

# **National Workshop on Improving Governance and Accountability in Primary and Junior Secondary Education in Nigeria, Grand Ibro Hotel Wuse Zone 5 Abuja 19th- 21st May 2015**

## **Topic: Nigeria Education Sector Post-MDGs... A Peep into the Future; Key note Speech Presented by Dr Gladys A.E Makoju (Mrs.)**

### **Protocol**

#### **1.0 Preamble**

The responsibility for ensuring human resource to drive sustainable development is a critical mandate of the education sector. The sector can however not effectively deliver on this mandate outside of the context of good governance. Good governance is predicated on accountability and capacity at all levels of management; at Federal, State, Local Government and micro levels, including schools and higher learning institutions. The absence of good governance, creates inequities within the system, constrains access and participation, promotes disparities in availability of human and learning resources and undermines efficiency of delivery systems. It thrives in the context of bad policies and thwarts efforts at introducing transformation and best practice. In light of the importance of good governance, the Dakar (2000) Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA) had urged Nation States to “develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of education governance and management’ but did not however, provide details of guidelines for entrenching good governance.

I therefore congratulate the Human Development Initiatives (HDI) and the coalition of partners on their selecting a theme that is so apt for this workshop. Permit me also to commend you on your contributions to advancing change in other aspects of human endeavor through research and other activities. As we eagerly await the commencement of the processes that should usher in this much sought after ‘Change’, active participation in gatherings such as this provide the opportunity to synthesize collective contributions as tools to drive the desired change that would surely cut across all facets of the nation’s socio-economic sectors; the education sector in particular.

Although implicitly referenced, the topic specifically addressed by this paper does not accentuate the issues of governance and accountability. It also does not limit our discussions to the basic education sector but instead provides for a holistic consideration of developments across all education subsectors; pre-primary to tertiary. However, before delving into the post-MDGs era, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the state of the education sector prior to MDGs. The paper also gives insight into the status of the sector as it currently stands and as we zero into the end of an era that is expected to have established equal opportunities and assured the right to basic education, for all children regardless of their circumstance. The ensuing analysis would enable assessment of the progress so far as well as throw up outstanding gaps to be addressed as a basis for projections into the future.

#### **2.00 Situation Analysis Pre-MDGs**

A 1992 situation and policy analysis of basic education in Nigeria (FME, SAPA 1993), following the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA), revealed that the decline in government income consequent on the end of the oil boom in the 1980s had its toll on education as with other subsectors. There was corresponding decline in quality of provisions across board, ensuing decreases in net enrolment, low attendance rate, increased drop out, decay and under provision of infrastructural facilities, overcrowded classrooms and so on. Some public schools had no conventional accommodation

with as many as 2.5% of about 38,649 public schools sampled operating under tree shades, furniture was inadequate in 47.0% of the schools with pupils having to carry furniture to and from school on a daily basis. About 36% of pupils in public schools had no writing materials with the majority (77%) having no text books. Consistently more boys than girls were enrolled with 7,729,677 boys enrolled compared to 5,877,572 girls (i.e. 43.2%) enrolled in 1990 and 8,930,600 boys and 6,939,680 girls (i.e. 43.7%) enrolled in 1993. During the same period, net enrolment for girls was as low as 10.5 to 19.0% in some of the Northern States. The under-provisions and inequities identified were not limited to the basic education sub-sector and characterized all subsectors up to the tertiary level. This was the prevailing scenario when Nigeria became a signatory to the Jomtien (1990) declaration on Education for All (EFA) by the year 2000. It was the initial collective attempt by Nation States to universalize access, reduce disparities and improve quality of basic education delivery particularly in developing countries.

Despite the efforts of Government and International Development Agencies (IDAs) by way of establishment of a mass literacy commission and sustained enrolment drive, by the end of 2000, the national gross intake into primary 1 (GIR) remained at 65% (74% for boys and 56% for girls) and 80% (91% for boys and 68% for girls) in 2001. The primary school gross enrolment rate GER was also relatively low at 57% (66% for boys and 48% for girls) in 2000 and 63% (72% for boys and 54% for girls) in 2001. The national adult literacy reported as 57% in 1999, actually declined to 49% by 2001 with a reduction in the literacy rate for women from 44% to 41% in 2001. Nigeria then remained amongst the E9 Countries that contribute 90% of the world's illiterate populations.

It became obvious that the initial target of year 2000 for actualization of EFA goals was unattainable hence the World Education Forum, reiterating its commitment to the EFA goals and within the Dakar Framework for Action, reviewed the target for EFA goals attainment to the year 2015. In the same year, driven by the need to accelerate improvements in the lives of people living in extreme poverty, the World Millennium Summit articulated the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targeted at reducing population of people living in poverty by the year 2015. The MDGs include two education related goals to which the Nigerian Government has also been actively committed.

This paper seeks to use progress made towards achievement of EFA and MDGs as a yardstick for projections on post-MDGs priorities for the basic education/ schools subsector and where it is germane, apply same to all subsectors - secondary as well as tertiary. Progress is considered in terms of developments in policy environment, access and participation, equity of opportunities, quality issues and learning outcomes as may be relevant for any subsector. The analysis also considers governance including, management, planning & data issue, funding, partnerships, some output and outcome variables some of which are discussed as cross cutting issues as they pertain to the sector in general. In addition to the National Policy on Education, the EFA and MDGs have informed National Development Plans such as the NEEDS, SEEDS, Vision 2020, the current Transformation Agenda and other programs and activities established to drive education reform particularly for the school sub sector.

### **3.00 Progress Made**

#### **3.01 Policy Environment**

The launching of the 9 year free and compulsory Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in September 1999 is considered a watershed significant turning point in the development of basic education in Nigeria. This time around, government backed commitment with action by committing 2% of its

Consolidated Revenue as counterpart fund to all 36 States and the FCT for its implementation. The law extended basic education to 6 year primary and 3 year junior secondary schooling. It also recognized pre-primary schooling as part of basic education, thus positioning it for the first time to receiving government's active support. To improve provisions at this level, an Early Child Care Development and Education (ECDE) policy was developed while a school linkage policy requiring all public primary schools to integrate pre-primary sections was adopted. Although the initial framework for the funding of the UBE program did not make provisions for preprimary education, the recent proposal by the government to adopt a 1, 6, 3, 3, 4 Education Policy that officially integrates a one year mandatory pre-primary schooling into the national education system should further assure the right to participation of children at this level.

To ensure that JSS was not constrained by linkage with senior secondary schools, a disarticulation policy requiring separate heads and facilities for junior and senior secondary schools was adopted in 2006. In 2009 however, a new policy requiring the re-articulation of junior and senior secondary schools, under one head with shared structures was enacted. This was for political reasons as State Commissioners of Education were dissatisfied with the entrustment of the management of funds for the UBE program to State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs). Such policy reversals have not been uncommon and have contributed to creating setbacks in the quest for sustainable development of the sector. It is therefore not surprising that some States including Lagos, Edo, Osun and FCT amongst others have so far not complied with the re-articulation policy.

### **3.02 Access and Participation**

With the increasingly supportive policy environment, there has been very rapid expansion in access and participation in ECE. From 1,860,271 in 2005; total enrolment in nursery preprimary schools increased to 2,538,336, in 2009; and 5,880,842 in 2012. In the same vein, total enrolment in primary schools has also been on the increased. From 22,861,884 (GER 92.52% males; 81.92% females) in 2005 enrolment increased to 24,035,371 (GER 91.78% males, 88.33% females) in 2009 and to 26,158,375 (GER 97.65 males, 98.55 females) in 2012. However the increase in total and gross enrolment rate does not reflect the true situation on access and participation of children of primary school going age (6-11year olds). For example, the primary school net enrolment rate, despite the increase in number of pupils enrolled, dropped from 61% in 2007 to 58% (60% males, 55% females) in 2010, implying that more than 40% of pupils of primary school age (6-11 year old) were out of school. The same was also true for enrolment in JSS with a total enrollment of 3,624,163 (GER 38.60% males, 33.82% females) in 2005, 4,435,251 (GER 43.21% males, 38.39 females) in 2009 and 5,277,527 (GER 46.43% males, 42.90% females) in 2012. The implication of the very low GER is that not only are most pupils of JSS going age out-of school, but also that a significant proportion of children who complete primary school are not transiting to JSS despite the seamless transition policy. This is not surprising as some State Ministries of Education and Federal Government Unity Colleges (FUCs) require at least minimum performance on entrance/selection examinations prior to admission to JSS. This process leaves out children who do not attain predetermined cut-off marks and are 'pushed out' to join the growing population of out-of-school children.

### **3.03 Adult Literacy**

The Adult literacy rate is currently estimated at 69% (NMEC, 2015), representing a 20% improvement over the 49% estimate in 2001. The current female adult literacy rate (49.0%) is lower than the male adult literacy rate (69.0%). This represents a slight drop in the 2010 estimate from the National Literacy survey which put the literacy rate at 50.6% for females, 65.1% for men and 57.9% for both sexes. The

disparity in adult literacy rate by place of residence - as high as 73.6% for urban and 49.5% for rural dwellers - observed in the survey has implications for provisions. Similarly, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NBS MICS 2007) also observed disparities amongst States and geo-political zones in female youth adult literacy attainment estimated at only 9% for the North East, 56% for North Central and over 86% for the Southern geo-political zones. These zonal differences also have implications for following up on adult literacy delivery targets post-2015. There is also no evidence that NMEC has been active in the area of lifelong learning, which is where the future focus of the Commission should lie, especially considering that illiteracy is expected to diminish in line with globalization

### **3.04 Senior Secondary Education**

Total enrolment in senior secondary schools, has also been on the increase, but remains relatively low. It was 2,773,418 (GER 33.24% males, 25.49 females) in 2005; 3,392,067 (GER 36.03% males, 30.08% females) in 2009; and 5,152,805 (50.63% males, 41.72% females) in 2012. From policy considerations, the apparent low subscription to senior secondary education is not entirely unexpected as at least 30% JSS completers may have transited to vocational /technical schools or to the informal sector. Notwithstanding, the truism is that some State Governments impose levies or other charges at this level, inadvertently denying right to access of children from low income quartiles. Apart from the 104 Unity Schools on which the Federal Government expends at least, 1 million Naira annually as unit cost per student senior secondary education remains the only subsector that does not receive funding support from the Federal Government or notable IDPs.

### **3.05 Technical/Vocational Education**

Although government has recently embarked on a number of initiatives to improve access and quality of Technical Vocational Education (TVET) the total enrolment in secondary technical/vocational schools has not improved considerably. A recent situation analysis (FME SER 2013) observed uneven distribution of TVET institutes amongst States with Edo State having over 89.6% of TVET institutions while Borno state had only two. Kebbi State however had the highest enrolment (21,101) followed by Adamawa (15,810), Cross River (12,511) and Edo States (11,266). The recent 'vocationalisation' of the senior secondary curriculum which makes it compulsory for every student to offer at least one vocational subject has improved subscription to vocational skills training. The introduction and licensing of Vocational Enterprise Institutes (VEIs) and Innovative Enterprise Institutes (IEI) are also initiatives in the right direction. The Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and the National Commission for Mass Literacy (NMEC) in partnership with other relevant Agencies have developed curricular for training on a number of these skills while a new certification framework which also takes care of trainees under the informal sector has been approved by government. However, the dearth of teachers, instructors, equipment and other facilities for effective dissemination of most of the vocational subjects within the New Senior Secondary School Curriculum remains a challenge and should inform post MDGs action.

### **3.06 Tertiary Education**

Statistics on tertiary education indicate that apart from Universities where there have been consistent increases in enrolment, there have been fluctuations in total enrolment in Monotechnics, Colleges of Education and Polytechnics with enrolment in National Teachers Institute (NTI) on a downward trend. Total enrollment in Colleges of Education was 318,887 in 2009 and 330,405 in 2013 with more males (51.48%) than females (48.20%) enrolled. While the NTI offers NCE teacher training by distance learning

and diploma in education program, in 2007 it received the additional mandate for the upgrade of all practicing teachers with less than NCE minimum qualification under the Teacher Upgrading Program (STUP) program. Available data however indicates consistent decreases in enrollment for the NTI teacher training program with 67,158 enrolled in 2009; 48,871 in 2011; and 42,711 in 2013. The proportion of females enrolled also remains consistently higher than the proportion of males at 64.04% females in 2009; and 69.62 in 2011 and 71.15% in 2013. The decrease in enrolment in NTI is not unexpected as most public school teachers have now acquired the NCE certificate. On the other hand, some private schools prefer to recruit unqualified teachers at lower costs and this poses a major challenge. Also, the recent pronouncement by Government of its intention to raise the minimum teaching qualification to a First Degree has implications for planners and teacher educators especially in a context where the proportion of unqualified teachers in the system remains significant.

There are observed fluctuations in total enrolment in Monotechnics and Polytechnics from 1999 to date. Fluctuation in enrolment in Monotechnics is alleged to arise from the difficulty of sustaining continuity in some of the institutions. From 40 in 2005/6 the number had reduced to 32 in 2010/11. The total enrolment in Monotechnics was 19,623 in 2005/6; 14,690 in 2007/8; and 19,923 in 2010/11 with consistently more males than females 28.54% in 2005/6 and 29.31% in 2010/11. The same obtains with Polytechnics which decreased from 52 in 2007/8 to 45 in 2010/11. Enrollment in Polytechnics has also been on a consistently steady decrease and is also skewed in favour of males with 303,190 (29.28% females) in 2005/6; 241,658 in 2007/8 (29.91%); and 225,171 (39.54%) in 2010/11.

On the other hand, there has been very rapid expansion in access to University education in Nigeria contrary to the trend across Monotechnics and Polytechnics. From 45 universities in 1999 comprising 25 Federal, 17 States and only 3 Private, the total number of Universities currently stands at 139 consisting of 40 Federal, 39 State and 60 Private Universities. The rise in the number of Private Universities is quite significant however there has been criticism that private schools exclude students of low income quartiles due to high fees charged. As would be expected, total enrolment in Universities has also increased steadily though with disparity in favor of males. From 780,001 students comprising only 285,179 (36.56%) females in 2005, the total enrolment increased to 862,573 with a 1.7% increase in number of females to 38.19% in 2011. Despite the increases in enrolment, the current total carrying capacity does not satisfy demand as only about one fifth of candidates who apply through the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) receive placement. For this reason and due to quality and stability issues with the universities calendar, an increasing number of Nigerian students are migrating to Europe, Asia, America, Middle East and indeed other African countries for their first degree. This development is not only draining Nigeria of foreign exchange earnings but has relegated Nigeria to the backseat in a world where education has become an exportable commodity. Redressing the outward migration should be taken up as a post MDG challenge.

### **3.07 Open and Distance Learning**

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) and other accredited 'off campus' programs of conventional Universities, offer alternative modes of part-time degree programs and e-learning opportunities, particularly for students in full time employment, thus further broadening access. The stability of the NOUN systems underscores its ability to graduate students on target thus reinforcing its credibility and growing acceptability of the system as an alternative mode. However, the limited course offering needs to be up scaled within the limits of its capacity, to align with emergent national and global demands.

#### 4.00 Equity of Provisions

Although both the MDG3 and EFA goals advocate achievement of gender equality in education by 2015, available statistics for all subsectors indicate gender inequities relating to access-to-education to be in favor of boys. Table 1 representing the gender parity index which compares the proportion of girls enrolled with the proportion of boys, shows that except for JSSs in 2013, the proportion of boys enrolled was consistently higher than the proportion of girls. The same observation obtains in almost all spheres of tertiary education. Apart from gender, there are also disparities in availability of schools, teachers, learning resources and almost all other forms of provision resulting in disadvantages for children in rural and urban low-income communities. The gender disparity is more pronounced in some States in the Northeast and Northwest geopolitical zones where the proportion of girls enrolled remains at less than 30.0%. For example the NER for girls in the Northwest geopolitical zone in 2010 was 21% and 22% for girls in the Northeast zone compared with 66% for girls in the Southwest and 60% for girls in the Southeast (NEDS 2011). In addition discriminatory cultural and religious practices and economic factors such as poverty as well as early marriage and more recently OVC (orphans and vulnerable children) factor, further constrain access and participation of girls, particularly in rural communities. These issues should of necessity inform actions to mobilize girls' participation in post MDG era.

To improve girls participation in the Northern States, the Girls Education Program (GEP) was introduced by the Federal government with the support of some IDPs. It was later renamed the Gender Education Program with its mandate expanded to address the low participation of boys arising from the 'boy drop-out' syndrome in some Southeastern states as well as out-of school boys in Oyo state. Other initiatives aimed at redressing gender imbalance include, the integration of gender sensitive policies, the reintegration of girl drop-outs in non-formal education programs, review of text books for gender friendliness, Grant in Aid and microcredit schemes for mothers aimed at poverty reduction as well as Student Tutoring and Counseling (STUMEC) among others (EFA (Nigeria) Report Card 2009, 2010).

Table 4 represents GPI for primary, junior and senior secondary schools from 1999 through to 2013. The table depicts increases in girls participation to the extent that in 2013, the proportion of girls enrolled in primary schools outstripped the proportion of boys thus indicating the success of GEP and other targeted activities.

**Table 4: Primary and Junior Secondary Education Gender Parity Index**

Year	1999	2005	2006	2009	2012	2013
Primary Education	0.79	0.85	0.88	0.92	0.96	1.01
Junior Secondary	NA	0.90	0.81	0.88	0.92	NA
Senior Secondary	NA	0.76	NA	0.84	NA	0.82

#### 4.01 Out of School Children and Youth

Statistics indicate that the number of out-school-children has been on the rise since 1999. From 7.4 million in 1999 it increased to 8 million in 2005, 8.7 million in 2007 and to as high as 10.5 million in 2011 (UNESCO Annual Global Monitoring Report, 2009 to 2014). In the absence of recent, consistent and

reliable data, the population of out-of-school children is still stated at over 10million; placing this phenomenon as a major challenge to the sector. The implication is that current strategies have not been able to reach the marginalized in different contexts including a large population of Almajiri who remain on the street, children on/of the street in some Southern States, Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) in Benue and other states, children in conflict situations, children living in extreme poverty and others where schools are not available or accessible. Bringing on board all categories of excluded children is another major challenge for post MDGs era while a target should be set for its accomplishment.

According to the UNESCO Global Monitoring report literacy rates for children and youth in the 17-24 age brackets was 71% between 1985/99 and 72% between 2005/8. The implication is that over 25% of children and youth in the age bracket are illiterate and in the absence of recent and reliable data, it may be assumed that the situation remains largely unchanged within a context where a significant proportion of graduates remain out of job. Provisions that are already in place towards meeting the needs of this group include integration into formal and non-formal education programs, provisions for special and inclusive education for children with special needs, HIV awareness and prevention programs and special skill training programs for youth. Government has also intensified efforts at standardization and certification of provisions by the non-formal sector to which most of the adolescents and youth in this category subscribe.

## **5.00 Quality**

The determinants of quality are embedded in key aspects of input, process and outcome. Deriving from statistical indicators, inputs include; pupil: teacher ratio, pupil: qualified-teacher ratio, percentage of qualified teachers, pupil: classroom ratio, pupil: text-book ratio and so on. Process factors such as methodology, classroom management capacity, teacher support services, opportunity for continuous professional development of teachers and other classroom dynamics also impact on quality. Similarly output and outcome factors such as student's cumulative continuous assessment scores, performance in national examinations, graduate on-the-job performance, etc. constitute quality and efficiency indicators. To inform projections into the future, an analysis of the current status of some of these indicators, for which reasonable amounts of data are currently available, provide insight on progress made and the gaps to be addressed post –MDGs and are presented as follow.

### **5.01 Proportion of Qualified Teachers**

The proportion of qualified teachers in 2010 was 42.5% in public ECD centers, 68% in public primary schools and 86% in JSSs (UBEC 2010). The teacher: pupil ratio for the same year was 1:42 for ECD, 1:36 for primary schools and 1:32 for JSSs compared with the national bench mark of 1:25 for ECDE and 1:40 for Primary and Junior Secondary Schools. Qualified teacher: pupil ratios were however higher for the same year; 1:62 for ECD, 1:60 for primary schools and 1:32 for JSS and are below the benchmark for ECD and primary schools. This is however an improvement over 2006 with qualified teacher pupil ratio at 1:119.6; indicating that the teacher intervention programs at this level, are making positive impact. The presence of unqualified teachers five years after the take-off of the STUP, that was intended as a short term intervention program, is however indicative of poor governance and quality assurance practices. More so as it appears that some States as with private schools do not comply with enforcement of the NCE minimum qualification policy. It is mandatory that unqualified teachers be forced out of the system in the post MDGs era

## **5.02 Learning Outcomes**

Performances on national examinations including the Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (SSCE) WAEC, NECO and monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) assessment tests provide basis for evaluation of quality of outputs and outcomes. The proportion of candidates who obtained at least five credits and above including English language and Mathematics in the SSCE WAEC examinations has increased consistently from 27.04% in 2010 to 30.9% in 2011 and 37.66% in 2012. The success rate however remains relatively low.

Although only 8.07% of candidates obtained five credits and above in English Language and Mathematics in the 2011 SSCE NECO examination, there was significant improvement to 32.5% success rate in 2012. Despite the increase, the success rate also remains less than 50% - this is indicative of low system efficiency and resources wastage. Similarly the national mean percentage on performance by primary school pupils' in Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) National assessment (FME MLA 2003) was 32.2% in Numeracy (Mathematics) tests; 25.2% in Literacy (English Language) and 36.86% in Life Skills (Social Studies, Science, Health and Survival Skills) tests. This corroborated the findings from the pioneering assessments of 1996 (FME.MLA 1997) no other MLA have been conducted since 2003 despite global acceptance of the MLA as a reliable quality assurance tool for planning and policy decision making. The MLA also offers a tool that regularly tracks performance and institutes redress as soon as performance no longer conforms to standards rather than waiting until students have sat for and failed WAEC/NECO examinations. The institutionalization and commitment to a sustainable MLA system of performance tracking is another must do for post MDGs era.

## **5.03 The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB)**

Prior to adoption of the 6-3-3-4 education system, secondary education was for duration of five years. Admission into the university was based on two options, one requiring successful completion of a two year A-Level, which qualified a candidate for a 3 years degree program, and the other requiring a candidate to sit a preliminary examination which qualified him/her for a 4 year degree program. The adoption of the 3-3 system extended the duration of secondary education to 6 years, despite this, students who have acquired the minimum admission requirement for a first degree programs are further required to sit for and obtain a minimum of cut off mark on the JAMB examinations. Having satisfied this requirement, the student has to undertake a final screening at the university. This tortuous process is vulnerable to corruption and is unduly time and resource consuming. The Oransaye Commission for various other reasons recommended that the JAMB be scrapped. In view of the proposal for University autonomy, there is need for the re-definition of the role of JAMB within the extenuating circumstances. The JAMB could for example serve as a clearing house.

## **5.04 National Common Entrance:**

The National Common Entrance Examinations was scrapped in 2006 to allow for seamless transition from primary to junior secondary school as implicit in the 9 year Basic Education Law. The examination was however restored in 2009 by the Federal Ministry of Education for selection of students into Federal Government Colleges. In the same vein, some State and Federal Government establishment still insist on Primary School Leaving Certificate despite the fact that, as stated within the 9-year basic education policy, primary 6 is no longer a terminal point and hence does not qualify a pupil for certification. Indeed the failure in selection/ placement examinations for prequalification and placement of primary 6 pupils in public school JSS classes was stated as the reason why 11% of

pupils (8% urban and 13% rural) were 'pushed out' of school (NEDS 2010). This issue should be a course for concern to assure that pupils not schooling prematurely.

### **5.05 Curriculum and Relevance**

To ensure a more responsive curriculum to meeting national developmental needs and individual self-sufficiency, a 9-year Basic Education curriculum was introduced in 2008. New subjects as Basic Technology, ICT and French were added along with creative & critical thinking and some entrepreneurial skills as electives. The new curriculum has subsequently been extensively reviewed to make it less cumbersome and more realistically implementable. The reviewed curriculum is currently being implemented but need to be monitored to ensure compliance with guidelines.

A new vocationalised senior secondary school curriculum with improved relevance was introduced in 2011. Its major challenges however are inadequate preparedness of teachers prior to its implementation and the paucity of teachers, equipment and other teaching and learning resources, especially for the 35 vocational skills/subjects. At the tertiary level, a new policy requiring that Entrepreneurial studies be taken compulsorily as part of a General Studies Course would improve student's preparedness for the world of work. Furthermore, improved commitment to enforcing the SIWES (Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme) is another step in the right direction

### **6.00 Quality Assurance**

The Federal Government through the Federal Inspectorate Service (FIS) recently renamed the department of Quality Assurance to reflect its new orientation, has the mandate to set standards and assure quality of the education delivery system below the tertiary level. State Ministries of Education (SMOEs) and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) also undertake quality assurance functions as part of their mandate. In collaboration with relevant Parastatals, SMOEs and other stakeholders and with technical support from DFID, the FIS has adapted more participatory inspection strategies and developed new instruments for Whole School Evaluation. The new approach indeed within in the short term proved to be more effective at generating improved outcomes in the schools system. However the absence of synergy of numerous Agencies, which apart from the FIS, SIS and LGEAs include UBEC, SUBEB and other State departments for monitoring and supervision of schools, creates multiple school visits and over-supervision of schools promoting "inspection fatigue" of vulnerable schools. This also constitutes resource wastage and should be addressed within the post MDGs scheme.

As with the schools sub- sector there have been developments to strengthen the system of accreditation and quality assurance practices at tertiary level. For example, the NUC has reviewed the instruments for accreditation, developed guidelines for assuring quality of Cross Boarder programs and introduced measures to assure quality of the Distance Learning programs. The NUC has also introduced a Lead Scholar program and established linkage with external experts including academics in Diaspora as part of quality assurance measures.

### **7.00 Governance**

With the failure of increasingly huge investments to promote commensurate growth and outcomes, stakeholders are increasingly focusing on governance and accountability as critical bottlenecks causing sustained and pervasive underperformance of the Nigerian education sector. Weak or bad governance promotes inequities in all aspects of education delivery and reduces access for the underprivileged,

particularly girls. Low commitment to enforcement of requisite policies has failed to completely eliminate practices that deprive children of the right to full participation.

### **7.01 Teacher Governance**

There are problems with teacher governance, in particular in the deployment of teachers and the extent of their motivation. A 2009/11 situation analysis (SESP and SESOP 2009/2011) confirmed that inequities in teacher deployment contribute to under performance of rural schools. The most experienced and qualified female teachers abound in urban schools where pupil: teacher ratios are often far below the recommended 1:40 for reasons of political interference. This is to the detriment of schools in rural communities where paucity of qualified and experienced female teachers sustains low attendance of girls in some communities and creates disparities in learning achievement between urban and rural schools pupils. The inability to sustain regular payment of teachers' salaries and allowances promotes low motivation of teachers occasioning regular strike actions which deprive pupils of learning time. The appointment of principals on the basis of patronage and favoritism rather than on merit/ competence and experience/seniority also promotes discontent amongst teachers and undermines the system's efficiency.

### **7.02 Education Management Information System (EMIS)**

The inability to sustain availability of reliable, relevant and up-to-date data for decision making and planning arises largely from the low commitment to the implementation of the 2008 Education Management Information System (EMIS) Policy and Guidelines for Data Management. This underlies the absence of data on key indicators on Nigeria in international publications as the UNESCO Annual Global Monitoring Report on EFA which should serve basis for comparison with other countries on EFA goal attainment. The last official publication of national school census statistics was in 2011 making 2010 data the official and most recent version. The collection of data by multiple Agencies occasions publication of non-harmonized and inconsistent published education data. A systematized implementation of the EMIS Policy and accruing guidelines in the post MDGs era would ensure availability of reliable and recent which has so far remained elusive .

### **7.03 Strategic and Operational Planning**

With the support of UNICEF and DFID, 34 out of the 36 States have developed their State Strategic Education Sector Plans (SESPs) and States Strategic Education Operations Plans (SESOPs). The SESP and SESOPs were informed by UBE, MDGs and individual State's developmental aspirations and are to serve as roadmaps for leveraging the reform and repositioning of state education delivery systems. Unfortunately only a few States are committed to actively implementing the SESP and SESOP which should synchronize and accelerate standards attainment nationwide. Similarly the non-completion of the Strategic National Education Sector Plan derives largely from the high turnover of Ministers, each of who has so far preferred to operate on the basis of short/medium term plans. The completion and commitment to implementation the 10 year strategic and operational sector plans should constitute a priority of the post MDGs era.

### **7.04 School Based Management Committee (SBMC)**

As part of the education reform and in line with decentralization principle, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of school level management, government in 2006, instituted a policy requiring that every public primary and secondary schools establishes a School Based Management Committee. For proper

orientation of members of SBMCs, UBEC has recently embarked on a train the trainer approach while the DFID supports training of members in collaborating States. In the absence of equivalent sustained initiative for SBMC members in secondary schools, despite the initial enthusiasm, most of the SBMCs established in secondary schools are not functioning. Where they are functioning, SBMCs are making positive impact. However, there are instances of politicization of appointment into SBMCs creating unfulfilled expectations especially where there is no financial remuneration.

An emerging trend in the tertiary subsector is that membership of Governing Councils of Federal Institutions has virtually been reduced to being a prerogative of party carrying card members as compensation for partisanship. Councils are no longer constituted on the basis of knowledge, experience or value a member is likely to add to an institution's capacity to deliver. This does not augur well for the quest to better position our higher institutions for global competitiveness and would need to be redressed in the post MDGs era.

## 8.00 Funding

The challenges of financing education are not necessarily in terms of quantum of resources allocated but rather in poor prioritization in disbursement, low political will, poor commitment to good governance, absence of an effective tracking mechanism and absence of transparency and accountability in the management of available resources. Although total annual budgetary appropriation to the sector has consistently recently been on the increase, as indicated in Table 2, the bulk of allocation has disproportionately been on Personnel emolument leaving very little to Capital expenditure necessary for development of infrastructure, equipment and other relevant resources. For example in the Federal Ministry of Education, there are more administrative than professional departments. The implication is that the budget on personnel is expended on staff that do not contribute added value to the quality or efficiency of schools.

**Table 2 – Federal Government Allocation to Education 2012-2014**

Year	2012	2013	2014
<b>Total Personnel</b>	318,267,492,560	343,078,926,591	421,032,329,092
<b>Total Recurrent</b>	342,727,781,936	366,247,658,676	443,922,095,037
<b>Total Capital</b>	54,650,331,902	71,230,438,355	49,536,035,231
<b>Total Allocation</b>	397,378,113,838	437,478,097,032	493,458,130,462

Some of the Ministry's Parastatals have also created State and/or Zonal offices in preference to deploying ICT to foster communication with the public. Such practices unduly swell the number of staff. A 2006 reform that attempted to redress this lopsidedness and reduce the number of Parastatals of the FME was subsequently reversed. Similarly, the Oronsaye Report which reinforced the position of the 2006 reform may also be left to roost.

The non prioritization of needs inadvertently denies access to children from disadvantaged backgrounds creating inequities. For example, the UBE law, which made preprimary education a key component of basic education, did not make any financial provision for its funding. For this reason, preprimary education still virtually remains the responsibility of the private sector thus denying access to children from low income quartiles. However, the recent pronouncement on the adoption of a '1-6-3-3-4' system of education should redress this anomaly. On the other hand, the over centralization of the management of the UBE program promotes resource wastage as evidenced in the bulk of funds expended annually on monitoring and evaluation and other miscellaneous functions which are far in excess of millions of naira annually. The senior secondary education subsector has also not benefitted financially from ongoing reforms. Apart from the FUCs, for which the Federal Government contributes at least one million naira as cost per student, no other secondary schools receive financial support from the Federal Government. The persisting low enrolment at this level as already observed may also not be unrelated to the levies and fees charged by some State governments which deny the rights to participation of children from underprivileged backgrounds.

When pooled together, the total national spending on education is far in excess of direct allocations by the Federal, States and LGAs, which admittedly are not always fully released. In addition to rapidly increasing private sector participation, other sources of funding include the MDGs DRGs, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) as well as IDPs in Education. However the absence of an effective tracking system coupled with corruption predicted on bad governance practice sustain the application and misappropriation of resources that should otherwise support reform and development of the sector.

### **9.00 Research and Development**

The tertiary education subsector has not made any significant contributions to promoting development by way of research and innovations as has been the case with renowned Nigerian academicians and scientists in other countries. The Tertiary Education Fund (ETF) had in the past complained of the under utilization of special funds set apart to promote research and development in Federal Universities. However, as part of strategy to support innovation and research in Universities, the NUC convenes the Nigerian Universities Research and Development Fair (NURESDEF) to show case and reward innovations in technology and contributions to advancing knowledge. The World Bank has also just recently provided grants to support designated Universities to becoming centers of excellence in different fields. In contrast, education research itself remains grossly underfunded while the findings from sectoral research have not been sufficiently applied to advance development within the sector.

### **10.00 ICT Penetration**

There are inequalities in acquisition of ICT skills and disparities in the extent of ICT penetration in subsystems within the sector. A 2010 national survey observed that the proportion of teachers with computer literacy ranged from 26% of primary school teachers and 29% of teachers of JSSs in the Southwest geopolitical zone to only 4% of primary school teachers and 22% of teachers in JSSs in the Northeast geopolitical zone. The inclusion of computer studies as a core and compulsory subject in the new curriculum for basic education should promote equal opportunities for computer skills acquisition. However, not all schools have access to electricity while the majority may not necessarily have the benefit of uninterrupted power supply. Indeed there are inequities in access to computer systems and in availability of computer educators, with urban private schools being more advantaged. Similarly there is also relative low penetration in application of ICT in school and curriculum administration. The current

attempt by JAMB to replace the old paper and pen tests with computer based testing is a pointer to potential for which ICT could be deployed in future and should be strengthened and up scaled.

### **11.00 Sexual Harassment and other Vices**

Degeneration of societal values is manifest in unwholesome and immoral practices amongst students to which society appears to be turning a blind eye. Although some institutions have attempted to impose some form of dress code, there has been resurgence of cultism, rising case of prostitution, armed robbery, internet fraud and other vices amongst students. There are allegations of sexual harassment by teachers and students alike. A 2003 National Survey (FME ESA 2007) observed that sexual harassment was no longer limited to tertiary institutions as 12.5% of principals reported, incidents of sexual harassment in their schools with male students harassing female students making up 7.6% of reported cases, males outside the school harassing female students making up 6.84% and male teachers harassing female students as frequent as 31.53%. It is alleged that in tertiary institutions, lecturers request pecuniary benefits (Sorting) to confer undue privileges to students. Rather than overlook them, these issues should be addressed in the post MDGs era to restore order in schools and higher institutions and guarantee safety of the girl child.

### **12.00 Children in Conflict Situations**

Recent developments in the socio-political context have created new challenges that place children in such circumstances that hinder full participation in schools. These include; enduring unresolved communal conflicts and, more recently, the menace of terrorism that has displaced families, forcing them into refugee camps as internally displaced persons. Such occurrences place children in difficult and unusual circumstances and deny them access to schooling. The absence of policies and guidelines that address the needs of children in such situations denies them access to formal learning opportunities.

### **13.00 Challenges and Way Forward - Post MDGs**

The foregoing analysis has unraveled some of the subsisting challenges of the education sector. The sector wide approach conveyed by the topic under consideration made it imperative to examine issues as they cut across all subsectors of education while not losing sight of the need to draw largely on the basic education sector, which is the focus of the current workshop. Mindful that the analysis may not have touched on all possible issues that bedevil the sector, the ensuing discussions on the way forward are limited only to some of the key issues that need necessarily be addressed as aspects of post MDGs priorities. Addressing these and other outstanding issues should restore credibility and efficiency of the sector and position the education to playing the complementary of roles to sustain Nigeria's current leadership position in Africa.

In the absence of reliable, up-to-date data to guide sector-wide evidenced based policy decision making and planning, government should undertake a Rapid Assessment to generate data on the current realities of the sector. This will provide an empirical foundation for development of sector strategic and operation plans as roadmap for repositioning the sector for sustainable development.

There has been much hue and cry, particularly by non-practitioners, on the suitability of the 6-3-3-4 system on which the sector operates. The consensus however, is that the problem does not repose on the system but on the low commitment of operators to making the system work despite huge

investment from government. The recent pronouncement of the Government's intention to adopt a 1-6-3-3-4 system does not encroach on the fundamentals of the current system and indeed reiterates commitment to retaining the system. The 1-6-3-3-4 system should be strengthened to deliver more effectively on the education mandate.

In view of the importance of preprimary education to providing a head start for beneficiaries and conferring advantages that continue to subsist at least up to senior secondary school (FME MLA 2003), the UBE Law and its financial framework should be reviewed to assure the right of about 61.0% of out of school children of ECD age to qualitative preprimary education. The compulsory component of the UBE Law should be enforced while all public primary schools that have not created preprimary classes should be made to comply to expand the scope of opportunities and assure the right of all children to preprimary education.

With about 10.5 million of children of basic education school going age are still completely left out of the system, Nigeria will have to redefine its own targets and articulate its framework to ensure reach and assure the right to education of all those who are yet to come on board the process. The proposed Rapid Assessment should have this as one of its objectives. Subsequently awareness and mobilization campaigns at grassroots level should be intensified and the compulsory component of UBE law enforced. All parents and guardians who deprive children of the right to education should be sanctioned.

The Almajiri education initiative should be intensified in all affected States including those yet to commit to the process. Government should collaborate with NGOs currently involved in the education of street children of all categories. The legacy created by the current government of Akwa Ibom state against labeling of children as witches or wizards and depriving them of the most basic rights must be sustained. The OVCs and children in persistent conflict areas in Benue State make up the bulk of those who remain out-of-school and deserve special attention. The post MDGs era must ensure their right to education; since levies are imposed at all levels of schooling by the State government. The microcredit scheme for mothers should be extended to families in low income quartiles particularly in rural and urban disadvantaged communities where children do not enroll or attend school regularly. Where there is a National or State School Map, the map should be deployed for identifying locations where new schools would be required and where other resource gaps would have to be provided for. In the absence of a School Map, developing one should be treated as a post MDG priority.

For equity and quality of provisions, the proposed School Map/findings from the recommended Rapid Assessment should provide data on resource requirements to assure adequacy of provisions at least for all public schools. This would remove inequities in learning acquisition, improve level of pupils learning achievements and upgrade the efficiency and effectiveness of the national school system.

School level governance should be strengthened through training and proper role definition for SBMCs. Every public school should mandatorily have an SBMC whose members are highly committed and accountable. Communities and Non-Governmental Organizations should be empowered to track the application of funds particularly in the execution of schools projects. The UBE coordinated Conditional Cash Transfer initiative should be sustained and extended to secondary schools while the 2006 Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative (CATI) which was jettisoned should be revived and properly deployed.

A new target for all unqualified teachers to obtain the NCE minimum qualification should be set and enforced. Any school that retains or recruits unqualified teachers should be sanctioned while a new target should also be set and enforced for the NTI to wind up the STUP program. Government should vigorously pursue the ratification of the proposal to make a first degree the national minimum teaching qualification in the light of existing realities. Alongside this, the government should stop spoon feeding the Teachers' Registration Council as it has the potential to become completely self sustaining. The Agency should commit fully to discharging its mandate as entrenched in its enabling instrument as this would further infuse quality and credibility in public and private education delivery.

The role of quality assurance departments at different levels of governance should be reviewed to avoid overlap of functions, achieve synergy, reduce multiple undifferentiated visits to schools, avoid inspection fatigue and address resource wastage. More effective teacher continuous capacity development systems that align with emergent global good practices in teacher support service delivery should be entrenched. In-school teacher development practices and mentoring should be adopted and instituted through train-the-trainer programs for principals instead of reliance on external trainings that are conducted outside the reality of the classroom setting.

The implementation of the new senior secondary school curriculum and the revised primary and junior secondary school curricula should be tracked on a sustainable basis. A more effective tracking system would involve the application of emergent quality assurance practices. The institutionalization of regular Monitoring of Learning Achievement as is the emergent trend in advanced and developing countries is a must do. Nigeria does not currently officially subscribe to any of the regional or global partnerships on MLA and therefore does not enjoy the benefits that should accrue. Indeed, Nigeria has the potential to initiate and lead a West African English Speaking MLA partnership such as already exists for the French speaking countries.

Government is on the right track in strengthening the formal, non-formal and informal delivery of TVET. Both the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Technical Examinations Board (NTEB) should assure quality of provisions in TVET delivery. The new certification guidelines should be applied at all levels of provision. The Agencies should continue to collaborate with NERDC and NMEC to ensure adequacy of curriculum for all vocational subjects. The distribution of vocational training materials and equipment to providers of vocational training recently embarked upon by NMEC should be sustained equitably while the office of the Special Assistant to the President on the administration of the MDGs DRGs should continue to support this initiative.

There are several laudable proposals by government which are yet to be fully actualized. These include amongst others; the bill on the proposal for University Autonomy which is still awaiting Presidential assent; the 12-year basic education program which will accord senior secondary education the advantage of FGN counterpart funding; the 1-3-3-4 system; seamless/ examinations free transition from primary to JSSs, etcetera. These will further decentralize Universities administration, strengthen governance and accountability, promote equity in funding for all subsectors, broaden access, enhance quality of provisions at all levels and improve deliverables to learners and the sector's efficiency.

The role of JAMB, UBE and all existing Parastatals of the FME should be scrutinized in light of the Oronsaye Report and the 2006 FME Reform initiative. These should be reviewed with a view to streamlining of functions and strengthening the Agencies to deliver on the reviewed mandates.

The Federal Government should, in line with global practices, review its role in the direct management of basic education institutions; primary, JSS and SSS. Government should hand over the management of FUCs as these institutions are no longer delivering on the initial mandate of forging national Unity and serving as models of excellence. Most have become glorified community schools in view of the reality of the current socio-political milieu. For example, except in exceptional cases no parent who resides in Sokoto would wish to send a 10 or 11 year old child to Ikot Epkene, Calabar, Ibillo or Ipetumodu in the quest for basic education. Most of the institutions are living on past glory as the SSCE and NECO results annually portray. They have become examples of the impact of poor governance predicated on syndrome of 'Absentee Landlord' and degenerated to conduit pipes for siphoning government resources into private pockets. There is therefore no justification for the annual more than one million Naira dispensed as cost per unit on students in the context of equal opportunities professed in the National Policy on Education and reiterated by EFA and MDGs.

All 36 State Governments must be compelled to access the Federal Government intervention funds to assure the right of every Nigerian child to access and receive good quality basic education. The President, Legislature and high level policy makers should engage in dialogue with State Governments to maximize benefits of their laudable intentions. The NGOs in education and related others that promote the enforcement of human rights, should engage defaulting States to ensure enforcement of rights of the Nigerian Child.

The NUC has the obligation to place Nigerian Universities in enviable positions on the global league. All subsisting challenges that constrain the credibility, acceptability and quality of tertiary/higher education in Nigeria should be identified and redressed. These should ensure the quality, currency and adequacy of teaching resources, stability of Universities Calendar and strict compliance with prescribed standards. All regulatory agencies should strictly enforce the outcome of accreditation exercises, strengthen research and development, create synergy of course offerings with labor market and impose sanctions on non-conforming students and lecturers who undermine and misrepresent the image of our institutions. The NUC should collaborate with other tertiary education regulatory agencies to identify all subsisting factors that constrain global competitiveness of our Universities with a view to placing them on the top of regional and international league tables.

As initially stated, this paper does not attempt to unravel the gamut of challenges facing the Nigerian education sector neither does it pretend that the post-MDGs directions as proffered are the best possible options to position the sector for regional or global competitiveness. What the paper does attempt to do is to throw up issues for collective discourse at this forum. This I hope, is the purpose for which this topic was selected by the organizers so serve as a means of opening up discussions on the ramification of possibilities in which good governance would make a difference when conceived from a sector wide approach.

I thank you once again for your foresight for choosing this topic as part of your contributions to the new administrations CHANGE agenda.

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