Basic education in Nigeria: what we have learned

Presentation for the EDOREN closure event

26th June 2018
We have clear data that levels of learning of schoolchildren are by and large very poor.

Learning outcomes of Primary 4 pupils in six states

- Over 80% of children in Primary 4 have the English skills appropriate for Primary 1, or lower.

Words read correctly in one minute, by children in Primary 6

- Less than 1 in 6 children in Primary 4 have close to the expected levels of English and maths.

Note. The results shown are for Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos states from an ESSPIN survey in 2016.

Note. The results are for the TDP evaluation sample in Jigawa, Katsina and Zamfara, and are not intended to be representative.
Students’ English comprehension is poor

50% of grade-3 pupils could not name the first letter of their name

On average, a grade-3 pupil could name or sound out 6 letters in a minute

Only one in every ten grade-3 pupils demonstrated basic listening comprehension skills on a grade-1 level story

Note. The results are for the TDP evaluation baseline sample in Jigawa, Katsina and Zamfara, and are not intended to be representative.
But the same is true of Hausa

Hausa literacy from p1-3 students in 119 RANA intervention schools in 6 LGAs in Katsina and Zamfara from GEP3 midline (2018)
There is considerable regional variation

Percentage of children studying in Primary 6 who can read a sentence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage of Children Staying in Primary 6 who Can Read a Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of 12 year olds who can read a sentence

- North Central: 57%
- North East: 60%
- North West: 60%
- South East: 62%
- South South: 81%
- South West: 79%

Note: Rural are in orange, urban in blue. From NEDS 2015.
And large numbers of children remain out of school

Net primary enrolment (2013)

Children out of school, ‘000s (2015)

Over 11 million children out of school in the north

Calculated from the 2015 National Education Data Survey

Source: DHS 2013
Learning outcomes are very difficult to improve.

Impact of TDP on pupil learning:

- Mathematics (scaled test scores): Estimated Treatment Effect = 5.619
- English (scaled test scores): Estimated Treatment Effect = 2.689
- Science and Technology (scaled test scores): Estimated Treatment Effect = -2.429

TDP endline survey in Jigawa, Katsina, and Zamfara 2018

Impact of GEP3 RANA on pupil learning:

- Hausa scale score: Estimated Treatment Effect = 19.193

GEP3 midline survey in Katsina, and Zamfara 2018
Poor learning outcomes are in large part due to four major obstacles

• Teachers’ skills
• Teacher recruitment and management
• Language of instruction
• Curriculum and assessment

• Though these are only some of the school-related factors – ignoring malnutrition, etc.
Teacher effectiveness is often very poor

GEP3 survey in RANA schools in Zamfara and Katsina, 2018
Teachers’ mastery of the subjects they teach is often very limited and hard to improve.

Percent of teachers successfully completing tasks they would face in day-to-day work, such as correcting p4 maths questions. 75% is considered ‘sufficient’.

TDP endline survey in Jigawa, Katsina, and Zamfara 2018
Teachers often lack the capacities to assess students effectively
Teachers are often not in classrooms

Classes observed with teachers and pupils present

Classes observed with pupils but no teacher

TDP endline survey in Jigawa, Katsina and Zamfara 2018
Teacher improvement must be a focus, but requires a comprehensive approach

- Not always based on clear, standardised, procedures
- Entry requirements are not stringent enough

- No link to performance
- Salaries are low, delays are common

- Multiple agencies involved, overlapping responsibilities and poor coordination
- Duplication, inefficiency, uneven coverage, neglect of key functions

- Poor co-ordination between States & LGAs; no clear link to schools’ staffing needs

- One-off workshops, not needs-based, limited school-based support, opaque process for selecting teachers to participate, unequal access
Overcoming these obstacles is likely to need long-term, systemic change

Lessons from other countries that have engaged in education reform are that:

1. Stability of core **political leadership** is crucial
2. Invest in quality **education data** and assessment systems
3. Take on the difficult and controversial issue of **teacher accountability**
4. **Genuine school autonomy** can improve learning outcomes
5. **Real decentralisation** is powerful but requires strong financial & outcome monitoring systems
We are in agreement that this has to change
...and there is hope that change can occur, but there is much work to be done
Thank you

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https://www.opml.co.uk/our-expertise/human-development/education