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**NIGERIA NORTHERN
EDUCATION INITIATIVE**



Strengthening State Systems, Increasing Access

Nigeria Northern Education Initiative Project Report



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February 2014

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Abstract

Creative Associates presents the Final Progress Report of the Nigeria Northern Education Initiative (NEI) Project. NEI is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to strengthen systems for delivery of basic education and to increase access of vulnerable children to basic education and other services in two northern states of Sokoto and Bauchi.

When the project commenced in November 2009, basic education indices in northern Nigeria sharply contrasted the national average to the extent that while the national average of children who had never attended school was 31%, the averages were 52% in Bauchi and 66% in Sokoto states [Nigeria DHS EdData Survey (NEDS), 2010]. The challenges faced by basic education were compounded by factors such poor planning, weak budgeting systems, low capacity of officials, non-involvement of communities and civil society in service planning, delivery and monitoring as well as a poor perception of the concept of vulnerability among children.

NEI in partnership with state and local governments agencies and and non-governmental organizations set out to address some of these problems by improving the delivery of quality basic education. To support the project hypothesis two hundred (200) public and Qur'anic schools were selected as demonstrations schools. In addition, NEI supported Bauchi and Sokoto states to improve their delivery system by introducing a mechanism to collect and process school-level data regularly to inform a consultative decision-making process involving Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), communities and civil society organizations (CSOs). This consultation followed a deliberate, reflective planning process, that utilized tools and methods in setting standards, goals, and benchmarks to establish state-wide policies and procedures which improved classroom instruction, teacher performance and supervision as well as support to vulnerable children (VC) to access and succeed in school.

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Forward

Creative Associates International, leading a consortium of international partners - Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and Johns Hopkins University - Centre for Communications Programs (JHU-CCP), and School-to School (STS) - and local partners - Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) and Civil Society Action Coalition on Education For All (CSACEFA) successfully implemented the USAID funded Nigeria Northern Education Initiative (NEI) in two northern states of Nigeria - Bauchi and Sokoto. Although initially a four-year project, NEI was implemented in a four and half-year time span following the award of a six-month No-Cost Extension (NCE) from 20 September 2013 to 19 March 2014. This USAID supported initiative is greatly acknowledged and highly appreciated by the state governments of Bauchi and Sokoto.

Prior to NEI, the two states witnessed limited access to basic education and health care services. In addition, the number of vulnerable children (VC), including boys leaving home, remained high in the north, and systems for identifying and supporting them were only beginning to develop. NEI had two objectives set out to address key issues in the management, sustainability and oversight of basic education. Its interventions focused on facilitating policy development and implementation; the introduction of information management system and use of data for decision-making; and human resource development and management including training, monitoring, and supervision. Additionally, NEI supported the two states to increase access of VC to basic education and other services through innovative approaches such as Non-Formal Learning Centers (NFLC) that catered for the educational and psycho-social needs of out-of-school youths. Support services provided to VC included in-school and out-of-school activities such as life skills education, and psycho-social support. The children were also provided with referrals to the nearest health facilities supported by other USAID-supported health and HIV/AIDS interventions.

In collaboration with state governments NEI developed or adapted policies that enabled planned, data-informed, structured, and result-driven implementation of basic education. The Mid-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS), State Education Sector Operational Plans (SESOP), State Education Management Information System (EMIS) policies, the State Teacher Education Policy (STEP), and the Teacher Recruitment and Deployment (TRD) procedures all encouraged better management of basic education services. NEI also adopted a community-based approach to education access. Using community mobilization strategies, the project supported school governance structures that helped bridge the gap between government and the local communities. These structures made immense contribution to improve the school environment.

It is our sincere hope that as leaders of the sector in both states we will not only to work to sustain the effort of USAID-supported NEI project but also build on its achievements, own it and sustain the interventions. We hereby recommend that other development partners in the Nigeria explore the USAID-NEI model of intervention in the education sector especially in the area of increasing access to vulnerable children (including the Almajiri) using community-based approach.



Alhaji Ibrahim Mohammed Aminu
Honorable Commissioner for Education
Bauchi State



Alhaji Bello Yusuf Danchadi
Honorable Commissioner for Education
Sokoto State

Acknowledgements

The successful implementation of NEI is attributed to the support provided by various stakeholders. First and foremost, our appreciation goes to the USAID Education Team under the able leadership of Drs. Sandy Ojikutu and Jill-Jupiter Jones. Beyond providing the hands-on technical direction to the project, both made tremendous efforts to make sure it succeeded. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the wise leadership provided by Dr. Ray Kirkland, Mrs. Dana Mansuri, and Mr. Michael Harvey who one after the other served as Mission Directors for USAID Nigeria.

We can never forget to commend the contribution of the people and governments of Bauchi and Sokoto states who have at different times during the life of the project expressed their appreciation to the support provided by the American people through USAID. Not only did they support the project but owned it to improve the lives of their children through taking part in meeting the project objectives: strengthening state and local government capacity to deliver basic education services and increasing access of OVC to basic education and other services.

Creative Associates representing the consortium is also highly indebted to the Technical Working Groups, members of the Community Coalitions and Community Education Forums, mentor teachers, the classroom teachers/facilitators, the Ma'alams and proprietors of Tsangaya centres, grantee NGOs who were the *foot soldiers* that raised the standards for i) high enrolment, ii) the formation of highly mobilized compassionate communities, iii) data-driven decision making process, and iv) result oriented policies. The political will and support from policy makers was outstanding. Suffice to mention the strong backing accorded to the project by the two states' Executive Governors - Malam (Dr.) Isa Yuguda (Matawallen Bauchi, Obasayero of Oyo Empire) and Alhaji (Dr.) Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko.

Last but not least, Creative Associates would like to express its gratitude to the field management team and project backstops of all members of the consortium - Creative Associates, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), John Hopkins University/Centre for Communication and Policy JHU-CCP), School-to-School, the Civil Society For Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) and the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN) - who for four and half years went back and forth in providing the much needed technical and administrative support to the project. We would in particular like to recognize the visit of the President and CEO of Creative Associates International - Mrs. Charito Krivant – to Bauchi state at the height of security challenges. This is a rare demonstration of passionate leadership.

Creative Associates International

Introduction

NEI is a four-year basic education project (a six month No-Cost Extension was added later) funded by USAID and implemented in partnership with the Government of Nigeria (GON). NEI strengthened the capacity of state and local government to deliver quality basic education services and increased access to education (and related services) for OVC in the northern states of Nigeria - Bauchi and Sokoto.

This was achieved through strong collaboration with state partners such as State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA), Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), Adult and Non Formal Education Agency (ANFEA), Bauchi State OVC Agency (BASOV-CA), Bauchi State Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria (BACATMA), Local Government Area (LGA) education authorities, communities and community structures such as Community Coalitions (CC) and Community Education Forums (CEF), head teachers, school structures such as School-based Management Committee (SBMC) and Center CBMC, other cooperating partners such as DFID, other and USAID implementing partners such as TSHIP, LEAD and WOFAN. Federal agencies that took part in this effort included UBEC, TRCN and FMOE.

NEI's approach was based on three fundamental principles: building on what exists, effecting change through a three-pronged change strategy, (build

capacity, promote advocacy for acceptance and support transparency and accountability), and embracing a system approach (horizontal and vertical) that ensured comprehensive coverage of processes the project aimed to strengthen. In line with this conceptual framework and supported by its well experienced team and dynamic leadership, NEI set itself to build on what existed at national, state and Local Government Area (LGA) levels and took advantage of



the experience accumulated under previous USAID-funded projects - Community Participation for Action in the Social Sectors (COMPASS), State Education Accounts (SEA), and the Literacy Enhancement Assistance Program (LEAP).

Taking advantage of its wealth of experience in Nigeria, NEI successfully met the project's overarching goal of strengthening states' and local governments' systems in Bauchi and Sokoto, and established functional models to increase access of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) to quality basic education. This effort laid the foundation for delivering quality basic education services in both formal and non-formal education with unprecedented community participation.

The initiative was implemented in twenty LGAs (ten per state), 120 formal schools and 80 Non-Formal Learning Centers (NFLCs). During the life of the project, NEI built the capacity of 461 administrators and government officials in competencies directly related to their primary assignment and day-to-day activities. The project supported the training of 5,685 (3323m and 1362f) teachers and educators both in in-service and pre-service surpassing the target by 53%. NEI also reached 1,422,925 (853,418m, 569,507f) children in both states resulting in 33% increase in enrolment during the life of the project. Enrolment increased by 23% in all demonstration

schools/centers. The project also witnessed a 23% increase in enrolment in both states as against the envisaged 15% increase by the end of project. This state wide increase in enrolment could be attributed to the system-wide approach of the project which was endorsed and scaled up by the state through the application of plans, budgets, policies and other interventions modeled and supported by NEI to non-project LGEAs and schools.

The project introduced an Education Management Information System (EMIS) in twenty pilot LGEAs in Bauchi and Sokoto states. NEI distributed an updated EMIS Toolbox that incorporated the 2012/2013 Annual School Census (ASC) data. Also, the project trained the executing bodies of one hundred and twenty (120) School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) and eighty (80) Center-Based Management Committees (CBMCs) on effective schools management strategies and monitoring. NEI supported these school structures to develop plans and budgets. In addition, the project supported the State Education Accounts (SEA) Working Groups (SWGs) in both states to take a leading role in the conduct of SEA Round II resulting in the successful and timely completion of the exercise. The use of the train-do-train approach helped build the capacity of the SWGs and gave them a sense of ownership which was demonstrated by their willingness to sustain SEA.

The project adapted and/or developed thirteen policies, guidelines and procedures to improve equitable access to quality basic education services. Chief amongst them are: the Med-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS); State Teacher Education Policy (STEP); Teacher Recruitment and Deployment (TRD) procedures; and Guidelines for Civic Society Organizations (CSO) Role in Partnering with Government. The most recent is the Teacher Management Information System (TMIS) - a statewide system that integrated information on teachers in a comprehensive yet accessible and timely way for efficient human resource management. This tool is currently being used to ensure fair and equitable distribution of teachers in schools and across LGEAs. These documents were approved by the State Basic Education Steering Committees (BESC) following a thorough deliberation and review.

In order to ensure ownership and sustainability of government projects within the communities, NEI supported the establishment of twenty Community Coalitions – CCs - (one/project LGA) and 200 OVC Support Teams (OSTs) and provided training to help them support 200 demonstration schools/center (one/school) established by NEI.

The project conducted a symposium on adolescent girls and VC that brought together key religious and community leaders, NGOs, and representatives of key government agencies. The project also conducted

formative research in view of identifying the needs of VC. The research also led to designing relevant project interventions on Adolescent Girls Program (AGP), Kids Forum (KF), and also in creating radio programs used for advocacy purposes.

Over the life of the project the number of OVC enrolled and provided with services (education,



health, nutrition and psychosocial information) reached 16,000 (9770m, 6230f). The breakdown is: Bauchi 8000 (4425m, 3575f), Sokoto 8000 (5345m 2655f). NEI also supported the well-being of these OVC through the provision of support packages and recreational learning materials. Furthermore, it supported 2,686 adolescent girls (Bauchi 1402, Sokoto 1284) by providing literacy, numeracy, life and vocational skills instructions in the twenty AGP centers; and 6,714 (4,293m, 2,420f) caregivers were trained to support VC education and well-being.

The last two years of the project were geared towards ensuring sustainability. Specific project interventions such as MTSS, EMIS, SEA, STEP, NEI Teacher Training Model, TMIS, AGP and VC care and support were adopted as models by the two states and approved for scale up by relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Progress of project implementation was carefully monitored through periodic engagement of government officials, surveys (to identify gaps and plans to redress them), annual data quality assessments (DQAs), and portfolio reviews by USAID. These efforts paid off since it enabled NEI to surpass targets that it set for itself at the inception of the project. Project planning, implementation and monitoring were conducted in deliberative consultative forums that involved regular attendance of key government

officials. The various inter-ministerial Technical Working Groups (TWGs) at the state and LGA levels were the driving forces in the implementation of the project. The Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) and the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), and other Civil Society organizations (CSOs) served as grantees to support project interventions and to engage state governments and communities in the planning and improvement of the education sector.

In conclusion, the project succeeded in **strengthening education delivery systems** in Bauchi and Sokoto states by building the capacity of relevant MDAs and CSOs. Presently, school-level **data** are regularly collected and processed to inform a **consultative decision-making** process involving LGEAs, communities, and civil society organizations. This consultative process follows a **deliberative and reflective planning process**, utilizing established tools and methods to set **standards, goals and benchmarks** in establishing **state-wide policies and procedures** which in turn helped improve classroom instruction, teacher performance and supervision as well as improved VC to access.



**Chapter One: Improving Planning,
Management and Administration of Basic
Education in Bauchi and Sokoto States**

Improving Planning, Management and Administration of Basic Education in Bauchi and Sokoto States

Understanding the context

In Northern Nigeria, despite the immense efforts made by the state governments to design sector plans, they can be difficult to implement for a variety of reasons. Sometimes priorities are unclear or goals reflect ideal rather than attainable standards. At other times plans can fail to include critical details such as provision of a sufficient number of teachers for a proposed expansion. Sequencing of activities is frequently ignored, institutional review processes can often be weak; redundancies between Federal, state and LGEA plans are also seen to lead to cost inefficiencies; and at times implementation can be derailed by bureaucratic logjams and stalemates.

Although some financial reforms have solved key problems, resource management in Bauchi and Sokoto have been hindered by poor coordination among the three tiers of government, unclear roles and responsibilities of financial managers, and weak fiscal administration. Equity often means equality, resulting in problems like the delivery of equal numbers of benches to schools, regardless of need. Charts of Accounts are often too general to show whether funds are truly spent against specific budgeted items. For example, instructional materials are all classified under material supplies, a category that is not broken down between basic and secondary education in the Finance Ministry's Chart of Accounts. Weak administrative capacity also leads to

extended procurement processes and missed deadlines for federal funding. At the local level, few schools are authorized to manage their own budgets or provided the funds to do so. This results in limiting the sense of community ownership of education.

Significant challenges surround the supply and use of data. Supply problems include the existence of multiple data sources and data sets (e.g. EMIS census data, household data), differing methodologies and definitions for their use, and debates over contradictory numbers and the validity of different data sets rather than productive discussions about numbers and their implications. Use problems consisted of limited capacity to collect, capture, and use data. For example, the Sokoto EMIS unit had only two staff and four functional computers. The server (provided by UNICEF) was not functioning for lack of an operating system, and the MoE could not keep up with internet subscriptions. The new National EMIS (NEMIS) policy accounts for some of these problems, but it had not been applied at the state level.

In Bauchi and Sokoto few formal mechanisms existed for cross-Ministry and cross-department coordination of specific operational plans, so problems are overcome through informal channels and hierarchical relationships. Although mechanisms exist at state level for public participation in policy dialogue, information that articulates a clear rationale behind re-

source allocation decisions is not publically available. Similarly, mechanisms that enable school-based constraints or best practices to be channelled to higher decision-making bodies are ad-hoc and informal, with the consequence that civil engagement in school management is difficult to sustain. NEI strategy has been to reinforce accountability by building the capacity of civil society to participate in the educational planning, information tracking, and review process in the delivery of quality education.

Strengthening the system to deliver quality basic education

The NEI project focused investments in improving: (i) Education Sector Plans and Mid-term Sector Strategy (MTSS) budget development processes and tools; (ii) EMIS systems and deployment mechanisms; (iii) civil society participation in educational planning and monitoring; periodic monitoring of quality by School-based Management Committees (SBMCs); (iv) community-based access to educational information and participating in educational planning through Community Education Forums (CEFs); and (v) Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessments (EGRA and EGMA) that highlights student performance at the Primary 2 and Primary 3 grades.

NEI succeeded in improving and demonstrating a system for making school census data accessible through the use of School Profile Reports generated

from the EMIS Toolbox. NEI also used school statistical data as a feedback mechanism to inform systems strengthening efforts.

Through a series of technical workshops, NEI improved the capacity of the TWG and of the BESC on budget development by moving from the use of Excel spreadsheets to the introduction of the advanced budget planning tool (BPT) software. Skills



were developed to create a policy framework to develop a prioritized MTSS budget. The BPT allowed the states to better allocate resources to key intervention areas and track progress against planned targets.

The introduction of the EMIS Toolbox in Bauchi and Sokoto states improved the perception and use of data in the decision-making process. Capacity building investments by NEI improved the quality and use of data by LGEAs and State EMIS personnel. The project supported the states to establish EMIS units - initially in 20 LGEAs (in the two states) and later expanded to all 43 LGEAs. The process introduced in the annual school census (ASC) gave greater validity to the EMIS data through improved data collection processes and validation measures.

Significant success was realized in the way civil society and government worked together, starting with the sensitization and awareness of civil society partners to the Freedom of Information Act. NEI informed key stakeholders of their rights under the law regarding the types of information and data that could be requested from government officials at the state and federal levels. This led to groups requesting for data that helped in preparing work plans and activities to support the state's efforts as well as monitor activities planned by the states. The development and introduction of the CEF regularized the

round-table discussions and facilitated the participation of civil society partners in the budget and planning process. The formation of the CEFs gave local communities the platform to interact with local government officials in a way that highlights priorities and supports the efforts of government. CEFs are also taking a more proactive approach to addressing community education needs through the creation of targeted work plans.

Building on earlier work by UNICEF, NEI improved the management capacities of SBMCs in both states and enhanced community participation in education. The committees ensured effective management of resources at school level, promoted positive educational outcomes and quality learning environment, increased the range of school decision-making and resource utilization, and enhanced the school's ability to set priorities and give more control over how resources are spent. Technical assistance was provided to facilitate the development of effective School Improvement Plans (SIP) that were used in the management of the schools and monitoring of education service delivery. The work plans were also used by the SBMCs to address needs at the school level.

NEI supported the use of EGRA and EGMA to provide data on learning outcomes that can be used to improve education planning and delivery. NEI worked with relevant institutions and personnel within SUB-

EB, MOE and the COE to familiarize them with the EGRA and EGMA tools, their purpose, and how to use the data for effective education management and decision making. NEI worked with these partners to administer four EGRA and/or EGMA exercises. The assessment results were used to: (i) provide all education stakeholders with information on learning outcomes; (ii) inform education sector strategic planning and budgeting; (iii) provide recommendations on how to improve teacher training and instructional practices in early grade reading and mathematics; and (iv) develop reading and mathematics indicators and benchmarks.

Results and outcomes

The strengthening of EMIS activity in the education sector had improved awareness, effectiveness and efficiency in planning for the education sector. State agencies realized the importance and relevance of collecting accurate data and in all thematic area of education planning. These resulted in the creation of EMIS unit in LGEAs in Sokoto and Bauchi states. Consultations were made to fast-track the adaptation of the NEMIS policy in the two states, with the acronyms SEMIS and BEMIS representing Sokoto and Bauchi state adaptations of the national policy. The EMIS implementation committees were inaugurated at the local and state government levels headed by the Education Secretary and Director planning Research and Statistics respectively.

With technical support from NEI, the Technical Working Groups (TWG) produced the MTSS, a three year mid-term plan for basic education for the period 2010-2013. Interventions proposed in the plan included the expansion of schools infrastructures, integration of IQE, establishment of additional Early Childhood and Care Education Development (ECCED) centres, recruitment of more qualified teachers, pro-



vision of instructional materials, involvement of private sector, and empowerment of communities through SBMCs. Through dialogue with state partners, points of entry were identified where the utilization of new tools would have had a significant impact on decision-making and planning. Working at three levels, i.e. state, LGA and civil society, NEI built the capacity of the BESC and TWG to create MTSS annual implementation plans and budgets that take into account system linkages and priorities. NEI supported both states to improve the rational use of Charts of Accounts, consolidated capital expenditures, and activity-based budgeting. To further build capacity and cultivate advocacy, the project organized a series of study tours and inter-state conferences for educational leaders, decision-makers and technicians to ESSPIN states. Finally, NEI reinforced accountability by building the capacity of civil society organizations to participate in the educational planning and performance monitoring process.

The successful implementation of the 2010-2013 MTSS plans in both states led to further demand for a successor mid-term plan. NEI supported each state to develop its 2014-2016 MTSS plan and assisted in implementation by supporting the development of 2014 budgets from the MTSS plans.

Community education forums were conducted once each year in all pilot LGAs of both Bauchi and Sokoto

states. During these forums different stakeholders held roundtable discussions to identify issues of concern, prioritize, and develop action plans to address those challenges. Some of the action items were implemented at the local level while others that could not be addressed at that level, were forwarded to the state for inclusion into the state budget. LGA Implementation Committee (LIC) activities such as advocacy, sensitization and meetings with the various stakeholders culminated in classrooms construction, renovation, and the purchase of teaching and learning materials support to OVC to influence changes towards improving the situation of education at both community and local government levels. This resulted in increased enrolment and attendance of pupils in primary schools.

Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations for future programs

While both education sectors improved allocation for education, budget execution remained a challenge. The challenges of data supply and use was addressed by focusing on the adoption of the NEMIS policy to each educational level in Bauchi and Sokoto states and the supply of basic education data by supporting the Annual School Census (ASC) in each state. Through a consultative process the national policy was adapted to state and local needs and conditions, each state's EMIS units were equipped with computer

hardware and software, including NEMIS software, and trained in its use. Training also extended to ASC data gathering, cleaning and validation and reporting. This support was also provided to all LGAs in Bauchi and Sokoto states.

Decisions about educational issues, needs, priorities for schools and communities were made without due consultations with the direct beneficiaries resulting in misplacement of priorities and de-standardization in the delivery of educational services. Improved community participation in education and establishing the CEFs improved government responsiveness and planning based on local priorities.

Untimely completion of ASC exercises slowed down availability of updated data for planning and decision making. These examples are a result of the organizational development issues that still need time to adapt to more effective approaches to efficiency, accountability and transparency.

The most important recommendation is for government to improve the release of funds to support activity-based budgets prioritized across policy objectives. This will help further strengthen the foundations NEI has established in the following areas: (i) Strengthened strategic planning systems; (ii) Improved financial resource management and budget-

ing; (iii) Strengthened EMIS; and (iv) Improved performance management and accountability

Further integration and use of BPT will improve education service delivery and facilitate monitoring against planned targets. Referencing timely and accurate data collected through the ASC, will allow decision makers and planners to make informed decisions regarding resource utilization and prioritization of initiatives. Additionally, ongoing monitoring of student performance will assist administrators to address issues related to teacher quality, learning materials, curriculum and teaching pedagogy.

Finally, a strong collaborative relationship between state governments and CSOs is needed to achieve strategic results. CSOs and other local community groups can inform government on key education priorities that budgetary resources should be directed to. CSOs can also act as monitoring agents on behalf of government to ensure quality standards are maintained, and inform the relevant government agents when action is required to correct a matter. This level of partnership will address the real needs of the education sector.



**Chapter Two: Impact of Financial Expenditure
Analysis in Decision making for Basic
Education in Bauchi and Sokoto States**

Impact of Financial Expenditure Analysis in Decision making for Basic Education in Bauchi and Sokoto States

Preparing State Education Accounts

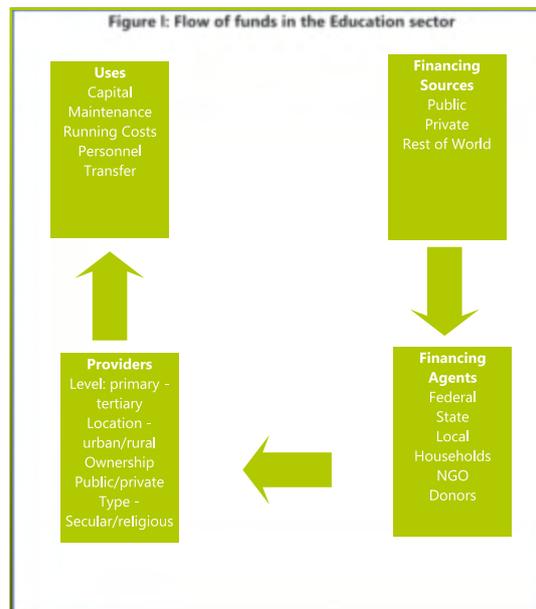
State Education Accounts (SEA) are modelled after the National Education Account framework, which can be described as a transparent method for collecting and analyzing data on actual allocations and expenditures of resources in the education sector and linking those allocations and expenditures to system reforms.

SEA is a planning tool that provides a snapshot of financing during one school year. It identifies the sources and uses of funds and the contributions made to financing education at the state level by the federal, state and local governments; international and indigenous donors; and private contributors and households. It, therefore, measures the “financial pulse” of a state education system by answering four key questions:

- Sources of Financing: Where does the money come from?
- Financing Agents: What is the flow of funds?
- Providers: To whom did the money go?
- Functions (Uses): What service was actually produced and who benefits?

Data are presented in standardized, user-friendly matrices that can be easily interpreted by policy makers to allow for comparisons and decision making in future education financial expenditures in the state.

SEA creates a standard format of accounting for educational expenditures that establishes the platform for technical analysis of the performance of the education sector and permits comparisons of relevant indicators between states and internationally. SEA provides a framework that helps policy-makers, financiers, and providers of education answer questions that help improve the performance of the education system and improve the efficiency of the sector. Furthermore, since SEA uses a standardized format, the information that it provides allows meaningful within state and interstate comparisons. SEA is the only tool currently available in the education



sector that combines all data on spending in a systematic way. Therefore, as a planning tool, SEA provides vital information for *evidence-based* decision making.

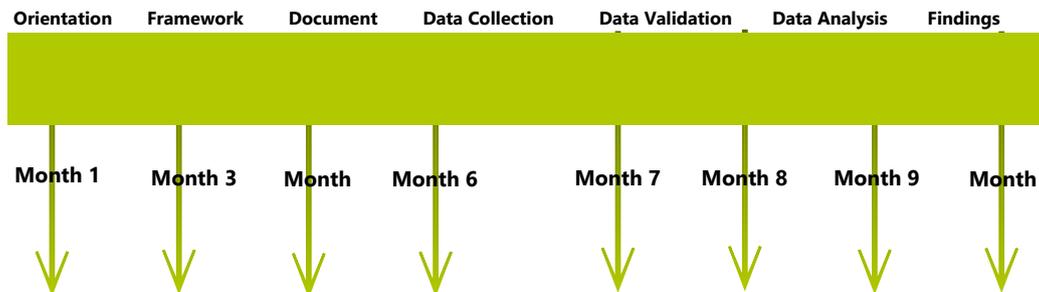
The SEA Process: A Case of Bauchi and Sokoto states

SEA was conducted by the State Ministries of Education in both States. The process included *just-in-time training* and capacity building for ministry officials that lasted nine months. The process is divided into two major phases. Phase one is the planning stage that involves the establishment of structures, the organization of orientation workshops, and the preparation of a framework document. Phase II is the preparation of a SEA report, which is made up of data collection, data validation, data analysis, and a report detailing the findings as prepared and presented for review (*Annex A details the SEA structure*). The data is drawn primarily from existing reports and studies, excepting for private schools and donor financing

which usually requires primary data collection. Figure II below indicates the timeframe for the major activities under the SEA process

SEA impact in Bauchi and Sokoto States

For the first time in the two states, a survey was conducted that showed the flow of funds in the education sector. The results of the first round of SEA was released in Bauchi in October 2011 and in Sokoto in September 2012. This enabled the general public to become aware of funding sources and expenses in the education sector. This awareness generated a lot of discussions by many stakeholders about the huge expenditure on education without corresponding impact on pupils/students' performance. As a result, several organizations are now actively involved in budget tracking to ensure that budgetary allocations are released and used as planned. SEA also influenced better data storage in the two states with several organizations now using electronic devices for data storage.



As a planning tool, SEA identified key issues that were generated from the MTSS. The results of SEA feed into budget development, estimating cost of teacher development, and other planning process in both states. SEA also enabled NEI to provide technical assistance to the states to develop new budget classifications, chart of accounts, activity-based budgeting and map the role of different ministries in procurement and process management to develop training to improve these functions. Members of the SWG are making concerted efforts to ensure that annual budgetary allocations are made based on educational priorities of the states. In addition, many non-governmental organizations are also actively participating in ensuring that allocation of resources are in conformity with the state educational priorities

In both Bauchi and Sokoto, SEA identified key issues generated from the MTSS. As a result of the linkages established with MTSS, the results of SEA feed into: (i) budget development, (ii) estimating cost of teacher development, and (iii) other planning process in both states. Using the categories and classifications used in SEA as well as the training provided to the SWG on resource mapping, the NEI project was able to provide technical assistance to the states to:

- Develop new budget classifications and chart of accounts,

- Develop activity-based budgeting and maps on the role of different ministries in procurement and process management,
- Identify education funding flows and reduce duplication in the allocation of capital resources, and
- Develop a consolidated budget

State-specific results: Bauchi

SUBEB used the SEA findings to compile an action plan for accessing federal UBEC funding in 2012. The MOE and SUBEB annual budget proposals for 2013 emphasized construction, feeding and the procurement of instructional material, based on the SEA findings. In addition, NEI assisted state EMIS units in linking SEA data to EMIS. It also supported two follow-on studies to explore ways of using SEA data to enrich EMIS data, inform policy, and influence implementation.

The comparison of data from both SEA rounds in Bauchi provided evidence that there was an increase in educational expenditures by the private sector on voluntary schools (this includes community schools) in urban areas. While this would need a follow-up study to confirm the findings, anecdotal evidence suggested that this increase in expenditures is a result of the migration of families from neighboring 'conflict' states. Many migrating parents were unable to enrol their children into public schools, being non-indigenes of the state, and thus send their chil-

dren to the private and community schools. SEA is now reflected in the Bauchi State MTSS/SESOP2 plan. This will ensure the conduct of SEA in subsequent years.

State-specific results: Sokoto

The presentation of SEA report at the Executive Council Secretariat resulted in directives given by the governor for the state to conduct Education Accounts annually and for the State to explore option of conducting similar accounts for other ministries. Additionally, SEA report influenced the State House Committee on Education to set up a sub-committee to ensure resources committed to education are effectively utilized to ensure that the desired educational goals of the state are achieved. SEA results also promoted dialogue on education financing in the state and generated intense public interest and debate on education sector funding. Civil society groups in the state are now asking questions related to effective utilization of the education sector funds.

Addressing key challenges

Accessing data sources from public officials and private schools (including Almajiri and Qur'anic schools), was challenging as the exercise was associated with increase in taxation, unwanted integration of secular subjects, or exposure to law enforcement agencies. The 2011 elections, nationwide labor strikes, Sokoto State political campaigns and gover-

norship election, and closure of several private schools by a Sokoto State task force impeded data collection or implementation. The unavailability of quality data, poor data storage and poor data transmission system also delayed program implementation. Data on public expenditures for religious formal schools at the primary and secondary levels was unavailable though there were expenditures made by the public sector on those schools. The lack of sufficient information on household consumption from household data surveys was also a key challenge.

NEI held meetings with government officials who are the custodians of data and the National association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS) executive officials and community leaders were involved in data collection. The SEA WG worked with various departments within the MOE as well as with the private schools association to develop an accurate list of functioning private schools. Data cleaning was introduced to improve data quality. Extrapolation and estimation was used to resolve unsegregated data to some extent. However, effort should be made to collect future data disaggregated by education level, gender, urban/rural basis. Data from Consumer Price Index was extrapolated to obtain the breakdown of household consumption of education services.

Lessons Learnt and recommendations for future programs

SEA activities should be conducted with the active participation of government officials, representatives of private and civic organizations to incorporate sustainability into the process. Capacity building and mentorship of the SEA Working Group (SWG) (*Please see annex B for SWG composition*) in Bauchi and Sokoto, and the use of the *just-in-time train-do-train* approach built their leadership skills used in during SEA I and SEA II. This strategy solidified the training and increased the potential for long-term sustainability. The SWP developed and began implementing an action plan for sustaining SEA after the NEI intervention. It is recommended that future programs support the establishment of a permanent SWG to work with the MOE and SUBEB based on the findings of SEA II and in preparation for subsequent SEAs. The MOE and SUBEB should make more concerted effort to gather annual data on indicators of school quality such as retention, promotion, dropout rates for students, to be collected and made available to the SEA team.

Other investments should focus on additional training for SUBEB and MOE staff on the use and development of the database, addressing data quality issues including storing state expenditure data in electronic format, ensuring the availability of household data (including detailed information on household expen-

ditures) and training for LGAs to improve their understanding on SEA and use of data for decision making. It is also recommended that a network of professionals be established to support future SEA exercises and that SEAs should be conducted annually to facilitate tracking of progress. An SEA desk officer designated by the MOE or SUBEB will improve liaison and facilitation of all SEA matters. Other recommendations include intensive teacher training, recruitment of certified qualified teachers, investments in in-service training, institutionalization of feedback mechanisms, and continued education dialogue as initiated by NEI.

SEA is the only tool currently available in the education sector that combines all data on spending in a systematic way, which is essential for evidence-based decision making. There is, therefore, the need to institutionalize its conduct and use in all States.

To improve the performance of the education system and efficiency of the sector, which is the goal of the SEA, there is the need for a stronger collaboration among all stakeholders. Government officials should further appreciate and encourage Public Private Partnership (PPP) in education financing. Enabling environment should be provided for NGOs, CBOs and other stakeholders to enable them to actively participate in budget planning and tracking. This will ensure that state education funds are spent efficiently,



Chapter Three: Managing Teachers for Improved Learning Outcomes

Managing Teachers for Improved Learning Outcomes

Introduction: Teacher Management in Nigerian Context

The performance of teachers in delivering quality services has direct impact on improving learning outcomes of pupils. This performance is hinged on the effective management of teacher recruitment, training, retention, as well as supervision and support. Yet evidence from studies conducted by USAID-funded Literacy Enhancement Assistance Programme (LEAP) and Enabling HIV/AIDS, TB and Social Sector Environment (ENHANSE) project, and the World Bank show that while Nigeria's teacher education system has improved over the years, it has not adequately succeeded in preparing teachers for classroom teaching, especially in primary schools. Also, opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) are inadequate with little school-based support for teachers.

The National Teacher Education Policy (NTEP) offers the framework for states to access federal funding, and to design and implement teacher education improvements programmes. However, it was not included in the States MTSS planning process. Other challenges impeding teacher performance include inappropriate recruitment and deployment, inadequate incentives, weak information systems for tracking teacher deployment and progress, unclear priorities and unrealistic goals, financial inefficiencies

and bureaucratic logjams resulting from redundancies at the different government levels.

Improving Teacher Management in Bauchi and Sokoto: Elements of NEI Strategy

In response to these challenges, NEI interventions targeted a variety of policy development and institutional strengthening activities. Both Bauchi and Sokoto States were supported in adapting the NTEP



to state requirements and contexts resulting in the development of State Teacher Education Policies (STEPs). The project trained education sector personnel in both states to tap into available federal funds by developing proposals for funding teacher education programs as specified in the STEPs. Furthermore, NEI provided the two states with technical assistance to develop and implement Teacher Recruitment and Deployment Procedures (TRD) procedures, including the clarification of roles and responsibilities amongst the teacher recruitment agencies. It also assisted both SUBEBs in developing a TRD training manual, trained state and LGEA personnel in its use, and expanded the new procedures across the entire state. A TMIS database linking teacher deployment with background information was thereafter developed.

The project supported education officials in the development of a management, support, and supervision programme which resulted in state specific Quality Assurance (QA) guides used by school supervisors and head teachers for school improvement. A QA training manual was also developed, and NEI supported the training of SUBEB, pilot LGEA officials and head teachers in demonstration schools on how to use the guide.

State Teacher Education Policy (STEP)

The STEPs for Bauchi and Sokoto were developed in a participatory manner through extensive consulta-

tion with the Teacher Education Working Group (TEWG). The stakeholders comprising different groups identified existing gaps in teacher education; and through mutual consultation designed a viable approach to teacher development in Bauchi and Sokoto states. STEP looks into all aspects of teacher development and hence forms the basis for the development of other more specific policy areas of teacher development. These include TRD procedures and QA guides. Each state now has its own STEP document. The Basic Education Steering Committee (BESC) in each state supported the development of its STEP and approved its use as reference document in planning, budgeting and the implementation of all teacher education development activities in the states. The immediate impact of the STEP is increased awareness among agency actors on the need to plan for priority teacher development activities in the states.

Teacher Management Information System

Recent researches carried out on TRD practice in basic education sub-sector of Bauchi and Sokoto States clearly revealed a systemic challenge regarding the management teacher information system which is indispensable for human resource management. Accordingly, the TRD policy recommended the creation of a robust and reliable Teacher Management Information System (TMIS). In line with the recommendation, NEI supported the development

and deployment of TMIS database application software. This software platform was created to manage the human resource data and enhance productivity in the personnel management of the teaching workforce. TMIS has improved the ease with which the Human Resources (HR) department provided teachers with regular and meaningful feedback on their performance through the generation of appropriate reports. It also ensured that the system recognised, appreciated, and rewarded employees in a fair, transparent, and consistent way. TMIS is also expected to support employee development and career progression by keeping updated records on teachers' existing professional needs and their past professional development records. The application is built on a database engine which enables the MDAs (SUBEB, TSC, MoE and LGEAs) to have a secure, reliable and massive record storage system with enhanced HR data-centric and iterative features. HR personnel from the above MDAs as well as all forty-three LGEAs in the two states were trained on how to use the application. This was followed by a massive, state-wide sensitization of head teachers and teachers on the advantages of TMIS to their administrative needs.

Teacher Recruitment and Deployment

An action research conducted by the Teacher Recruitment and Deployment (TRD) Technical Working Groups in Bauchi and Sokoto states in 2011 identified gaps in the TRD process and solutions were proffered

based on best practices. A major gap identified was the overlapping roles of teacher recruitment agencies. The research processes involved examination of overlapping roles and responsibilities issues and challenges relating to existing TRD practices in the education sector in Bauchi and Sokoto states. The process was entirely open to all stakeholders, while discussions and results were documented and freely made available for scrutiny. The TRD policies were



approved by the BESC in both states. They are widely referenced for teacher reform activities in the states, especially in teachers' recruitment and deployment processes. Teacher recruitment in both states is now based on need with necessary advert placement, and oral and written test coordinated by the Teachers Service Commission/Board (TSC/B) in collaboration with the requesting agency.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance (QA) strategy for Bauchi and Sokoto states were developed by the Quality Assurance Technical Working Groups following the articulation of vision statements for QA in each state. Based on these vision statements, prompts were developed to focus on what is required and how the stated vision statements can be actualized within existing structure of QA. The existing roles and responsibilities were reviewed against the vision statements and procedures for achieving the roles identified. The documents also specified minimum standards for basic education in the states. Instruments were developed for school situation analysis and classroom observation and the Whole School Development Document was adopted.

The Bauchi and Sokoto QA documents drew heavily from the federal QA document as a guide in the development of the strategy document as well as the

instruments. At the time of writing this report, the states are implementing the QA policies that were developed as a result of these reforms. These reforms entailed adoption of QA-sensitive roles and responsibilities by personnel throughout the various organizations within the states. Revised procedures and tools are being used by school supervisors, and other personnel with responsibilities to assure quality at the school level.

Materials for Teachers and Teacher Educators

An important component of NEI's teacher education intervention is the provision of training and instructional materials to teachers. These include: literacy, numeracy, life-skills, and psychosocial counselling manuals. These guides provide teachers and facilitators with a set of activity lessons that demonstrate active learner-centred instructional practices.

The development of these guides involved a structured curriculum and teacher training analysis in the above mentioned thematic areas. The analysis was followed by participatory process to develop content for each guide. The drafts of the guides were further reviewed and finalised through consultation with state counterparts. These guides do not replace the state recommended curriculum materials; rather, they complement them. These guides use Activity

Plans instead of Lesson Plans as lesson plans are too often associated with *chalk and talk* methods.

In-Service and Pre-Service Teacher Training

The training manuals described above were utilised in the training of 2,260 classroom teachers in each state in the four thematic areas. This exercise entailed collection of baseline data from the 200 schools and learning centres to provide the background information for planning of all teacher training and basic education activities at the LGEA and school levels. In order to deliver the training, 49 mentor teachers (MTs) were selected in each state through a screening process and trained as trainers. The MTs were trained in all the thematic areas and facilitated trainings for classroom teachers at LGEA-based clusters. Thirty PES lecturers from Bauchi and Sokoto states were also trained on the manuals, which they stepped down to over 1,000 PES students. The successes of the NEI teacher training model and manuals rested on the wide use of the model by the state governments to train some 2,000 teachers in 2012 and 2013.

Gender Considerations

NEI took account of gender in the development of instructional materials used in both formal and non-formal settings. Illustrations equally represented both sexes and roles were not stereotyped. Teachers were trained to provide equal opportunity for both

boys and girls to participate in classroom exercises and to assume positions of responsibility. NEI also adopted girl-friendly techniques such as recruiting more female teachers and facilitating the construction of separate toilets for girls and boys.

Results and Outcomes

NEI's teacher education initiatives laid the ground-work for sustained improvement of a sound teacher education system in the Bauchi and Sokoto states. STEP in both states are providing the policy cover for present and future improvements in teacher education systems. The consultative bodies were exposed to participatory design approaches and are developing an attitude of learning and reflection in achieving teacher education development goals. The procedures and guidelines for merit-based TRD was approved and accepted by the states as the basis for all teacher recruitment. The use of TRD procedures and guidelines are currently being used to create a culture of merit-based recruitment. When combined with sustained political commitment for merit-based recruitment and rationalized deployment of teachers, the TRD procedures and guidelines are expected to go a long way in improving the quality of basic education in Bauchi and Sokoto states.

Teachers need easy to use supplementary materials and training to achieve better learning outcomes.

Feedback from the teacher educators and teachers using the NEI's materials—in the thematic areas of literacy, numeracy, life skills and psychosocial skills—suggested that they were finding them extremely useful in using learner-centred and activity-based pedagogy in their classrooms. Because of their demonstrated usefulness, the supplementary materials were incorporated into the curricula of the CoEs thus extending their benefit to the student teachers in the pre-service programmes.

In addition to the development of STEP, TRD procedures and guidelines, and TTMs based model of teacher training, NEI has supported the states to put into operation a QA paradigm to gradually replace the obsolete inspection regime. NEI's support to QA at the school level demonstrated substantive improvement in the pedagogical support and supervision provided to the schools. NEI registered a ten percent increase in the quality of teaching in supported schools. This improvement is demonstrated in the way teachers prepare for lesson, use instructional materials, and manage their classes. On the use of teaching methods, teachers were found to also improve (an increase of thirteen percent) the way they organise activity-based learner-centred instructional approaches in their classes.

Community support and participation were a key feature in NEI supported school improvement inter-

ventions. Communities were instrumental in teacher and school monitoring, and advocacy for school improvement including teacher training. SBMCs supported minor repairs and construction of school infrastructure and repair of water sources. It is noteworthy to mention the revitalization of mothers' association resulted in enhanced women participation in school development activities.



The combined benefits of the above interventions are amplified through the establishment of TMIS. TMIS is reducing redundancy in the training activities thereby making them more cost effective. TMIS is also streamlining and improving the administration of teaching staff in Bauchi and Sokoto states.

Recommendations for future programs

The outlines of a reformed and locally owned system of teacher education and management are fully emerging in Bauchi and Sokoto states. This is eliminating political interference in the TRD processes and addressing administrative problems related to maintaining, training, and retraining a large number of teachers through appropriate use of information technology in the form of TMIS. As part of the learning system, the state's policymakers and planners should rely on devices for reflective thinking such as Action Research to contribute to continual, prioritized, and sustained improvement in the system. The policy related outcomes, which are already enshrined in the STEP, TRD, and QA procedures and guidelines, need to be provided executive and legislative cover by the state.

To maintain momentum in reforming their teacher education systems, the states will need sustained advocacy to ensure that this cover is available as soon as possible. The state officials should become accustomed to using TMIS to recognise the value of

administrative convenience that comes with it. They should begin to use it to eliminate redundancy in the selection of teacher training participants and in the distribution of teachers' welfare entitlements. The teacher education reforms, like reforms in most sub-sectors, have a technical as well as a political aspect to them. The pieces of technical puzzle are already in place. Policy makers and other stakeholders will need to demonstrate the political will to sustain and keep these reforms going.



**Chapter Four: Supporting Vulnerable Children to
Access Basic Education and Vocational training in
Bauchi and Sokoto states**

Supporting Vulnerable Children to Access Basic Education and Vocational training in Bauchi and Sokoto

NEI interventions focused on: (i) increasing support and provision of education and health services for VC by establishing community coalitions, setting up a VC referral system for education and health services, enhancing teacher ability for literacy and numeracy instruction to OVC, establishing non-formal learning centres, providing VC support packages, and providing access to vocational education; (ii) increasing support and provision of supplementary VC support activities by training teachers and VC support persons in mentoring, psycho-social counselling and hygiene, implementing an adolescent girls programme, establishing kids' clubs, and building capacity of communities and care-givers to support VC education and well-being; and (iii) strengthening systems for increasing access to education and health services by adapting the national VC plan of action in each state, strengthening capacity of VC-responsible agencies and officers, developing procedures to integrate academic subjects into Qur'anic schools, and building capacity to integrate VC into formal schools.

The project operated in twenty pilot LGAs (ten each in Bauchi and Sokoto states), and 200 demonstration schools (100 per state, made up of 40 public schools, 20 Islamiyya schools and 40 non-formal learning centres) randomly and purposively selected to demonstrate the re-invigorated system being put in the place at state and local government levels.

Findings based on a formative research conducted in 2010 led to a program design focused on four core support areas. These are: Kids Forum (clubs), AGP, CCs and caregivers training. The recommendations include: (i) the need for vocational training and skills acquisition for income generation; (ii) the need to provide food and access to free health care services for VC ; (iii) the need for the provision of free boarding schools and teachers' salaries in Qur'anic schools (in view of reducing Almajirai begging on the street); (iv) the need to provide training to teachers to extend appropriate care and support to VC; (v) to need to be aware of the stigma and neglect that VC are subjected to how to address them; (vi) the need to involve affected children in addressing their welfare; (vii) the importance of providing access to education for VC to help socialize; and (viii) the need establish KF in schools and the importance of implementing culturally sensitive activities to get buy-in from parents and communities.

Pioneers Reproductive Health and Youth Association (PREHYA) – an NGO grantee supported by NEI developed a proposal and received a grant from to the US Embassy to the tune of N1,280,000 to support 100 vulnerable adolescent girls.

Increasing VC access to basic education through community engagement

NEI supported the formation of twenty CCs that comprise 600 members. NEI supported CCs to identify, prioritize and address VC's education needs with or without outside support in view of sustaining their efforts. CCs were trained to provide support in 200 demonstration schools covering 16000 (9770m, 6230f) Bauchi 8000 (4425m, 3575f), Sokoto 8000 (5345m 2655f) VC. The CCs in turn provided training to 1,000 CC and OST members on CC tools, and conducted advocacies and mobilized resources. The CCs provided support to community structures around demonstration schools and strengthened the services available to VC, both in the community and through referral to health and other social services.

NEI with the support of CCs and other community structures established twenty Adolescent Girls' Programme (AGP) centres with a total enrolment of 2686 (Bauchi 1402, Sokoto 1284). At the very inception, AGP centres were provided with vocational and learning equipment (sewing, knitting and local spaghetti making machines, cooking utensils, food items and handcraft materials). 105 adolescent girls' facilitators also received training on the AGP manual developed in collaboration with state counter-parts. A booklet on health and hygiene practices for adolescent girls was also produced and distributed. Additionally, 533 AGP and KF facilitators and OSTs were

trained on Life Skills, WASH and PSS to enhance their ability in addressing the priority needs of VC.

Between 2011 and 2013, 2686 (Bauchi 1402, Sokoto 1284) adolescent girls graduated from the AGP centres. Upon graduation, the girls were provided with equipment such as sewing, embroidery, knitting and pasta making machines donated by local governments, philanthropists and community members to help them start income generating activities. Some of these graduates established their micro businesses and even went further to disseminate the skills they learned to younger vulnerable adolescent girls who they recruited as apprentices.

Amina Jibrin graduated in knitting from the Dass LGA AGP centre in 2012 and established a micro business in her home with the tools donated by Dass community. Now, her earnings are not only enough to support her family, but she is also giving back to her community by ensuring that vulnerable girls like her have access to economic opportunities. She currently has twelve adolescent girls aged between 15 and 17 as her apprentices.

KF provides psychosocial support and recreational learning for children through physical activities and use of interactive materials. 320 KFs were established under the NEI project in collaboration with NGOs and other community structures with a total participation of 16000 (9770m, 6230f); Bauchi 8000 (4425m, 3575f), Sokoto 8000 (5345m 2655f) children. 320 KF facilitators received training on KF manual and training guide to build their skills on how to deliver recreational learning to kids. Although the forum targeted VC, its membership was open to all to avoid stigmatization. Furthermore, 6713 (4293m, 2420f) caregivers of VC were trained on a range of topics including positive parenting, care and support for VC, income generation, and village or peer savings scheme.

NEI trained twenty journalists from the print and electronic media on strategic reporting on VC and girl-child education issues. The training led to the production of twenty six episodes of a thirty-minute radio discussion programs on OVC issues and girls' education produced and aired three times per week in collaboration with local radio stations in the twenty NEI pilot LGAs (reaching over 35 LGAs in the two states).

In Bauchi and Sokoto states, plans are being firmed up for the Ministries of Women Affairs (MOWA) and SUBEB to sustain the twenty AGP centres and 320

KFs. An orientation meeting was held with Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development to address the sustainability of NEI-supported VC activities in the state.

Results and outcomes

Activities by CCs led to increased awareness on VC issues through religious sermons led by Imams. CCs in both states facilitated computer training, vocational skills acquisition, free meals for VCs, donated food supplies to caregivers, provided school uniforms, donated laptop, and sponsored thirty three secondary school VCs until graduation. Community Mobilization and Development Initiative (COMDI) – an NGO grantee - provided their conference hall as the venue for the OVC TWG meetings in Sokoto State. Four such meetings of the TWG that would have cost N240, 000 were held at their venue. Additionally, the

Badel community in Dass LGA has pledged to sustain and continue with the initiative at the Girls' Education Centre after the NEI project ends. In Sokoto State, Kebbe, Wamako and Ilelah CCs who were trained on resource mobilization have started galvanizing their LGAs to support vulnerable children.

training of journalists led to the production of twenty six episodes of thirty-minute radio discussion programs on VC issues and girls' education produced and aired three times per week in collaboration with local radio stations in the twenty NEI pilot LGAs (covering reaching well over thirty five LGAs in the two states). Overall, N10,629,500 was leveraged in cash and in-kind resources through CC activities for improving the wellbeing of VC.

Challenges and how they were resolved

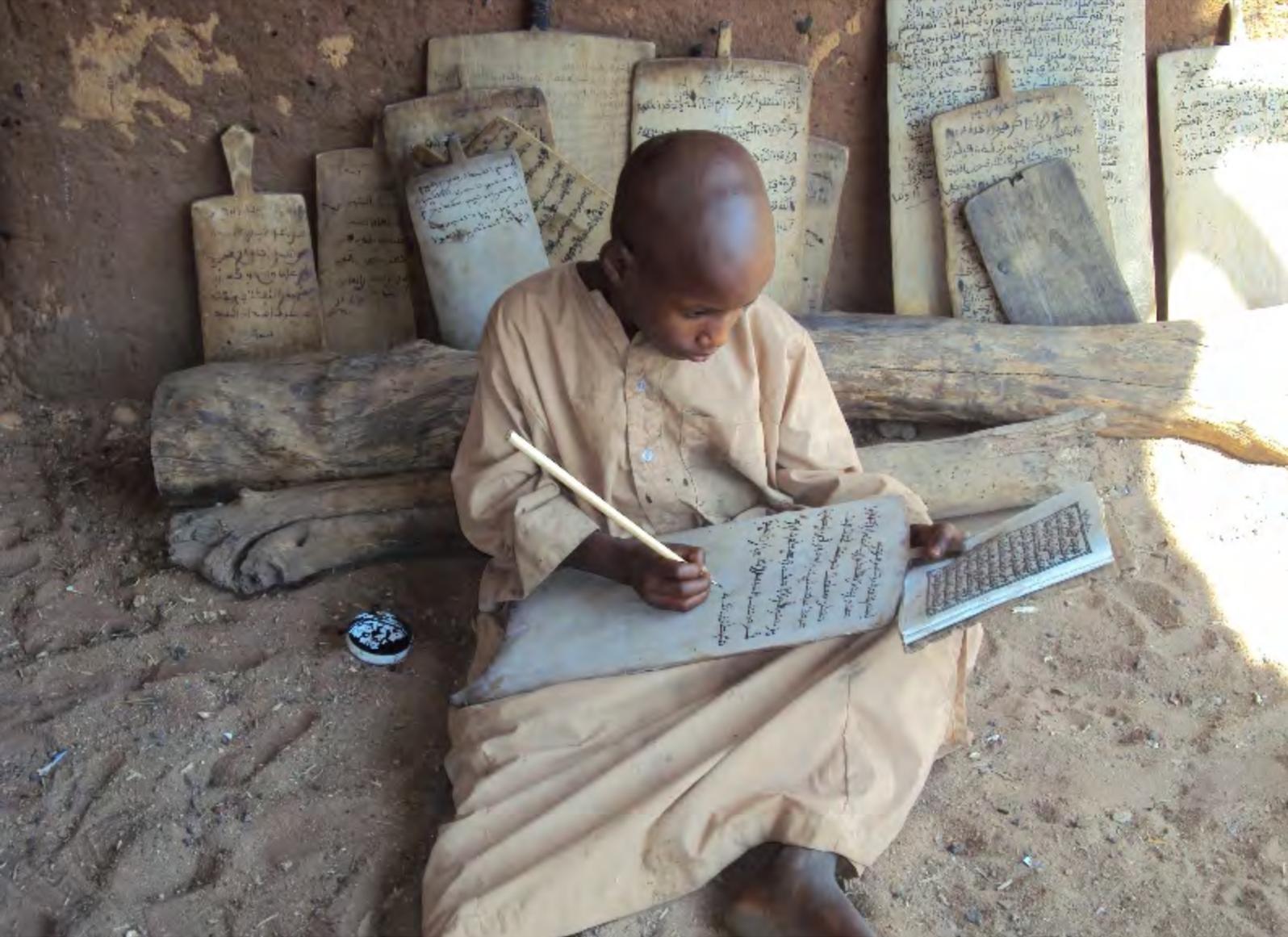
Delay in fulfilling LGA pledges of financial support made to CCs, AGP and KF activities at community level impacts CC action plans. Follow up visits to the Ministry for Local Government Affairs (MOGA) aided the release of some of the pledged funds. Sustaining the zeal of OST members in identifying and tracking OVC and record keeping by OST at the school level still remains a challenge. Security issues in both project states, especially in Bauchi and transition of political office holders posed specific challenges to program implementation. These challenges were surmounted through persistent advocacies which lead to budget provision for sustainability, scale up, and community ownership.

Lessons learned, Recommendations for future programmes

When communities are properly sensitized and possess motivated leaders, they have the ability to carry

out activities to sustain the well-being of VC. Communities are demonstrating their willingness to provide educational support to VC. The VC quality improvement model is seen by communities as a viable mechanism of VC support.

Joint state meetings conducted by relevant MDAs is improving the quality of capacity building through cross exchanging of experiences and best practices when introducing new interventions. Frequent meetings with stakeholders at the community level create a favourable environment for achieving and sustaining program deliverables. When CC members and policy-makers get together and discuss sustainability of basic education interventions, local council members buy into CC suggestions to ensure community level participation.



**Chapter Five: Working in Tsangaya
(Qur'anic) Schools: NEI Experience**

Working in Tsangaya (Qur'anic) Schools: NEI Experience

The Almajirai Phenomenon in Nigeria: Conceptual and Historical Background

The term Almajiri is a Hausa word for a migrant pupil or student. The word derives from the Arabic term 'al-muhajir', meaning migrant. It refers to a person who left his town or village, parents, friends and relations, in search of religious knowledge and scholarship. It is loosely used in referring to beggars or destitute in general.

The choice of Bauchi and Sokoto as the focus states for OVC programming that includes Almajirai presented an opportunity to make tremendous impact. NEI built on successes of previous projects such as LEAP and COMPASS, while capitalising on lessons learned from USAID investments in systems building and OVC support under projects like Enabling HIV & AIDS, TB and Social Sector Environment (ENHANSE) and President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Response (PEPFAR). The approach focused on three fundamental principles: (i) to build on what exists; (ii) to effect change through a three-pronged change strategy; and (iii) to embrace a systems approach that ensures comprehensive coverage of processes.

Ground work to support the initiative

In Sokoto and Bauchi States, the project conducted advocacy campaigns and mobilization efforts amongst key stakeholders (relevant state ministries, NGOs, CSOs, and traditional and religious leaders) to

garner support from local communities in support of this initiative. In addition, NEI organized orientation workshops that brought together commissioners, permanent secretaries and directors of the ministries and agencies to provide them with an opportunity to understand what the project was all about and to delineate roles and responsibilities for the project and its counter-parts. This resulted in framing a common approach and program to support the Almajirai population in both states. In a similar vein, NEI engaged Ma'alams and proprietors of Qur'anic schools to allay their fears and concerns with regard to the integration of core curricula in their schools and to garner support from amongst their ranks. It is also worthy to note that NEI supported the two agencies responsible for integrated Qur'anic schools to develop the standards and produce the list of such schools that NEI could support. 200 (100 in each state) schools including forty NFLCs were identified as pilot schools for NEI intervention.

Catalysts for Implementation

A key impetus for VC programming was the adaptation of the National Orphans and Vulnerable Children policy to suite to the peculiarities of the states. NEI supported the MOWA (the ministry in charge of VC affairs) to lead the process and brought together other agencies (MOE, MORA, MOBEP, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Local Governments, and other agencies and departments)

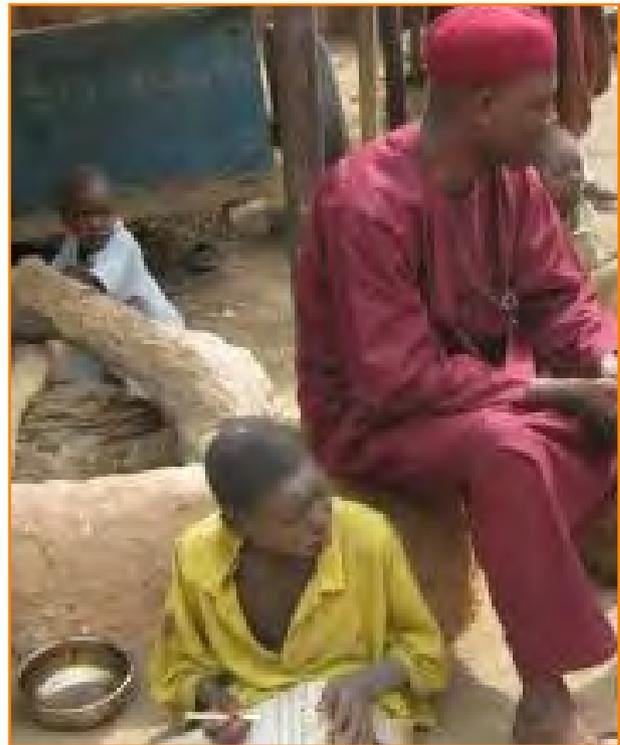
to draft and adapt the State OVC Action Plan from the National Priority Agenda for Support of Vulnerable Children in Nigeria. The State OVC Action Plan is a framework of integrated response to OVC care and support. It delineates roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in view of addressing the education, health, protection, and psycho-social support issues.

Support Packages

NEI engaged all stakeholders including vulnerable children and the physically challenged in determining the kind of support package to be provided to VC in the two states. Each group identified the kind of support preferred for in education, health, food and nutrition, shelter and care, protection, and economic empowerment. Government officials, caregivers and the Qur'anic schools proprietors (Ma'alams) were impressed by the support items identified by the children. NEI used this as the basis for designing a support package of VC that comprised Koyon Karatu and Koyon Lissafi, pencils, pens, crayon, exercise books, slippers, uniform, school bags, bathing and washing soap, and blanket. 16000 (9770m, 6230f) Bauchi 8000 (4425m, 3575f), Sokoto 8000 (5345m 2655f) vulnerable children were the beneficiaries of the support packages. Furthermore 800 sewing machines, 160 embroidery machines and 240 knitting machines were distributed to the eighty NFLCs

which in turn supported 1600 children to acquire vocational skills.

In addition, forty vulnerable children in each non-formal learning centre were provided with a meal per day through arrangements made with the school proprietors and grantee NGOs in collaboration with the OSTs and community members.



Support to Mal'alams through the NGOs

Proprietors of NFLCs are central to success in increasing access to VC and the Almajirai in particular. NEI first obtained their buy-in and participation by organizing sensitization meetings. This gave them the opportunity raise and address their concerns and understand what the objectives of the project were. NEI also organized a study tour to Kano State for a first-hand view of operations in similar Qur'anic schools. The tour helped them understand the advantages of integrating of core curricula in Qur'anic schools and to integrate them in their own schools.

Accelerated Literacy Programme

Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) prepares learners to acquire the equivalent of primary education in three years. The basic literacy stage of the ALP lasts for nine months. During period the learner is taught literacy and numeracy in the language of the environment equivalent to the level of lower primary schools. The learner will be able to write simple letter and do some simple arithmetic operations. The second stage is called post literacy. The medium of instruction is English and the duration is two years. The subjects taught are English, mathematics, basic science, social studies and life skills. The graduates of this stage are expected to complete the equivalent syllabus of primary six in formal schools allowing them to be mainstreamed into junior secondary schools.

The project worked with eighty NFLCs (Integrated Qur'anic Schools) in twenty LGAs in Bauchi and Sokoto states. Four centres were selected in each LGA and left to be managed by a grantee NGOs. The NGO recruited and trained facilitators for each centre. Project supported schools recorded an enrolment of 8,856 in 2010; 11,874 in 2011 and 14,483 in 2012 showing continued growth. The growth is attributed to NEI initiatives that involved the engagement all stakeholders to support the critical needs of VC.

Many of the learners (including Almajirai) that completed the basic literacy were mainstreamed into primary schools. In addition, 2947 (2018m, 929f); Bauchi 1219, Sokoto 1728 VC acquired vocational skills through the apprenticeship arrangements with community master craftsmen and women.

Integration of Core Subjects into Qur'anic Schools

Integrating core subjects into Qur'anic schools helps in increasing access to basic education for the underserved. This is necessary for the attainment of the Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Universal Basic Education (UBE). The goals of EFA, MDGs and NEEDS cannot be achieved if learners in Qur'anic schools are not catered for. The best method for their incorporation is through the integration of core subjects into Qur'anic schools and other non-formal learning centres.

Although Qur'anic education promotes adherence to Islamic injunctions and moral values for the potential needs of children, basic education needs to be integrated to build the capacity of the children and prepare them to meet the challenges of modern world including the world of work. It is in view of this notion that NEI worked with key state stakeholders (chief amongst them MOE, MORA, SUBEB, SAME, ANFEA, Arabic and Islamic Education Board, proprietors of Qur'anic Schools, FOMWAN and CSACEFA) to develop a manual for integrating core subjects into Qur'anic schools.

Mainstreaming the Integrated Qur'anic Education Centres

Integrated Qur'anic Education (IQE) centres in both states are managed by ANFEA, SAME, SUBEB and MORA. These centres have learners with diverse learning backgrounds. Some of them have never attended any formal school while a number of them dropped out of school without completing basic education. This is one of the major reasons why basic education is introduced in such learning centres. In these centres, learners are exposed to a nine-month accelerated learning, with focus on basic literacy and numeracy, equivalent to formal school Primary one to three. After graduation from this initial basic literacy level, they proceed to two years post literacy level which is equivalent to Primary four to six at the end

of which the learners sit for the final exam. If successful, they qualify to join junior secondary level.

Engaging State-based NGOs

NEI mobilized several NGOs to support the delivery of basic education in both Bauchi and Sokoto states. This approach increased local participation, encouraged private public partnership and demonstrated that basic education can be delivered through support provided by reputable NGOs in the community.



In addition to FOMWAN and CSACEFA, twenty four such NGOs were identified through a selection process participated in running the eighty NFLCs, AGP, and 320 KF by providing literacy, numeracy, life skills, psychosocial counselling to VC and adolescent girls.

Capacity building and support for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

The project set up the OVC TWG and engaged them on applying the participatory approach (REFLECT) in identifying support packages for VC in Nigeria. It was the first time state partners engaged the children in selecting support packages. NEI also supported line ministries to adapt the National OVC Plan of Action and in introducing the Nigerian OVC Management Information System (NOMIS) and the training of desk officers and data entry clerks in usage.

Centre Based Management Committees

The project facilitated the formation of Centre Based Management Committees (CBMCs) for each of the eighty NFLCs in Bauchi and Sokoto states. Each ten-member committee comprised the centre proprietor, facilitator, OST member, representative of the traditional leader, women's representative and five members of the community. The CBMCs received training on Whole School Development Plan and participated in a CBMC forum for peer review and to share experiences.

Monitoring

NEI put in place a two-layer monitoring mechanism. NGO monitoring officers conduct monitoring of the centres in addition to monitoring exercises by governmental partners at both State and LGA levels. The project also supported the state education agencies to harmonize their monitoring tools.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The redeployment of VC Desk Officers and Directors by the Ministry of Local Government in Sokoto State was a setback to programme implementation as some of the new officials had no experience in their new job assignments. However, NEI utilised the VC quality of service training to induct the new officers into VC programming as well as provide clear guidelines on their job specifications.

Adaptation of KF games to suit local peculiarities made teaching and learning lively and participatory for the kids. Also, involving community and government partners in planning of activities allowed for greater success in the implementation of these activities at all levels. Furthermore, frequent monitoring of NFLCs helped in improving the performance of learners in the centres. The learners in NFLCs demonstrated the ability to read and write better than some primary schools pupils.



**Chapter Six: Impact of USAID-NEI Project
on grantee NGOs' capacity to implement
basic education project in Bauchi and
Sokoto states**

Impact of USAID-NEI Project on grantee NGOs' capacity to implement basic education project in Bauchi and Sokoto states

Background

NEI is a strong advocate for the adaptation of the domesticated National Teacher Education Policy (NTEP) to State Teacher Education Policy (STEP). Series of advocacy to the state House of Assembly were carried out for legislative approval of the policy in Bauchi and Sokoto States. In addition to developing modalities for civil society engagement and public accountability for the development and implementation of sector plans at the state level, similar processes for civil engagement and accountability were developed at school, community, and local government levels. School performance was monitored in collaboration with School Based Management Committees (SBMCs), Community Coalitions (CC), Orphan Support Team (OST), Centre Based Management Committees (CBMCs), NEI structure established in non-formal learning centres to ensure quality in the centres, and rebuild its capacity on school planning, management, advocacy and resources mobilisation. NEI identified some key relevant structures in the community such as WDCs and mothers club in ensuring basic education quality service delivery. NEI strengthened the capacity of civil society counterparts to be effective advocates and watchdogs in budget planning and execution, working with policy champions in the state.

Following the formation of CCs and capacity building on resource mobilization, CCs in Dass and Bodinga

LGAs mobilized resources worth N1,250,000 for equipment including knitting, sewing, and pasta making machines for graduates of the adolescent girls program. The Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) in collaboration with CC, conducted community mobilisation meetings to discuss OVC issues and support girl-child education.

Through CSACEFA, NEI increased access by orphans and vulnerable children to basic education and other services. Literacy, numeracy, life skills programme, and psychosocial support materials were incorporated into the existing learning centres' programme and used in the learning centres. Also, additional primers and other materials were leveraged from the state agency for non-formal education to improve learning experience. 112 OVC graduates have been mainstreamed into formal school. CSACEFA managed eight non-formal learning centres and supported them with daily meals and monitored the delivery of basic literacy and numeracy. It graduated the first set and certificates were issued. Older OVCs among them were attached to master craftsmen to learn marketable skills in the community such as knitting, sewing, embroidery, motorcycle mechanic, carpentry, henna design, bricklaying, photography and lots more.

The Adolescent Girls programme identifies and enrolls girls that dropped out of school aged 12-17 for

a period of nine months during which they were thought literacy, numeracy, vocational and life skills. One of the beneficiaries from Dass community is already giving back to her community. Amina Jibrin has opened a micro business and has 12 apprentices age 15-17 learning in her shop. Murjanatu Yunusa registered to go back to school. She is now in Dawar College of Education, Dass, studying to become a teacher. CSACEFA is still monitoring kids mainstreamed into formal school in Aliyu Liman Qur'anic School, Dingyadi. One of the vulnerable children mainstreamed into formal school took first position in his class and won the overall best student in speech and prize giving day 2012 in Mohammed Baraya Model Primary School Dingyadi in Bodinga LGA.

Twenty-nine Kids Forums were established both in Dass and Bodinga LGA and the project supported the facilitators in conducting extra-curricular activities such as sports, instructive social interactions, arts and crafts, formation of debating clubs and other educational competitions among the pupils. These activities have assisted the kids greatly in being assertive and have made them more interactive with their facilitators, especially in problem identification and solving. The project built the capacity of 1,976 OVC caregivers on household economic strengthening and trained 24 SBMC and CBMC members on whole school development plan (WSDP) in Dass and Bodin-

ga of Bauchi and Sokoto. The project also trained kids' forum facilitators on the use of KF manual on literacy and numeracy, life skills and psychosocial.

The NEI project brought synergy and cordial working relationship between CSACEFA (and other CSOs) and the government for the first time. This relationship was achieved through deep involvement between CSOs and government in budget review, and round table discussions on project process. Owing to this



engagement, the Bauchi State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) gave a copy of its expenditure to CSOs. Additionally, CSACEFA has forwarded a proposal to SUBEB to access funding for monitoring of SUBEB activities as embedded in the annual budget. CSACEFA also oriented government officials on the Freedom of Information Act to ensure sustainability of information flow from government agencies.

NEI engaged the media to advocate, sensitise and inform policy makers and the public, depending on the issue at hand, especially during its yearly celebration of global action week. The media provided accurate, balanced and timely information that is of interest and relevance to the public in a bid to promote good governance and accountability. The project supported government in monitoring progress against targets in the Annual Implementation Plan.

Results and outcomes

NEI built the capacity of CSACEFA members in resources mobilisation, proposal writing, budget tracking, strategic advocacy and monitoring school performance. Through CSACEFA, NEI developed policies, guideline and procedure for engaging CSOs. Annual global action week celebrations were conducted to reawaken the government to meet the MDG target. Resources were leveraged for 200 adolescent graduates in Dass and Bodinga LGA. CS-

CACEFA, in collaboration with CC/OSTs, linked 85 OVCs to household members for daily meals. The CBMC in Tsangaya Malam Idi and girl-child centre mobilised resource and renovated the centre. CSACEFA, CC/CBMC and community members mobilised resources for the reconstruction of Malam Aliyu Altine Qur'anic School Darhel in Bodinga LGA. Dass LGEA supported four NEI non-formal learning centres with permanent teachers. Bodinga LGEA supported AGP centre with one permanent facilitator. Three adolescent girls who participated in Dass AGP have means of livelihood and are now training others. 112 OVCs from non-formal learning centres were mainstreamed into formal schools.

Twenty-four schools SBMC members were trained on whole school development plan in Dass and Bodinga of Bauchi and Sokoto. Twenty policy champions (respected, retired and active civil servants) were engaged to carry out high level advocacy to policy makers for their approval of documents that NEI adapted or produced. 240 older orphan vulnerable children were linked to master craftsmen/women to learn marketable vocation within the community. Dass LGEA supported all the NFLCs in Dass with permanent facilitators.

Challenges and lessons learnt

One of the challenges faced was the bureaucratic process involved in obtaining information, data and

budget. However, the project obtained the Freedom of Information Act 2011 and sensitised relevant stakeholders. Roles of LGA and LGEA were overlapping on NEI activities in LGAs. Therefore, it was difficult to get them involved in monitoring. In response, the project organised a meeting with LGEAs and LGAs to define their roles. Also, a quarterly meeting was initiated to provide updates.

Sustainability Plan

Beyond the NEI project, CSACEFA will continue to work with its members to advocate for quality basic education in the two states. Already, an advocacy strategy guideline for CSO engagement has been developed. CSACEFA will continue with monitoring and implementation of MTSS/SESOP, budget tracking in the two states and also continue to advocate for timely release of funds using the platform of established network of NGOs. CSACEFA will continue to work with CCs in collaboration with ESD department to mobilise and sensitise community to support basic education, with special attention given to girls. CSACEFA will support CCs in collaboration with the ESD department in managing the adolescent girls programme (AGP) and to leverage resources in supporting the graduating girls as organised in the previous years.

CSACEFA will work with ANFEA/SAME and ESD departments in SUBEB and LGEA to support OVC in

literacy, numeracy, life skills using manual/primers. CSACEFA will continue to advocate and sensitise the community members to support the NFLCs with daily feeding. CSACEFA will continue to organise refresher training for CBMCs on household economic strengthening, OVC protection and link them with quality improvement committee structures set up by URC/LINKS for Children. CSACEFA will continue to collaborate with ANFE/SAME to support vocational skill acquisition, establish new centres where necessary, and leverage resource to support those that perform exceptional well on graduation.

CSACEFA members live and work in both LGA and state levels and they will continue to monitor and track schools' improvement and teacher quality. CSACEFA will continue to collaborate with social mobilisation departments in managing and giving direct service delivery to the kids' forum and also replicate it in other schools having recorded great successes in kids' assertiveness, negotiation skills and psycho social support.

NGOs on USAID-NEI Project:

- We are proud of working with NEI, USAID-NEI has built our capacity to deliver"
- "Working with USAID-NEI has upgraded the standard of our Organization"
- "Enriching."



**Chapter Seven: Strategies For Reaching Out to
Vulnerable Children: FOMWAN and CSACEFA's
Experience Under NEI**

Strategies For Reaching Out to Vulnerable Children: FOMWAN and CSACEFA's experience under NEI

Understanding the context

At the start of the project, communities, particularly religious leaders and other Islamic organizations were sceptical of the project's motives. Although there were OVCs in schools and centres, there was no documentation or guidelines for identifying them and providing them with educational or health services. There were no effective literacy or numeracy programs in the NFLCs. Only four NFLCs indicated that they taught literacy and numeracy. There was, however, no records to prove this. Additionally, no learner was mainstreamed from NFLCs into formal schools. Furthermore, there were no initiatives supporting OVCs to acquire vocational skills. Community support for OVCs were mostly based on personal relationships i.e. people only supported orphans that were related to them, or when they came begging.

FOMWAN and CSACEFA with the support of NEI, rose to these challenges by embarking on a series of advocacies campaigns targeting policy makers, community and religious leaders, and faith-based organisations to clear misconceptions, and ensure that VC have access to basic education. The two NGOs held meetings with women organisations and succeeded in organizing town hall meetings with various stakeholders in the communities and LGA headquarters. Palace-based mobilization initiatives were also held and used as a platform for assisting OVCs and linking them with households. The Ramadan Tafsir was an

opportunity to mobilize communities and all the relevant stakeholders to rally around the project. This was clearly demonstrated with the formation of community OVC support groups, and getting Ulamas and FOMWAN Da'wah committee members to talk on OVC support and girls education.

FOMWAN and CSACEFA conducted regular monitoring visits and provided technical assistance to proprietors and facilitators on proper record-keeping and

FOMWAN mainstreamed 74 Almajirai and girls to formal primary schools in Alkaleri and Shagari LGAs in Bauchi and Sokoto states respectively. The exceptional performance of one of the mainstreamed pupils, Ammar Muhammad, drew the attention of the head teacher of his formal primary school who encouraged him to sit (and subsequently pass) the Bauchi State Special Schools examination. This effort resulted in Ammar gaining admission into Government Science College, Toro - a school for gifted children. Ammar now dreams of becoming a medical doctor in order to give back to his community. To support his dream, FOMWAN has secured a pledge of the Bauchi State Agency for OVC to provide full boarding scholarship till he completes his secondary education.

on teaching methodologies. Both participated in the development processes (planning and budgeting) of the Mid-Term Sector Strategic plan (MTSS) for Sokoto and Bauchi States, and developed advocacy kits for conducting advocacy in the legislative and executive branches of the state governments for budget approval, budget release and budget tracking in collaboration with other CSOs.

FOMWAN and CSACEFA collaborated with the Teacher Education component of NEI and state partners in developing the State Teacher Education Policy (STEP). They collaborated with BETWG and SC in each state to examine the status of teachers, to develop Teacher Recruitment and Deployment (TRD) guidelines, and to streamline recruitment and deployment procedures.

The two NGOs identified policy champions within their focal communities to promote dialogue between the executive body of the government and the community. The policy champions were especially useful in mediating with SUBEB to end a teachers' strike in Bauchi. FOMWAN was instrumental in opening dialogue with MDAs on ways of improving education services in the twenty pilot LGAs in Bauchi and Sokoto states, and in bringing together MDAs and state-wide CSOs to develop a framework for CSO participation in government budgeting and planning in basic education. The framework which was adopt-

ed by the BESC set out the roles and responsibilities of CSOs in monitoring the MTSS budget and implementation process, the role of government in supporting CSOs to carry out these functions, and provided forums for interfacing with CSOs.

Over 30,000 community members in different spheres of life were reached on the importance of basic education, on supporting girls' education, and on increasing OVCs access to basic education. Town



hall meetings that targeted religious and traditional leaders were organized in view of increasing boosting girls' enrolment, retention and completion in school, and mobilizing support for OVCs. FOMWAN and CSACEFA sensitized LGA officials on the need to post additional teachers to support the literacy and numeracy programs conducted in the eighty NFLCs. FOMWAN also succeeded in linking 146 OVCs to craftsmen or/and women for training in viable and marketable vocational skills.

200 adolescent girls were enrolled in two FOMWAN-managed AGP centres, of which 65 have recently completed their training. FOMWAN and the Alkaleri CC mobilized the community to provide support vocational skills training centers. Community members responded positively by donating four sewing machines, two knitting machines and sixteen pasta-making machines. The girls centre in Alkaleri formed a committee which paid advocacy visits to Alkaleri local government council and secured a plot of land to build a permanent centre. Furthermore, FOMWAN built a block of two classrooms and an office to complement the community and local branch efforts. FOMWAN also paid visits to a philanthropist who agreed to fence the compound. Another philanthropist donated two sewing machines to Kajiji AGP centre in Shagari LGA. Seeing the benefits, Mandera community, which is also an NEI demonstration community provided a plot of land to FOMWAN to build

one for them. The building is currently in progress with another centre commissioned in Alkaleri. FOMWAN will continue to collaborate with CCs to set their priorities and mobilize resources to address them.

FOMWAN's association with NEI resulted in improved capacity of Amirahs to monitoring the delivery of basic literacy and vocational training in both formal and non-formal schools, and to leverage resources.

Results and Outcomes

Owing to the efforts made by FOMWAN, girls' enrolment increased by more than 100 percent in FOMWAN-managed NFLCs and schools. 1520 VC were enrolled in sixteen formal schools and eight NFLCs in Alkaleri and Shagari LGAs. 320 OVCs received literacy, numeracy and life-skills training in eight NFLCs out of which 160 of them proceeded to post-literacy. Seventy-four OVCs who attended NFLCs were mainstreamed into formal schools one of whom gained admission into a science secondary school in Toro. A coalition of 89 member organisations was registered to address access, management and quality of education. Communities were empowered to respond to OVC issues and leveraged N5,000,000 (in-kind and cash) to support OVC education and well-being. 147 OVCs were linked with household members for daily meals and other basic

needs (clothing and shelter). Support packages including 53,000 exercise books, 165 school bags, 3 bundles of school uniform, three cartons of soap/pomade and forty packs of pens/pencils were leveraged and distributed to 422 OVCs in schools.

CSACEFA, in collaboration with CC/OSTs, linked 85 OVCs to household members for daily meals. The CBMC in Tsangaya Malam Idi and girl-child centre mobilized resource and renovated the centre. CSACEFA, CC/CBMC and community members mobilized resources for the reconstruction of Malam Aliyu Altine Qur'anic School Darhel in Bodinga LGA.

Sustainability plan

Beyond the NEI project, FOMWAN and CSACEFA will continue to support CCs, CEFs and government partners to improve the delivery of quality basic education in eighty NFLCs. FOMWAN will also continue sensitizing communities to support OVC education and well-being by engaging all its branches in the twenty LGAs and subsequently expand to all local governments for wider coverage. Finally, FOMWAN has formed CSOs for action in the education sector and will use the opportunity to engage them in advocacy for adapting and implementing policies and frameworks in Bauchi and Sokoto states. To help monitor budget implementation at the grassroots

level, FOMWAN plans to partner with local governments and ANFEA to continue managing the AGFs.

Both FOMWAN and CSACEFA will work with ANFEA/SAME and ESD departments in SUBEB and LGEA to support OVC in literacy, numeracy, life skills acquisition. CSACEFA will continue to advocate and sensitize the community members to support the NFLCs with daily feeding. CSACEFA will continue to organize refresher training for CBMCs on household



economic empowerment, OVC protection, and linking them with quality improvement committee structures set up by URC/LINKS for Children. CSACEFA will continue to collaborate with ANFE/SAME to support vocational skill acquisition, establish new centres where necessary, and leverage resource to support those that perform exceptionally well on graduation.

Challenges and how they were resolved

The support that FOMWAN gets from local government authorities to sustain training of OVC caregivers leaves much to be desired. Despite the training provided to teachers, teachers still lack the fundamental skills to teach. Lack of proper coordination with appropriate MDAs to continue with OVC services, especially those mainstreamed to formal schools in also another challenge that needs to be looked into. Efforts to increase OVC access to education and other services are numerous but uncoordinated, roles and responsibilities overlap among MDAs and desk offices, and services are underfunded compared to needs. Funds released to LGAs are inadequate.

Lessons Learned and recommendations for future programmes

Frequent meetings with stakeholders at the community level create a favourable environment for achieving and sustaining program deliverables. Training of CSOs on budget tracking and community involve-

ment improves delivery of quality education in schools.

Government should embrace CSOs as partners in progress by involving them right from the planning stage to implementation and monitoring and evaluation. CSOs should work hand in hand with the media to create awareness and ensure community participation.





Chapter Eight: USAID-NEI Gender Interventions

USAID-NEI Gender Interventions

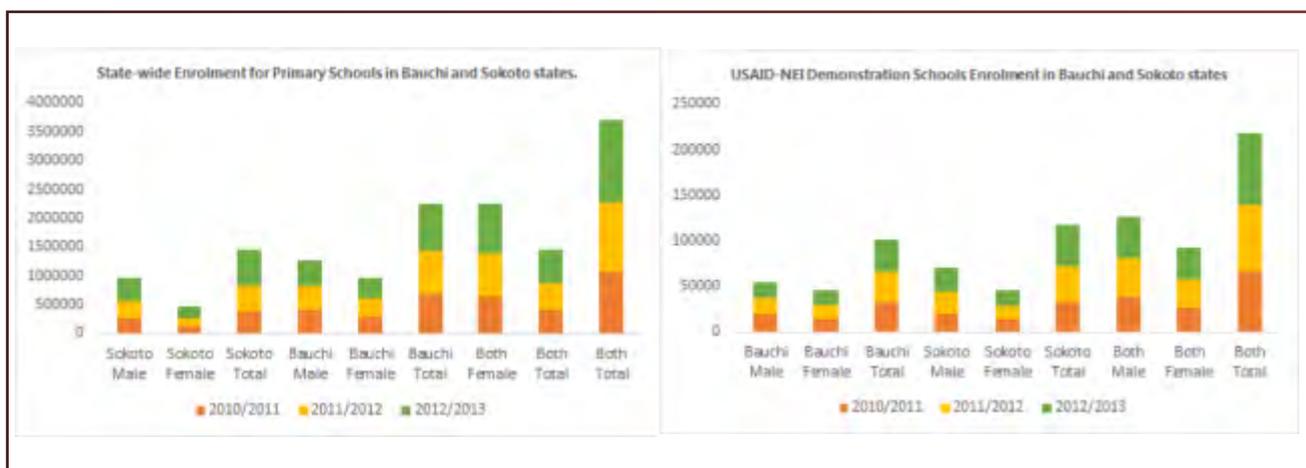
Background

Access to quality education for women and men is a fundamental human right. Education serves as a gateway to better employment and improved standards of living as well as positive health behaviors. Equal access to education for both sexes affords women and men the opportunity to acquire necessary skills and competencies thereby fostering personal development. Efforts to provide equal access to education for women and men are a worthy national investment, not only for the personal development of its citizens, but also for the social and economic development of the country.

Noting USAID vision of providing males and females equal opportunity to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural and political development, NEI set out to

strengthen government delivery of basic education services and increase access to education (and related services) for OVC in the northern states of Bauchi and Sokoto. To ensure that gender comes into play in developing strategies for the different intervention areas of the project, NEI engaged stakeholders at the community, LGA and state levels and conducted series of activities that took into consideration the gender aspect.

NEI organized a forums to address key obstacles to girl-child education and OVC in Bauchi and Sokoto States. NEI also engaged key stakeholders to assess the status of OVC with focus on attendance, retention, conditions at school (e.g. environmental hygiene), and parental attitudes. These were aimed at identifying winning strategies and champions, and establishing community-run non formal programs.



NEI also carried out a study to assess gender-specific barriers to primary education, document the living conditions of OVC in the project states, describe the status of community programs and resources for OVC, and to identify major gaps and constraints in gender equality in the education sector in Bauchi and Sokoto states. The following tries to summarize gender related interventions carried out under NEI:

Teacher Education

The teacher education program was generally designed to ensure gender issues are properly addressed. Gender considerations were made in developing instructional materials for use in both formal schools and non formal learning centers. These include picture and illustrations representing boys and girls, and avoiding role stereotyping (girls as engineers, doctors; lawyers as well as boys). The manuals on literacy, numeracy, life skills and psychosocial counseling that meet the needs of both boys and girls ensured that all pupils' regardless of their gender are provided with the opportunity to be actively engaged in learning and assume a variety of responsibilities such as class captains and group/team monitors. In a recently conducted classroom observation by NEI in both Bauchi and Sokoto states, 43% boys and 38% girls were found to actively participate in teaching-learning process.

Non-formal Learning Centers

To ensure that access to basic education is provided to VC, NEI set up eighty NFLCs to provide literacy, numeracy, psychosocial support, life and vocational skills to both boys and girls. In Bauchi state from amongst the forty demonstration NFLCs, girls have access to twenty one centers, nine 9 of which are exclusively girls centers while twelve centers are mixed. In Sokoto state, all forty NFLCs are mixed. Vocational skills equipment were provided equally to



these centers without stereotypes, while manuals were developed and teachers trained on their use.

Adolescent Girls Program

Working through MoWA and other appropriate government agencies, twenty AGP centers were established and teachers and facilitators trained to manage the centers. NEI also produced and distributed training materials for use by teachers and facilitators in the AGP centers. The centers provide literacy, numeracy life and vocational skills to vulnerable adolescent girls within the age range of thirteen to seventeen. FLHE, WASH, PSS instructions were also provided. A booklet that provides life skills and health information are produced and distributed to girls. A total of 2,182 young women participated in the AGP in Program Years 2 to 4, and 1,076 (Bauchi: 520, Sokoto: 556) graduated.

Community structures

NEI in collaboration with MDAs formed CCs and CEF with adequate representation of men, women and youth groups. The CCs and CEFs are meant to improve the community's ability to use participatory approaches to identify problems, and ultimately develop activities to solve problems related to OVC and girls' education. NEI trained and supported all twenty CCs to utilize behavior change communication materials like posters, information booklets, and radio magazine programs to provide doable action

points, mobilize resources for schools to have girls' friendly learning environment (such as the recruitment of additional female teachers), and the construction of separate toilet facilities for boys and girls. NEI implemented program activities to increase enrolment of girls in primary schools, improve parents' acceptance of public education, promote gender equity in primary school education through direct support to pupils and families, as well as strategies to build the community's capacity to solve problems



related to girls' education and OVC. To date, over 400 varied vocational tools worth over N600,000 have been provided to graduates of AGP and NFLCs in Bauchi and Sokoto by their communities.

Kids' Forum

NEI in collaboration with NGO grantees implemented KF (Dandalin Yara) program in 200 public schools and NFLCs with the support of CCs and OSTs. The forum targets vulnerable children aged eight-twelve years and provides separate forums for boys and girls in a safe and supervised environment. In addition to life skills, Dandalin Yara focuses on school learning and reading components from Teacher Education and Sesame Square. 11,149 (6,435m, 4,714f; Bauchi - 2,435m, 2314f; Sokoto - 4,000m, 2400f) kids participated in the forums in Bauchi and Sokoto states.

Caregivers training

To increase equal access to productive resources for caregivers of VC, 6,597 (4,396m, 2,201f) caregivers were trained on OVC care and support including economic empowerment, positive parenting (psychosocial support), nutrition, and counseling and referrals to foster OVC education and wellbeing.

Outcome/Impact

There have been steady increases in primary school enrolment in Bauchi and Sokoto states. Overall enrolment increased by 33.6% (30.8m; 38.1%f) in both

states. In Bauchi state, pupil enrolment and girls' in particular went up by 17.8% from 2011 to 2013 (14.8%m; 21.8%f). Sokoto state has the highest impact on gender enrolment with 62.6% increase (55.6%m; 77.3f). Male enrolment grew by 55.6% while female enrolment jumped 77.3% over the same years. Figure 1 (right) graphically depicts these increases.

Comparatively, enrolment in the 200 NEI demonstration schools increased by 9% over the same year and 23% cumulatively by 2013. Girl enrolment went up 18.1% same year and 37.2% cumulatively in Sokoto state. The figures are 5.3% and 21.55% for Bauchi state. Figure 2 shows growth in enrolment in NEI demonstration schools by state and by gender. There have been steady increases in primary school enrolment in Bauchi and Sokoto for both boys and girls. In Bauchi state, pupil enrolment went up 8.84% in 2011. Male enrolment grew by 7.41% while female enrolment jumped 10.8% over the same year. In Sokoto state, enrolment increased by 22.81% over the same period. Boys' enrolment grew by 23.78%, and that of girls by. Figure 1 (right) graphically depicts these increases.

Gender Assessment

NEI commissioned a baseline study in 2012, to document the living conditions of OVC in the project states and describe the status of community pro-

grams and resources for OVC in the education sector in Bauchi and Sokoto states. The study was aimed at assessing gender-specific barriers to primary education, the impact of NEI interventions on girls' education and health, and implications for sustainability. The result of initial assessment which set a baseline shows that in the domain of access to education, the Apparent Gross Intake Rate (AIR) for the first grade of primary school was 65.31% for males compared to 53.21% for females in Bauchi state, while in Sokoto state, AIR for males was 87.25% and 43.88% for females.

In the domain of Learning Process, the survey revealed that overall girls were less likely to initiate classroom interactions in predominantly boys' classes, although girl-initiated interactions did not vary by site type or by school type. Girls were more likely to respond to interactions in classrooms that had female teachers, a predominance of female pupils, in Islamiyya schools, in Sokoto state. In both Bauchi and Sokoto, female children were more likely to report being literate in English than male children. Boys' primary school completion rate was significantly higher than girls' in Bauchi (0.78f; 0.87m). There were no differences for girls and boys in Sokoto (0.87f; 0.89 m). Completion rate was higher in Islamiyya schools than in public schools. Significantly more males than females had heard messages about OVC in both Bauchi and Sokoto states. However, in Sokoto

project LGAs, there were significantly more males than females who participated in community programs for OVC. NEI's caregivers training in Sokoto state made a conscious effort to reverse this by training 40.45% women among the 3,290 caregivers trained in the state.

Program impact

The impact and sustainability of NEI gender activities include the following:

- AGPs: Both states' MOWA have drawn up plans to replicate NEI's AGP model to all LGAs of each state to provide access to more young girls.
- NFLCs: ANFEA in Bauchi state and SAME in Sokoto state have approved demonstration Almajiri schools in their annual budgets. Indeed, SAME has recently completed a video documentary of improvements and teaching processes in the forty NEI NFLCs and drawn up and itemized budget for operating each NFLC as part of its planning process.
- Community structures: CCs remain pivotal to mobilizing community resources for the NFLCs and AGPs, and procuring vocational tools as seed capital for graduating young women of AGPs. SUBEB and MOE have endorsed CEF as vehicles of community participation in basic education decisions. The CEFs are particularly vocal in requesting for female toilets in schools for their girl children and

deployment of female teachers to their schools.

- Teacher Education: NEI teacher training model has already been adopted by SUBEB in each state to train 2,000 teachers in 2012. This year, NEI has supported Sokoto SUBEB to use the TMIS to select male and female teachers for in-service training.
- Data systems for education management: LGEA HR officers comprising men and women from all LGAs were trained on TMIS. SUBEBs are now collaborating in state-wide rollout of TMIS and ensuring that henceforth all teacher management decisions are assisted by the TMIS database. SUBEB and all LGEAs data officials were trained and use the EMIS Toolbox to provide management decisions. The Toolbox easily identifies schools requiring more female teachers, more female toilets and other resources for improved service delivery.



**Chapter Nine: Measuring progress under the
USAID-NEI Project**

Measuring Progress Under the USAID-NEI Project

The NEI performance monitoring system systematically collects and provides accurate, timely and reliable data to the NEI team, government and non-government partners, and donors in order to track progress towards completing activities and reaching objectives. NEI measured performance at three levels: inputs (e.g. training), outputs (e.g. number of people trained), and outcomes (e.g. changes in quality of services delivered).

NEI operated intensively in ten LGEAs in each state and in ten demonstration schools (four government primary schools, two Islamiyya schools, and four non-formal Learning Centres) per LGEA. This adds up to 100 demonstration schools per state. Up to ten schools per state (one per LGEA) were used as control schools in more experimental interventions, which required more scrutiny before rolling out to demonstration schools. This approach served multiple purposes. Firstly, it built capacity and provided hands-on experience of the state and local governments; secondly, it demonstrated that the systems and procedures are viable; thirdly, it provided a structure for a “whole school” model which brought together education system support and OVC support; and fourthly, it enabled the project to measure the impact of the reforms it put in place and systemic improvements on schools, teachers, pupils and communities within the project timeframe.

In each state, the ten LGEAs and three control LGEAs were selected using stratified random sampling based on senatorial districts, with the exclusion of LGEAs where the UNICEF program was operating (to avoid confounding variables and redundancies). Within each project LGEA, target schools were randomly selected from a list of those that fulfilled basic criteria: six grades, having a minimum of six classrooms, a student population of at least 100 pupils, and teaching the core subjects. In each control LGEA,



comparison government and Islamiyya schools were similarly selected. A sub-set of target schools, comprising of one target school per LGEA—was selected for experimental and trialling purposes (e.g. school discretionary funding).

Data for NEI fall into three major categories: (i) school learning centre and service effectiveness-related data, (ii) system-strengthening-related data; and (iii) routine project coverage, monitoring and reporting-related data. Data were collected through multiple methods and sources, both on a project-wide and sample basis, as appropriate. More readily accessible data—primarily used for descriptive and monitoring and reporting purposes—were collected project wide. For the most part, data that dealt with systems strengthening and capacity-building were reported on a project-wide basis. Some data were also collected from all schools and pupils, especially to show the number of service recipients/beneficiaries. However, for the more complex evaluative measures of the project's impact on pupils, teacher/facilitator, and school performance and action, NEI used data that were collected from samples at different times. Built into the NEI M&E system were measures and analyses needed to determine the extent to which the programming is responding to gender needs and its differential impact. Data collection approach and considerations are discussed below.

NEI measured pupils' learning outcomes in reading, math and life skills using two instruments—pupil achievement tests (based on the curriculum), which were used in the two surveys conducted; and early grade reading assessment (EGRA), which measured reading speed, fluency and comprehension; and early grade mathematics assessment (EGMA), which measured mathematics skills. Pupils were tested in grades 4, 5 and 6 in all the (120) target government and Islamiyya schools, as well as 36 comparison schools, using both instruments.

Service effectiveness data were collected from a sample of target schools that are best representatives of the development hypothesis underlying NEI—that system changes coupled with services tailored to meeting pupil needs should lead to improved school effectiveness. Although the results cannot be extrapolated to all schools in each state, there is a high predictability value that if all schools receive these interventions they will enjoy the same results. Effectiveness data were collected using pupil performance tests (other than learning outcomes, addressed above); OVC support team (OST) performance; teacher performance; principal and community performance; and functionality of and satisfaction with the various services.

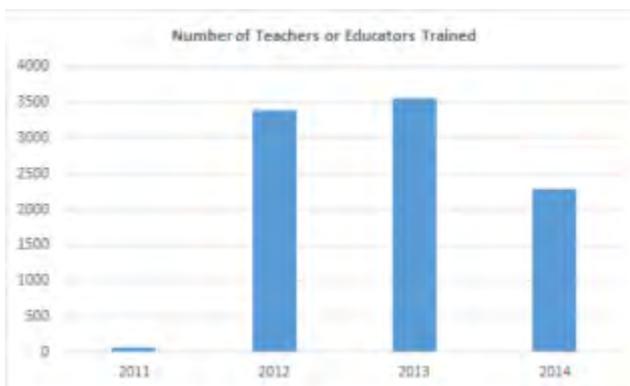
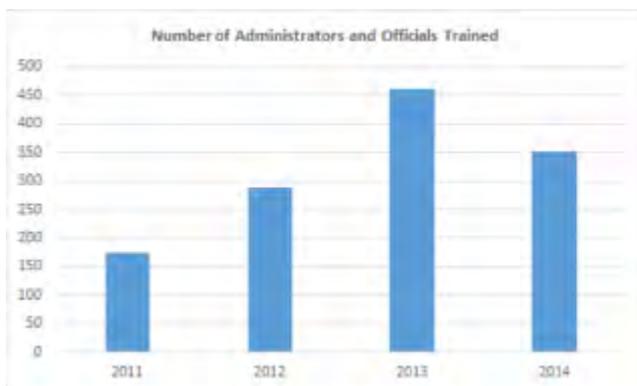
Routine Monitoring and Reporting

Data collection instruments were developed in conjunction with practitioners in the practice areas. For example, teacher and head teacher performance instruments were developed with the NEI teachers, head teachers and school management teams to define expected performance criteria and benchmarks. In all cases, instruments development was predicated on a review of existing instruments used in Nigeria and elsewhere. All instruments were piloted and translated—as necessary—into the local languages. NEI state and LGA staff were actively involved in the collection of data from the government’s education management information systems at the LGA level (e.g. EMIS data on pupil enrolment by class and sex, pupil attendance by class and sex, teacher population by class and sex, etc.

Data tracking and reporting forms were developed to collect routine data that are related to project output indicators. These include: module and material inventory form and trainee registration form to record participants. Each NEI *practice area* group leader has a computer-based reporting form into which s/he can log products and outputs on a real-time basis for quarterly report preparation. Their application and handling were guided by standardized protocols and procedures. NEI also collected routine data from target schools on pupils and services, using a single closed instrument with choices clearly delineated.

Data Quality Assurance

Data collection instrument design adapted best examples. All instruments were pilot-tested and refined as necessary. Procedures for data collection were always defined and standardized. Rigorous training



was always conducted for data collectors to reduce bias and increase inter-rater reliability. Supervisors were trained to detect errors, trouble patterns, inconsistencies, and outliers; as spot checks were always conducted by project staff, in some instances involving re-interviewing or testing to verify results. To enhance data integrity, mechanisms for triangulation were usually instituted. In all cases, raw data were retained for inspection and re-analysis, as found necessary. Strict data management, inventory and storage procedures were adopted to reduce misuse and increase security.

Data Analysis

NEI used a relational database (e.g. ACCESS, SPSS) to set up the M&E data base built on the tracking and assessment instruments. Data reporting and analytic templates (tables) were also created so that data were “automatically” presented in easy-to-understand formats. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were used as appropriate in response to indicator needs. As far as possible, data analysis responsibilities were shared with relevant groups of stakeholders - such as TWGs - so that data are subjected to multiple interpretations.

Feedback, Communications and Reporting

M&E data and results were shared in seminars with stakeholders representing states and LGEAs annually for collective interpretation, analysis and dialogue,

providing a platform for problem-solving and future planning. In addition to formal reports (e.g. Annual M&E Report, School Effectiveness Impact Report), data were presented in easily accessible formats for use by different stakeholders and on specific topics of interest. Reports and publications were posted on the NEI web-site. NEI prepared quarterly reports for USAID which included M&E data according to approved formats. Other reports and analyses were prepared upon request from USAID.

NEI developed an internal database system to first collect and analyse data before sending to an external database as report. The internal database is usually used to capture enrolment, OVC, training, etc. The data is analyzed before sending them to an external database i.e. the performance reporting system (PRS), district health information system (DHIS) or the LGEA-based National OVC Management System (NOMIS), as appropriate.

NEI Training and Capacity Building

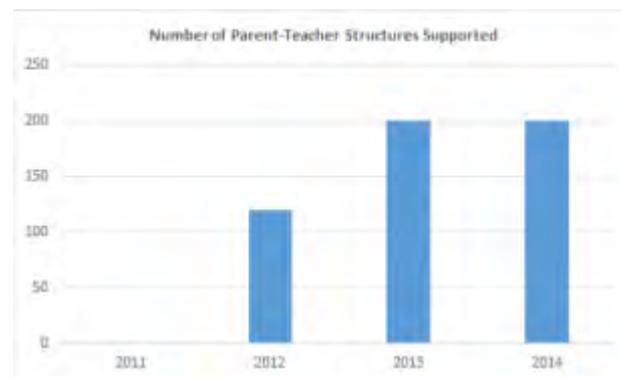
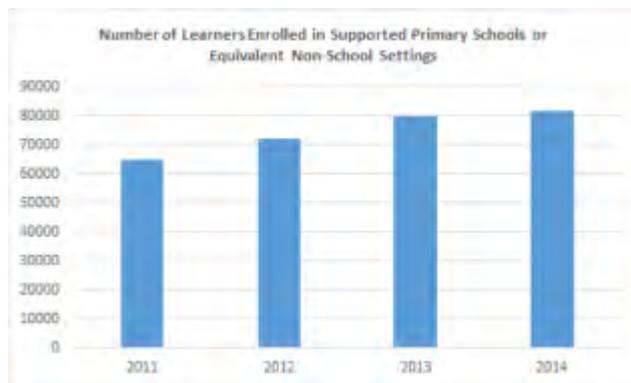
One of the major achievements of this project is the series of trainings and workshops conducted to build the capacity of government officers. The topics covered included: finance, management, logistics, monitoring, personnel use and support, governance, etc. At the school level, teachers and head teachers were also trained. Overall, 5218 government officials were trained on a range of topics.

NEI supported Bauchi and Sokoto states SUBEBs to update their Performance Reporting Plans for monitoring and reporting on the MTSS, review a semi-annual Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and Departmental Work Plan (DWP). It also supported all ten target LGEAs in each state to jointly harmonize their priority lists of basic education issues with SUBEB. A survey on the utilization and sustainability of WSDP of school-based management committee members was conducted in all 120 demonstration public schools and the report showed that the system has sustainability prospects. Similarly, a validation exercise by fifty five data collectors indicated that all twenty target LGEAs collected Annual School Census (ASC) data using approved procedures and guidelines, while all 200 demonstration schools provided acceptable ASC data. The TWGs, module teams, and others participated in instrument design with expert guidance. Assessment teams included government

and other stakeholder staff which were trained in data collection methods. NEI also developed LGEA capacity to monitor schools. To the extent possible, NEI ensured the compatibility of the NEI data base with existing government databases for shared project data use, and utilized government reporting structures, as appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation Survey

Two surveys were conducted in 2012 and 2013 using a systematic sampling design to assess changes in the delivery of instruction as an area of intervention. The surveys employed systematic observation focusing on three major categories of instructional activities of both teachers and learners – classroom structure, verbal communication and teaching activities for the teacher; and structure, verbal communication and learning activities for the learners. In addition, the enumerators recorded every instance of



learners' participation during the lesson using an instrument called learners' participation by gender checklist; and also completed a teacher performance checklist by conducting an informal interview with the teacher. A questionnaire was also administered for teachers and another one for head teachers, while learners' learning achievements in literacy, numeracy and life-skills were measured using achievement tests. All the instruments were pilot-tested in order for the enumerators to get a first-hand feel of what was intended. A review of the instruments was conducted before using them in the second survey.

Even though a very marginal improvement was observed in certain aspects of teaching between 2012 and 2013 surveys, teachers were observed to be performing below the minimum threshold. In specific terms, learners were almost always arranged in whole class format i.e. facing the board – an arrangement that does not give room for group work or learner-to-learner interactions; teachers talk most times during the lessons; and few learning activities were provided for learners to engage during lessons. Given these findings, it should not be surprising that learners' learning achievements are similarly below the minimum threshold in the learning areas tested and across the two states. Recommendations were provided at the end of each survey on ways of addressing the issues and consequently improving learners' learning.

Data Quality Assessments

The NEI project reports on thirty two performance indicators that describe how well a program is achieving its objectives. Of these, five are standard indicators. These include: number of administrators and officials successfully trained; number of learners enrolled in USG-supported primary schools or equivalent non-school-based settings; number of parent-teacher associations or similar 'school' governance structures supported; number of host-country institutions with improved management information systems as a result of USG assistance; and number of host-country institutions that used USG-assisted MIS system in administrative/management decisions.

Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) were conducted by an independent body - Nigeria Monitoring & Evaluation Management Services II (NMEMS II). The objective of the DQAs is to ensure that the data that NEI reports to USAID are devoid of any technical quality issues. The three DQAs conducted on NEI helped to further improve and address data quality issues.

The third DQA conducted in 2013 confirmed the validity of NEI's indicators. This was a milestone for NEI particularly as the second critical indicator; number of learners enrolled, had never been validated and cleared before, even in earlier projects.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for future programmes

It is important to integrate M&E into all program activities for ease of reporting and results tracking. M&E personnel should be present at every activity that has input into particular project indicators and that such personnel take adequate record of participants and objectives, and perhaps, outcome of such activities. In terms of data collection instruments, the use of Optical Marks Reader (OMR) was found very helpful for easy data collection and processing. Thus, whenever possible, it is recommended for programs to use OMR based instrument to collect data. This is not only because it is easier and more convenient for the enumerator, but also because it ensures accuracy in data entry and processing speed when OMR is used.



Chapter Ten: Main Challenges

Main Challenges

Project implementation had major challenges that required solutions. Chief amongst them were:

- The ever deteriorating security situation in Northern Nigeria engendered travel restrictions to the Northern states. This became a real concern as activities requiring international Short Term Technical Assistance (STTA) were limited to Abuja, with its attendant budgetary implications. The team responded to this by working harder to plan well in advance and aggregating activities that need STTA.
- General strikes and the political crises that unfolded in 2013 adversely impacted a number of scheduled activities. These forced the rescheduling of some activities.
- The redeployment of government staff was a setback to program implementation, as some of the newly deployed officials had no experience in their new job assignments.
- SEA is made up of eight major tasks and the SEA team was faced with the challenge of completing Tasks 4-8 in Bauchi and tasks 3-8 in Sokoto. In addition to this, the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) faced other pressing commitments which made completing the SEA circle in the two states at the same time a major challenge. To address this challenge the team re-prioritize its schedules sometimes carrying out SEA activities back-to-back in the two states which eventually resulted in the successful and timely completion of the two SEAs.
- Basic literacy graduates of the NFLCs are supposed to continue with post literacy program at the NFLC or mainstream into primary schools. However, post-literacy programs have not commenced in either Bauchi state or Sokoto state as both state agencies are yet to allocate resources to execute it in every center. The project supported ANFEA and SAME in both states to develop MTSS to support VC post literacy programs.
- TMIS data entry commenced at the SUBEBs but at a very slow pace. Considering the schedule of the project, agreements were reached with SUBEBs to engage additional data entry officers to speed up the process. Other challenges included late submission of forms by LGEAs, late release of promised counterpart funding for data entry, and incorrect and illegible completed forms. These have all contributed in slowing down the completion of the data entry. NEI fast-tracked the data entry by engaging data entry clerks to ensure quick completion of the task.



Chapter Eleven: Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

Building MDA capacity

Identifying key drivers in relevant MDAs whose roles and responsibilities improve service delivery and providing such with technical know-how and exposure, ensures the sustainability of interventions. NEI made a conscious and deliberate effort to work closely with the key drivers that were successful in catalyzing the change from within. It put in place various mechanisms (Steering Committees, Technical Working Groups, Sub-Technical Working groups etc.) to facilitate coordination, implementation of agreed upon activities, and the approval process. The catalysts found space to expedite the change process and hold the government accountable to its sectoral goals and objectives. NEI introduced a culture of efficiency and professional ethics amongst members of the various joint working groups. This resulted in empowering and building the confidence of the key drivers.

Inter-ministerial collaboration

The establishment of TWGs with members from relevant MDAs created synergy and prevented overlaps of responsibility in allocation of resources for basic education. It also fostered clearer understanding and planning towards achieving state educational goals and objectives through strategic planning workshops. The inter-ministerial groups got to understand each other's priorities and where they needed to complement and support each other to further

their objectives. This mechanism promoted harmony and generated a sense of belongingness the bigger developmental picture.

Involving communities

Community members, when fully mobilized, will not only ensure sustainability and ownership but provide avenue for their participation and contribution in improving their communities as well as demanding for quality education and health services from the



state. Through the efforts of NEI established community support groups, government authorities in both Bauchi and Sokoto states became more open to civil society contributions to education policy development. NEI as thus become a bridge between the government and other civic society organizations.

Supporting local NGOs

Engaging local NGOs and CSOs as grantees has proven to be effective in reaching difficult to reach areas, working during security challenges and building a critical mass of local capacity to implement interventions. For example, CSACEFA – a coalition of NGOs working in the area of education – as well as FOMWAN – an umbrella body of Muslim women associations with national, state and local chapters, have acquired strong management and financial capacity for managing social projects at state and local levels. Under NEI The NGOS became the primary vehicles for mobilizing existing community structures to implement project activities and provide services.

Supporting NFLCs

Non-formal centers (Tsangaya or Qur'anic centers) are an avenue for rapidly increasing access to basic education and thereby reducing illiteracy among school age children in Northern Nigeria. An accelerated learning program (ALP) drawn from the basic literacy curriculum of SAME and ANFEA broken down into weekly scheme of work is highly recom-

mended in addition to a thematic are that could be mainstreamed into the ALP. Therefore subsequent programs should explore working with relevant MDAs to bring on board proprietors of these centers. Also, basic literacy programs in NFLCs should be accompanied with other motivating programs that will boost learners' attendance, parental acceptance and community participation. For example, NEI's model of vocational and apprenticeship training in Tsangaya schools and AGP centers, caregivers' training, WSDP training, training on conducting advocacy and resource mobilization could tie into relevant programs as sustainability mechanisms.

EGRA and EGMA

EGRA and EGMA are useful diagnostic tools for measuring internal efficiency of basic education programs. States should be supported to conduct annual samples to determine the progress of their learners and refocus school programs to respond to issues diagnosed.

Training head teachers on mentoring

Training of teachers using the mentoring technique is more effective than relying solely on the usual practice of periodic in-service teacher training. In-service teacher training should be accompanied by mentoring in pedagogy, classroom management, record-keeping, pupil-teacher relations as well as school hygiene.



Conclusion

Conclusion

Creative Associates and its partners emphasized the need for exclusive ownership of the program by the host state governments in tandem with the letter and spirit of USAID Forward. NEI defined its role as providing technical support to the host governments in order to help them achieve their sectoral objectives. As partners in development the project was part and parcel of the change process; stakeholder in the venture. The project served as trouble-shooter, provoking thoughts and perspectives for real development work, and promoting and sharing research and evidence-based contemporary thoughts in the education domain in general. NEI promoted partnership where equality, reciprocity, and the articulation of shared vision and strategy were at the heart of it. The project made sure that both parties complemented and supported each other in achieving the desired goal or goals. It maintained cordial working relationship with the host governments and other cooperating partners throughout the project cycle.

State and LGEA partners demonstrated willingness to own and sustain program interventions because they were involved from the beginning in the planning, implementation and review/monitoring of project interventions. The trainings and technical support provided to CCs have continued to spur them into taking actions that improve access to basic education and other services for VC. This demonstrates that when communities are adequately sensitized and

leaders motivated, they have the ability to carry out activities to sustain the wellbeing of VC.

The NFLCs that provided vocational skills program generated demand and raised the interest of OVC and their care givers in accessing basic education. Through the centre-based vocational skills and apprenticeship programme, 3,572 or 24% OVC (Bauchi 772 (415m, 357f) Sokoto 2,800 (1,516m, 1,284f) were trained in different marketable vocational trades and



are now contributing to their communities while also supporting their education and well-being. The ALP served as an action research and on-the-job training for officials of ANFEA, SAME and SUBEBs responsible for non-formal education. It exposed them to planning, implementation, and the techniques of creating pathways for accessing basic education through NFE as well as facilitating transition to higher levels in NFE or mainstreaming into formal schools as a way of enhancing lifelong learning. It has also brought understanding of the great potential of how formal and non-formal education systems can complement each other to improve the education profile of a state/local government as well as increase wider coverage and quality improvement in basic education service delivery.

The strategy of working through government and non-governmental structures to provide and expand basic education services to out-of-school children has proven to be very effective. NEI's experience in this area revealed the importance of partnering with NGOs to reach out and provide services to the disadvantaged strata of the society. NGOs do bring a range of other advantages to the table. NGOs are usually community-based. As such, they have the advantage of accomplishing important roles. NGOs play the role of intermediaries between government and citizens, possess the ability to provide cost-effective services while retaining development resources

in-country, can mobilise communities in decisions about the allocation of resources, hold government and donors to account, build capacities of communities and local people, and influence national policies. Knowledge of the terrain and local culture puts them at an advantage to be sensitive and responsive to local needs. Working with NGOs enhances local ownership and promote sustainable development. Therefore, emphasis should be made on pursuing sustained capacity building and a long-term and strategic approach to engaging with local NGOs leading to meaningful partnership. Capacity building takes time, expertise and resources though.

The project laid emphasis of producing measurable outcomes. The project management tools and our PMP in particular enabled NEI to monitor progress and perform effectively and efficiently resulting in quality services and outcomes on behalf of USAID.

The project's success is attributed to host governments' pro-active involvement in the process to bring about the desired change.



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