

# Assessing the Role and Effectiveness of Implementing Agencies In Achieving the Education for all Goal In Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme is one of the implementing agency planned to bring about positive change in the educational system through quality, functional and free education. However, this dream as met bottlenecks, barriers through high enrollment with inadequate classroom space, lack of laboratories, dilapidated infrastructure, employment of unqualified teachers and lack of fund. Despite the national objective to provide free and compulsory basic education to all children, Nigeria still has one of the largest out-of-school populations in the world with about 10.5 million primary school children are out of school which is about 42% of the primary age population. This paper reviews literatures to assess the role, effectiveness and implementing agencies in achieving the Education For All (EFA) goal in Nigeria. From literature reviewed, it was discovered that there is a strong significant relationship between school facilities, quality and quantity of teachers, funding of UBE and the enrollment of students into both primary and secondary schools. The article therefore recommends that for effective management and implementation of the UBA, there is need for full participation and cooperation of the public, professionals and the government.

**Key words:** Role, Effectiveness and Implementation, UBE Programme, EFA Goal.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental to development and growth. Education is a powerful driver of development and one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. As a result, it is the major desire of every nation across the globe to drastically reduce illiteracy especially in these modern societies. This is because, education is one of the vital indices used in the measurement and categorization of nations as developed and developing. Developed countries have made tremendous progress in getting children into the classroom and the majority of the children worldwide are now in primary school. The UNESCO (2016) shows that "about 263 million children and youth are out of school, according to United Institute of Statistics for the school year ending in 2016. The total

includes 63 million children of primary school age, 61 million of lower secondary school age and 139 million of upper secondary age." Nevertheless, there is a slight improvement according to the report of about 260 million children who are presently still out of primary school (World Bank, 2018). Sub-Sahara African (SSA) countries have experienced slow progress in achieving universal primary education (UPE) from 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries. Between 1980 and 1995, SSA was the only region that experienced a decline in the average gross enrollment rate (GER) for primary education, while other regions experienced substantial increases (UNESCO, 1998). Public expenditure on primary education also fell by 6% in per capita terms between 1985 and 1995, while it increased approximately threefold in all other

developing regions (UNESCO, 1998). International aid agencies and researchers shared a common concern that SSA will not achieve UPE by 2015, unless the progress is to be accelerated rapidly (Carceles et al., 2001; Bennell, 2002). Responding to this concern, many SSA governments have abolished school fees for public primary education, under the name of the UPE or Free Primary Education policy (Avenstrup et al., 2004).

The UPE policy has been well received by various stakeholders including politicians, aid agencies, and the beneficiaries as a pro-poor policy. World bank 2018 report shows that since 2012, most SSA countries failed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education and about 50 million children of primary and lower secondary school age are still out of school. Learning levels across the region are alarmingly low. Among second grade students, assessed on numeracy test in several Sub-Sahara Africa countries, three-quarters could not count beyond 80 and 40% could not do a one-digit addition problem. Adding to World bank 2018 report in reading, between 50 and 80% of children in second grade could not answer a single question based on a short passage they had read, and a large proportion could not read even a single word. World population review (2018) reports that Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with a population of 197, 447,862 million. Out of the total population, 42.79% are children aged below 15 years, while adults constitute the remaining 57.21%. Nigeria's Constitution (1999) the Vision 2020 document and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) underline the importance of education as a vehicle of both individual empowerment and national development. This is further elaborated and made more focused in the National Policy on Education (NPE), cementing the country's commitment to EFA and education-related Millennium Development Goals through the provision of free and compulsory 9 year basic education programme, comprising 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. The country is made up of 36 States and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and it is further subdivided into 774 local government areas in six Geo-political zones UNESCO (2012).

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016) reviewed that in the estimates of 69 million persons or 59.6% of the adult population (aged 15 years and above) in Nigeria can read and write. Accordingly, about 47 million adults are illiterate. Literacy rate for adult male population is 69.19% (40,458,949 persons) and 18,017,036 are illiterate. Literacy rate for adult female population is 49.68% (28,054,050 persons) and 28,415,454 are illiterate. Youth literacy rates are 79.89 and 65.33% for males and females accordingly. The overall youth literacy rate is 72.79%. Youth literacy rate definition covers the population between the ages of 15 to 24 years. Education has always been accepted as a life-long process enabling people to learn and be able to live

efficiently and effectively in the society they find themselves. All over the world, there is a renewed drive for education based on the conviction that education is a vehicle par excellence for driving functional self; national growth and development; as well as a key for unlocking ignorance and eliminating illiteracy (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004). It is a means of confronting the future challenges; a type of training through which the individual is helped to acquire skills and information that would enable him to meet the demand of his society.

Generally, the article will access from secondary data and literature the role, effectiveness and the Implementation of Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) in achieving the EFA policy in Nigeria educational development. It will also examine the efficiency of UBE programme in student enrollment, financing strategies, government and institutional involvement program, school facilities provision and management, and teachers' involvement.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The UBA Scheme was planned to bring about positive change in the educational system through quality, functional and free education, but this dream has met bottlenecks, barriers through high enrollment with inadequate classroom space, lack of laboratories, dilapidated infrastructure, employment of unqualified teachers and lack of fund, these have among others hindered the effective implementation of the programme. Teachers' appointment and development tends not to be based on supply and demand, in part due to lack of reliable data, but also because the process is prone to political interference. There is shortage of professional teachers in some states and /or local government areas and this tends shortage exists in some states and /or local government areas and tend to be higher in remote rural areas. Furthermore, there is a mismatch between teacher training, specializations and appointments with primary school trained teachers often ending up as secondary school teachers. Despite the national objective to provide free and compulsory basic education to all children, Nigeria still has one of the largest out-of-school populations in the world. According to UIS estimate, (2010) about 10.5 million primary school children are out of school which is about 42% of the primary-age population. Moreover, the trends are not promising. Net enrollment rates worsened over the past 10 years, from 61.3% in 1999 to 57.6% in 2010. Similarly, World Bank (2013) narrated that after an initial improvement from 84.2 to 102.6%, the gross enrollment rate declined to 83.3% in 2010.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Historical Background and Purpose of EFA Policy

At the year 2000 World Education Forum held in Dakar (Senegal), the international community reaffirmed its commitment to achieving EFA, a movement introduced 10 years earlier at the World Conference on EFA, held in Jomtien (Thailand). Participants also adopted the Dakar Framework for Action and identify six specific goals:

- Expand early childhood care and education.
- Provide free and compulsory primary EFA.
- Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults.
- Increase adult literacy by 50%, especially for women.
- Achieve gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015.
- Improve the quality of education.

Underlying each of these goals is recognition of and respect for the right to quality education. Full realization of the right to education is not merely a question of access. A rights-based approach to EFA is a holistic one, encompassing access to education, educational quality (based on human rights values and principles) and the environment in which education is provided. This document provides a framework for implementing and ensuring such an approach. While the right to education like all human rights is universal and inalienable, several conventions have enshrined it in international law, thereby placing binding commitments on ratifying States. Provisions on the right to a quality education inclusive of human rights values appear in such treaties as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

The EFA movement is, as its name suggests, directed towards all people: children, youth and adults. The Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights the particular significance of education for young people, and this document focuses primarily on the educational rights of children. But the right to education has no age limit. Additionally, EFA emphasizes the need to provide access to education for traditionally marginalized groups, including girls and women, indigenous populations and remote rural groups, street children, migrants and nomadic populations, people with disabilities, and linguistic and cultural minorities. A comprehensive rights-based approach must be dynamic, accounting for different learning environments and different learners. Each of the instruments named above illustrates the importance of a rights-based approach to education. However, without effective implementation, they remain only that illustrations, ideas and conceptions of what a rights-friendly learning environment could be. This document acknowledges that a rights-based approach to education is not without its obstacles. Nevertheless, a sustainable human rights based approach can be attained if key players fulfill their existing commitments

and work towards further progress. Thus, a rights-based approach to education is imperative. Schooling that is respectful of human rights both in words and in action, in schoolbooks and the schoolyard is integral to the realization of quality EFA. Complex barriers can impede the goals of EFA; a rights-based approach to education plays a key role in overcoming such obstacles. The following pages elaborate an overarching policy and programming framework for achieving quality education that is in keeping with human rights norms and values, and is truly EFA.

### **Overview of the Educational System in Nigeria**

The Education system in Nigeria is based on a 6-3-3-4 system, which involves three levels of institutional learning processes: at the primary school level, secondary school level and at the tertiary level. Nursery education forms the first stage of the learning process in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004), first published in 1977 and revised in 1981, 1995, 1998, 2004 and 2006, provides for a 6-3-3-4 structure for the education sector. This translates into six years of primary schooling, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and four years of tertiary education. In a further review in 2013, an additional one year was included to make for the formal inclusion of pre-primary education into primary education. The subsequent first ten years are therefore treated as a continuum of 10 years basic schooling which is offered seamlessly. This is the basis for the UBA UBE programme. As noted in the report of the Presidential Task Team on Education (PTTE) led by a retired UNESCO Regional Director, Professor Pai Obanya, the revisions in the policy over time were made in response to trends at the global and pan-African levels (EFA, MDGs-Millennium Development Goals, African Education Decades etc) and also in response to evolutions in national development goals (VISION 2010, NEEDS, VISION 20-20-20, in particular).

The Policy has been subjected to revisions on a regular basis. The 6-3-3-4 structure is in itself an attempt to align with global and pan-African trends that aim at compulsory education up to the end of junior secondary schooling. The basic education structure includes adult and non-formal education programmes, Almajiri education programmes and education for out-of-school children and youths. These are tucked into the various levels presented in the formal education system of Nigeria. In Nigeria, education falls under the items on the concurrent legislative listing meaning that both federal and state governments can pass laws on it. However, basic and secondary education, as well as adult and non-formal education, is managed by states and local government areas. The National Council on Education (NCE) chaired by the Honourable Minister of Education is the highest decision making body in education. The

Council is made up of all State Commissioners of Education and approves all decisions in education.

## **HISTORY OF UBA IN NIGERIA**

UNESCO (1990) during the Jomtien Declaration and Framework of Action on EFA defines basic education as a process which encourages close articulation of formal, non-formal and informal approaches to education and structures for the awakening of all round developments of human and capital potentials. Basic Education, therefore, is a "life-long" form of education. This involves "learning to learn", "continuing education", "mass literacy" and "Adult Education". At Jomtien world conference in 1990, the framework Action on EFA was developed, and every nation was urged to pursue the attainment of the objectives according to its developmental needs and capacity.

The UBA Commission, UBEC (2014) make it clear in their book that the outcome of the world conference prompted the launching of UBA in Nigeria on 30th September 1999 in Sokoto, Sokoto State by former President Olusegun Obasanjo. The UBE Programme is a nine (9) years basic educational programme. It proclaimed free and compulsory 9 years basic education for children of school age in Nigeria. It is propelled and executed to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integration.

The UBE Programme is a Nigerian strategy for achieving EFA and the education-related MDGs. UBEC (2005), states the vision of UBE in to ensure nine years of continuous education, in which every child should acquire appropriate and relevant skills and values and be employable to contribute his or her quota to National Development. The mission is to serve as a prime energizer of National Movement for the actualization of the nation's UBE vision, working in concert with all stakeholders, thus mobilizing the Nation's creative energies to ensure that EFA becomes the responsibility of all. According to Tahir (2005) the UBE Act (2004) makes primary and junior secondary education free and compulsory for all children within the target population and also guarantees regular funding from the Federal government for the programme. The scope of UBE programmes/initiatives for early childhood care and education is six-year primary education and three years of junior secondary education. The objectives of the UBE according to Sote et al. (2011) are to basically provide free and compulsory universal and nine-year basic education for every Nigerian child of school age. To reduce the incidence of dropout from the formal school system drastically, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency. To ensure the acquisition of an appropriate level of literacy numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral

and civic values. These are to ensure a solid foundation for lifelong learning. For full actualization of EFA and MDGs in every state in Nigeria, UBE programmes are implemented through close collaborative partnerships between UBEC and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs), Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) and Basic Education stakeholders at all levels.

## **UBE PROGRAMME AND STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

### **Programme For EFA**

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy of Education aim at achieving education for all before the end of 2015 but the achievement is still a dream till now. Compared to the total population of children, numbers of drop out student to the low level of achievement of the UBE, the policy of EFA still remains a dream in Nigeria. The policy strategy for achieving this aim is to make education free and compulsory, that is Basic education for 9 years education, comprising 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. This strategy is assumed to help address the problem of Out-of-School children by making education free and accessible to all the citizens of the country who should be going to school at the current age. The policy also aims to improving the efficiency, quality and relevance of education in the country to reduce the possibility of students to discontinue from their formal schooling, and ensure that the right skills and values are embedded on the students to help them in their life-long education endeavors. However, this aim appears unrealistic as it is yet to be achieved. Challenges such as low level of budgetary allocation has an effect in achieving these "EFA". EFA calls for so many needs like, buildings, school structures, school facilities, teachers to teach etc. With these challenges, meeting the aim will be very low. World Bank (2014) data from student enrollment in UBE shows that about 30% of children of official primary school ages are out of school.

The data also considered the proportion of children out of school by different characteristics. For example, approximately 29% of boys of primary school age are out of school compared to 35% of girls of the same age. For children of primary school age in Nigeria, the biggest disparity can be seen between the poorest and the richest children. Nearly 28% of female youth of secondary school age are out of school compared to 24% of the male youth of the same age. For youth of secondary school age, the biggest disparity can be seen between the poorest and the richest youth. These challenges, for example, should make the government of Nigeria to spend more to sure that the aim of making "EFA" achievable. World Bank (2014), also provides information that show the indicators of learning,

which lend insight into the quality of educational provision. Their data (in Figure 8) demonstrates where Nigeria stands in comparison to other low and middle-income countries in access to education, measured as the primary school net enrollment rate, and youth literacy. Compared to other countries, Nigeria ranks at the 6 percentile in access and at the 14 percentile in learning. In Nigeria, the literacy rate is 66% among the youth population; this is lower than the average youth literacy rate in other lower-middle-income countries.

Source from Summarized Provisional Data provided by the National Education Management Information System, 2015, shows an official study which summarized the key challenges in education quality in Nigeria. These include noncompliance with adopted benchmark qualifications for primary-school teachers, teacher absenteeism, large class sizes in many primary schools, the vulnerability of children as victims of conflict, disability, HIV/AIDS, and the need for children to earn household income. They also sported the April 2015 Joint Donor Policy Note on Education, that the majority of children in school are learning very little. "Even when children are in school a large proportion are not learning. Nearly half of all children who have completed primary school cannot read a complete sentence and more than two-thirds of children in the north remain illiterate by the end of primary school. Every year, students perform poorly in the secondary school leaving exams." The Joint Donor Note cites a large number of pupils in classrooms and teacher problems as contributing to the poor quality of basic education. According to the Note, "In some areas, there are already more than 300 pupils per class. Both trainee and practicing teachers do not receive the support they need to build adequate competencies to ensure children learning.

## **GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS AND UBE PROGRAMME FOR EFA**

Much of the failure to progress toward UBE goals can be attributed to institutional issues. The extensive set of institutional and intergovernmental relations for the provision of basic education for all makes the provision of this system of education in Nigeria more complex. Roles and responsibilities between the three tiers of government, are largely undefined, leaving no government or agency with clear, accountable results. Moreover, these relations have become even more complicated in recent years due to the creation of new agencies and organizations (UBEC and SUBEBs). The complexity of the institutional structure associated with the creation of the UBEC and the SUBEBs has resulted in confusion over roles and jurisdictions across institutions and institutional rivalry at the federal and, even more importantly, at the state parastatal level. In general, protocols are unnecessarily complicated and

unclear, and processes are often unknown and unaccountable which has given room for corruption in the educational system. In addition, there are no standards for the provision of key inputs such as class size, educational facilities, teaching and learning materials, health and safety, and teacher provision and qualifications. These are the key factors that directly affect the teaching and learning process. Adamolekun (2013) testified that over-centralization has decreased incentives for service delivery.

In contrast to the 1999 Constitution assigning responsibility for primary education to state and local governments, UBE was designed as a federal government policy and program. Under the UBE law, LGAs continue to be responsible for delivering basic education but without budgetary power, which is largely determined at the federal level. Because of this complex issues, sometimes the salaries of the teachers which make up about 80 to 90% of the budget has to be delayed or not even paid until after 4 to 5 months which has resulted in striking actions over the years. Similarly, schools have little autonomy in teacher recruitment, have inadequate systems to assess and monitor schools and have low accountability to parents and society. In some cases, schools have no funds to manage at all. In Bauchi, operational budgets, including those for materials and supplies, are managed by the LGA, leaving schools with no funds to manage. School inspection and monitoring are inadequate, in most part due to unclear and overlapping roles and responsibilities and a lack of accountability. As a result, data collection is not standardized, and data are unreliable.

## **Facilities Provision and Program Support Strategies under UBE for EFA**

In line with this, UBE Act (2004) cited in Tsafe (2013) stresses that the implementation of the UBA shall be financed from: Federal Government block grant of not less than 2% of its consolidated revenue funds or contributions in the form of federal guaranteed credits and; local and international donor grants. However, Ekpunobi (2006) cited in Tsafe (2013) posited that the federal government intervention to the UBE is done quarterly (4 times in a year), and a counterpart fund of equal amount is expected from the states of which Nursery (5%), primary (60%) and junior secondary school (35%), while it is disbursed in each level of education as follows: infrastructure (70%), manpower development (15%), and instructional material (15%). For proper implementation of UBE, Obioma (2006) claimed that strategies have been put by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) to re-structure and re-align the school curriculum for the 9 years basic education. A total of 19 curricula have been produced to cover the junior primary (year 1 to 3) senior primary (years 4 to 6) and junior

secondary school (JSS) (year 7 to 9). Primary science has been replaced by basic science and technology for junior and senior primary school levels, while integrated science has been replaced by basic science for JSS level. The UBE program is particularly expected to follow a collaborative model involving collaborative efforts of stakeholders in Nigeria. In addressing the problems encountered in UBE implementation, Federal Ministry of Education has focused on the provision of school building furniture, instructional materials and textbooks in four (4) core subject areas (English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Primary Science) in public primary schools. Ajayi and Adeyemi (2011) while discussing UBE policy implementation in facilities provision in Ogun State pointed out that a 15 years deadline has been set for the achievement of the objectives of the UBE scheme. Thus, in the past 8 years, massive programme support in the area of funding and provision of school facilities are required from the State governments in line with the implementation policy of the UBE scheme in Nigeria. These include:

- Rehabilitation of schools and the construction of new schools and classroom blocks.
- Special programmes targeted at girls and hard to reach groups such as children of fishermen and nomadic communities.
- Reduction of high pupil-teacher ratio.
- Formation of partnerships with local governments and communities on education.

The building programme of the UBE programme involves five components:

- The provision of additional classrooms/offices/stores/toilets/special rooms to existing schools that are short of such facilities.
- The renovation of existing structures in bad condition. This involves a number of minor works on floors, walls, openings and most importantly, the repairs of old/poor furniture.
- It also involves the construction of new schools for which a new layout plan has been made. An alternative design is also included in this plan for urban schools that are tight on the availability of land.
- The designs in both cases have been made fairly flexible to fit into different sites while growing by simple linear additions of classrooms.
- The programme equally requires the construction and supply of furniture for classrooms, office and special rooms, that is, laboratories, workshops and libraries.

Other programme strategies include: Expansion of early childhood care education; Improvement of teacher training; Provision of teaching-learning materials and; Provision of other forms of teacher support programme.

### **UBE Implementation Strategy for Achieving EFA in Nigeria**

According to FME (1999), strategies for achieving UBE

plans are:

- i. UBE Community Initiated Self Help Projects,
- ii. Federal Teachers' Scheme (FTS),
- iii. Inter-Agency Cooperation,
- iv. Collaborations with International Development Partners,
- v. Curriculum improvement and
- vi. Programmes aimed at addressing the problem of Out-of-school Children

### ***Federal Teachers' Scheme (FTS)***

The Federal Government of Nigeria introduced the FTS in 2006 with the aim of addressing the shortage of qualified teachers in the basic education sub-sector. The scheme which is being financed through the Debt Relief Gains (DRG) is a two-year programme designed to cater for unemployed NCE graduates. Under the scheme, NCE graduates are employed by the Federal Government and posted to States for a two-year period before formal absorption by states and LGEAs. The first batch of 40,000 participants completed the service in October 2008. UBEC enlisted 34,000 fresh participants in January 2009 while States have absorbed 27,000 products of the first batch into their workforce.

### ***UBE Community Initiated Self Help Projects***

The Self-Help Project of the UBE Programme is designed as a strategy to involve the community and private sector participation in basic education delivery through the initiation, execution, administration and ownership of designated school projects. Basic education funding, administration and implementation are gradually becoming the responsibility not only of the government but that of the communities through Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). The Self-Help strategy has proved to be very rewarding in providing requisite infrastructure and services within the school environment as well as galvanizing popular community support and involvement in UBE delivery. Importantly, the strategy has instituted transparency and accountability in resource management, paved the way for community ownership of UBE programme and increased the opportunities for increasing access, quality and equity in UBE delivery. Additionally, the strategy has several deliverables in key infrastructural components and other essential facilities for the UBE programme.

### ***Inter-Agency Cooperation***

In recognition of the multi-sectoral and cross-cutting nature of UBE programme implementation, UBEC pursues and implements critical sub-sector related programmes in collaboration with other agencies with distinct responsibilities within the Federal Ministry of

Education. In this regard, the following are some of the achievements recorded:

- Production and distribution of the new 9 years Basic Education Curriculum to all public primary and junior secondary schools across the country and
- Development, production and distribution of training manuals to provide the knowledge and skills required to plan, design, organize and evaluate training programmes for all those that are concerned with the implementation of the 9 years basic education curriculum;

### ***Collaborations with International Development Partners***

The UBEC is mandated by Section II 9 (I & J) of the UBE Act 2004 to facilitate and ensure smooth collaboration with International Development Partners (IDPs) and Non-Governmental Organizations to boost basic education delivery in Nigeria. In keeping with this mandate, UBEC has attracted financial and technical supports from IDPs prominent among which are; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Project for the Construction of Additional Classrooms Phase I in Niger, Plateau and Kaduna States (2004 to 2008); Strengthening of Mathematics and Science (SMASE) in Niger, Plateau and Kaduna States (2006 till date); JICA Project for the Construction of additional Classrooms Phase II in Kano, Katsina, Oyo, Adamawa, Gombe, Ebonyi and Borno where Kano is now on board as a pilot State; Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) which basic education in the area of classrooms construction in Kogi, Katsina, Gombe and Adamawa States. The projects in Katsina and Kogi were completed and handed over on July 30th 2010 while those in Gombe and Adamawa States are being implemented; China Assisted Four Rural Primary Schools in Nigeria whose intervention is in Kaduna, Katsina and Ogun States and FCT; The World Bank, UNICEF and USAID are supporting States to Fast-track the achievement of EFA goals through support funds under the EFA-FTI funds; Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) is supporting Institutional capacity building of UBEC and SUBEB officials in educational planning strategy; British Council is currently working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UBEC and the States to provide technical capacity for English Language teachers in Lagos, Kano, Enugu, FCT Abuja, Rivers, Oyo, Sokoto, Adamawa and Yobe States. Under this programme, 1,000 primary school teachers of English Language were trained by March 2011 and another 1,800 by October 2011.

### ***Programmes Aimed at Addressing the Problem of Out-of-school Children***

In line with Government's desire and global agitation for the provision of enhanced opportunities for the education

of out-of-school children, UBEC has undertaken programmes and activities aimed at tackling challenges associated with the girl-child and the Almajirai phenomenon. Recently, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) set up a Ministerial Committee on Madrasah Education to advise the government on steps to be taken towards addressing the Almajirai challenge. The Committee has since submitted its report which is currently being studied by the FME. It is expected that UBEC, together with sister agencies will partner with the FME to implement recommendations of the Ministerial Committee on Madrasah Education. UBEC believes that through these and other efforts, Nigeria is on the steady path towards achieving its Vision 20-2020 aspirations.

### **FINANCING UBE PROGRAMME FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EFA**

There are four main sources of public funding for the public (nonfederal) education sector: state governments, local governments, direct allocations from the federal government (through the UBE Intervention Fund and the Education Trust Fund), and private individuals and organizations, including nongovernmental organizations and international donors in some states. There is a huge lack of information on state and local expenditures for education which makes accurate estimates of total spending difficult. To achieve the UBE programme support strategies in the area of facility provision, the Federal Government Intervention (in collaboration with the States) is to be funded through:

- Not less than 2% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) of the Federal Government
- Funds/contributions in the form of Federal Government Guaranteed credits and
- Local/international donor grants.

The federal intervention fund to States is to be utilized to broaden access, improving quality and ensuring equity in basic education, but not for teachers' emoluments and overhead costs.

The components are as follows: (a) Substantial part of the CRF will be disbursed to States as matching grants; (b) Part of it will be disbursed to States for special intervention support:

- Initiatives by States to correct educational imbalance up to 2010.
- Efforts by States to provide special education for the physically and mentally challenged.
- Efforts by States to implement school feeding programmes.

Other aspects relating to the issue of funding mechanism of the UBE Program this is how funds are disbursed and checks and balances for ensuring effective use of such funds for the intended outcome are:

- Disbursement of funds to States will be through SUBEBs.

- Disbursement of grants to States will be dependent on the provision of 50% counterpart funds by states.

- UBEC may withhold further disbursement to a State if it is not satisfied that funds earlier disbursed had been judiciously utilized.

To access the fund, States are expected to:

- Present acceptable annual implementation plans based on EFA/MDGS and those projects and programmes that address their peculiar educational problems;

- Show evidence of State UBE law or a strong commitment to enacting it;

- Show evidence of lodgment of the State's 50% counterpart fund in a separate SUBEB account for specific UBE programme;

- Set up an appropriate mechanism that ensures transparency for the procurement of goods and services. Monitoring of a fund utilization will be multi-sectoral involving the following stakeholders: UBEC, Federal Ministry of Education, National Assembly, Budget Office of the Federation, Budget Monitoring (Presidency), Accountant General of the Federal and Auditor General of the Federal.

## **TEACHERS INVOLVEMENT, SCHOOL FACILITIES AND UBE PROGRAMME FOR EFA**

UBEC (2009) uncovered that national pupil/class ratio in primary classes was 49:1 and 62:1 at the junior secondary level in 2009, much higher than the recommended 35:1. Classes were found to be especially large in the North where the average class size is 56 students, almost twice as many as an average classroom in the South. Classrooms in early childhood development (ECD) centers are also crowded, with an average of more than 130 pupils per classroom in the North. Moreover, even when schools are available they are often physically unsafe; and water, health, and sanitation facilities are inadequate, further discouraging attendance. World Bank (2008) found that the ratio of pupils to good classrooms was found to be 109:1 at the primary level and 125:1 at the junior secondary level. The 2008 Education Public Expenditure Review shows that about half of primary schools require major rehabilitation. In 2012, World Bank reported that lack of and poor qualities of teachers are a serious hindrance to students' enrollment and learning. Teacher/ student ratios per pupil stood at 36:1 at the primary level in 2010. In addition, estimates from the UBEC in 2009 to 2010 indicated that only 60% of primary school teachers are qualified.

The lack of teachers is particularly acute in the Northwest and Northeast, where only 50 and 53% of teachers were qualified. The Southwest has close to 100% qualified teachers. But even teachers with qualifications do not have adequate professional knowledge and competency

to teach. A teacher assessment conducted in five states in 2010 illustrates that the majority of qualified teachers had only limited (0 to 25%) or emergent (25 to 50%) professional working knowledge. Again significant geographical disparities were found. Likewise, UBEC (2009) discovered that students and teachers do not have adequate educational tools. About 80% or more of students in Nigeria do not have a textbook for a subject, about 60% of primary students do not have a mathematics or English textbook, and materials in languages other than English are scarce.

## **Factors Limiting Implementation of UBE Programme for Achieving EFA**

Liesbet Steer (2013) in his highlighted some of the critical barriers that need to be tackled to make progress toward achieving UBE in Nigeria. He pointed out that the obstacles to achieving UBE are numerous and complex, and cannot be viewed in isolation. With high levels of poverty and significant opportunity costs, many families are unable to afford sending their children to school. Other barriers, including religious beliefs and cultural norms, have prevented many girls from attending school, in particular in the country's North. Early marriage and subsequent teenage pregnancies have adversely affected attendance, retention, and achievement in schools. The sector has also struggled with challenging supply-side constraints. Insufficient and ill-maintained school infrastructure coupled with lack of appropriate teaching materials and qualified teachers at the primary and pre-primary levels have contributed to the low universal basic education outcomes.

These constraints are highly related to broader institutional and financial challenges. The complexity of the over-centralized institutional structure, lack of minimum standards, limited autonomy and accountability at the school level, and inadequate overall monitoring of service delivery and outcomes have been at the heart of Nigeria's education crisis. In addition to these problems, a rapidly rising population will put increasing pressure on all sectors, including the education sector, in the coming years. To elucidate these problems further, Liesbet Steer regroups these problems as follows:

- i. Poverty and economic constraints;
- ii. Cultural, religious, and gender biases;
- iii. Inadequate school infrastructure, teaching materials, and poorly qualified teachers;
- iv. Financing constraints in the education sector;
- v. Weak governance and institutions;

## **Poverty and Economic Constraints**

Despite Nigeria's policy, free basic education is not a reality in Nigeria, and poverty remains one of the key constraints to progress in improving access to basic education. The costs for school-including direct costs,



such as fees, uniforms, textbooks; and indirect costs, as a result of the loss of children's time for work—impact the age of primary enrollment, attendance and completion. Lincove (2009) in an econometric analysis using the 2004 Nigeria EdData Survey and Demographic Health Survey, poverty was found to have a large and statistically significant negative effect on children's school attendance, even after accounting for child, family characteristics, and distance to school. Despite the fact that tuition fees were abolished, NPCN and RTI International (2011) attested that 10% of parents reported paying some form of fee in 2010. About 57% of parents also reported paying a compulsory parent-teacher association fee and a further 40% had to pay exam fees. These costs can be significant. For example, Härmä (2011) foreseen that sending three children to a slum school in Lagos equates to 46% of the minimum wage. Poverty also affects families' ability to invest in early childhood education, which in turn has an impact on age of entry into primary school and learning outcomes. Ajayi (2008) discovered that government only funds 10% of existing early childhood education centers in Nigeria, while parents and other private entities are the largest contributors to this sector. Adequate public funding of early childhood education sector, and supervision of private pre-primary institutions is a major challenge. Poverty constraints interact with other factors. For example, the decision to pay school fees is strongly influenced by gender. Girls' schooling depends on family income to a greater extent than does boys' schooling, with an income elasticity of 9 compared with 6.4 for boys. This implies that when parents face budget constraints, girls are less likely than their male siblings to attend school. Their education is also hindered by the need to provide care for infant siblings or work on a farm, but encouraged by having school-age siblings. Lincove (2009). Malnutrition is a serious problem in Nigeria. Poor nutrition (related to poverty and lack of mothers' education) also drives poor schooling outcomes. According to the 2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 23% of children were underweight, 41% were stunted (suffering from chronic malnutrition), and 14% were wasted (suffering from recent acute malnutrition). World Bank (2013). In spite of improvements in the 1990s, child malnutrition has not shown appreciable changes recently. Viridiana (2012) attested discrepancies between wealth groups have become larger, and geographic inequalities have also increased. Rural children are more exposed to malnutrition than urban children, and these geographic inequities have increased slightly over time (except for wasting). Gender disparities are limited in malnutrition, although boys are slightly disadvantaged in comparison with girls.

### ***Cultural, Religious, and Gender Biases***

In addition to economic constraints, cultural, religious,

and gender-specific barriers affect demand for and access to education in Nigeria. These biases tend to lead to parents to enroll boys instead of or before girls. Barriers related to religious beliefs and traditional practices are particularly severe in Northern Nigeria. This is in line with the report of Action Health Incorporated (2011) that girls in the North marry (for the first time) about four years earlier, at age 16, than their Southern counterparts. Girls in rural areas are also more likely to marry early than girls in urban areas. Early marriage and pregnancy have a significant impact on girls' attendance, retention, and achievement in schools. According to Brown (2012), this problem is further exacerbated when girls start school late and reach the age of marriage before completing the basic education cycle. Among girls age 15 to 19, only 2% of those married were in school, compared with 69% of unmarried girls.

Further barriers related to gender include gender bias in content and also teaching and learning processes in schools. Many parents are reluctant to send their female children to schools that are far from their homes due to fears of child kidnapping and sexual assault. Increasing security challenges are consistently identified as an obstacle to girls' participation in education. In recent years, militancy in the Niger-Delta and insurgency in the North of Nigeria have created a security challenge because schools have been targets of insurgents. Tolulope (2012).

### ***Inadequate School Infrastructure and Poorly Qualified Teachers***

Lincove (2009) posits that access and quality of schooling are also affected by a range of supply-side constraints including inadequate school infrastructure, teaching tools and qualified teachers. The availability of and distance to primary schools has a negative effect on school enrollment in Nigeria. UBEC (2009) uncovered that national pupil/class ratio in primary classes was 49:1 and 62:1 at the junior secondary level in 2009, much higher than the recommended 35:1. Classes were found to be especially large in the North where the average class size is 56 students, almost twice as many as an average classroom in the South. Classrooms in early childhood development (ECD) centers are also crowded, with an average of more than 130 pupils per classroom in the North.

Moreover, even when schools are available they are often physically unsafe; and water, health, and sanitation facilities are inadequate, further discouraging attendance. World Bank (2008) found that the ratio of pupils to good classrooms was found to be 109:1 at the primary level and 125:1 at the junior secondary level. The government estimates a shortfall in classrooms for early childhood education of 90%, primary education of 60%, and junior secondary education of 67%.

The 2008 Education Public Expenditure Review shows

that about half of primary schools require major rehabilitation. In 2012, World Bank reported that lack of and poor qualities of teachers are a serious hindrance to students' enrollment and learning. Teacher/ student ratios per pupil stood at 36:1 at the primary level in 2010. In addition, estimates from the UBEC in 2009 to 2010 indicate that only 60% of primary school teachers are qualified. The lack of teachers is particularly acute in the Northwest and Northeast, where only 50 and 53% of teachers were qualified. The Southwest has close to 100% qualified teachers. But even teachers with qualifications do not have the adequate professional knowledge and competency to teach. Likewise, UBEC (2009) discovered that students and teachers do not have adequate educational tools. About 80% or more of students in Nigeria do not have a textbook for a subject, about 60% of primary students do not have mathematics or English textbook, and materials in languages other than English are scarce. There is similarly a dearth of instructional materials for teachers; fewer than 15% of teachers in Kaduna, Kwara, and Lagos have a teacher guide, and the situation is even worse in Jigawa and Kano.

### ***Financing Constraints in the Education Sector***

There are four main sources of public funding for the public (nonfederal) education sector: state governments, local governments, direct allocations from the federal government (through the UBE Intervention Fund and the Education Trust Fund), and private individuals and organizations, including nongovernmental organizations and international donors in some states. There is a huge lack of information on state and local expenditures for education which makes accurate estimates of total spending difficult. Overall, available data point to a lack of education funding in the sector, in particular at the state level. Excluding direct federal spending through UBEC and the Education Trust Fund, total state education expenditures in all but one of the nine states declined significantly between 2001 and 2005. Spending on essentials such as textbooks, instructional materials, in-service 8%, of total public expenditures on education is absorbed by salaries, whereas the benchmark is 67%. Most local governments and schools have inadequate capacity and financial resources with which to manage primary education (ESSPIN and UK Aid, 2010b).

### ***Weak Governance and Institutions***

Much of the failure to progress toward UBE goals can be attributed to institutional issues (Arong and Ogbadu, 2010; Adamolekun, 2013; World Bank, 2008). The extensive set of institutional and intergovernmental relations for the provision of basic education makes the provision of education in Nigeria particularly complex. Roles and responsibilities between the three tiers of

government, and between government and parastatals, are largely undefined, leaving no government or agency clearly accountable for results. Moreover, these relations have become even more complicated in recent years due to the creation of new agencies and organizations (for example, UBEC and SUBEBs), new policy initiatives (for example, UBE Intervention Fund), the over-centralization or re-centralization of primary education, and the emergence of private education (World Bank, 2008). The complexity of the institutional structure associated with the creation of the UBEC and the SUBEBs has resulted in confusion over roles and jurisdictions across institutions and institutional rivalry at the federal and, even more important, at the state parastatal level. In general, protocols are unnecessarily complicated and unclear, and processes are often unknown and unaccountable. National minimum standards set in law are not enforced, and the resources required to meet established standards are not provided. As a result, standards vary widely across schools and LGAs.

## **CONCLUSION**

As revealed from various literature, the following conclusion were made:

1. There were funds available for UBE implementation but not sufficiently provided to meet up with the high task of the number of student enrollment, school facilities, salary of teachers, teaching aids etc.
2. School facilities are very strong predictors of enrollment into the Junior secondary school.
3. The provision of facilities and teaching aids is also a strong indicator for teacher's interest mostly at the rural areas.
4. Funds utilization, management, transparency and accountability are strong factors that enhance proper spending and use of funds.
5. Corruption in the UBE system among the top and key officials in the system is also a strong indicator of the success of UBE programme.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The article, therefore, recommends that for effective, management and implementation of the UBE, there is need for full participation and cooperation from the public, professionals and the government. The government system should be open to ideas and allow the free role and participation of educational specialist. The government should stop the political practices of nominating key leaders into the educational position. Proper screening should be encouraged to nominate key leaders into the system. More funds should not just be made available, but adequate accountability and transparency should be given more consideration on the

part of the government, agencies and other key officials involved in the system. And this fund should be made sufficient to meet the affected needs of the students. The budget allocated to education should be properly considered before implemented. More Teachers should be employed into the system most especially at the rural areas and there should be room for training and retraining. Teachers should be highly encouraged to work in rural areas where their duty is highly needed. They should also be supported with necessary school facilities and teaching aids for effectiveness in performance. Salaries of teacher should not be delayed and they should be motivated.

Parents should be more informed and educated about the child basic education and also enrolling their child, giving all required support the child needs in schooling, most especially the girls in the northern part of Nigeria. Early marriage should among children or youth be discourage mostly in the northern part of Nigeria as this may affect the child's basic education. And the government can map out strong strategy to making sure that every young girl not only in the Northern part but all states is encouraged to schooling. The schools as well, mostly in the rural areas, for example, should be provided with adequate facilities to enhance a conducive learning environment. This is also a key factor to be considered as earlier discoursed. Student, on the other hand, should be encouraged by a daily meal like a good strategy some state governments have employed. And lastly, the government should set up adequate monitoring/maintenance track on the ground to ensure that school facilities provided are properly used and also maintained in good condition.

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