



Nigeria

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Principles and general objectives of education

The guiding principle of education in Nigeria is the equipping of every citizen with such knowledge, skills, attitudes and values as to enable him/her to derive maximum benefits from his/her membership in society, lead a fulfilling life and contribute to the development and welfare of the community. More recently, and in the spirit of promoting basic education, there is a plan to provide every child with a nine-year schooling up to the end of the junior secondary level.

The national educational aims and objectives for all levels of education are:

- the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
- the inculcation of correct types of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society;
- training for understanding the world around.

Current educational priorities and concerns

Nigeria is a federation of thirty states with a Federal Capital Territory in Abuja. It has altogether 593 local governments and is divided into six geo-political zones.

A survey of the Nigerian educational scene reveals a series of disparities. There is disparity between urban and rural schools, and between schools owned and controlled by the federal government and those owned and controlled by the states and private agencies. Gaps are also observed between male and female enrolments, and between admission figures and available teaching resources.

Rapid expansion of the education system at all levels, compounded by rapid policy changes and the shrinking economy, have constituted constraints to educational development in the country. The reduction of annual foreign earning has resulted in reduction of expenditure on social services, education not exempted. This has slowed down the reforms and rapid progress of the 1970s and created the problem of maintaining the system even at the scale obtained in the 1970s. The tasks that need to be accomplished before Nigeria can attain the goal of education for all by the year 2000 are enormous. Time and inadequacy of resources are among the most daunting constraints.

Since 1990, the major activities of the government designed to promote basic education for all include:

- The Situation Analysis and Policy Study. This study was undertaken from 1991 to 1992 under the terms of the co-operation agreement with UNICEF. Its



primary objective was to elucidate empirically the factors that affect quality and access to basic education.

- The Nine-year Schooling Programme. In 1992, the government introduced the nine-year schooling programme which requires every child who enrolls in primary education to remain in school until the end of the three-year junior secondary education cycle. This policy is designed to ensure 100% transition from the primary to the junior secondary level and also to ensure that children remain long enough in school to acquire basic competencies and life skills. The objectives of this scheme are: (a) to widen access to basic education; (b) to eliminate present inequalities in enrolment between boys and girls and also between rural and urban children; (c) to ensure greater retention rates; and (d) to ensure long-term permanent literacy for children who have passed through the system. The ultimate aim is to make the scheme compulsory. Appropriate legislation has been enacted spelling out the obligations of the three categories of government stakeholders, parents and all those who will be involved in operating the scheme.

For universal basic education to be attained, there must be massive grassroots participation in the provision and administration of education at the primary level. By the law which resuscitated the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) in 1993, responsibility for the management of primary education is shared among the Federal Government, State governments, local governments, community committees and school committees. Measures have been introduced in the past few years which encouraged active participation of local communities in the running of schools and this has resulted in improved levels of retention, especially of girls.

There have also been innovative approaches to the funding of education such as the Nigeria Community Education Programme (1996), which is directed at the underserved rural communities in three states of the Federation (Abia, Bauchi and Akwa-Ibom) and at nomadic communities in the north-eastern part of the country. The objective of the programme is to increase quality and access particularly for women and girls in the target communities. The Catchment Area Planning, Management and Monitoring (CAPMM) Mechanism is presently being developed as part of the strategy for implementation of the primary and non-formal education projects supported by UNICEF—a community-centred strategy which aims at ensuring retention in schools.

As far as primary education is concerned, the main objectives of current plans are: to increase primary education access to benefit 90% of eligible age groups by the year 2000; to increase primary education completion rate from 58% to at least 75% by the year 2000; to reduce gender gap in enrolment from 17.3% in 1990 to at least 5% by the year 2000, and increase access to primary education for adolescent girls; to assess the minimum level of learning achievement and to improve the performance of primary school children; and to increase the role of local communities in planning, management and monitoring of primary education.

The new democratic government of Nigeria has made education one of its priorities by re-launching in September 1999 a Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme that aims at achieving the following specific objectives:



- Developing among citizens a strong commitment to the vigorous promotion of education.
- The provision of free, universal basic education for every school age child.
- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop-outs in the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency.
- Catering for school drop-outs and out-of-school children/adolescents through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.
- Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral and civic values, needed for laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

There are three components of the UBE scheme, namely: (a) formal basic education encompassing the first nine years of schooling (primary and junior secondary education) for all children; (b) nomadic education for school age children, pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen; and (c) literacy and non-formal education for out-of-school-children, youth and adults.

The government regards education as the most efficient way through which a society can face the challenges of tomorrow and has therefore geared up towards achieving universal access to basic education through effective promotion of: the nine-year compulsory primary and junior secondary education; literacy and adult education; and science and vocational training.

The following approaches and operational strategies will be adopted for the successful implementation of the UBE scheme: enactment of necessary legislation; articulation of enabling policies; sensitization and mobilization of the target groups and all stakeholders; adequate planning, funding and management; optimal allocation and efficient utilization of resources; adequate teacher training, recruitment and motivation; effective co-ordination of activities; encouragement and stimulation of the active participation of the private sector, non-governmental and voluntary organizations, as well as local communities in the scheme; establishment of working partnerships and collaboration agreements with the international community and donor agencies; and regular supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the scheme. (Federal Ministry of Education, 1999).

The Federal Government, having identified the teacher as the key actor in the education delivery process, recognised that no educational system surpasses the quality of its teachers. It therefore mounted aggressive programmes to enhance the status, raise the morale and welfare of teachers through improved salary structure, training and re-training as well as professionalisation of teaching. It also committed itself to salvaging the ailing educational system by ensuring that all the identified problems are properly and adequately addressed within a reasonable period. The government is fully focused and committed to meet with all these educational challenges between 2004 and 2007 through:



- Operationalising the Strategy for National Education Plan (SNEP).
- Engaging fully with the National Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Service Delivery Compact (SERVICOM) to ensure its success.
- Ensuring completion of UBE I Project in the first 16 States.
- Securing support for and completion of UBE II Project in the remaining 20 States and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.
- Scaling-up and implementing the UBE.
- Producing the National Education for All (EFA) Plan. (FME, 2004).

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

The National Policy on Education was enacted in 1977 and undergone three revisions, the most recent one in 2003. Since 1981, a number of decrees have been passed providing the legal framework of education in the country.

The **Decree No. 16** of 1985 places special emphasis on the education of the gifted and talented children within the National Policy on Education.

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education, which was established by **Decree No. 17** of 26 June 1990 and formally inaugurated on 5 July 1991, is charged with the responsibility of developing strategies, coordinating programmes, monitoring and promoting literacy and post-literacy programmes nationwide.

The **Decree No. 96** of 1993 re-established the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC). It also provides the arrangement for funding primary education in the country.

In 1993, the National Minimum Standards and Establishments of Institution Amendments **Decree No. 9** was promulgated. It provides for religious bodies, non-governmental organizations and private individuals to participate in the provision of tertiary education.

By a recent decree, all companies operating in Nigeria which have up to 100 employees on their payroll shall contribute 2% of their pre-tax earnings to the Education Tax Fund for the funding of education.

The most crucial strategy for sustainable education development in Nigeria is the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme, which was launched in 1999. In May 2004, the Nigerian Legislature passed the UBE bill into law. The **Universal Basic Education Act** represents the most significant reform and addresses comprehensively the lapses of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the issues of access, equality, equity, inclusiveness, affordability and quality. In the context of Nigeria,



basic education includes primary and junior secondary education. The main policy objective is to provide universal free and compulsory education at the primary and the first three years of secondary school, as well as to provide functional literacy for adult illiterates

Administration and management of the education system

The management of education in Nigeria is dictated by the country's political structure based on federalism. Consequently, the administrative mechanism devolves some power to the state and local governments. By the law which resuscitated the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC, now the Universal Basic Education Commission) in 1993, responsibility for the management of primary education is shared among the federal government, state governments, local governments, community committees and school committees. Measures have been introduced in the past few years which encouraged active participation of local communities in the running of schools.

The basic policy of education with regard to structure, curriculum and school year is centrally determined. Other areas of educational delivery are modified to suit local requirements.

The **Federal Ministry of Education** is charged with the responsibility of harmonizing educational policies and procedures of all the states of the Federation through the **National Council of Education** (NCE). The NCE is the highest policy-making body in educational matters in the country. It consists of the Federal Minister of Education, and all the state commissioners for education. It is assisted by the **Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on Education**, which is composed of all the federal and state directors of education, chief executives of education parastatals and directors of university institutes of education. The Committee is headed by a director of the Federal Ministry of Education and it advises the NCE on a wide variety of educational matters. The **National Universities Commission** is a parastatal entity under the Federal Ministry of Education; the Commission is responsible for the development of universities in the country. The **National Examinations Council** conducts examinations for some junior secondary schools, and for senior secondary schools jointly with the West African Examination Council. The **National Business and Technical Examinations Board** administers technical and business examinations. The **National Commission for Colleges of Education** provides advice to the Federal Ministry and co-ordinates all aspects of non-degree teacher education in the country. The **National Commission for Polytechnics** has been established following the 2003 revision of the National Policy on Education. Other relevant bodies include: the National Board for Technical Education; the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult Education and Non-formal Education; the National Commission for Nomadic Education; the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board; and the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.

The Federal Ministry of Education owns and funds twenty-five universities, thirteen polytechnics, fifteen technical colleges, twenty colleges of education, and sixty-six secondary schools, which are evenly located in every state in the country. The remaining tertiary institutions are owned and funded by state governments, while other secondary schools are owned and funded by state governments, communities



and private organizations. The administration of the different types of tertiary institutions is defined by the federal and state governments' instruments which established them.

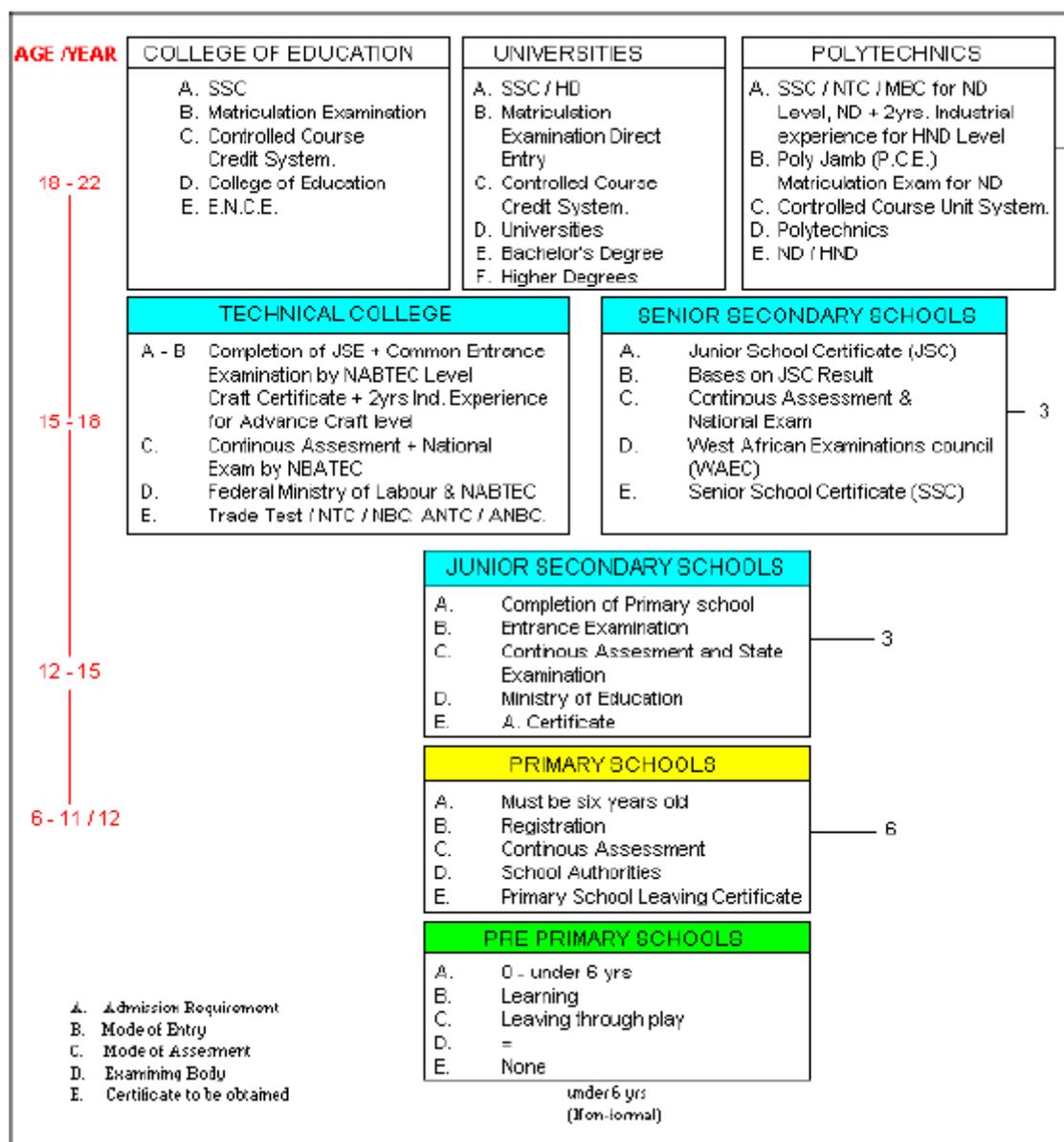
State governments own a large proportion of secondary schools in the country. With regard to state secondary schools, administration and management fall within the purview of the State Ministries of Education and their proprietors, but they have to comply with minimum standards which are prescribed by state laws. The administration of public primary schools is under local education authorities, while pre-primary schools are essentially maintained and administered by their proprietors. Federal and state governments maintain quality control through inspection of schools.

Other ministries involved in education are the ministries of: Women's Affairs and Social Welfare; Health; Agriculture; Information and Culture; Finance; and the National Planning Commission. For example, the Ministry of Information undertakes publicity and sensitization for educational policies and programmes. The Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Welfare and the State Commissions for Women collaborate with Ministries of Education in the promotion of the education of women and girls. The Ministries of Finance provide funding while the National Planning Commission and state ministries of planning approve educational plans.

There are networks of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which collaborate with the federal and state ministries of education in the management of the non-formal education system. They operate private primary schools and offer literacy and other educational programmes. Women's education centres have been established in most of the states. They are involved in mobilization and advocacy in aid for the education of women and girls.

Structure and organization of the education system

Nigeria: structure of the education system



Pre-school education

Pre-primary education is for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years or above. It lasts two to three years and attendance is not compulsory.

Primary education

Primary education lasts six years and caters to children aged 6-11. Basic education includes primary and junior secondary education.



Secondary education

Secondary education is divided into two three-year cycles: junior secondary, culminating in the Junior School Certificate examination; and senior secondary, leading to the Senior School Certificate examination. Junior secondary school graduates may enrol in technical colleges offering three-year programmes leading to the award of National Technical/Commercial Certificates.

Higher education includes colleges of education, universities, polytechnics and colleges of technology. The duration of studies ranges from three to seven years, depending on the nature of the programme. Colleges of education offer three-year programmes leading to the award of the National Certificate in Education. Polytechnics and colleges of technology award national certificates and diplomas, namely: the National Diploma, after two years of study following the senior secondary school; and the Higher National Diploma, awarded after a further course of two years' duration. A Professional Diploma requires one additional year of study. At the university level, programmes leading to a first degree (e.g. bachelor's degree) should last not less than four years.

The school year extends over ten months, divided into three terms of ten to twelve weeks each at the pre-primary, primary, junior and senior secondary levels. The school year lasts nine months (thirty-six to forty weeks) for technical schools. The academic year consists of nine months, divided into two semesters of eighteen to twenty weeks each.

The financing of education

The 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vested the management and funding of public education in the three tiers of government: federal, state and local. Public institutions are funded almost solely by the government. Students in these institutions pay very low fees and charges, which constitute an insignificant proportion of the finances of the institutions. On the other hand, privately-owned institutions which are mainly at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels are funded with fees paid by students. Figures of the expenditure of local, state and federal governments on education are not available. The table below shows the approved fund allocations by the Federal Government to the education sector and their percentages of total allocation to all sectors.

Federal Government's total budget allocation and specific allocations to education

Year	Total Budget (billion N)	Allocation to Education	
		Total	Percentage of Total
1994	69.30	10.30	14.87
1995	111.45	12.70	11.42
1996	127.47	15.35	12.33



Primary education is free of charge. Decree No. 96 of 1993 which re-established the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC), provides the arrangement for funding primary education in the country. Under this Decree, the federal government is responsible for the running costs of NPEC. It also provides funds for the general improvement of primary education and the procurement of primary school materials via the national Primary Education Fund. Furthermore, the federal government provides funds for the rehabilitation and renovation of classroom buildings as well as for providing new infrastructure. According to a NPEC's recent survey, the rehabilitation and renovation exercise will require 80,54 million Nigerian *naira* (N).

State governments are responsible for the operating costs of the State Primary Education Board (SPEB), while the local government councils are responsible for the operating costs of primary schools in their areas of jurisdiction. Teachers' salaries and allowances of teaching and non-teaching staff are paid from the funds disbursed by NPEC to the local governments through the SPEBs.

Secondary education is tuition-free. However, different forms of levies are imposed on parents to cover running costs of these institutions. The secondary schools and technical colleges owned by the federal government are funded directly by the Federal Ministry of Education. State governments and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, own and manage their own secondary schools. Statistics on budgetary allocations of state governments to the secondary level of education are not available.

Higher education is currently provided and funded by the federal and state governments, with insignificant private participation and contribution. All private primary and secondary institutions in the country charge tuition and boarding fees. No public fund is, therefore, granted to them. The only private tertiary institution in operation at present is a college of education which is run by a Christian organization. Figures of fees payable per student at each level are not available. However, fees paid in private primary and secondary schools in the country vary widely, according to their geographical location and the standard of service provided.

There is increasing support to public tertiary institutions by private companies. This usually takes the form of endowments and funding of infrastructural facilities. This support is still too low, however, to form a significant proportion of the funding to those institutions. The Education Tax Fund which was established to manage the recently introduced education tax is a viable source of revenue for education.

While the Federal Government is solely responsible for funding the training of teachers for UBE at the primary, junior secondary, adult literacy and nomadic education levels, it has joint responsibility with the State Government and minimally with the Local Government for: (a) teacher recruitment and remuneration, (b) provision of infrastructure and (c) provision of instructional and learning materials. The following Table shows the specific ratios:

1. Responsibilities for provision for infrastructure	
Primary School	Federal 75%, State 25%
JSS	Federal 50%, State 50%
Adult Literacy	Federal 25%, State 50%, Local 25%
Nomadic	Federal 100%
2. Responsibilities for funding instructional and learning materials	
Primary School	Federal 100%
JSS	Federal 50%, State 50%
Adult Literacy	Federal 25%, State 50%, Local 25%
Nomadic	Federal 80%, State 20%

Source: FME, 2004.

The educational process

Once a policy decision has been taken at the level of the Federal Government, after discussions at the level of the Joint Consultative Committee on Education and the National Council on Education, the Monitoring Unit of National Policy on Education together with the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and in collaboration with relevant curriculum/content panels (consisting of educators, experts, curriculum developers and teachers), provide guidelines, materials and training to implement the innovation or change.

The 1969 National Curriculum Conference was the first national attempt to change the colonial orientation of the education system and to promote national consciousness and self-reliance through the educational process. A seminar held in June 1973 on the National Policy on Education adopted several recommendations of the 1969 Conference, including the proposal concerning the new structure of the education system.

The various subjects included in the curricula of primary and secondary education have been specified in the National Policy on Education (the last revised Policy was adopted in 1998). The 1997 NERDC National Feedback Conference provided five broad categories of subjects: languages, humanities, sciences (including mathematics), social sciences and technology (including vocational electives). Integrated science and social studies represent a broad field approach to various disciplines. Other content areas have a non-examination status such as population education, environmental education, citizenship education, peace education and drug abuse prevention. These subjects are to be "infused" into identified subjects in the curriculum and are mostly at the pilot project stage.

Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education caters to children aged 3-5, prior to their entering primary school. It is estimated that only 4.7% of the pre-school age population have access to pre-primary education. Pre-primary education aims at: facilitating a smooth transition from home to school; providing adequate care and supervision for children while their parents are at work (on the farms, in the markets, offices, etc.); preparing the child for primary education; inculcating social norms; inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, and the local environment,



playing with toys, artistic and musical activities, etc.; teaching co-operation and team spirit; teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc., through play; teaching good habits, and especially good health habits.

The curriculum at the pre-primary level is broad, and the range of subjects offered is quite wide. It focuses on: English language, mathematics (arithmetic), Nigerian languages, writing, reading, rhymes, social studies, music, singing, and elementary science/nature study.

At the pre-primary level, six thirty-minute periods per week are devoted to the teaching of English. This is the maximum number of weekly periods for any subjects. Two periods are allocated to the local language. Another subject that is given prominence in the pre-primary school programme is mathematics/arithmetic. Five periods are allocated to this subject per week and, on the average, the children spend one thirty-minute period every day learning mathematics. Topics like counting, recognition of numbers, addition and subtraction are also taught. This gives an important start in the acquisition of numeracy. Three periods are allocated to each of the following subjects: moral and religious instruction, writing, reading, drawing, rhymes, elementary science/nature study, social studies, handicraft and music /singing. On the average, instructional time consists of twenty-eight teaching periods per week.

The medium of instruction at this level is principally the mother tongue, or the language of the immediate community. The evaluation system is essentially based on continuous assessment. Continuous assessment is conceived as a cumulative record of the child's performance in various fields throughout his or her school career obtained through tests, quizzes, etc. The curriculum was reviewed and revised in 2003/04 using an integrated bottom up approach, targeting children age 0-5 years. This revised curriculum has been approved for use by the government, and a training manual to facilitate use of the curriculum is in process of development. The training manual is expected to promote the integrated approach and converge all sectoral interventions—health, nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, psycho-social care, early learning, child protection—with the aim to fulfilling the rights of all young children and creating a conducive environment for them to survive, live, learn and reach their full potentials.

In 1991, the Early Childhood Care Development and Education—now called Early Child Care Project—was launched by the federal government in co-operation with UNICEF. Early childhood care is now being taught in the Curriculum Department of the faculty of education of one of the universities, and plans are under way to integrate the concepts of this project in the syllabus of colleges of education throughout the country.

Early childhood education has had increased focus of attention since 2000. Although the establishment of early child care centres and pre-primary facilities is mainly private-sector driven, the government has taken significant steps to regulate this sector using the report of several commissioned studies or surveys through the development of curriculum guideline and training manuals as well as teacher training programmes in colleges of education and quality assurance of early childhood care and education. According to 1999 data, only about 18% of Nigerian children aged 36–



59 months attend pre-primary centres. Female enrolment is 19% while male enrolment is 18%, showing an insignificant difference between boys and girls in access. The report also shows regional disparities in access and very significant differences between urban (37%) and rural (12%) areas. (FME, 2004).

Early Child Development (ECD) centres, and day care centres and play groups, locally tagged 'Jelesimi', 'Ota-akara', 'Ibviosukumehu', etc. in local dialects, are usually for children aged 0-2 years and 2-3 years. The UBE Act (2004) has an expanded scope which includes programmes and initiatives for early childhood education and development. The UBE Programme has made provision for every public primary school to have a pre-primary school linkage to cater for children aged 3-5 years. An inventory of ECC facilities in Nigeria conducted by FGN/NERDC/UNICEF in 2003 showed that most of the ECC facilities are privately owned (42% of the sample population) and 34% by the government, followed by 21% by local communities. These findings are consistent with the ESA 2003 study, which also indicated a greater private ownership (57%) of ECC facilities, compared to ownership by the government (42%). Now that the Early Childhood Development programme is covered by the UBE law, government ownership at state/LGA/community levels is certain to increase, particularly regarding centres catering for the 3-5 year olds. Early childhood care has been included in the Bachelor's degree curriculum of the Faculty of Education of one of the Nigeria's universities since 1991. Two universities offer Master's/PhD degrees in early childhood care. Plans are underway to integrate the concepts of this project in the syllabus of colleges of education throughout the country.

The Child Rights Act (2003), the UBE Act (2004), the National Policies on Education, Food, Nutrition and Health are laws and policies which have given shape to different sectoral interventions on Early Childhood Care and Development in the country. Currently however, an Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy, that integrates interventions from the various sectors to promote an integrated holistic approach to the development of the child in its very earliest years. This stand alone policy is expected to bridge observed gaps in existing sectoral policies, e.g. the National Policy on Education and the UBE Act both of which did not make specific provisions for children age 0-3 years.

Primary education

The goal of primary education is centred on functional literacy and numeracy, the ability to communicate effectively, and the inculcation of positive attitudes towards co-operation, work, community, national development, and continuing learning.

The primary school curriculum is discipline-based, and addresses all the goals of primary education. Permanent literacy and numeracy and communication skills are the top priority. Seven main subjects are specified in the curriculum as follows: language arts; elementary science; mathematics; social studies; cultural arts; agriculture; and home economics. In 2003, the National Primary School Curriculum was further reviewed and the modular approach was replaced with a thematic one. Also, a number of emerging social issues such as HIV & AIDS, information technology, environmental education, gender equity and child labour have been introduced.



A thirty-five-minute period each day for the five days per week is allocated to English language and mathematics. Physical and health education is taught twice per week; religious knowledge, elementary science, agriculture, home economics and social studies are also taught twice per week. Drawing, handicraft, music and cultural activities are each allocated a period per week.

In Grades I-III the medium of instruction is the language of the immediate environment. During this period, English is taught as a subject. From Grade IV, however, English is progressively used as a medium of instruction, while the language of the immediate environment is taught as a subject.

The Primary School-leaving Certificate Examination has been abolished. Evaluation at the primary education level is now carried out by continuous assessment.

Of the estimated primary school age population (18.6 million children), 15.4% is not enrolled in school. The gross enrolment rate is estimated at about 70%, and the national average for functional literacy is only 51%. Furthermore, primary school enrolment growth rates—which averaged 4% annually—have not been able to fully clear the backlog and keep pace with the population growth rate, estimated at an average of 3.2%.

Despite high gross enrolment rates, severe constraints both within and outside the education system have led to comparatively lower completion rates—the current average being 62% for girls and 59% for boys. The average completion rate at the end of Grade VI, as a percentage of final enrolment in Grade I, is reported to be around 55%. In 1995, the transition rate from primary to junior secondary was estimated at 43.7%.

Between 1986 and 1992, the drop-out rate in primary school was estimated at 43.2%. According to a survey, the drop-out rate is higher in the upper primary classes than in the lower classes, presumably because the pupils in upper classes are mature enough to be engaged in income-generating activities. The Situation and Policy Analysis Survey, conducted in 1992, showed that there is a 17% wastage rate, and that an average of 46.6% of primary school pupils who dropped out from schools were girls.

Primary school drop-out rate by sex (percentage)

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
M	42.80	51.10	49.60	45.20	39.70	39.40	29.10
F	41.20	52.40	51.40	49.20	43.20	41.30	30.50

The National Policy on Education stipulates that the teacher-pupil ratio should be 1:40. However, the ratio is exceeded in most schools, especially in urban areas. In addition, the teacher-pupil ratio varies from a minimum of 1:21 (States of Kwara and Anambra) to a maximum of 1:73 (State of Yobe). The national average for 1996 was 1:34.



Primary school enrolment by grade, 1999-2003

Grade	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1	3,714,493	4,087,074	4,439,861	4,502,702	5,455,611
2	3,272,860	3,540,987	3,593,919	3,716,766	4,914,117
3	3,053,235	3,239,943	3,175,602	3,168,221	4,327,115
4	2,830,316	3,024,812	2,928,688	2,892,891	3,711,864
5	2,644,327	2,781,953	2,861,264	2,676,901	3,295,296
6	2,391,779	2,483,670	2,385,843	2,385,178	2,854,217
Total	17,907,010	19,158,439	19,385,177	19,342,659	24,563,004

Source: FME, 2004.

As of 2002 there were a total of 40,425 schools in the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory. (FME, 2004).

Secondary education

The broad aim of secondary education within the overall national objectives is the preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education. Secondary education should: equip students to live effectively in the modern age of science and technology; raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, and live as good citizens; foster the Nigerian unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite within diversity; and foster the desire for achievement and self-improvement. Secondary education lasts six years and is divided into two three-year cycles: junior secondary and senior secondary.

The junior secondary school is both pre-vocational and academic and is designed to enable pupils to acquire further knowledge and develop skills. The core curriculum includes: English; French; mathematics; language of the environment taught as first language; one major Nigerian language taught as second language; integrated science; social studies and citizenship education; and introduction to technology. Pre-vocational electives include: agriculture; home economics; business studies; local crafts; and computer education. Non-prevocational electives include: creative arts (music and fine art); religious and moral education; physical and health education; and Arabic. Students are expected to take a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 13 subjects, including all the core subjects. The main reform of secondary education is in regard to the fact that access to the junior secondary school is free and compulsory. More importantly, the reform strategy provides flexibility for students who complete junior secondary education to be streamed into either the senior secondary school, the technical colleges an out-of-school vocational training centre or an apprenticeship scheme. This would be determined through the result of tests of academic ability, aptitude and vocational interest. The target is to achieve a student transition ratio of 60:20:10 to these levels, i.e. senior secondary (60), technical college (20), vocational training centre (10) and the apprenticeship scheme (10). (FME, 2004).

Enrolment in post-primary school (junior secondary school) by gender, 1997-2003

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
JSS 1 – 3	771,649	769,334	708,523	806,811	938,903	941884	3,496,069
Male	412,851	430,203	394,794	448,016	525,760	530,827	1,986,460
Female	358,798	339,131	313,729	358,795	413,143	411,057	1,518,440

Source: FME, 2004.

Students who complete junior secondary education are streamed into any one of the following options: (a) senior secondary school; (b) technical college; (c) an out-of-school vocational training centre; or (d) an apprenticeship scheme. The streaming is based on the result of tests to determine academic ability, aptitude and vocational interest. As much as possible, a transition ratio to these levels of education should be targeted as follows: senior secondary, 60%; technical college, 20%; vocational training centre, 10%; apprenticeship scheme, 10%. On the other hand, most students and parents still prefer senior secondary schools to technical colleges or vocational schools. In 1997/98, the total enrolment in technical colleges was estimated at 43,354 students.

The senior secondary school has a diversified curriculum, with a core curriculum designed to broaden students' knowledge and outlook. Every student takes all the six core subjects, plus a minimum of two and a maximum of three from the list of elective subjects (resulting in a minimum of eight and a maximum of nine subjects). One of the three elective subjects may be dropped in the last year of the senior secondary course.

Core subjects are: English language; mathematics; one major Nigerian language; one elective out of biology, chemistry, physics or integrated science; one elective out of English literature, history, geography or social studies; agricultural science or a vocational subject. Vocational subject—a total of seventeen—range from agriculture to typing or technical drawing, and from bookkeeping to auto mechanics and woodwork.

The length of a teaching period at the secondary school level is forty minutes. As in primary schools, and because of their importance, English language and mathematics are taught every day. Integrated science (in junior secondary school) and each one of the science subjects—biology, chemistry, and physics—are allocated four periods per week. Subjects like agriculture, technical drawing, fine art, bookkeeping/accounting, woodwork, metalwork, geography, further mathematics, economics, social studies, and history, are each allocated three periods a week. The medium of instruction at the secondary school level is English. Overall, there are thirty-seven subjects approved for the SSS course. Based on the dictate of present challenges, the secondary curricula have been expanded to include the following: family life education; HIV & AIDS education (anti HIV & AIDS clubs have been introduced in schools to sensitize students on the pandemic and on safety-consciousness); computer education; drug prevention education; basic African cultural knowledge; cultural and creative arts; and Nigerian history. (FME, 2004).



Continuous assessment scores are combined with examination scores to determine the advancement of a student from one class to another. The Junior School Certificate is awarded on completion of the junior secondary school and the passing of an examination conducted by state and federal examination boards. The Senior School Certificate is awarded on successful completion of the senior secondary school and the passing of a national examination which is conducted by the West African Examination Council.

Technical education and vocational education constitute two distinct educational sub-sectors which are characterized by their purposes, levels of institutions, course offerings, organization and control. Generally speaking, institutions in the technical education sub-sector are of tertiary level but non-university in status. Their primary role is to produce middle- and technician-level manpower for commerce, industry, agriculture, health care and teaching.

The technical education sub-sector includes polytechnics, colleges of technology (mono-disciplinary tertiary colleges) and colleges of education. Colleges of education in this sub-sector train technical education teachers.

The primary role of vocational education is to train low-level manpower, i.e. operatives, artisans, craftsmen and master craftsmen for commerce, industry, agriculture and ancillary services). This sub-sector includes technical colleges and BEST (Business and Engineering Skills Training) centres, hitherto called vocational training centres. BEST centres are lower in status than technical colleges. This is because their primary role is to train operatives and artisans. Training programmes offered by the vocational training centres last between one and three years, depending on the skill or vocation.

Governments in the Federation assume direct control of their institutions of vocational education, but interfere little with privately-owned institutions, with the exception of the maintenance of standards. Greater participation by the private sector is encouraged and flourishes more in the vocational education sub-sector than the technical subsector.

Technical colleges are the only alternative route to further formal education and training after junior secondary education. This means that students who complete junior secondary education can either choose to proceed to senior secondary schools for further general or pre-professional education or proceed to technical colleges for vocational training. Technical subjects are included in the curricula of both junior and senior secondary schools, as a way of diversifying the curriculum and enhancing pre-professional orientation. This policy establishes the crucial importance of technical colleges in the national education system. In 1999, there were some 128 technical colleges in the country, of which 15 were owned by the Federal Government, 101 by the States, and 12 by private individuals and organizations. The curriculum for each trade consists of four components: (i) general education; (ii) theory and related courses; (iii) workshop practice; and (iv) industrial training and productive work.

Data available on retention rates in junior secondary classes are scanty. One official source, however, indicates that about 20% of students do not complete junior secondary education. In 1996, the gross enrolment rate at the junior secondary level



was estimated at 34%; at the senior secondary level, it was estimated at 32.4% for boys and 35.9% for girls.

From junior to senior secondary education, the transition rate was estimated at 88.3% in 1995. In 1994, the student-teacher ratio at the post-primary school level was 1:29. In 2001/02, the transition rate from secondary to tertiary education was estimated at 16.6%. (FME, 2004).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

The Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) project, was conceived in 1994 following the Situation and Policy Analysis Survey. The study revealed that the existing monitoring indicators did not include valid measures of the quality of learning outcomes. Subsequently, the Federal Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNICEF sought UNESCO assistance as technical adviser for the implementation of the MLA project.

The aim of the project is to develop empirical instruments which would be used in monitoring the efficiency of performance of the primary school system. These instruments were developed in three domains of knowledge: literacy (English language), numeracy (mathematics) and life skills (social studies, health education, basic science, home economics, etc.). The eventual goal is to provide a valid and more reliable basis for informed policy decision about curriculum matters at this level.

This study, which may be considered as the first stage in the implementation of the monitoring project, is presently limited specifically to Grade IV pupils. Grade IV was selected as target for the study because using any lower level would have necessitated the translation of the test items into more than 270 local languages. The immediate focus was to assess what level of skills—in terms of concepts, problem-solving and reasoning abilities, and comprehension—Grade IV pupils in formal primary schools actually acquired, compared to what they are expected to know with regard to curricular standards at that level. The mean percent scores on the literacy, numeracy and life skills tests were 25.1%, 32.2% and 32.6%, respectively. Although performance was generally poor, pupils were less competent on English language skills and displayed relative more understanding of tasks in mathematics and life skills. In general, pupils were found to have very poor writing skills.

Concerning the numeracy test, results indicated that the level of acquisition of geometry skills was very low. As regards the life skills test, pupils performed better on the science sub-test, followed by survival skills and health and hygiene. The lowest scores were obtained in social studies sub-test. The analysis of performance by location of schools (rural/urban) indicated that pupils in urban schools performed better than pupils in rural schools. The analysis of performance by school type (private/public) showed that pupils in private schools outperformed pupils in public schools in all the three subjects and sub-tests. (FME, 1999 and 2000).



Higher education

Higher education is provided by universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, as well as institutes that prepare students for professional courses such as accounting, law, architecture and mass communication.

Universities and inter-university centres produce high-level manpower in various fields. There are conventional universities (both federally and state owned) which produce graduates in the pure and applied sciences and arts; and specialized universities, which produce graduates in their areas of specialization. In the latter category there are: universities of technology (both federally and state owned); universities of agriculture; and one military university. In 1993/94, the total enrolment at the university level amounted to 207,982 students. As of 2003 there were 57 universities made up of 24 federal, 23 state-owned, 8 privately-owned, one military academy, and the Open University. Thirty-one other applications were being processed by the National Universities Commission. (FME, 2004). According to the National Universities Commission, in 2004/05 the total enrolment at the university level was 724,856 students (of whom 258,697 women). In 2003/04 the academic staff amounted to 23,871 faculty members (of whom 4,132 women). By the end of 2005 there were 76 universities, of which 24 in the private sector (16 accredited in 2005) and six state-owned established in 2004–05.

Inter-university centres develop and upgrade skills in their fields of competence. They are: the National Mathematical Centre, Abuja; the Nigerian Arabic Language Village, Ngala; the Nigerian French Language Village, Badagry; and the National Institute for Nigerian Languages, Aba. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), first established in 1983 and suspended shortly after, reopened its doors in 2003.

Polytechnics and colleges of technology train middle-level technical manpower. They award national certificates and diplomas, namely: the National Diploma (ND), awarded after two years of study following the senior secondary school; and the Higher National Diploma (HND), awarded after a further course of two years' duration. Students are expected to have at least one year industrial attachment after obtaining the ND and before pursuing the HND course. Recognized institutions accredited by the National Board of Technical Education include 47 polytechnics, 22 colleges of agriculture and specialized technological institutions, and eight *monotechnics* (for example, the National Water Resources Institute, the Petroleum Training Institute, the Federal School of Dental Technology and Therapy, etc.).

Colleges of education train middle manpower in teacher education. They offer three-year programmes leading to the award of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE), and since 1998 no teacher with a qualification below this certificate is expected to teach in any school in the country. The Technical Teacher's Certificate requires one additional year of study. As of 2005 there were 20 federal colleges, 41 state-owned, 5 privately-owned. In addition, there were ten polytechnics offering NCE programmes, one military college and the National Teachers Institute (Distance). Furthermore, all conventional universities offer teacher education



programmes. Colleges of education are supervised by the National Commission for Colleges of Education.

There is a shortage of teachers in all the major disciplines in Nigerian universities, except in the arts. The only areas where the staff-student ratios are approximately as expected are in veterinary medicine and social sciences. The shortfall of teachers in administration, education, agriculture, medicine, engineering, science and pharmacy is very significant. In all the major disciplines—except education and humanities—female enrolment is below 30%. The situation is the worst in engineering technology, where the enrolment of females lies between 5 and 6%.

The federal government and state governments are the major operators at this level of education and private participation and contribution is insignificant. However, in 1993 the National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions amendments Decree No. 9 was promulgated. It provided for religious bodies, non-governmental organizations and private individuals to participate in the provision of tertiary education. At present, there are collectively thirty-eight universities. Twenty-five are owned by the federal government, twelve are owned by the states, and one is owned by the army.

Universities are supervised by the National Universities Commission (NUC) which is responsible for the orderly development of university education, maintenance of standards at the level, and for funding. The day-to-day running of the universities is secured by the Vice-Chancellor acting on the directives of the University Governing Council.

There is a Standing Committee on Accreditation charged with the responsibility of coordinating and conducting accreditation in the Nigerian university system. The committee set up panels that drew up minimum academic standards for all undergraduate programmes. External examiners are also invited to assess the long essays/dissertations of students in order to ensure that the research work is of good standard.

Public institutions within the technical education sub-sector are largely self-governing, but with some instruments of government control. These instruments include the Governing Councils and National Standards Control Agencies. Institutions of the technical education sub-sector are largely public institutions. As mentioned, the National Commission for Polytechnics has been established following the 2003 revision of the National Policy on Education. There are thirty-eight polytechnics; fifteen are owned by the federal government, while the remaining twenty-three are owned by the states.

With respect to the curriculum of tertiary institutions, the NUC has evolved innovative strategies to enhance quality assurance and address the observed shortcomings that have been the subject of public criticism. Recently, there has been a comprehensive curriculum review of all programmes in universities with a view to ensure relevance and quality in line with the reality of the world of work. Furthermore, a programme of entrepreneurial studies will be introduced to prepare graduates of the system to be self-employed and create employment rather than look to government for employment. As a follow-up to the national stakeholders workshop



that was held in June 2004 on the need for curriculum reform, NUC/ETF (Education Tax Fund) carried out a three-week National Survey in July 2004 to determine the needs of the labour market as well as those of university undergraduate within the context of the larger society and work world that are not being met by the existing curricula. The survey involved all major public and private enterprises/employers of labour in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The outcomes of this national survey form the basis for review of the curriculum, in all its ramifications and the review exercise was held in August 2004. (FME, 2004).

Special education

There are two broad categories of children with special needs, namely, the handicapped and the exceptionally gifted children.

There are about ten million disabled persons in Nigeria—physically handicapped, visually impaired, speech and hearing impaired, behaviour disordered, learning disabled and mentally retarded—, of whom 2.5 million are school-aged.

Before 1975, the education and care of the handicapped was the concern of religious and voluntary bodies. The Pacelli School for the Blind and the Wesley School for the Deaf in Lagos; the School for the Blind of Gindiri and the Oji River School for the Blind, and a few others, are testimonies to the effort of these bodies.

Government's intervention in special education started in 1975. The National Policy on Education of 1977, revised in 1981, which devotes Section 8 to special education, and the launching of the Blueprint on Education of the Handicapped in Nigeria in 1989, has brought limitless promises and expectations, not only to the handicapped, but also to special education practitioners.

To co-ordinate programmes for the education of the handicapped in Nigeria, the government established a Joint Consultative Reference Committee on Special Education. As a result of this intervention, three types of schools for the disabled exist in the country. They are: schools for children with only one type of disability, i.e. schools for the blind and schools for the deaf; integrated schools for different categories of disability; and ordinary schools where disabled and normal children learn together.

Furthermore, the intervention of the government has led to the following achievements:

- Regular publication of statistical data on education of the handicapped.
- Training of special personnel for the education of the handicapped not only for Nigeria, but also for other countries in Africa.
- Integration of about 50% of the estimated enrolment of 15,000 handicapped persons at the different levels of education.



- Implementation of the free education policy for all handicapped persons up to the tertiary level by some States; and a scholarship programme for handicapped persons funded by the Federal Ministry of Education.
- Integration of many handicapped children who attend federal government Colleges which are schools for normal children, and placement of those who are unable to continue pure academic programmes after junior secondary school into federal technical colleges to learn vocational skills.
- Provision of facilities for the education of the handicapped in every state of the Federation. Some States have started to project at least one special school in every local government area.
- Collaboration between the branch which is responsible for the education of the handicapped in the Federal Ministry of Education and several other ministries and bodies in matters of job placement, indigence, human rights, health and rehabilitation for the handicapped.

Decree No. 16 of 1985 places special emphasis on the education of the gifted and talented children within the National Policy on Education. A special programme to identify, encourage and meet the special learning needs of these children started in March 1988 with the first set of children admitted into eleven pilot secondary schools. After the pilot phase, it was decided that a special school was necessary. This special school is known as the Suleija Academy. The performance evaluation of these children started in 1994, and the research is still in progress.

Private education

Private education in Nigeria is the responsibility of entrepreneurs, agencies or groups such as religious bodies, communities, universities and corporate bodies. There are also schools which are run by foreign communities.

The majority of private secondary institutions offer the junior and senior secondary programme. Decree No. 16 of 1985 prescribes minimum conditions for the establishment of institutions at primary and secondary levels. The provisions were expanded in Decree No. 9 of 1993 (National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions Amendment Decree) to allow the establishment of private universities under certain guidelines determined by the government. The monitoring and supervision of private primary and secondary schools is secured by the federal and state ministries of education, while parastatal bodies with appropriate mandates supervise the various categories of tertiary institutions.

The structure and content of private primary and secondary education comply with the requirements of the National Policy on Education. Private schools use curricula which are designed by the federal government for the national system, with modifications to meet special needs and interests.



Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

The book publishing industry in the country can meet all the textbook needs at the primary and secondary levels. There is a wide variety of titles in all subjects taught at these levels. However, textbooks are absent from primary and secondary classrooms because their prices are too high for the average parent to afford. For this reason, a high percentage of primary and secondary school children have no access to textbooks.

A recent World Bank study has demonstrated that the shortage of textbooks in the country's classrooms is real. Some of the findings are that less than 1% of primary school pupils have access to textbooks, and that textbook availability in the country generally is only 10%, while a very high proportion of schools have textbook availability ratios of 1% or less. It revealed further amazing disparities in textbook distribution, with some elite schools having availability ratios of 80% or higher, while many rural schools have virtually no textbooks. It has been estimated that in the 1994/95 school year, approximately 99 million textbooks were needed at the primary level; 42 million at the junior secondary, and 67 million at the senior secondary levels.

Scarcity of textbooks is most serious at the higher education level. Local publishing is almost insignificant, for the reason that it is unprofitable. A very high proportion of textbooks have to be imported, and the prices are exorbitant. Textbooks are, therefore, beyond the reach of the average tertiary education level student. Governments, however, devise various means to keep libraries of tertiary institutions stocked to a reasonable level to ease the problems.

The tremendous expansion in the educational system, which started in 1976 with the introduction of the universal primary education programme and the junior and senior secondary school system in 1982, has put heavy pressure on institutional facilities which have not been able to expand at the same rate as the school population. Efforts have been made, with the assistance of the Czech Government and the British ODA to improve the technical equipment and the school infrastructure in the country. UNDP and World Bank grants and credits have provided instructional materials for mass literacy education, universities, polytechnics and primary schools.

A major local initiative is the intended intervention of the Petroleum Trust Fund in the provision of materials and equipment and the rehabilitation of infrastructure of institutions all over the country.

Adult and non-formal education

The non-formal system provides education for youth and adults allowing for exit and re-entry at desired points or times in life. There is also provision for movement from non-formal to the formal system.

About 15.7 million (or 16%) school-aged children are not enrolled in any formal institution. There is also evidence suggesting further deterioration in the female literacy rate. The Local Government Areas Baseline survey (1992) showed that only 29% of the women in the sample were found to be literate. Another survey



on women's education (1993) indicated an average of 27%. The survey also revealed a high drop-out rate (86%) at women's education centres. In 1991, the overall literacy rate was estimated at 56.7% (65.7% for men and 47.8% for women). The literacy rate for the age group 15-24 years was estimated at 71.2% (90.6% for men and 62.5% for women; 62.1% in rural areas and 84.9% in urban areas).

In order to address this issue, a wide variety of non-formal education programmes designed for illiterate adults and out-of-school children and youths have been put in place.

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education has the responsibility of developing strategies, coordinating programmes, monitoring and promoting literacy and post-literacy programmes nationwide. It has succeeded in creating awareness through its sensitization and mobilization workshops at the national, state and local government levels. Data available from about 50% of the states show that the total enrolment in the UNDP-assisted mass literacy classes for 1995 was 678,407 learners, of whom 386,599 (or 57%) were females and 291,808 (43%) were males. During the same period, a total of 15,505 instructors were trained, of whom 8,140 were males and 7,365 were females. Furthermore, a total of 1,495 supervisors and organizers were trained, of whom 815 were females and 680 were males.

Overall enrolment in adult and non-formal education programmes (i.e. twelve major programmes, including: basic literacy, post-literacy, women education, nomadic education, continuing education, Arabic integrated education, literacy for the blind, workers education, functional literacy, vocational education, literacy for the disabled, and prison education) increased from 546,256 in 1991 to 1,143,737 learners in 1996. In the same year, 487,662 learners were awarded certificates.

The National Centre for Adult Education established in Kano in 1985, serves as a national non-formal education library, documentation and resources development and production centre. It provides in-service training to staff of state agencies for mass literacy and NGO literacy programmes and carries out research on adult education. Institutional and follow-up materials are also developed for distribution.

Courses are also organized for the training of mass literacy personnel in three institutes established in Uyo (1952), Maiduguri (1976) and Bauchi (1978). These courses are given in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, governmental organizations, the formal education sector and international agencies.

The National Commission for Mass Education, in conjunction with the state agencies, has organized a network of literacy committees linking literacy classes and programmes, both governmental and non-governmental. Participatory committees have been set up (at class/centre, village/ward, local and state government levels) to co-ordinate activities and aid material distribution; disseminate information; and provide feedback to the agencies.

Adult nomads and migrant fishermen learning centres are being created in order to offer literacy programmes to these population groups and their children, who have been found not to make maximum use of the mobile school provided.



The establishment of women's functional literacy centres nationwide by the federal, state and local governments, NGOs and individuals, undoubtedly added great impetus to the promotion of literacy in the country. A 1995 survey of these centres showed that their number was 720, with a total of 3,421 classes and an enrolment figure of 157,554 learners.

In the field of girl's literacy, BRAC-type schools for girls have been established. This is a strategy of using non-formal models to rapidly expand access to primary education, particularly for girls in the least-developed countries. Non-formal education models are being established for adolescent girls; girl-child task forces are engaged in social mobilization targeted at communities, parents and NGOs to increase girls' access to education.

The educational needs of street children and other disadvantaged children have attracted increasing attention from governmental organizations. As of 1995, the number of such children in Lagos was estimated to be at least 10,000. A study of street children in Lagos recommended: the setting up of drop-in educational and vocational centres by education authorities and concerned NGOs; an increase in the funding and expansion of non-formal remedial vocational continuing education programmes which should be flexible and varied to meet the street children's needs and permit a wide choice of options for those with aptitude; and the training of education and welfare workers in the right methods of approach to street children.

Koranic schools have been a strong feature of informal education in the country for generations. Integration of elements of basic education into Koranic school curricula is in progress. This exercise has already begun in at least three states (Kano, Katsina and Niger), providing access to education to over two million pupils.

Community-based programmes are run by women's co-operative society centres and by some mosques and churches. A home- and community-based informal low-cost participation initiative is also being employed in the provision of non-formal education at the pre-primary and primary levels. Plans are well in hand to collaborate with the British Overseas Development administration (ODA) in a community-based programme at the primary level.

Teaching staff

The requirements for the various teacher training programmes differ from one level to the other in terms of academic qualification. For admission to colleges of education, prospective candidates must have at least three credits in the Senior School Certificate—including the subjects they want to study—and two other passes. At the university level, the entry requirement is five credits, which must include the chosen major teaching subjects. In addition, prospective college of education students are required to sit and pass the polytechnic/college of education matriculation examination, while prospective university students must pass the university matriculation examination.

The National Policy on Education has prescribed that, as from 1998, the new minimum qualification required for teaching in the primary school will be the



Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE). The NCE (three-year programme) is also the qualification required for teaching in junior secondary schools and technical colleges.

At the senior secondary level, the Bachelor of Education degree or the single subject bachelor's degree plus a post-graduate diploma in education is required. However, holders of specialized qualifications like the national diplomas awarded by polytechnics can be employed to teach in secondary schools and technical colleges.

For teaching in colleges of education, at least a master's degree is required, while a doctoral degree is required for teaching in universities. Lecturers in colleges of education are required to have a teaching qualification, in addition to their degree.

Students are required to attain a high level of mastery of their teaching subjects, as well as their prescribed electives. Teaching practice constitutes about 25% of the programme. The Curriculum of the NCE course is drawn up by the national commission for colleges of education that also accredits the colleges. University teacher education curriculum is drawn up, along with all other undergraduate curricula, by the National Universities Commission that also accredits university undergraduate programmes.

Teacher-training establishments include:

- Teacher-training colleges, that used to be part of the secondary education programme. They awarded the teacher certificate, Grade II, which in the past was the qualification required for primary school teaching across the country. However, the National Policy on Education having made the NCE the minimum qualification for teaching in the country, the Grade II colleges are now being phased out.
- Colleges of education offer post-secondary NCE training programmes. They used to train teachers for the junior secondary school, but they now train primary school teachers, as well in view of the fact that the NCE which they award will become the minimum qualification for primary school teaching. Some of the colleges also run NCE pre-primary courses in order to produce teachers for the pre-primary level of education.
- Universities. All conventional universities in Nigeria offer the bachelor of education degree programmes, open to holders of the Senior School Certificate. NCE senior secondary school teachers are trained in the universities.

In-service teacher training has continued to receive priority attention. It may take one or more of the following forms:

- training in designated institutions and educational resource centres;
- training through seminars and workshops usually organized during long vacations; these usually provide opportunities for the dissemination of new ideas and innovations;



- distance teacher education programmes offered by the National Teachers' Institute for under-qualified or unqualified serving teachers;
- correspondence degree programmes of the Centre for External Studies of the University of Ibadan and the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute of the University of Lagos;
- the Teacher In-service Education Programme and the Nigerian Certificate in Education by correspondence course of the Institute of Education of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;
- undergraduate course in education offered by the Open Studies Unit of the University of Abuja;
- correspondence courses run by the Abia State University College of Education, Uturu.

The usual avenue for in-service training of principals and inspectors is through programmes, seminars and workshops during vacation periods. These usually cover educational planning, administration and management. The National Institute of Educational Administration and Planning, set up in Ondo in 1992, is expected to play a crucial role in meeting this need. Refresher courses continue to be arranged for teachers to strengthen their pedagogical skills, as well as to increase their competence in handling continuous assessment data. The need for teachers to acquire this skill has gained urgency, because the issuance of primary school certificates has become the sole responsibility of each head teacher nationwide with effect from 1993. There is also an appreciable continuous assessment component in the award of the Junior School Certificate and the Senior School Certificate.

The scope of UBE implies that 40,000 teachers will be required per annum for the next nine years (starting from 2004) to cope with the massive increase in enrolment as well as quality delivery of instruction and quality learning. The main innovative strategies include: the pivotal teacher training programme (PTTP); the establishment in 2002 of the Teachers Registration Council; the establishment of the Federal Teachers Corps; the restructuring and reinforcement of the National Teachers Institute (NTI) in Kaduna, through significant capacity building and partnership. Furthermore, the Federal and State Education Inspectorate Services, with the assistance of UNESCO, are being restructured and reinforced including the production of guidelines for School Inspection in Nigeria, which highlights the parameters, performance indicators and benchmarks for improved quality control and uniform standard for schools.

The regulation of the teacher education curriculum by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) extends to the pre-NCE programme (i.e. the remedial programme). Standards are also prescribed in detail for instructional factors; staffing, physical facilities, administrative leadership, discipline and funding. The NCCE enforces these standards through periodic accreditation visits, and completed the second round of such visits in 2000/01. Furthermore, teacher capacity building is taken seriously and teachers are expected to avail themselves of training and professional development opportunities provided by government, professional



associations and the wide range of seminars and workshops that the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) organizes in the area of curriculum/syllabus review, educational material development, and innovative teaching and learning strategies. In July 2004 the NCCE embarked on a nation wide capacity building of lecturers in colleges of education in each of the 6 geopolitics zones of Nigeria.

Educational research and information

Educational research is the responsibility of university faculties and institutes of education, colleges of education and the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council. They generate ideas which form the basis of policy making in the education sector. Various other parastatal bodies of the Federal Ministry of Education and agencies concerned with the management and delivery of education have become involved in educational research in fields related to their areas of responsibility.

The sectoral research branch of the Federal Ministry of Education is also statutorily mandated to conduct practical policy-oriented research into the areas of concern over which the Ministry has jurisdiction.

Recent research has focused, among others, on the following topics: the teaching of introductory technology in junior secondary schools; the life-style of nomadic fishermen and other pastoral nomads; the life of street-children in Lagos State; out-of-school children and youth; the evaluation of the causes of wastage in the Nigerian education system, etc.

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Web resources

Federal Ministry of Education: <http://www.fmegovng.org/> [Including links to parastatal organizations. In English. Last checked: October 2007.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>