal, State and Local Government Education authorities;
- liaise with media houses, information and communication technology provide and other relevant bodies in enhancing ODL; and

- encourage private efforts and other non-governmental organizations in the provision of quality education using ODL;

(e) *Special Education*

Special education in the definition of the National Policy on Education (2004) Section 10, is “a formal, special educational training given to people (children and adults) with special needs... who fall into three categories: *the disabled*, the *disadvantaged* and the *gifted and talented*. The disabled include the visually impaired, hearing impaired, physically and health impaired, mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, speech impaired, learning disabled and multiple handicapped. The disadvantaged include children of nomadic pastoralists, migrant fisher folk, migrant farmers, hunters etc. who, due to their lifestyles and means of livelihood, are unable to have access to conventional education provision and, therefore, require special education to cater for their particular/peculiar needs and circumstances. The gifted or talented, on the other hand, are at the other end of the spectrum of special needs. For them the teaching and learning approaches of conventional formal setting may be inappropriate or even behaviourally counter-productive.

Objectives of Special Education

Three key objectives are stated in the National Policy on Education (2004):

- give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities notwithstanding;
- provide adequate education for all people with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation; and,
- design *a diversified and appropriate* curriculum for all the beneficiaries;

The concept of special education covers adult literacy and non-formal education which the National Policy on Education (2004), the National Action Plan (2006) and the 10 Year (Education) Strategic Plan (2007) all thoroughly emphasize as essential to inclusive national and state policy design because it has been perhaps one of the most neglected of the sectors in terms of political will, public appreciation and funding.

Section 6 of the NPE 2004 addresses mass literacy, adult and non-formal education based on the following goals:

- provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education;
- provide functional and remedial education for those young people who did not complete secondary education;
- provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
- give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.

Within the National Action Plan (2006) there is a set of five objectives targeting the 2015 timeline, meant to drive the reform process:

- the progressive recruitment and training of 260,000 adult literacy instructors by 2010;
- the provision of access to, renovation of existing facilities and construction of additional 100,000 training centres for the delivery of adult literacy classes and centres for nomadic education, by 2010;
- the mainstreaming of alternative participatory approaches to adult literacy by 2007;
- the development of access programmes for all out-of-school youths including pregnant girls and young mothers, by 2007, and

- the reduction by half (25 million) the number of illiterates in Nigeria, by 2015.

f) *Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education*

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC) which was established in 1991 has since 2007 stepped up its activities in the light of the prevailing illiteracy level in Nigeria, an E9 Member Country. The Commission is mandated by law to achieve the following national objectives among others:

- Design policies that will accelerate literacy promotion and mainstreaming;
- Increase awareness of the importance of literacy and solicit the participation and cooperation of all in the task of making all Nigerians literate;
- Develop literacy programmes and strategies with special attention to disadvantaged groups such as women, the disabled, rural dwellers and out-of-school children among others;
- Motivate and mobilize people to participate in Mass literacy, adult and non-formal education programmes through the mass media;
- Capacity building for Mass literacy staff and operators;
- Monitor and coordinate activities relating to the promotion of Mass literacy as well as produce NFE report;
- Give policy direction on Mass literacy to the State Agencies and other implementing partners as well as ensure compliance;
- Develop, produce and disseminate instructional and learning materials; and,
- Network with all stakeholders on matters concerning Mass literacy and adult education. (NMEC, 2007)

Some of the achievements of the Commission under score its resolve to make significant contribution to the reform process:

- The Commission in consultation with all NFE stakeholders has developed National Benchmark for Non-Formal Education which is it awaiting JCCE and NCE approval and implementation.
- The Commission has designed programmes through which basic education delivery is available for the Nigerian masses. These programmes include: basic literacy, post literacy, vocational education and continuing education.
- Some of the methods used to reach clients are: Women Education, Arabic Literacy, Workplace Literacy, Prison Literacy, Out-of-school boys and girls, Literacy by radio, REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques), Adult

Education Nomadic and Traditional method. The latest strategy, which is literacy by radio, was imported from Cuba in 2005.

- The provision of Vocational Education programme is a major breakthrough in Mass literacy delivery because it supports and empowers non-literate Nigerians to acquire skills that help them earn a living.
- In partnership with the Commission, UNICEF has played very key roles in the provision of basic education for women, children in Quranic schools, out-of-school boys and girls, the development and production of NFE Curricula and Primers, NFE facilitators' handbook, supply of learning materials and equipment, development of tools for monitoring learning achievement.
- UNESCO has been very supportive in the execution of the literacy by radio project in the country, which was pilot-tested in some states in the country and is currently being scaled up to cover all the 36 states and FCT Abuja with the support of the Federal Government. The organization has also featured prominently in support for literacy awards and celebration of International Literacy Day (ILD). The most recent ILD celebration was carried out at Kebbi State from 8th – 9th of September 2008.
- Action Aid Nigeria supported NMEC by building the capacity of staff on PRA/REFLECT, UNDP assisted in making 3.4 million Nigerians literate while USAID supports basic education in Nigeria using COMPASS project. Specifically the beneficiaries are 1,400 Public Primary Schools and Integrated Quranic Schools in Kano, Lagos and Nassarawa States.
- The Commission monitors, co-ordinates and produces reports on all activities relating to Mass Literacy delivery in the country. A major national monitoring and data collection was conducted simultaneously throughout the entire federation in March 2008. This would form the base for NMEC EMIS that is about to be established.

Table 2: Summary of Enrolment of NFE Learners by Programme (2007)

PROGRAMME	LEARNER'S ENROLMENT			NO. OF CENTRES	NO. OF FACILITATORS
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL		
BASIC LITERACY	548,408	465,292	1,013,700	20,828	23,422
POST LITERACY	186,045	264,239	450,284	7,101	11,986
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	39,504	82,685	122,189	2,371	3,763
CONTINUING EDUCATION	37,651	44,312	81,963	4,393	2,642
TOTAL	811,608	856,528	1,668,136	34,693	41,813

Source: Status of NFE Statistics In Nigeria 2007, (NMEC, 2008).

However, several important challenges and constraints need to be addressed; these include:

- Low image /public perception of NFE at all levels;
- Absence of concise Literacy policy in the country;
- Poor remuneration for part-time facilitators in most states;
- Poor funding and non-provision of needed equipment for effective vocational education programmes;
- Lack of political will for NFE programmes in practical terms;
- Inadequate logistics, and equipment including office accommodation, Monitoring vehicles, teaching and learning materials at National and State offices;
- Irregular monitoring and Evaluation of programmes at all levels, especially the implementing institution;
- Absence/ineffective monitoring and coordinating Literacy Committees at State and LGA levels resulting in insufficient community participation and ownership of programmes;
- Non-existence of Adult Education departments in some LGAs where they are merely units under social welfare department;
- Difficulties in mainstreaming of learners from NFE to formal system;
- Non-participation of majority of the target group in the mass literacy programmes as evidenced by poor enrolment figures;
- Inadequate research on relevant areas in Mass Literacy, Adult and Non Formal Education.(NMEC,2007)

g) *Nomadic Education*

The other major component of the special needs/disadvantaged group education framework is that of *nomadic education* whose main task is the “development of Universal Basic Education (UBE) to achieve EFA goals and MDGs amongst the nomadic populations in Nigeria”. Accordingly, two strategic reform goals and specific targets make up the reform focus, and drive nomadic education towards the 2015 timeline. In this respect, strategic reform goals and specific targets are reflected in the revised Action Plan of the National Commission for Nomadic

Education (NCNE). The implementation strategies of the *Nomadic Education Programme* include:

- Adoption of an integrated approach to the implementation of the NEP which involves the provision of formal education to the children and extension education to the adults as well as provision of social and welfare facilities;
- provide unfettered access to quality basic education to nomadic school-age children as well as adults;
- boost literacy and equip the nomads with skills and competences to enhance their wellbeing and participation in nation-building;
- increase enrolment in primary 1 with a minimum annual target of 300,000 pupils;
- raise gender parity rate to 80% in primary 1-6 and 50% in JS 1-3,
- raise progression rate in primary 1-6 to 80% and transition rate from primary 6-JS 1 to 75%;
- increase use of ICT (especially Interactive Radio Instruction-IRI) in the delivery of basic education;
- provide in at "least 50% of the nomadic schools, 10 units of radio and 10 sets each of teacher and pupil support materials;
- launch E-learning model centres in nomadic schools by 2007;
- raise adult literacy to 50% by 2015 and
- train teachers on the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) Methodology.(NCNE,2008)

In effect, the NCNE has adopted an integrated approach to the implementation of the Nomadic Education Programme which also provides on the one hand formal education to nomadic children, extension education, and social and welfare facilities to nomadic adults on the other hand. (NCNE 2008)

h) *Teacher Education*

The issues of teacher preparation supply status enhancement motivation and retention as well as continuous training and retraining are at the heart of education reform at all levels: pre-school/ECCDE, basic-lower and upper, senior secondary, special education and tertiary. The overarching goal of human capacity development for the efficient and effective delivery of UBE, EFA, and related MDGs is that "by 2015 Nigeria will have the human resources base to manage and implement the UBE scheme" (NAP, 2006: 53). Thus, through certain strategic actions that include:

- continued expansion of teacher training opportunities;
- continuous programme of enhanced status and professionalism for teachers through training and retraining, reviews of current remuneration packages, and enhanced career opportunities;
- programmes designed to address the capacity needs of schools and educational management;
- building the capacity of the inspectorate services to improve quality;
- engaging civil society partners in the roles of quality assurance, monitoring evaluation and impact assessment work at all levels.

The critical need of professionalization of the teaching profession, vested in the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) by virtue of the Teachers Registration Council Act began in 2007 with the mandatory registration of all professionally qualified teachers. This action is equally matched with comprehensive training and in-service training seminars and workshops in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. More importantly, the TRCN has begun implementation of the NPE provision that “all teachers *in education institutions including universities shall be professionally trained*”(section 8, B, para 72).

The goals of teacher education are specified in Section 8 (b) of the NPE (2004), paragraph 70-79 the NAP (2006) and the 10 Year Strategic Plan, among others. While the goal of the Strategic Plan is to “design a teacher education framework, based on what teachers should know and do relative to Nigeria’s new vision and mission, The National Policy on Education (2004) highlights the thrust of the ongoing reform:

- produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- encourage further the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers;
- help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- enhance their commitment to the teaching profession (...) make them adapt to changing needs of society. (NPE, 2004).

It is significant that both the National Action Plan and the 10 Year Strategic Plan adopt a holistic approach to addressing reform of teacher education through training and retraining, instructional material development and availability, the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative (CATI), periodic renewal of teacher licenses, capacity building of a reformed of Inspectorate service, support to the Teachers Registration Council's mandate and enhancement of teachers status and incentives. Furthermore, The 10 Year Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to address key issues of access, equity and quality across eleven related areas, each of which has been the focus of a dedicated Task Team:

- Education, economy and competitiveness;
- Curriculum, instruction and teacher quality;
- Reform of the Federal Ministry of Education and Parastatals;
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT);
- Physical Infrastructure;
- Standards, accountability and academic assessment;
- Examination ethics and campus safety;
- Communication strategy;
- Equity;
- Governance and politics; and,
- Education finance.

1.4 Curricular Policies, Educational Contents, Teaching and Learning Strategies

The Nigerian Government, through the Federal Ministry of Education and its agencies, has evolved additional curricular policies, educational contents and teaching and learning strategies at all levels of the educational system with a view to strengthening in such policies, contents and strategies that Nigeria had reported on between 2000 and 2004. These are amply reflected, since 2004, in several reviewed and new national policy documents: the National Policy on

Education (2004) the National Action Plan (2006), the Vision 2020 document and 10-Year Strategic Plan 2007, The National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria (2007), The National Policy on HIV and AIDs for the Education Sector in Nigeria (2005), the outcome of the 53rd and 54th meetings of the National Council on Education (NCE); the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2007), outcomes of workshops on policy imperatives and teacher competencies for inclusive education (2008), and the Quality and methodology of nomadic education in Nigeria (2008).

a) Early Childhood and Care Education

The National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria provides an inter-sectoral framework within the universal basic education scheme and goal I of EFA, aims “to enable the Nigerian child to appropriate all its rights as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Nigeria subscribes (...) as well as “definitely ensure improved care and support for the growing child thereby giving it a good head start in life” (FME 2007: I).

The objectives are drawn from the NPE (2004), Food and Nutrition, and the Child Rights Act (2006). Since this is an integrated inter-sectoral initiative, the curricular objectives/outcomes are wide-ranging and prescribe roles for all key stakeholders to ensure the fulfillment of the basic rights of the child: i.e. parents and caregivers, community members and leaders in providing a conducive environment for IECD programmes and practice; religious groups and leaders in ensuring peaceful co-existence and tolerance; relevant public and private agencies especially those of Education, Women Affairs, Health, Information and National Orientation, Agriculture, Labour, Internal Affairs, Water resources and related agencies; local government, civil society organizations, private sector organizations, international development partners, the media, tertiary institutions, policy-makers and legislators and the National Population Commission. Several important reform initiatives to enhance quality of curriculum

content and delivery now fall within *first, the new role and expectations of tertiary institutions* in the implementation of IECD: Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Research Institutes, Colleges/Schools of Nursing and Schools of Health Technology. As indicated in the policy document, their major roles and functions are: "organizing training and retraining programmes for operators and practitioners of IECDs; and development and implementation of academic and professional courses in IECD; initiating and undertaking research and project activities on IECD" (Page 16).

The *second* is the role of the family in providing a supportive conducive context in terms of "culturally appropriate and scientifically sound antenatal, delivery and post-natal care and practices" that would best prepare the transition of the child from home to school. Such culturally desirable practices for ages 0-3 include:

- the introduction of *indigenous* "baby" games, rhymes;
- praise songs or 'Oriki' delineating family clan and ancestral linkages and achievement;
- the introduction of the child into the social (and cultural) world using the mother tongue;
- encouragement of grandmothers to live in and share indigenous knowledge with children;
- the provision of safe and secure environment and good household practices i.e. breast feeding and keeping medicines out of reach.... (FME 2007);
- for the 3-5 year old child, the promotion of an indigenous sense of responsibility and *non-slavish acceptance of "birth order* and authority of parents and significant others; and
- responsible administration of discipline to shape the child's behaviour to be responsible to his community.

A third important role in the curricular, teaching and learning strategy is that of *the Neighbourhood* in providing recreational facilities and crèches for day care,

acting as counseling groups for positive change in the case of conflict resolution, child abuse and good family practices, and support for good child care practices.

The role of the media is also a critical part of the strategy to promote culturally appropriate communication and stimulation through indigenous contents programming i.e. theatre, and tales by moonlight, for inculcating universal and Nigerian morality, and promoting indigenous knowledge through indigenous cartoons... (page 18).

b) *Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme*

The UBE programme started in 1999 while the UBE Act was signed into law in 2004 at the federal level. It has been domesticated in all states of the federation for effective ownership and delivery. In addition, the National Integrated Early Childhood (IECD) Policy was approved in 2006 to guide inter-sectoral intervention on children aged 0-5 years. Since then, Local Governments and States have assumed more visible roles in driving the UBE process and providing effective partnerships with Federal agencies charged with Basic Education delivery.

The UBE Act provides for the utilization of 2% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) for basic education delivery. 70% of this fund is reserved as a matching grant for the implementation of State level projects, while 5% of the 70% UBE Matching Grant is allocated for Early Childhood Education, 60% for Primary education and 35% for Junior Secondary. These funds are utilized as follows:

- 70% for infrastructural development.
- 15% for supply of instructional materials
- 15% for care-giver/Teacher professional development
-

Some notable achievements have been recorded in the past four years.

- National Early Child Care minimum standards for ECCE centers and the Integrated Early Childhood Curriculum for 0-5 Years was approved by the National Council on Education in 2004 for pre-school child growth and early stimulation is effectively being implemented
- Revised and restructured 9-year basic education curriculum has been approved in 2007 for implementation in 2008/2009 in primary 1 and JSS 1
- The Book policy which states the minimum ratio of textbooks, play equipment, charts, and computers for basic education has been approved by the NCE.

UBEC target is to provide to each pupil textbooks in at least the core subjects

- So far, 9,189,592 assorted textbooks have been procured and distributed since 2005 (i.e. a text book to 4 pupils)
- There has been considerable improvement in funding profile in terms of
 - Federal Government Funding from annual budgets (1999-2004)
 - Federal Intervention Fund (2% of CRF) -2005-2007
 - MDG Intervention -2005-2007
 - ETF Intervention to Basic Education Implementing Agencies
 - ETF Intervention in states for basic education (being 30-40% of annual ETF Fund)
- 2% of the FGN/UBE Fund is dedicated to special education. UBEC is presently focusing on the education of the physically and mentally challenged. In 2005, all the 36 states and FCT received N10, 706,754 each to provide infrastructure and instructional materials for special education schools.
- In 2006, 30 states and FCT received N11, 302,313.52 each while 15 states received N13, 356,756.72 each in 2007.
- N182 Million has been given to NGOs and other private providers have been supported by UBEC since they are significant players in the provision of education for this group of children.

Since 2004 several other key reform initiatives and policies to enhance quality education programmes, delivery and outcomes have been introduced. In September 2005, the Federal Ministry of Education adopted the *National Policy on HIV and AIDS for the Education Sector in Nigeria*. The policy was inspired by the facts, statistics, and *impact* of HIV/AIDS on the teaching personnel, especially teachers and orphans of HIV/AIDS parents. The major consequences of the HIV/AIDS scourge for Nigerian education are characterized as :

- reduction in efficiency and productivity owing to illness and absenteeism;
- depletion of student and teacher populations;
- increase in school dropouts and reduction in access to education;
- decrease in the production of manpower for the work force; and,
- increase in demand for public services and benefits. (FME,2005).

These serious challenges have determined the specific objectives and scope of application of the policy presented in the policy document in relation *to basic education*:

- promote awareness and educate on HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs);
- develop strategies and intervention that support behaviour change;
- create a supportive work and learning environment for infected staff and learners.

In terms of the scope of the policy it is provided that subject to prevailing socio-cultural norms and values of a multiculturally diverse country like Nigeria, the policy will be applicable to all government and private education institutions and workplaces in Nigeria [and applied] equally to all employees and learners regardless of sex, ethnicity or religion” (page 9).

Curricular issues and content envisaged in this policy include the development of teaching methodology and new basic education curriculum in order to entrench relevance, functionality, and learner-centred stimulation to promote successful learning, address firmly the problem of examination malpractices and related ethical issues such as sexual harassment; the promotion of the use of ICTs in the learning and teaching processes; “provision of training and capacity building by broadening the curriculum of Colleges of Education delivering National Certificate in Education (NCE) programmes for UBE”; provision of opportunities “to enable learners from the non-formal system to enter into formal training and learning system within UBE”; “provision of life-skills and other appropriate learning through Quranic and other forms of learning;” “development of access programmes with flexible approaches to meet the needs of-out-of school children” (NAP, 2006).

Another landmark event in the reform process of Basic Education was the launch of the *National Policy on Gender on Basic Education, 2007*. The policy is premised on the fact that “a gender sensitive policy is one that will ensure that gender is systematically mainstreamed into all components of the education sector development” (FME 2007: 1). Furthermore it demonstrates Nigeria’s commitment

to several key normative instruments she has initiated; signed, ratified or acceded to, including:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999;
- The Universal Basic Education Act UBE 2004;
- Education for All Goals (Dakar Framework for Action);
- National Policy on Education (NPE 2004);
- National Policy on Women;
- The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS);
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and most recent;
- The presidential 7 point Agenda which includes Education.

The highpoints of the policy are its four objectives: equal access and participation in basic education; promotion of high level of retention, completion and performance; advocacy to attract the support of all key stakeholders in resource mobilization and partnership, and creation of a favourable environment to actualize the policy (page 7).Consequently, the strategies that have been put in place to actualize the objectives include :

- state policies and laws against early girl child marriages or betrothal;
- enforcement of laws against sexual abuse and exploitation of children, child begging and hawking;
- provision of midday meals in primary schools and implementation of poverty alleviation initiatives and policies;
- a scholarship programme for girls from to address drop out rates between primary 6 and the upper basic or junior secondary education;
- a Second Chance Education Program and centre for girl dropouts;

- Girl Child Encouragement Clubs in schools which will “ focus on leadership skills, building self-esteem and improving girls’ performance among other activities” ;
- Reproductive Health Education focused on the teaching of core values and messages in family life and HIV/AIDS education, health education and gender issues in the school curriculum, with “special consideration for Orphans Vulnerable Children (OVC)”.
- The establishment of boarding schools where there are distributed populations, poor accessibility and low enrolment of girls(FME,2007).

The concept of gender includes both girls and boys in special circumstances and the key strategy of advocacy, sensitization and mobilization is targeted at the cultural, religious, and geopolitical realities of the Northern and South Eastern parts of Nigeria. Consequently, this strategy involves all levels of government, and all stakeholders to “implement effective awareness campaign to inform, sensitize and dispel religious misconceptions and cultural inhibitions against girls’ education in the North and boys’ education in the South East” (FME 2007).

Beyond this landmark policy, the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) has developed a gender-sensitive or gender-responsive curriculum which makes it “mandatory for the new editions and new texts that are going to be used in schools to be censored for gender sensitivity (....)” including government’s expectation that women in general and successful women will be shown in very positive light in books, films and other media (FME 2007).

1.5 The Legal Framework of Education

The main legal framework of Education in Nigeria are the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999; and the Compulsory Free, Universal Basic Education Act 2004 and other Related Matters. However between 2004 and 2008 several National Policies (which have force of law) have been introduced and are

being implemented by Federal Ministry of Education and Education Agencies, and other competent ministerial agencies in the case of integrated inter-sectoral policies. The UBE Act underscores the Federal Government of Nigeria's political will to intervene where necessary to ensure inclusive, uniform and qualitative education for all based on the right of a child. In effect, part 1 paragraph 2 of the Act stipulates that:

- "Every Government [Federal, State and Local] shall provide free compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age;
- "Every parent shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes
 - a) primary school education and
 - b) junior secondary school education;
- The stakeholders in education in a Local Government Area shall ensure that every parent or person who has the care and custody of a child performs the duty imposed on him under section 2 (2) of this Act". Penalties are also prescribed for erring parents.

The strategy is driven by the new motto: "Education for all is the responsibility of all" and that the community's role is that of watchdog, facilitator and benefactor, and beneficiary in the final analysis.

Other normative/legal instruments introduced since the UBE Act are:

- The Child Rights Act which most of the 36 State legislatures have ratified.
- The National Policy on HIV/AIDs for the Education Sector in Nigeria;
- The National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria; and,
- The National Policy on Gender in Basic Education.
- the signing by Nigeria of Article 24, 2d of the 1st United Nations Millennium Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006);
- The Implementation of the decisions of the 53rd and 54th meeting of the National Council of Education in terms of (i) effective derecognizing of

- schools found guilty of aiding and abetting examination malpractice during national public examinations;
- the implementation of Road Safety Awareness as a subject in the primary and secondary school curricula;
 - reinforcing the teaching and learning of French as a second official language in primary and junior secondary school.
 - review of the national framework and implementation of the Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFAP); and,
 - the mandatory establishment of the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) by 2007 in all 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja;

1.6. Objectives and Principal Characteristics of Current and Forthcoming Reforms

The objectives of the current and forthcoming reforms are reflected in several policy frameworks and reform strategies *to meet* the challenges that Nigerian education faces in meeting the global and national goals of EFA, MDGs and Universal Basic Education among others. Furthermore, the successive results of monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) carried out since the early 1990s and the education sector-wide situation analysis published in 2006, have made it absolutely crucial to put in place decisive strategies, supported by all stakeholders including states and local government, international development partners and agencies, to bring about significant and comprehensive quality reform of the Nigerian education system.

The National Action Plan 2006, reviewed in 2007, has identified priority directions for achieving EFA, UBE and MDGs based on the following targets (i) ECCE, 2) UBE including Adult literacy and non-formal Education and human capacity development; 3) eliminating gender disparities through the education of women and girls and 4) quality and relevance of learning.

These are characterized by a rights-based framework of action, intersectorality, wide consultation and partnership building among all stakeholders, strategies and relevant implementation processes that are timelined, benchmarked, and guided by the principles of relevance, functionality of content, transparency, accountability and the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to make the reform sustainable and cost efficient/effective. As the 10-Year Strategic Plan reiterates, the current reform is driven by the Government's need to address what has been objectively summarized as not only "an education crisis but a crisis for the nation" hence the new vision to position Nigerian education to "become an emerging economy model, delivery sound education policy and management for public good" (FME 2007).

2.0 Major Policies, Achievements and Lessons Learned

2.1 Access to Education

Against the backdrop of the Universal Basic Education Act 2004, the (Nigeria) Child Rights Act 2004, the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria 2007; the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education 2007 as well as the National Action Plan for implementation of the UBE, EFA and MDGS, Nigeria has made significant progress in addressing the critical and now treble issues of access, completion and quality. Furthermore, there are dedicated national agencies whose mandates are to ensure compliance, management and implementation of relevant policies on Basic Education. For example, since 2004, the Universal Basic Education Commission has reinforced the strategy of National Sensitization, Advocacy and Mobilization for the promotion of the basic rights of children to education, placing the emphasis on "enrolment (especially girls'), retention and completion of a full cycle of at least 9 years basic education" [FME 2005].

Since Nigeria's main policy innovation and framework is the Universal Basic Education Act 2004, it should be instructive to highlight further achievements

and projections related to the Universal Basic Education Commission's (UBEC) activities in the last four years:

- construction of schools and reinforcement/rehabilitation of primary school classrooms;
- Access provided by the National Commission for Nomadic Education- (NCNE), to" primary education for about 303,518 pupils inclusive of fishermen and farmers in 2,526 nomadic schools with a total of 8,665 teachers [FME 2005] using the mode of onsite schools in nomadic company sites; semi-settled schools for nomadic groups that "practice split and partial movements", and mobile schools in the form of "collapsible structures for pastoral nomads and boat schools for migrant fisher-folk (NCNE 2008).

Given the strategic importance and role of UBEC, key lessons learned so far should be highlighted at this point:

- Government's efforts alone cannot meet ALL the multi-faceted challenges of the sub-sector thus the increasing need for partnership across the broad spectrum of socio-economic institutions.
- Greater synergy among the implementing agencies of Basic Education enhances the attainment of overall national objectives.
- There is need to pay greater emphasis and initiate programmes and interventions targeted at vulnerable groups through social mobilization and sensitization of all stakeholders to drive home the concept of *"education for all is the responsibility of all"*.
- There is need to introduce initiatives that will ensure full enrolment of all out-of-school children e.g. free uniforms, free school kits, micro-credits on completion of basic education, etc.(UBEC,2008).

The integration of other Nigerian children, youth and adults who belong to the special needs education categories has continued with appreciable though modest success. For instance, it is reported that the Federal Government of Nigeria's response to the statistics of about 10 million out-of-school children of school-going age was the establishment of the National Steering Committee on School Feeding Programme in 2006. Furthermore, the Government made available 2% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, administered by the National Basic Education Commission, to support the feeding programme in 12 States of

the Federation. This is the Home Grown School Feeding and Health programme (HGSFHP) as it would be known by 2007.

Non-formal Education has recorded appreciable successes since 2004. The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and non-formal Education (NMEC), driven by the goal to reduce adult literacy by 50% while providing gender equity and vocational and life skills training opportunities, reported the following:

- In 2005, it launched, in collaboration with Cuba, the Literacy Radio Project which is now being implemented in the twelve pilot states.
- developed in collaboration with UNICEF three curricula for girl-child education, Koranic education and out-of-school boys' education [FME 2005];
- developed and pilot-tested an instrument for the monitoring of learning achievement for the non-formal education centre;
- Basic and post-basic literacy have become one of the focal points of the entire literacy programme especially the promotion of literacy among women and girls.
- In order to meet the set target related to goal 4 (EFA) school infrastructural development, enrolment of learners and instructors for basic and post basic literacy have been appreciable.
- 25, 399 classrooms were constructed throughout Nigeria for a total enrolment of 881,594 basic literacy learners, and a further 9,770 classroom for an enrolment of 325,405 post-basic learners.
- The commission recruited a total of 26, 474 instructors and 4, 149 supervisors for the both levels of the literacy programme [FME 2005]

2.2 Early Childhood Intervention

The major policy which has defined a road map for Early Childhood Care and Education in Nigeria is that which brought about the structural integration of the ECCE as part of Nigeria's UBE scheme (FME 2007) making it a rights-based, holistic, comprehensive and intersectoral programme covering education, health,

food and nutrition. Before now ECCE was an all-comers, private venture with little regard for such critical issues as good practices in the ownership, access to and delivery of ECCE programmes. This is in an environment where “infant mortality rate (IMR) and under-five mortality rate (U5MR) worsened from 90 and 168/1000 live births in 1999 (MICS) to 109 and 217/1000 live births respectively in 2003.

The weakened primary healthcare (PHC) system has resulted in a persistent high disease burden affecting mostly very young children.” Other compounding problems included malnutrition/micronutrient deficiency, low immunization, high incidence of paralytic polio which by 2004 was about 80% of globally reported cases (FME 2007).

The integrated IECD therefore addresses the situation of Nigerian children aged 0-5, 20% of whom do not have access to pre-primary educational experiences. Several significant actions have been taken since 2005 to move the IECD forward in the critical areas of increased access, quality health, education programmes, learning and teacher preparation and infrastructural development, and management.

By 2005 the following achievements had been recorded, thanks to the collaboration between the Federal Ministry of Education; the Department of Primary and Secondary Education, the UBE Commission and the UBE Boards of State Governments (SUBEBs) (FME 2005):

- the establishment of Early Child Care Units in one hundred and eleven primary schools in each of the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja;
- the monitoring and evaluation of 27,500 Day Care Centres now provide essential quality assurance right from the outset;
- training workshops and programmes have been organized for care-givers/ECCE teachers throughout Nigeria;

- some universities have become involved in the curriculum development and training of pre-service teachers on ECCDE;
- Between 2004 and 2005, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) developed three important documents after wide consultations, workshops and seminars involving relevant specialists, teachers
 - a) National Minimum Standards for ECCD Centres
 - b) National Curriculum for ECCE (0-5)
 - c) ECCD Care givers' and teachers' manual.
- In meeting the implied costs of the integrated ECCD programme, the UBE Commission provides 5% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) to state UBE Boards for ECCD.
- By 2006, ECCD had become one of the compulsory/core courses in the National Certificate of Education programme of all Colleges of Education as another strategy to ensure that every trained teacher becomes aware of, and is trained and able to provide ECCE/deliver ECCE.
- Under the Vocational Enterprise Institutions/Innovation Enterprise Institutions VEI/IEI programme, the National Board for Technical Education has developed, for the first time in Nigeria, a curriculum for the training of ECCE managers, known as National Innovation Diploma (NID) in Early Childhood Care and Management. It is a two-year course that trains ECCE managers for effective running and management of ECCED schools. No programme of similar nature is currently obtainable in any Nigerian tertiary education institution (NBTE, 2008).
- As at 2008, the sustenance of the innovation looks promising as 18 VEIs and 62 IEIs have been licensed by the NBTE to operate while 52 programmes in 25 related institutions have attained Interim Accreditation. Furthermore, another 50 applications for the operating license for VEIs, and IEIs are being considered (NBTE, 2008).

- By 2003/2004, the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) developed two programmes – B. A. (Ed) in Early Childhood Education and B. A (Ed) Primary Education. About 350 and 650 students respectively are currently enrolled in the programmes.

Table 3: ECCE enrolment 2004-2006

Year	No of Schools	Male	Female	Total	% Female
2004	55,223	937,997	896,522	1,834,579	48.86
2005	54, 167	956,475	903,796	1,860,271	48.58
2006	56,188	1,206,760	1,109,218	2,315,978	49.50

Source: [FME 2007].

2.3 Learning Achievements/Outcomes, and Reduced Inequalities

The basic and secondary education sector has been the subject of several national assessment exercises since the early 1990s, and the outcomes of each Monitoring of Learning Achievement in the last decade have led to the same conclusion: that Nigerian learners were performing well below the (40%) mean in English, Mathematics and life skills; that there were too many unqualified teachers in the system; that morale/motivation was at a low-ebb; that teaching and learning conditions/environments were not conducive etc; that private school learners were consistently outperforming their public school peers; that funding to schools remained chronically poor etc. Special attention has been drawn to the draft report of the comprehensive education sector situation analysis carried out by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2006. The details were presented in the National Action Plan (2006) and have become a strong feature of the 10-Year Strategic Plan to meet the 2015 timelines of EFA, UBE, MDGs and Nigeria’s Vision 2020 education targets.

The sector analysis was based on 10 issues/measures and scores ranging from 0 to 5: policy, structure/governance, physical infrastructure, deployment of ICT, academic achievement, monitoring inspection, quality of curriculum, teacher quality and supply, funding, and equity issues.

Table 4: Situation Analysis of Education Sector

		A	B	C	D	E	F
	Sector	Total score/ 50	Curriculum quality	Teacher quality + supply	Academic achievement	Funding	Monitoring/ Inspectorate
1	ECCD	07	1	1	1	1	0
2	PRIMARY	22	5	1	1	1	1
3	NON FORMAL	09	1	1	1	1	1
4	SECONDARY	18	1	1	1	3	1
5	SPECIAL NEEDS	07	1	3	0	1	0
6	TERTIARY	20	1	3	1	3	1

Adapted from: FRN (2006).

It is obvious from the details in Table 1 that the comprehensive reform of the Nigerian education system is rooted in the less than encouraging results of the Education Sector Situation Analysis which strongly reflected the prevailing crisis since the early 1990s. Accordingly, the Federal Ministry of Education and all its agencies, EFA, UBEC, NCNE, NBTE, NMEC, NTI, NUC, NOUN, NERDC and NIEPA, have reinforced their drive to bring about a turnaround in their respective areas of competence/mandate in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, national and international. Furthermore, there is an invaluable and welcome shift in the role of the general public, from that of vocal critics to partners in progress, the concerned and active involvement of the private sector through the public-private sector partnership. (PPP), the engagement of the civil society coalition, the Nigeria Union of Teachers/ (NUT) and National Parent Teacher's Association, the Teachers' Registration Council, the National Universities Commission (NUC), school-based management committees for every school, the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiatives (CATI) etc.

2.4 Pre-Service Teacher Training, Recruitment, Deployment, Working Conditions and In-Service Professional Development

Teacher training at pre-service level, in-service and continuous professional capacity-building have been given national priority in the National Policy on Education the National Action Plan and 10-Year Strategic Plan: "continued expansion of teacher training opportunities and increasing conversion of existing TC II certificate teachers to the National Certificate of Education (NCE) qualification, achieving 100% by 2015 (specific targets include the need for an additional 500,000 teachers and instructors to deliver the formal and non-formal components of UBE by 2015" (FME 2006).

The main reform strategy being reinforced since 2004 includes the innovative Pivotal Teacher Training Programme (PTTP), the establishment of the Federal Teachers Corps, the improvement in the status and conditions of service of teachers including the recently introduced Teachers Salary Scale (TSS), a series of incentives such as the Home Ownership/Housing for All Teachers Scheme, and awards such as the Bournvita National Teachers Award - a successful private sector-sponsored programme which is: Implemented with the collaboration of the UNESCO Office, Abuja. Above all, the Nigerian government is committed to the implementation of UNESCO/ILO Declaration and recommendations on the status of teaching personnel. The nine recommendations therein are central to Nigeria's ongoing capacity building of the teaching corps and education personnel, especially school administrators and inspectorate officials. Particular attention is given to 1) making sure that the provision of the National Policy on Education (2004) concerning the mandatory training of all teachers in all educational institutions who are not professionally qualified as well as the registration and certification of all qualified, practising teachers is adhered to. Secondly, the problem of teachers working in exceptional, difficult or special circumstances are being progressively addressed especially with increasing

funding. The recruitment, training, remuneration, retention of trainers and instructors (FME 2007).

Between 2006 and 2008 several significant actions have been taken to reposition the teaching profession and the training, recruitment and motivation of teachers and education personnel at all levels.

a) National Commission for Colleges of Education

It is recalled here that the dedicated national agency charged with the production/pre-service training and continuous preparation of teachers for basic education is the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The Commission which was established under Decree No. 3 of 1989 (Amended Act No. 12 of 1993, has the legal mandate for management, regulation and supervision of a total of "88 NCE-awarding institutions including 80 Colleges of Education, and the National Teachers' Institute which provides training to serving II teachers to upgrade then to NCE status" (FME 2008).

Expectedly, the NCCE is a focal point of the reform of the education sector and whose mandate is rightly described as "very challenging and tasking" (NCCE, 2006). The restructuring of the organization began with the generation of more information and data on both its human capital and infrastructural facilities. Based on demand, the Commission embarked on the first phase of a verification exercise in 21 Federal Government Colleges of Education (...). Of great importance was monitoring and evaluation of projects in the institutions to ensure the maintenance of standards. The NCCE produced the final draft copy of the reviewed scheme of service for the Federal Colleges of Education in collaboration with the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation. It also reviewed the 3rd edition of minimum standards for Colleges of Education by means of a stakeholders sensitization workshop (NCCE 2006). The following also characterize the mandate of the NCCE.

Every five years, it carries out accreditation of academic programmes in all NCE – awarding institutions to ensure conformity to minimum academic standards, and monitors and evaluates academic programmes on teacher education polices in colleges of education annually. This serves to bridge the gap between the periods of accreditation.

NCCE has enriched the curriculum of Teacher Education, by infusing some emerging issues into the NCE curriculum. Such issues include: Drug Abuse Education, Family Life and Emerging Health Issues (FLEHI) and Entrepreneurship Education, etc.

In order to facilitate the production of special teachers to teach children with special needs at the basic education level, NCCE has been closely monitoring the Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo State, where such teachers are specially trained

The Nigerian governments at the Federal, State and Local levels are very much concerned about the welfare of teachers, education managers and personnel. Against the background of general low interest in the teaching profession, the Federal Government has taken decisive action to meet the challenges of teacher preparation, recruitment, increased status enhancement, motivation and retention.

The following initiatives are noteworthy:

- The Federal Teachers Scheme
- The (Federal) Teacher's Salary Scale (TSS)
- The National Health Insurance Scheme
- The President's Teacher's and Schools' Excellence Award
- The Housing for All Teachers' Scheme (HATS)

These incentives should facilitate a rapid change of attitude amongst applicants for admission to tertiary institutions especially the Colleges of Education and University Faculties of Education.

The success of the education sector reform depends to a very large extent on the level of preparation and recruitment of teachers for the formal and non-

formal and special education sub-sectors. Each of the dedicated Commissions such as UBEC, NMEC, NCNE, NBTE and, NIEPA, have been making significant strides in this regard within the framework of the recently established National Strategy for Teacher Quality and Development. The activities of some of these agencies will briefly presented.

b) The National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) The NCNE has recorded the following achievements given the exceptional nature of the needs of the target population.

- It has introduced a specialized teacher training programme which involves trainees who come from the nomadic communities and would return to their respective communities as trained teachers;
- Head teachers, supervisors and state coordinators of the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) are regularly updated and upgraded;
- Teachers are trained on the use of curriculum guides, innovative teaching approaches, e-learning strategy and on Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) and the production of learning aids: pictures, illustrations and sketches;
- The first phase of the NCNE's train-the-trainers' workshop, on good record keeping in nomadic schools in the six geopolitical zones (NCNE 2008).

Among the teacher development initiatives planned within the 10-Year Strategic Plan are [NCNE 2008]:

- the selection of more nomadic individuals for training as teachers. In collaboration with the Education Trust Fund and Federal Colleges of Education, 208 children of Nomadic Communities were selected for specialized training;
- increased use of modern teaching and learning techniques including ICTs for better and successful learning;
- preparation of teachers, instructors and supervisors for preventive HIV/AIDS education and monitoring.

However, the NCNE's current challenges involve the inadequacy of teacher supply and retention which has been due to:

- the indiscriminate transfer of teacher from nomadic schools to conventional schools by Local Government Education Authorities without replacement; and
- teacher truancy which is attributed to poor conditions of service and harsh environmental conditions (Yamta, 2006).

c) *The National Commission for Mass Literacy Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC)*

NMEC, true to its mandate and vision, is positioning to eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria. The issues of teacher preparation, recruitment, motivation and retention are vital to the success of its mission at the basic and post-basic literacy levels. Its continuing education, vocational education and women education programmes are faced with problems of inadequate personnel and, facilities and the non-payment of stipends to facilitators by some Local Government Administrations, among others. Also, the Adult and Non-formal education programme needs a significant reinforcement through a much greater political will and commitment of Local Government Authorities to the success of Non-formal Education.

d) *National Teachers Institute (NTI)*

The National Teachers' Institute (NTI) was established in 1976 to provide pre-service and in-service training for basic education level through the continuing Professional Development of Teachers programme which is a distance learning provision. It is the only dedicated institution in the Commonwealth mandated to deliver teacher development programmes through distance learning techniques. NTI's contribution over the years has been to ensure continuous supply of qualified teachers, ensure retention and upgrading of their professional competences. With the introduction of the Universal Basic Education reform, NTI

has been increasingly active in upgrading Grade Two certificated teachers. 26,051 have been trained so far, while a further 81,981 trainees- 75% of whom are females in the semi-urban areas are currently enrolled. It runs the following programmes: the Pivotal Teacher Training Programme (PTTI) for teachers at the request of state governments; Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) for untrained graduate teachers, and has trained 11,500 such teachers; Diploma in Education in ECCDE, Guidance and Counselling and School supervision; regular Continuing Professional Development Programmes based on teachers' needs for the Federal Ministry of Education, Universal Basic Education Commission, State Ministries of Education and State Universal Basic Education Boards.

The workshops and training sessions are participatory, reflective, skill-driven and knowledge based. They include:

- Effective approaches and methodologies for teaching the core-subjects at the Basic and Technical Education levels;
- Effective use and Improvisation of Instructional Materials.
- School-Based Assessment;
- School Management and Record Keeping for Principals, Head teachers and their Assistants;
- Effective School Supervision Methods for Education Supervisors and Inspectors;
- Approaches to Effective Curriculum Implementation;
- Methodologies for ECCDE teachers and Care-givers;
- Continuing Professional Development Programme for Trainers of English Language Teachers (CPD)-an On-Line programme run in collaboration with the British Council;and,
- The Technical Teachers Training Programme on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education. The Programme is to upgrade and retain Instructors in Technical Colleges.

Furthermore, NTI collaborates with the Open University, U.K. and other 18 Institutes in Sub-Saharan Africa to run the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) Programme (TESSA), which aims at improving teaching by making the learning of the core-subjects in schools more interesting for pupils thereby increasing learning achievements and enhancing pupil's retention.

In all its activities, the Institute is mindful of the fact that it is only competent and knowledgeable teachers that can deliver relevant and functional education. Its training programmes thus promote creativity, innovativeness and reflection on practices in teachers. (NTI 2008).

d) National Universities Commission (NUC)

As a key agency in delivering quality education, the National Universities Commission's is to be a dynamic regulatory agency acting as a "catalyst for positive change and innovation for the delivery of quality university education in Nigeria". Its mission is to "ensure the orderly development of a well coordinated and productive university system that will guarantee quality and relevant education for national development and global competitiveness".(NUC,2008).

Accordingly, the Commission goals are as follows:

- Attainment of stable and crisis-free University System.
- To work with Nigerian Universities to achieve full accreditation status for at least 80% of the academic programmes.
- To initiate and promote proficiency in the use of ICT for service delivery within the Commission and the Nigerian University System.
- Upgrade and maintain physical facilities in the Nigerian University System for delivery of quality university education.
- To match university graduate output with national manpower needs.
- To foster partnership between the Nigerian University System and the private sector.

NUC's mandate in ensuring quality reform in the university system
Commission covers:

- Approval of courses and programmes
- Determination and maintenance of Minimum Academic Standards
- Monitoring of Universities
- Accreditation of Academic Programmes
- Provision of guidelines and processing of applications for the establishment of private universities.(NUC,2008)

A recent innovation launched by the Commission is the Linkage with Experts and Academics in the Diaspora (LEAD)Program. It is a key aspect the Federal Government's continued effort at transforming the educational sector through collaboration with Nigerians in the Diaspora. NUC's advertorial calling for application and participation describes the innovation as follows:

LEAD is aimed at attracting experts and academics of Nigerian origin in the Diaspora to contribute their quota to the development of the Nigerian University System, and hence development of the Nation through short-term academic appointments. The major objectives of LEAD are:

- To encourage the relocation to Nigeria on a short-term basis of academics and experts of Nigerian origin in the Diaspora to contribute to National development through engagement in teaching, research and community service activities in the Nigerian university system;
- To tap from the huge human resource of Nigerian origin based within and outside the country but located for the purpose of work outside the Nigerian university system for the improvement of the delivery of university education;
- To encourage healthy staff movements, interaction and collaboration across and between Nigerian Universities and with other sectors of education and National development.
- To encourage experts in industry to participate in teaching and research in Nigerian Universities. (NUC, 2007).

Because tertiary institutions now have a distinct responsibility to be actively engaged in driving educational reform at all levels , the importance of such reverse brain gain partnerships for Nigeria cannot be overemphasized

e) National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)

As in the case of Colleges of Education, the enrolment figures for polytechnics and monotechnics are low, given the powerful attraction that universities have for secondary school graduates.

The key issue is that a good number of teachers employed to teach children with special needs lack essential qualifications and teaching style (FRN 2006) and those qualified to teach are more likely to be in administrative positions than in the special needs classroom. While a survey of special education personnel/teachers has shown that many hold the Ph.D. (1.7%), M.Ed (5.1%) and NCE (18.8%), "because they lack access to appropriate training programmes and refresher courses, their qualification sometimes counts for little" (FRN 2006). Consequently, technical and vocational education has until recently experienced the chronic problems of negative attitudes, low enrolment of students and inadequate number of qualified TVET teachers. Furthermore, there is a "near total absence of private sector investment in vocational and technical education (which) is demoralizing to teachers and their students [FME 2008]. Perhaps more significantly, it is reported that the Junior Secondary (now upper basic) school curriculum which focuses on pre-vocational and technical education among other academic contents "does not sufficiently prepare students for technical education" (FME 2008).

In order, therefore, to firmly address the issues and challenges within the ongoing reform process, the Federal Ministry of Education and its agencies have adopted two key strategies: (i) make TVET more attractive to prospective students, (ii) and create a conducive working condition for teachers to enhance motivation, status enhancement and retention. Implementation of these key strategies has been yielding appreciable results which the projected

establishment of a National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF) for Nigeria, will further enhance. The following features are significant: The strategy seeks to:

- It allows for the recognition of skills and competencies acquired through a variety of ways by citizens of the country irrespective of the method of training or skill acquisition;
- It enhances practical skills-based training through standardization of the qualifications obtainable, either through formal, non-formal or informal (apprentice type) training;
- The scheme is employed by setting up progressive levels of benchmarks – National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), for various skill-areas that are attainable by youths and working adults. Training for the qualification is directly responsive to industry via the standard setting bodies – sector skills councils (SSCs). The SSCs are sector specific bodies that are constituted, with full industrial representation, to regulate and generate standard of skills attainable for each level of competence for each trade or profession;
- It also allows industries to partake in the competency-based skills training of their workers and to give such training recognition in the national system educational qualifications;
- It expands production of technical teachers in all trades through increased output from existing Colleges of Education (Technical) and the establishment of more colleges;
- It establishes, in collaboration with Nigerian Universities, programmes that will train graduates of other professional affiliations as potential TVE teachers for polytechnics and similar tertiary level technical institutions;
- It allows the polytechnics system to produce its own teachers by mandating them to run degree programmes in technical fields.(NBTE,2008).

- The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) has opened an avenue for serving NCE (TVET) teachers by running a B. Sc. (Ed) Business Education programme NOUN since the 2005/2006 session. About 400 students are currently enrolled. Also B. Sc. (Ed) Agricultural Science and B. Sc. (Ed) Information Technology programmes which commenced in 2003/2004. About 200 and 150 students respectively are currently enrolled. (NOUN, 2008).

In addition to the Federal Government's incentives to motivate and retain teachers that the teaching corps as a whole has been enjoying especially at the basic and post-basic level, TVE teachers should also receive 10% inducement allowance, and can conduct private practice within certain ethical limits.

f) The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)

Since 2004, NERDC' has been successfully undertaken significant curricula restructuring and implementation in the following critical areas of reform :

- (i) Curriculum and Teaching – Learning Materials, and
 - (ii) Technical and Vocational Education and Training.
- (i) Curriculum and Teaching – Learning Materials Development
- *Within the 9-Year Basic Education curriculum project*, extant primary and JSS curricula have been restructured into 20 Basic Education Subjects curricula for the implementation of the 9-Year Basic education programme. The curriculum will be implemented in the 2008 – 2009 school year starting with Primary one and Junior Secondary One (JS1).
 - *Adaptation of 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum for Special Needs Education:-* Considering the current emphasis on inclusive education for children with special needs, the 9-Year Basic

Education curriculum has been adapted to suit children with visual impairment.

- *Post Basic Education Curriculum Structure:* - In line with ongoing reform, NERDC has developed a new curriculum structure for Senior Secondary Education (SSE) in Nigeria. The new curriculum structure categorizes Subject offerings into cross-cutting compulsory subjects, core subjects and electives. Trades and entrepreneurship education are an integral component of the new SSE curriculum structure, thereby addressing the gaps in extant senior secondary education curriculum. The Council is presently revising extant SSS curricula in conformity with the new approved SSE curriculum structure.
- *Infusion of Capital Market Studies curriculum (CMSC)* into relevant School Curricula was achieved in collaboration with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
- *Development of National Book Policy* to regulate the quality of books in educational institutions in Nigeria.
- *Textbook Development:* - NERDC has also revised all extant text books for core basic education subjects; as well as develop new ones in line with the philosophy, content and goals of the new curricula. It plans the revision and development of Senior Secondary text books.
- *Other Teaching – Learning materials:* - In order to ensure maximum guidance for teachers on the implementation of the new curricula, NERDC has developed:
 - Teachers' Handbook for the Implementation of the 9-Year basic Education Curriculum;
 - A Manual for the Development of Instructional Resources from Local Materials; and,

- Instructional Sign Language Textbook for Nigerian Schools (ISLTENS)

(ii) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

- .NERDC is currently developing curricula for the 35 Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) Trades subjects. There are also plans to develop appropriate text books for the teaching and learning of these trades in the senior secondary schools

*Out-of - School Youths Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Curriculum project:-*In a related development and in a bid to ensure equity in educational delivery, NERDC has embarked on Out-of - School Youths Skills and Entrepreneurship Curriculum project. The components of the project include the development of Skills and Entrepreneurship curriculum modules for the named target group;

(i) Training of the youth in the identified trades and Entrepreneurship skills; and

(ii) Equipping and monitoring of the youth trained under the scheme.

The project, which is funded with the Debt Relief Gains (DRG), is aimed at empowering young men and women whom by virtue of their circumstances are unable to benefit from senior secondary education. (NERDC, 2008)

g)The Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)

The Council has been very active in the preparation and continuous training of teachers for quality delivery of programmes at all levels of the education system. The following actions have been taken since 2005 to ensure quality and the

professionalization of teaching personnel in close collaboration with a wide range of education institutions, agencies and development partners and local stakeholders.

- It registered more than 700,000 teachers in primary and secondary schools nationwide;
- “established a baseline date of over 91,000 unqualified teachers who are being upgraded through the strategic teachers’ upgrading programme (STUP)...”
- carried out “back to the basics” capacity building workshops for teachers nationwide;
- began in 2006, the implementation of the Federal Teachers’ Scheme which trains and deploys 40,000 NCE graduate teachers; and,
- has introduced incentives to help teachers to be more mobile via the provision of cycles and motor cycles.

3.0 The Role of the Education System in Combating Poverty and Other Forms of Social Exclusion and Cultural Marginalization

Education has been recognized and adopted as a tool par excellence for individual, communal and national development. The link between education and intolerance and conflict cannot be over-emphasized. Nigeria has fully subscribed to the goals of Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals, the Nigerian education and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, as well as the Presidential 7-point agenda among others.

The National Policy of Education (2004) states that:

- “Education fosters the worth and development of the individual for each individuals’ sake, and for the general development of the society” and,
- “Education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument of change; any

fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution” [FRN 2004].

In more concrete terms, The NEEDS document establishes the link between education and employment generation, poverty reduction, wealth creation, and economic growth targeting key sectoral priorities including access, equality of educational opportunities, and quality at all levels as the fundamental right of every Nigerian no matter their social and economic circumstances. For instance the National Action Plan (2006) has evolved far reaching strategies for a holistic prosecution of the Universal Basic Education Scheme. These include:

- modification of the UBE Act such to make ECCE the bedrock of Nigeria’s education programme, such that by 2015 the enrolment of 0-5+ in participatory early childhood programmes will increase from the current 18% to 70% of eligible children”;
- “development through research of appropriate and relevant curriculum and pedagogy to harness and maximize the benefits of learning for pupils in all settings” such as the curriculum for the education of nomadic population in Nigeria;
- “the development of specific programmes which target vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in urban and rural contexts”;
- programmes to address poverty within communities driven by the government’s National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP);
- the provision of funding that supports both the development of facilities and capacity to mainstream children with disabilities into the (formal) educational system;
- the development of flexible access programmes for out-of-school youth, as well as the inclusion of curriculum context which encourages peace, mutual respect and cultural tolerance and understanding;
- the development of schemes that provide alternative income sources as part of the strategies for addressing poverty reduction;

- extensive use of NICTS to provide access to learners across great distance and in hard-to-reach areas;
- the development of advocacy programmes which seek to mitigate the effects of cultural practices on the attendance of women and girls in educational programmes;

4.0 Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future

4.1 *Approaches, Scope and Content of Inclusive Education in Nigeria*

Nigeria's concept of inclusive education has been influenced by several global and national normative instruments and frameworks to which she actively subscribes as a member of the United Nations and UNESCO in particular. The instruments and frameworks include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the Jomtien Declaration on EFA, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (1979); The United Nations Disability Convention (2005), the World Education Forum/Framework for Action (EFA) 2010, and 6 goals, the UN Millennium Declaration (and 8 Goals); The UBE Act 2004; and the Child Rights Act etc.

Since its first edition in 1977, The National Policy on Education has always recognized the issues and different needs of potential groups of learners, their physical, social, mental, economic status notwithstanding and in relation to the formal education system. Section 1 (c) states that "every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunities irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities, each according to his or her ability", while Section (a) states that "(...) school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education". Furthermore, the policy provides a comprehensive framework for actualizing inclusiveness as shown in the following sections (2) ECCE/pre primary; 3) primary; 4) Junior and Senior Secondary; 5) Mass literacy, adult and non-formal education; 6) Science, technical and Vocational education;

7) Tertiary Education including universities, polytechnics, monotechnics, teacher education, Open and distance Education; 9) Special Education (the disabled, the disadvantaged and the gifted/talented; 10) Educational services, planning, administration and Supervision of Education; and 11) Financing Education.

More importantly, the Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act 2004, amply demonstrates the political will of the Nigerian government to meet her national obligations under the constitution, as well as the international goals of EFA and the MDGs.

Section 18 (1) and (3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 states that "Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy, and to this end, Government shall as and when practicable provide:

- a) free, compulsory and universal primary education;
- b) free secondary education;
- c) free university education; and
- d) free adult literacy programmes

The critical organ of state set up for the purposes of a, b, and d, is the Universal Basic Education Commission with a wide range of stakeholders nominated as representatives of stakeholders' interests in the implementation of the provisions of the UBE Act. The list of representatives speaks for itself.

The Federal Ministry of Education;

The Federal Ministry of Finance;

The National Teachers Institute;

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC);

The National Commission for Colleges of Education;

The National Education Research and Development Council;

The National Commission for Nomadic Education;

The Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT);

The National Parents/Teachers Association of Nigeria;
Women's group or Societies;
Six members representing the six geo-political zones of the country;
Two members appointed on personal merit;
The Executive Secretary;
Two Deputy Executive Secretary (Technical and Services).

The situation described here therefore amply reflects the vision and conception of inclusion as further prescribed in the National Action Plan and 10 year Strategic Plan. It is "a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children" [UNESCO, 2005].

4.2. Most Important Challenges in Ensuring Educational and Social Inclusion

The challenges will be addressed by sector and in relation to the UBE and Education goals. First, all the weaknesses identified in the Education Sector Situation Analysis (2006) persist although considerable efforts have been made in the National Action Plan, the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative (CATI), the Public-Private Sector Partnership (PPP), the 10-Year Strategic Plan, the composition of membership of the Universal Basic Education Commission and the disbursement of 2% of consolidated Revenue to assist states to implement UBE;

In terms of the six EFA goals, several important challenges persist, as characterized in the EFA (Nigeria) Report Cards for 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively:

- a lack of adequate available, reliable and up-to-date baseline data to facilitate effective planning;
- inappropriate socio-cultural and religious practices;
- “massive neglect in the development of functional school libraries over the years”
- “erratic and inadequate funding of projects and programmes”.
- “enforcement of instruction in the mother tongue”.
- “Providing unhindered access to about seven million school age children;
- “provision of 251, 037 classrooms to meet the expansion in access;
- “Providing child-friendly environments through the renovation of dilapidated physical structures and the Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme for all learners;
- The Non-formal sector faces the challenges of repositioning in order to “address the world of work and economic empowerment”. It also has to develop programmes that are flexible so as to cater to the needs of “out-of- school youth including pregnant girls and young mothers”.
- Funding remains a huge challenge in all sectors and particularly so in the non-formal education (NFE) sector with serious implications for the adequate provision of basic infrastructure, equipment, instructional materials, and transportation for facilitators, teachers and supervisors to reach distant places;
- the need for the integration of learning in the non-formal setting into the formal context, which would enable learners to transit to formal education/ learning contexts;
- The HIV/AIDs challenges are highlighted in terms of an urgent need to ensure that school intervention programmes are implemented;
- teachers and counselors need to be trained to provide effective HIV/AIDs prevention services;
- all teachers need to be trained in the use of FLHE (Family Life Health Education) curriculum (FME 2006).

The challenges of quality education are related to a wide range of factors and issues: access, retention, grade repetition, dropout rates, school health and security; teachers, administrators, curriculum, instructional materials, innovative methodologies, monitoring and evaluation, and language of instruction.

The linguistic challenge is characterized by the experiences of the nomadic education programme as a “frightening encounter with entirely different cultural norms and values that are not only non-nomadic but also linguistically traumatic...” for such learners in English as a second/foreign language different from fulbe, the nomadic mother tongue (Muhammad, (2007).

Perhaps more complicated is the finding that teachers of fulfude may not be performing up to expectation in their mother tongue. Particular attention is now being paid to addressing other challenges that Adult and Non-formal education faces but the pace is slow, as reflected in the National Action Plan (2006) and the 2007 Annual Report of the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC). Some of the challenges are:

- public apathy towards adult and non-formal education as a route for acquiring basic literacy;
- weak curriculum as it does not sufficiently link literacy and numeracy to life skills and income-generation;
- Severe dearth of baseline data and information of non-governmental private initiative in NFE; and,
- “No mechanism for determining equivalence between formal education and non-formal training, e.g. no competency good for comparing levels of qualification in formal education and non-formal training”.

Activities of NMEC in 2007 show other challenges which arise from the following [NMEC 2007]:

- inadequate funding by State and Local Governments to run mass literacy programmes;
- lack of incentives for facilitators;
- lack of mobility for effective monitoring and evaluation;

- lack of teaching/learning materials and facilities;
- inappropriate learning centres;
- suspicion and skepticism on the part of religious leaders;
- lack of electricity and inadequate infrastructure;

The challenges have increased over the years as enrolment figures have expanded across all sectors. Furthermore, the demand for more human, material and financial resources has increased drastically with no immediate hope of the government meeting the demands.

4.3 Specific Legal/Regulatory Framework Inclusive Education Issues

In Nigeria, the framework of inclusive education involves several global normative instruments, the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, the National Policy on Education (2004), the Universal Basic Education Act 2004, the National Action Plan and the 10-Year Strategic Plan (2007), the Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria (2007), the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the Education Sector in Nigeria (2005); and the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2007).

Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Education has characterized policy guidelines for inclusive education targeting the three groups already discussed, i.e. the disabled, the disadvantaged and the gifted or talented, with greater focus on desegregation, anti-discrimination, and enforcing the fundamental human rights of these special needs groups.

As embodied in the (six point) inclusion charter:

Segregated education is a major cause of society's widespread prejudice against adults and those experiencing difficulties in learning and that efforts to increase their participation in community life will be seriously jeopardized unless segregated education is reduced and ultimately ended.

Desegregating special education is therefore a crucial first step in helping to change discriminating attitudes in creating greater understanding and in developing a fairer society [Kalu 2008).

4.4 Public Policies

a) Current dimensions of the phenomenon of exclusion from and within Education

Based on the rationale already specified in the policy document, inclusive education “involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structure and strategies, with a common vision, which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that “it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children””. Consequently, it is held that: “there is no legitimate reason to separate children for their education. Children belong together with advantages and benefits for every one” [Kalu, 2008]. Within the formal education system, the issue of mainstreaming children is all important for internal inclusion. The reform process, therefore, is premised on the following research findings:

- that children do better academically and socially, in inclusive settings;
- that there is no teaching or care in a segregated school which cannot take place in an ordinary school;
- that given commitment and support inclusive education is a more efficient use of educational resources;
- that segregation teaches children to be fearful, ignorant, and breeds prejudice” [Kalu, 2008].

Internal exclusion is perhaps more traumatic and cost inefficient than external exclusion. Within the framework of basic education, there is internal exclusion in terms of the rather high repetition rate and dropout rates in basic and upper basic education, the absence of a strong linkage between the non-formal setting of basic education (e.g. nomadic education and adult education) and the

mainstream setting. Furthermore, it is arguable that internal exclusion of learners is a chronic consequence of overcrowded classrooms, very poor learner-teacher ratios, absence of basic teaching and learning materials, and infrastructure teacher and incompetence in terms of innovative, reflective, creative teaching and learning approaches, learners' level of poverty or difficult family situations, poor learning environments and monitoring and evaluation culture and very significantly the inappropriate language of instruction which has consistently featured as a vital factor of successful learning (Muhammad, 2007).

From a practical point of view, there are no public policies that lead to exclusion from basic education. Incidences of exclusion are basically self-made and often due to negative traditional beliefs or communal practices. Apart from being firmly entrenched in the UBE Act 2004, the policy of inclusion at the public domain as mainstreamed in various human/child-right policies is receiving greater attention and impetus for possible enforcement at the grassroot level.

b) Indicators and Data Used to Inform Inclusive Education Policies

It is widely retailed that there are 10 million Nigerian children of school-going age who are not in the formal school system. In addition, there are hundreds of thousands of children who have one form or another of handicap or disability that are outside special education institutions or institutional care.

This, in the case of the UBE/formal education, has been a particularly worrying situation even within the framework of the Universal (Free Compulsory) Basic Education Act since only about 24.77 million children are enrolled in primary school. Furthermore, thousands of children attend Quranic education institutions in Northern Nigeria whose curriculum are yet to be fully harmonized with the mainstream curriculum, while thousands more in the South East States prefer commercial activities to schooling.

The Federal system of government has made it the prerogative of State governments to legislate to formally adopt the UBE Act within their jurisdictions, which often takes a lot of time due to the tediously slow pace of consensus-building.

In general, the indicators and data are derived from UBEC, NMEC, NCNE, the Federal Ministry of Education, The Education Data Bank, as well as the Federal Bureau of Statistics. Those indicators regularly shown are: Number of Schools; Population; Enrolment; Gross Intake Rate (GIR); Net Intake Rate (NIR) Gross Enrolment Rate (GER); Net Enrolment Rate (NER); Number of Teachers; Percentage of Teachers (qualified) and Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR); Completion rate; and Gender.

c) Inclusive education issues relevant to current and future educational policies in Nigeria

Federal Ministry of Education estimates put the population of Nigerian children of school age with various types of disabilities at 3.25 million or 7% of the Nigerian population out of which only 90,000 or 2.76% are enrolled in primary school, while a further 65,000 or 1.85% are in secondary schools.

Inclusive education has revolved around several key issues since the first edition of the National Policy on Education in 1977. These are:

- that Government has a responsibility to take care of all its citizens and to provide the best means and opportunities to enable each individual to maximize his/her abilities and potential,
- that access to education is a fundamental human right of every child,
- that the recognition and identification of the range of needs - common and special is the key strategy in planning for and meeting the needs of all categories of learners,
- that there is ability in disability,
- that there are about 10,000,000 Nigerian children who are out of school;

- that the net enrolment ratio in primary school is 84.3,
- that the survival rate of enrolled children in primary 6 is 68.3%,
- that the percentage of trained teachers in primary schools is only 50% and in secondary schools is 73.2% [Nigeria Macroeconomic and Education Statistical Profile],
- that HIV/AIDS continues to be a major issue among out-of-school children who are orphaned.

d) Most Vulnerable Groups to Various Forms of Exclusion from and Within Education

Three groups have taken centre stage on the problems/challenges of inclusion in Nigeria: the disabled, the disadvantaged and the gifted, as identified in the National Policy on Education (2004). Each group has several categories of learners with specific needs that have been identified and located within two recent policy and implementation documents published by the Federal Ministry of Education:

- 1) Guidelines for Inclusive Education
- 2) Guidelines for the identification of Gifted Children
- 3) Proposed implementation plan for the Special Needs Education Category

e) Current Educational Reforms and Inclusive Education in Nigeria

¶The Guidelines for Inclusive Education address (i) the nine categories of impairment/disability and gifted/talented that “have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities” (ii) the changes that need to occur to ensure successful inclusion: adjustments to be made to physical infrastructure, provision of special equipment and material, intensive advocacy to mobilize all stakeholders and communities/grassroots organizations partnerships, collaboration and alliance-building; the specification of the roles of key stakeholders especially the National and State Ministries and parastatals and other agencies. There are other inclusion strategies at the formal school system and a four-phase implementation procedure comprising, “teacher training as

special needs educators, deployment and retraining; and the need for/establishment of special education assessment centres in every local government area which would “provide support for inclusion through identification, referral to relevant services, and supply of adaptive materials where necessary” (FME 2008).

The Guidelines for the Identification of Gifted Children provides i) useful, practical orientation on the issue of giftedness and its various symptoms - both positive and disruptive in nature; ii) 12 components for identification which are made up of checklists, tests, portfolios and academic records; iii) procedures for administering the various instruments as well as iv) fast-tracking measures such as grade skipping; flexible academic schedule, crossages, etc.

The proposed implementation plan of the Federal Ministry of Education includes a step-wise multi level intervention in terms of tasks, responsibility, funding source and cost.

The six intervention levels and cost in the plan are:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Inclusion Education: | ₦1.446 billion naira; |
| 2. Braille and large print textbook production: | ₦123,987,000 |
| 3. Sign language manuals: | ₦59,940,000 |
| 4. Teacher Training (1): | ₦265,999,734 |
| 5. Teacher Training (2): | ₦89,910,000 |
| 6. Economic Empowerment: | ₦370,000,000 |

The trend in the financing of education has shown marked and continuous increases in every budget over the past eight years and this will continue in order meet the challenges of inclusive education in Nigeria. Between 2005 and 2007 the Universal Basic Education Commission recorded the following contributions to special education delivery.

2% of the FGN/UBE Fund is dedicated to special education. UBEC is presently focusing on the education of the physically and mentally challenged. In 2005, all

the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) received N10,706,754 each to provide infrastructure and instructional materials for special education schools. In 2006, 30 states and FCT received N11,302,313.52 each while 15 states received N13,356,756.72 each in 2007. Furthermore, N182 Million has been given to NGOs, and other private providers have been supported by UBEC since they are significant players in the provision of education for this group of children (UBEC, 2008).

5.0 Systems, Links And Transitions

a) The main Barriers to Inclusive Education

Within the current reform template, the basic education system is properly structured to offer equal and inclusive educational opportunities to all Nigerian school aged children. All education stakeholders at the National State and Local Government levels are saddled with the responsibility of facilitating its actualization. Importantly, fresh initiatives have been pioneered towards ensuring flexibility in the planning of educational programmes for the '*almajarā*', nomads and other vulnerable groups with a view to enhancing their utilization of available opportunities.

The main barriers to inclusive education have been identified and are central to the reform process:

- Poverty, marginalization of the general population and other groups.
- Inavailability of reliable data of the population of school-age children to
- The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, places education on the concurrent list, under Federal, State and Local Government authority, which makes consensus-building and the passage of legislation by States a protracted and sometimes controversial matter;
- Weak enforcement of legislation, and national policy requirements, a multicultural environment with very diverse socio-cultural practices and value systems, and resistance to change and education reform;
- A high corruption index;
- Poor quantity, quality, status enhancement and motivation and retention of teachers;

- Inadequate funding at all levels, inadequate for the capital-intensive nature of inclusion education;
- Low capacity of the Education Management Information System;
- Poor physical Infrastructure, especially for basic education;
- Poor quality of curriculum, monitoring assessment and evaluation of learning;
- Low capacity of the Federal and State Inspectorate services;
- “Poor manpower for development and capacity-building in the Education sector”;

Specific sectors of the education system also witness the following significant challenges:

In **early childhood education**, the problem of access to ECCE and pre-primary education is outside the legal provision of the compulsory, free, universal Basic Education Act. Consequently, the Federal Government plans to establish an ECCE section in all public primary schools as well as address the critical issues of poor funding; high costs of private sector dominance in ECCE provision, poorly qualified teaching staff and care-givers, inappropriate learning and teaching methodologies, and quality assurance of outcomes;

The **Universal Basic Education** equally faces the specific challenge of expanding, upgrading and renovating physical structures and infrastructure, adequate supply of qualified teachers, and learning resources needed to cater to the needs of about 10 million children of school age under the UBE. For example, 251,000 more standard classrooms are needed to cope with current expansion as well as the continued provision of the School Feeding and Health Programme to ensure that all children have at least one balanced meal per day.

The **non-formal education** sector faces eight major challenges:

- poor public perception or apathy, non-challant attitudes of potential stakeholders to the non-formal education sector;

- insignificant levels of funding to meet the needs of the non-formal education sub-sector which addresses basic issues of literacy, adult and non-formal education provision, especially the eradication of illiteracy and its implications for poverty eradication and the socio-political empowerment of disadvantaged populations;
- poor and irregular remuneration of NFE instructors, facilitators and inspectors as well as limited transportation facilities, and instructional materials;
- meeting the needs of out-of-school youth, including young mothers and pregnant girls, and their social and vocational integration through the development and sustenance of a flexible access programme;
- changing attitudes, negative traditional practices and customs through intensive advocacy and mobilization of spiritual, traditional and community leaders especially towards the education and empowerment of children of school age and women and girls respectively;
- developing, strengthening and funding the use of conventional and new information and communications technologies and alternative/solar energy for programme sustainability;
- the non-formal Education needs to urgently “articulate the link between adult and non-formal education and the acquisition of life skills; (...) and income generation... linking literacy with extension services in the areas of health, agriculture, family planning and national orientation” [FME 2006];
- “the (poor) integration of learning within non-formal settings into the formal contexts, thus enabling learners to switch into formal opportunities” [EFA Report Card 2007 p. 73].

The special needs group of workers enrolled in **distance learning programmes**, just like nomads and migrant fishermen, have had to face frequent transfer from job location to another, had hindered their further education. However with the establishment by NOUN of study centres in all

thirty-six (36) State Capitals, this problem is now considerably reduced. Nigerian workers enrolled in NOUN programmes now have the opportunity to continue with their further education wherever they find themselves..

b) Gender and Inclusion

The challenges of inclusion as far as gender is concerned involve a) girls and women and b) boys and men in both mainstream and out-of- school settings. While the focus generally is on creating access and programmes for women and girls particularly in the Northern parts of Nigeria, the problems of low basic school enrolments and high dropout rates constitute serious challenges to addressing the needs of able-bodied school-age children and adolescents who prefer economic and entrepreneurial activities to what many see as the protracted drudgery of formal schooling.

Several challenges outlined by the Federal Ministry of Education (2007) involve securing the:

- cooperation of States to demonstrate political will to replicate the Gender Education Project (GEP) in order to eliminate gender disparities;
- improved governance and management of education resources at the state and local government levels;
- adequate plans for the sustainability of Gender Education Project (GEP);
- “the legal and practical removal of discriminatory laws, harmful traditional practices, and cultural barriers to women and girl-child access to education; including those within schools such as sexual harassment”;
- “Introducing Poverty Reduction Programmes focusing on alternative income sources and enhance family earning while reducing dependence on child labour”;
- “generation of data and capacity for proper planning, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment of education in Nigeria” and;

- the active and sustained involvement of civil society organizations and communities in ownership of Basic Education and its effective implementation. [EFA Nigeria Report Card, 2007].

c) The Challenge of Quality Imperative

Nigeria is fully conscious of the fact that while considerable progress has been made on access in both the formal and non-formal education, the imperative of qualitative inclusion cannot be over-emphasized because it is the most crucial indicator of systemic efficiency and cost-effectiveness of programmes at all levels. In the Nigerian context quality implies an enriched, functional, flexible and innovative curriculum; well-trained, motivated, reflective and adaptable teachers and school administrators; appropriate and medium-size classrooms and good school health and security, diversified instructional materials; adequate funding, appropriate language of instruction - preferably the mother tongue, good support services, monitoring, assessment and evaluation, completion and successful learning. The National Action Plan (2006), the Ten-Year Strategic Plan (2006-16) and the EFA Report Card 2007 have all identified the challenges of quality: The following are noteworthy:

- the provision of child or learner-centred curriculum and a conducive learning environment in both the formal and non-formal education;
- the preparation, recruitment, status enhancement, motivation, training of teachers, instructors, learners and administrators for the effective implementation of basic education in both the formal and non-formal settings;
- the adequate funding of education, especially basic education, will depend to a great extent on the effective mobilization of strengthened collaboration between the States of the Federation and organized private sector, communities and civil society as well as international organizations and partners;

- effective implementation by Federal and State Governments of the (New) National Strategy for the Education of Persons with special Needs in Nigeria approved by the Federal Executive Council in 2007;
- effective and sustainable implementation of the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education in Nigeria;
- effective and sustainable implementation of the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the Education sector in Nigeria; and
- effective and sustainable implementation of the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria.

d) The Most Important Facilitators of Inclusive Education

Specific approaches and measures have been adopted to make the education system more flexible for dropouts and other out-of-school youths.

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC) manages the Basic and Post-Basic literacy programmes using the REFLECT approach which is a “participatory approach to literacy delivery aimed at empowering individuals and communities for their own development” With the pilot-stage successfully completed, there are now a total of 223 REFLECT Centres in Nigeria, and there are plans to establish a centre in each of the 774 Local Government Areas in the country.

The second crucial approach is the Literacy by Radio training that facilitates access to learning by nomadic girls and adults wherever they may be located. Since the critical factor at this stage is participation, NCNE utilizes the following strategy to enhance participation rates: radio, face-to-face campaigns and IEC materials to sensitize the nomads to the need for their daughter to attend and remain in school. Currently, there are 2,526 schools, with a total enrolment of 432,411 learners (255,494 males and 176,917 females), and 8,665 teachers (NCNE, 2008)

The National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) is involved in manpower development, instructional materials development, procurement and distribution of extension toolkits, providing (i) advisory support and assistance to nomadic women to form some 238 multipurpose cooperative societies, ii) training on child health and care, exclusive breast feeding and HIV/AIDS preventive education. These are in addition to the main target groups of nomadic pastoralists and migrant fisher folk and youth who are trained on livestock management skills acquisition and poverty alleviation.

The eradication of illiteracy, especially among girls and women, is a cardinal goal that the Federal Ministry of Education, NMEC and NCNE are working towards achieving. Major actions taken since 2005 include:

- the construction of over 25,400 classrooms for basic literacy and 9,770 classroom for the post-literacy programmes, especially amongst women and girls. The Sports Literacy Club and the Schools' Literacy Club are proving to be a very useful framework in primary and secondary schools. While the Sports Literacy Club has been facilitating "the improvement of enrolment retention and completion not only in formal but also in adult literacy centres", the schools' literacy club is geared to eradicating illiteracy among drivers, cooks, security men and others in Unity schools (Federal Government-owned) who, for one reason or another, either dropped out of school or never attended school (EFA Score Card 2007: 41).
- the creation of transition points from the non-formal into the formal or mainstream education so that successful learners would find greater opportunities for self development and mobility up the educational ladder;
- the Gender Education Project (GEP 2) was designed to "fast track girls" participation in education in the Northern States [of Nigeria]" in order to improve the participation of nomadic girls in education. The NCNE utilizes the radio, face to face campaigns and IEC materials to sensitize the nomads on the importance of enrolling their daughters in schools

Actions that have been taken to consolidate and implement these strategies are:

- the adoption of comprehensive role models and mentors for boys;
- the student tutoring, mentoring and counseling (STUMEC) strategy to promote retention among girls;
- the formation of a Girls/Boys education movement;
- the promotion of Mothers' club/associations in schools and communities to encourage girls and other disadvantaged boys to enroll, remain and complete a 9-year basic education course;
- With respect to the peculiar challenge of boys' low enrolment and high dropout rates in the South East States of Nigeria, the Gender Education Project (GEP 2) has provided 960 computers and accessories in over 24 schools in the pilot states of Anambra, Imo, Oyo and Abia, as well as sports equipment. In 2007, 10 additional pilot schools in each of the four pilot states received similar ICT equipment.

The fact cannot be over emphasized that the reform of secondary, technical and vocational education holds the key to inclusiveness of educational opportunities to the out-of-school youths and young adults. The BVQS Framework and VEIs/IEIs innovation discussed earlier hold considerable promise. It is therefore essential to characterize the current innovation.

6.0 LEARNERS AND TEACHERS

a) New approaches to teaching and learning being implemented to increase educational opportunities for all

Apart from the guiding principle of learner-centred teaching and learning, the implementation of the new continuous assessment requirement in basic education and beyond is a fundamental component of learner-profiling and ensuring that learning becomes successful, within a secure and child-friendly, and participatory learning environment. Furthermore, the emphasis is on relevant

and functional education based on identified and authentic needs of target groups both within and outside the formal education settings.

Furthermore, current teacher improvement strategies focus on making teachers reflective, innovative and creative as well as action-researchers who would be best placed to diagnose, understand the learning needs of learners-cognitive, affective and psychomotor - in order to plan appropriate learning or teaching strategies.

The use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning contexts at all levels is being given priority attention. Nigeria is participating in the NEPAD e-school project which is at the pilot stage. Beginning with the ICT awareness creation in ECCE, there are plans to develop ICT-mediated teaching and learning including autonomous learning in basic education, and to reinforce the impact of the interactive radio approach in nomadic education and literacy, adult and non-formal education through the use of NICTs (radio, television, computer based technologies and solar powered technologies).

Apart from the development of flexible programmes for out-of-school youth, income-generation activities are being integrated to address poverty. Children with special needs are the focus of short, medium and long term strategies to create better conditions of learning and increase the possibilities of inclusion within the larger framework of education. The focal areas are internal inclusion, production of instructional materials and textbooks, large-print materials, Braille versions of all standard textbooks for primary, secondary and tertiary levels, sign language manuals, extension of inclusion programmes to tertiary and vocational institutions, and establishment of web-based and physical special education resource centres. By 2016 it is envisaged that the inclusion programme would be extended to "100% of all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; 100% of all vocational and technical schools, and all institutions of higher learning" [FME 2007].

The current turbulent state of the world and the need to avoid potential flash points that exist in multi-linguistic and multicultural societies such as Nigeria,

underscore the Federal Ministry of Education strong emphasis on a third key strategy: the “inclusion of curriculum content which encourages peace, mutual respect and cultural tolerance and understanding.” This requirement transcends the programmes at all levels and settings. As was rightly characterized by UNESCO, such infused or integrated concepts and issues that concern human security are best promoted by learning to know, to do, to be and to live together. (Delors,1996). Consequently, the inclusive, proactive curriculum has an “instrumental role to play in fostering tolerance and promoting human rights, which are powerful tools for transcending cultural, religious and other differences”. This vital aspect of quality inclusive education drives the goals of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) which Nigeria supports.

In order to further enhance inclusiveness, the following strategies are being implemented:

- Undertake School Mapping and establish basic education schools within 2.5km radius.
- Construct 33,383 additional classrooms annually for the next eight years
- Upgrade Women education centres to integrate ECCE centres.
- Intensify efforts to integrate *al-majirai* (children) into basic education programme;
- Scale-up support for the physically and mentally challenged at state levels
- Improve the Girl-Child education by providing more facilities through the child-friendly school initiative
- Synergize with micro-finance agencies to introduce skill acquisition and support low income families, women within the migrant folds at nomadic and adult literacy centres
- Scale-up support for NGOs, CSOs, etc at the grassroots to address adult illiteracy;
- Design and develop integrated education scheme for nomads and migrant folks to enhance skills acquisition and entrepreneurial engagements;

The current turbulent state of the world and the need to potential flash points that exist in multi-linguistic and multicultural societies such as Nigeria, underscore the Federal Ministry of Education strong emphasis on a third key strategy for quality education:i.e the “inclusion of curriculum content which encourages peace, mutual respect and cultural tolerance and understanding.”

This requirement transcends education programmes at all levels and settings. As was rightly characterized by UNESCO, such infused or integrated concepts and issues that concern human security are best promoted by learning to know, to do, to be and to live together. (Delors, 1996). Consequently, the inclusive, proactive curriculum has an “instrumental role to play in fostering tolerance and promoting human rights, which are powerful tools for transcending cultural, religious and other differences”. This vital aspect of quality inclusive education drives the goals of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) which Nigeria supports.

b) Designing and Organizing Curriculum for Responding to the Diversity of Learners

The education system is made up of three main sectors: the formal (basic); the non-formal (basic) involving literacy, adult education, Nomadic education and Special Education, with emphasis on the physical, mental, emotional disabilities or challenge). The National Policy on Education 2004 contains policies and goal prescriptions, while the various Federal and State Agencies determine the details of curriculum and content, and modes of delivery (teaching and learning), instructional material and facilities, monitoring, assessment and evaluation approaches for an effective implementation of the policies and programmes respectively. A range of key stakeholders local, community-based and civil society are increasingly being involved in curriculum issues.

c) Instructional Hours Dedicated to Learning Reading in the Early Primary Education

Instructional hours generally range from one to four a week depending on type of school. Reading is taught using some of the popular materials written by Nigerian authors.

d) Strategies for Improving Teacher Training and Quality to Meet the Diverse Expectation and Needs of Learners

The critical elements in any teacher training and education system are enhanced awareness and knowledge of inclusion/exclusion outside and within education, effective use of appropriate language of instruction, flexible curriculum, lesson plan, instructional material, conducive class environment, effective learning strategies and learning styles including autonomous learning, appropriate monitoring/continuous assessment and evaluation techniques, and self-assessment and teacher - as-researcher roles.

Furthermore, pre-service teacher training and in-services training should include exposure of trainees to a wide range of contexts of learner needs conventional, nomadic, disadvantaged and special education. Such varied hands-on practical experiences do have a positive impact on the teacher's holistic view and understanding of needs and, consequently, on his or her attitudes.

Emphasis should also be placed on the principles of inclusion, the development of inclusive curriculum, concept of quality, functionality of education, a through understanding of the goals of the various key frameworks that Nigeria subscribes to, such as EFA, MDGs, UBE, NEEDS, DESD, etc, their respective goals and implementation strategies as well as the vital role teachers and education personnel should play in bringing about a more inclusive society. The collaborative/cooperative approach to problem solving is vital for the sustenance of the inclusive education project.

Above all, it cannot be overemphasized that this new vision for Nigerian education can only be realized if the corps of professional teachers have their rights respected and, their conditions of service working/environment, status enhancement and motivation are actualized

In-service training is generally practised in Nigeria through workshops organized by the Federal, State and Local Government agencies as well as the Teachers'

Registration Council of Nigeria. However, with the growing use of ICT, the Open and Distance learning mode is fast becoming a very cost-efficient means of delivering in-service training in the formal education sector, as it is being done for teachers, supervisors and instructors through the NTICS programme for Nomadic and adult literacy.

Within the ongoing sector-wide reform process, teacher trainers in the formal education system especially in Colleges of Education and University Schools or broaden Faculties of Education will need to broaden their knowledge base, skills and professional practice to include regular interactions with their peers (instructors and supervisors) in the non-formal education setting. This should facilitate the appreciation and integration of a holistic perspective on inclusion/inclusive education in pre-service and in-service education and training. This is a fundamental condition for quality education, just as the linkage between the educational setting, the family and community, promotes understanding of socio- cultural factors in designing quality curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, and mobilizes support for school, community, educational setting and especially learners, no matter their needs and the challenges.

e) Strategies for Effective Organization, and Environments to Ensure the Inclusion of all Learners

The ideal structure for the effective organization of learning environments should comprise high level representatives of the supervisory ministry or agency, the National Commissions, the community, teachers and instructors, education administrators and supervisors, the funding agency (Federal, State), the community-based organizations, parents, non-governmental organizations and private sector partners, and special representatives of EFA, MDGs, Human rights advocates. The role of this structure will be to ensure that inclusive education is clearly understood, planned and efficiently implemented and assessed, drawing

on the collaborative strength and role/mandate ascribed to each component of the structure briefly presented above.

The Universal Basic Education remains the flagship of educational reform in Nigeria and clear directions have been identified, by the universal Basic Education Commission's 2009-2011 budget and programme activities at the following levels:

- i) ECCE/pre-primary: the constructions of additional 5,008 classrooms for 15,296 ECCE centres;
- ii) Primary Education: the construction of 21,699 new classrooms, with 26,124 more in 2011;
- iii) Junior Secondary (upper basic): the construction of 35,052 classroom;
Apart from classrooms, UBEC will private the following facilities:
 - 964 functional school libraries annually;
 - 7,500,000 textbook annually to improve the pupil/textbook ratio;
 - 964 laboratories will be constructed and equipped annually;
 - 80,000 science kits will be purchased and distributed annually; and
 - Communities participation in school improvement programme will be facilitated with an allocation of 14% of the 2% of the consolidation Revenue Fund (CFR) (UBEC, 2008)

Conclusion.

While in the case of Nigeria, the issues of access have been addressed through advocacy, awareness and consensus building and the UBE legislation, the chronic issues of inadequate funding, serious infrastructural inadequacies, insufficient number of qualified teachers, and poor motivation remain the biggest challenges to inclusive and quality education that all key stakeholders have now mobilized to tackle. Perhaps the most important lesson learned which drives the national resolve to entrench unusual access, equity and quality is that "education for all is the business and responsibility of all"

REFERENCES

Delors, J. (1996). *Learning the Treasure Within, Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century*, Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Federal Ministry of Education & UNESCO (2006). *UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) for Nigeria 2006-2015*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education/UNESCO.

Federal Ministry of Education (2005). *National Policy on HIV & AIDs for the Education Sector in Nigeria*. September 2005, Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

Federal Ministry of Education (2005). *Nigeria Education For All (EFA) Report Card: UNESCO High Level Group Meeting*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education EFA Unit.

Federal Ministry of Education (2006 & 2007). Abuja: *Matters arising from the 53rd and 54th Meeting of the National Council on Education*.

Federal Ministry of Education (2006). *Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

Federal Ministry of Education (2006). *Education Sector Situation Analysis*, November 2006. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

Federal Ministry of Education (2006). *Guidelines for the Identification of Gifted Children*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education Special Education Unit.

Federal Ministry of Education (2006). *National Framework*. Abuja.

Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *EFA (Nigeria) Report Card 2007*. High Level Group Meeting, Dakar, Senegal 11th – 13th December 2007, Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education EFA Unit.

- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *Implementation Plan for special Needs Education Strategy*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education Special Education Unit.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *National Policy on Gender in Basic Education*, Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *Ten Year Strategic Plan*. Abuja: FME.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *Vision 2020: The Role of the Nigerian Education Sector*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2008). *Nigeria's Country Report for the Seventh E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting, Bali, Indonesia, 10th – 12th March 2008*, Abuja.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2008). *Workshop on Policy Imperatives and teacher competence for inclusive education*. Abuja.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1977 & 2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos/Abuja: Federal Government Press/NERDC.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1989). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria* . Lagos.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2006). *National Action Plan (NAP) for Implementation of the UBE Programme to achieve Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015*. Abuja.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2007). *Review of NEEDS and Development of NEEDS 2*. Abuja: National Planning Commission.
- Kalu, E. (2008). *Policy Imperatives of inclusive Education*. A key note address presented at a workshop organized by FCT Universal Basic Education for Special Education Teachers. June 2008. Abuja.

- Muhammed, N. D. (2007). *Of the excluded: the Case of the Nomadic*. Unpublished Paper, 10 pages.
- National Board for Technical Education (2008): *Comments from the National Board for Technical Education, Kaduna, on the draft National Report on the Development of Education in Nigeria*.
- National Bureau of Statistics (2005). *The Nigerian Statistical Fact Sheets on Economic and Social Development*. Abuja: FBS.
- National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (2007). 2007 Annual Report. Abuja: NMEC.
- National Commission for Nomadic Education (2008). *Nomadic Education and Basic Education*. Kaduna: A Brief submitted to the Honourable Minister of Education.
- National Open University of Nigeria (2008). Memorandum/input to Draft National Report on the Development of Education in Nigeria for the 48th Session of the ICE.
- National Teachers Institute (2008). Observations and comments on the draft Country Report on the Development of Education in Nigeria.
- National Universities Commission (2007). *Call for Application & Participation: LINKAGE with EXPERTS and ACADEMICS in the DIASPORA, Second Announcement, July 10,2007*. Retrieved on 14 October,2008 on www.ananet.org/NUC.html.
- National Universities Commission(2008). *Mission/Vision*. Retrieved on 14 October,2008 on www.nuc.edu.n/pages/pages.asp?id=31
- Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (2008). *Memorandum on the draft National Report on the Development of Education in Nigeria*.

Tahir, G., & Muhammed, N.D. (2005). *Improving the Quality of Nomadic Education in Nigeria: Going beyond Access and Equity*. Paris: ADEA.

UNESCO (2003). Open File on Inclusive Education, Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for Inclusive: Ensuring Access to Education For All*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Universal Basic Education Commission (2004). *The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act, 2004 and Other Related Matters*. Abuja: UBEC.

Yamta, I.A. (2006). "Current situation in teacher training, recruitment and development in nomadic schools in Nigeria". A paper presented at the Forum on Flexible Education: reaching nomadic populations in Africa. Kenya, 20-23 July.

Universal Basic Education Commission (2008) memorandum submitted on the Draft Country Report on the Development of Education,