

FINAL TERMS OF REFERENCE [TOR] FOR NIGERIA'S EDUCATION GROUP [NEG]

1.0 Introduction

Nigeria has an estimated population of 200 million, 106 million [53 per cent] of whom are school-aged.¹ Over the last decade, the education sector in Nigeria has made great strides in improving access to education: pre-primary school participation increased from 45 per cent to 61 per cent between 2017 and 2020; primary school enrolment increased by 5 million from 23 million to 28 million between 2015 and 2020 ; and the rate of out of school children [OOSC] also decreased by 10 per cent from 42 per cent to 32 per cent between 2011 and 2019. [Source: NEMIS]

Despite the above, Nigeria is presently reputed to have the largest number of OOSC globally. An estimated 1 in 3 children are out of school (OOS) in Nigeria: this is approximately 10.2 million primary school aged children and additional 8.1 million junior secondary aged children². The majority of OOSC belong to disadvantaged groups living in the North - Almajiris³, internally displaced children, children from poor households and children with disability. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that even where children are in school, little learning is taking place. 70 per cent of children in Nigeria cannot read with meaning or solve simple mathematical problems⁴. Significant barriers and bottlenecks include:

- i. very low public spending on education – only 1.97% of GDP is allocated to education [only 6% of the recurrent expenditure is dedicated to non-salary items]⁵
- ii. inadequate numbers and underprepared teachers with 27% of the teaching staff unqualified; 175,000 qualified teachers are needed to fill capacity gaps⁶
- iii. Frequent attacks on schools and abduction of school children in the recent past- in 2020, 25 schools were attacked; 1,470 learners abducted, 200 children are still missing, over 1 million children are too afraid to return to schools [2021]. This led to 11,500 school closures in 2020.⁷

¹ World Bank. (2020).

² UBEC Personnel Audit and Digest of Basic Education Statistics in Nigeria, 2018

³ Almajiri children are mostly boys aged between 5 and 18 years attending Qur'anic education (less than 2% are girls). Almajiri children (approx. 2 million) are considered out of school in Nigeria, most of whom are in Northern Nigeria, living with Mallams who are, Islamic teachers, and the proprietors of Islamic learning centers called Tsangaya or Qur'anic schools.

⁴ Nigeria Measuring of Learning Achievement (MLA) (2017)

⁵ UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning and the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2020). *Education Sector Analysis*

⁶ UBEC (2019). 2018 National Personnel Audit (NPA) Report on Public and Private Basic Education Schools in Nigeria

⁷ SB Intelligence (2021). Attacks on Education in Nigeria 2020-2021

Nigeria boasts a large portfolio of development partner supported projects and programmes. To foster policy dialogue as well as coordinate and harmonize donor support, the Nigeria Education Group [NEG] was established in 2013 to work jointly with the Federal Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to ensure that development assistance or foreign aid, in addition to government resources yields expected outcomes in the education sector.

2.0 Objective

The overarching goal of this Terms of Reference [ToR] is to reinforce the country's capacity to deliver its education priorities through more effective stakeholder coordination that enables evidence-based decision making and better alignment of partner resources towards government's priorities. The expected result is a revised sector-wide coordination with clearly defined roles and functions for government, donors, development partners and civil society. The structure will be established and adopted by the Federal Ministry of Education and its agencies.

Specific objectives include:

- i. Promote harmonization, alignment, and coordination among education partners in support of government priorities, to foster mutual accountability and to reduce transaction costs;
- ii. Provide strategic direction in the development, implementation and review of education policies and plans;
- iii. Provide strategic direction in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the ministerial strategic plan; and
- iv. Advocate and support adequate, efficient, equitable and transparent financing of the education sector and resource use.

3.0 Guiding Principles of NEG

The NEG will be guided by the following key principles: ⁸

- i. Clear and agreed mandate, functions, and objectives. The objectives will be reviewed annually in line with country priorities;
- ii. Inclusive and engaging representation evidenced in the membership structure;
- iii. Clear milestone/ priority list for each year with key performance indicators; and
- iv. Clear and demonstrable leadership, ownership, commitment, and governance from government.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Co-Chairs will:

- i. Arrange and conduct all NEG scheduled meetings with the support of the secretariat;

⁸ In line with GPE's key principles towards an effective Local Education Group - <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2020-04-GPE-principles-effective-local-education-groups.pdf>

- ii. Chair meetings, prepare and circulate the agenda and minutes to members with the support of the secretariat;
- iii. Share information of wider interest to the NEG as necessary;
- iv. Seek and summarize the views of NEG members on key issues and coordinate feedback/comments when needed;
- v. Establish and dissolve working groups in agreement with the core members; and
- vi. Inform the NEG of important news and events.

4.2 The FME will:

- i. Maintain past meeting records for NEG scheduled and called meetings;
- ii. Maintain an accurate database and contact list of NEG members;
- iii. Draft quarterly reports on the progress of the education sector;
- iv. Coordinate all NEG members sector interventions/activities and report;
- v. Lead on and set education sector priorities and objectives;
- vi. Identify areas and issues to improve donor collaboration and harmonize education programming efforts; and
- vii. Retain and lead on sector coordination responsibilities not specified under these Terms of Reference.
- viii. Initiate actions on areas of emergency that may require urgent attention and report same to the NEG

4.3 NEG Core Members will:

- i. Attend quarterly coordination meetings and actively participate in, provide timely inputs, and support government education related policy formulation processes open to Development Partners [DPs], including sector reviews, progress reports on the implementation of relevant strategies and policies;
- ii. Share information on key issues in the sector as it relates to the implementation of the ESP; MSP
- iii. Vote as necessary when issues are to be decided upon and when such motion to vote is called for by the NEG Co-Chair; and
- iv. Promote policy dialogue on strategic sectoral issues.

5.0 Frequency of meetings

NEG will meet on a quarterly basis through the calendar year at an agreed time and Venue or virtually as will be determined. The meetings will be aligned with the FME's education meeting cycle for the Joint Consultative Committee on Education [JCCE] and National Council on Education [NCE] in support of decision-making. The duration of the meeting will be in accordance with the agenda, not exceeding three hours.

6.0 Organisation and administration

Co-chairs Nomination: The nominated co-chair of the NEG will serve for a term of two [2] years on a rotational basis. This can be extended by one year as needed. A roster of co-chairs will be provided by the Education Development Partners Group [EDPG] to

ensure rotation among development partners and to support predictability of leadership. The co-chair will be suggested/ presented to the FME for their endorsement.

Secretariat: A part-time secretariat will be made available by FME with the role of ensuring strong knowledge management and coordination systems. The secretariat [in support of the Co-chair] will prepare and share agendas, minutes, and relevant documents to members as and when due.

Logistics/funding: All members may be required to contribute to logistics and funding efforts according to their respective capacities.

7.0 Governance Structure and Membership

7.1 Governance Structure

The NEG will have co-chairs, one by the Federal Ministry of Education [FME], represented by the Permanent Secretary and one by a nominated representative from the Education Development Partners Group [EDPG].

The Secretariat will be formed by members from the FME's Department of Educational Planning, Research & Development [EPR&D] and Basic Education Department [BED].

A quorum shall be formed as soon as one of the Co-chairs is present at any called meeting.

7.2 Membership

Membership of the NEG is strictly for 'Critical Stakeholders' operating in the education sector and who support the education sector, either through direct budget support or through project support.

Membership and composition

The NEG should include representations of all critical stakeholders impacted by and impacting the education sector and who are directly engaged in the policy dialogue around education. These include:

Federal Ministry of Education [FME]:

- i. Permanent Secretary
- ii. Director, Basic Education
- iii. Director, Educational Planning, Research and Development
- iv. Director, Education Support Services
- v. Director, Information Communication and Technology [ICT]

Other Government parastatal:

- i. Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC)

Global Partnership for Education [GPE] Coordinating Agency:

- i. The Co-chair of the Education Development Partner Group (EDPG).
- ii. The coordinating agency

- iii. Multilateral partners
- iv. Bilateral partners

Civil Society Organizations:

- i. One representative from CSACEFA / NOGALLS
- ii. One representative from a youth organisation

Other stakeholders:

- i. One representative from the House Committee on Education.
- ii. One representative from the Governor's Forum.
- iii. One representative from the Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning.
- iv. One representative from the Ministry of Finance.
- v. One representative of Federal Ministry of Women Affairs.
- vi. One representative from National Commission for Persons with Disability.
- vii. One representative from Nigeria Union of Teachers.
- viii. One representative from Ministry of Police Affairs.
- ix. One representative from Ministry of Defence.
- x. One representative from Oando Foundation

Annex 1

Priorities for NEG's consideration in the immediate year:

1. Reduce the number of out of school children
 - a. Support the development of a credible alternate learning system (including digital pathways).
 - b. Advocate the creation of a multi-sectoral steercom on school safety (led by education) and support the implementation of minimum standards on safe schools at scale.
2. Improve Foundational Literacy and Numeracy – Scale cost-effective Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) models.
 - a. Scale play-based pedagogy for Early Childhood Education (ECE).
 - b. Support the development and implementation of a continuous teacher professional development model.
 - c. Strengthen skills development in support of the school to work transition.
3. Improve data availability and quality, its use for decision making and to track learning outcomes (including participation in national regional and international learning assessment)
4. Advocate and support the development and implementation of a roadmap on education financing.

The Co-chairs set up three [3] Sub-Committee to Address the four [4] Priority Areas

1. Sub-Committee on how to reduce the number of Out- of- School children to be chaired by Director, EPR&D, FME
2. Sub-Committee on how to improve Foundational Literacy and Numeracy – Scale cost-effective Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) models to be chaired by Director, Basic Education Department, FME
3. Sub-Committee on how to improve Data availability and Quality, its use for decision making and to track learning outcomes; and advocate and support the development and implementation of a Roadmap on Education Financing to be chaired by Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning [National Planning Arm]

Note: The sub-committees were to determine their respective Terms of Reference and Membership.