



Reimagining Education in Nigeria

**A CIVIL SOCIETY
MANIFESTO**

Education is the most powerful investment in our future. But the Nigerian education system is in a state of emergency and the country is lagging behind even the poorest countries on the continent.

But this moment is one of opportunity: for the new government to reimagine education for the country and find better ways to provide 12 years of safe, free, quality education for all. This manifesto, therefore, calls for the next government to:

MAKE SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION FREE

1. Amend the legislation to make education free and compulsory up to senior secondary level, thus guaranteeing 12 years of uninterrupted education for Nigerian children.
2. Adopt a progressive universalisation approach to the implementation of 12 years of education, which priorities support those at greatest risk of not learning—the poor, the discriminated against, girls, children with disabilities and those facing multiple disadvantages.

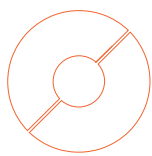
FUND MORE. FUND BETTER

3. Commission a task force, including members of civil society, to develop a roadmap to achieve Nigeria's commitment to spend 4% GDP and 22.5% of the national budget for education by 2025.
4. Establish and mainstream minimum standards and guidelines for financial planning for education to include guidance on gender-responsive planning and budgeting and the establishment of

MAKE SCHOOLS SAFE

5. national education accounts.
5. Ensure that students deprived of access to quality education as a result of the conflict, violence or crises are promptly given access to quality alternative education in a safe environment, in line with the National Guidelines for Accelerated Basic Education.
6. Effectively and immediately roll out the implementation of the Safe Schools Plan of Action and the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence Free Schools.
7. Enhance teacher training on school related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and create standard operating procedures for responding to rights violations and clear referral pathways for services.





1. UNLOCKING THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Education is not only a human right, but the best catalyst for the most important development issues in the country:

- **Economic growth and poverty** - Education helps to grow the economy and also fights poverty. Earnings increase by approximately 10% for each additional year of schooling. Girls' education is shown to yield particular economic benefits: if every girl completed a full 12 year cycle of education, the global economy would benefit from between \$15-\$30 trillion dollars in lifetime productivity and earnings. ¹ For Nigeria-whose average share in global (Gross Domestic Product) GDP is 0.81% ² -that equates to a potential \$243 billion. ³
- **Peace and security** - Equitable access to quality education-particularly for girls-is a key strategy for sustaining peace and security. ⁴ Doubling the percentage of students finishing secondary school would halve the risk of conflict ⁵ and prioritising girls' education and achieving gender equality in education can decrease the likelihood of conflict by as much as 37%. ⁶
- **Early marriage** - Learning reduces early marriages. In Nigeria, the annual economic cost of child marriage as a result of lost earnings and productivity could be up to \$76 billion.⁷ If all girls had access to primary education, child marriages would be reduced by 14%. If all girls had secondary education, child marriages would be reduced by 64%. ⁸
- **Improved health** - If all women in Nigeria completed their secondary education, the country would lower the mortality rate for children under five years old by 43%. ⁹

¹ Wodon, Q.,Montenegro,C.,Nguyen,H and Onagorua,A (2018) Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/29956>

² 2017-2019 On average Nigeria's share in global GDP adjusted for PPP stood at 0.81% <https://www.statista.com/statistics/382354/nigeria-share-in-global-gdp-adjusted-for-ppp/>

³ Estimates based on pre-COVID economic outlooks

⁴ Leone,S, Novelli M, Kirk, C et al (2012) The Role of Education in Peacebuilding : A synthesis report of findings from Lebanon <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ce0c/fa97eb5d9cc150571fb28618b5b2d8a19a43.pdf>

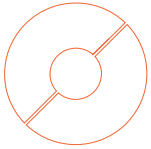
⁵ UNESCO (2014) Sustainable Development Begins with Education: How Education Can Contribute to the Proposed Post-2015 Goals. <https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2275sdbeginswitheducation.pdf>

⁶ Omoeva,C.,Moussa,W., and Hatch,R (2018) The Effects of Armed Conflict on Educational Attainment and Inequality (<https://www.epdc.org/epdc-data-points/armed-conflict-and-education-inequality-what-do-we-know>)

⁷ Plan International (2020) The Case for Holistic Investments in Girls <https://plan-international.org/publications/the-case-for-holistic-investment-in-girls/>

⁸ UNESCO,(2013),Education transforms lives ,<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002231/223115E.pdf>

⁹ Ibid



2. EDUCATION IN CRISIS

In Nigeria, out-of-school rates among adolescents and youth of secondary school age have hardly changed in 20 years with the result that the out-of-school population in this age group increased by 61%, from 6.3 to 10.1 million. The number of out-of-school children of primary school age also increased by 50% from 6.4 to 9.7 million, as the out-of-school rate has remained constant at 28% since 2010.¹⁰

Nigeria is among the top three countries alongside India and Pakistan - with the most children and youth excluded from education.

- Girls make up the majority (60%) of out of school children.¹¹
- Nearly a third of girls and a quarter of boys have never been to school at all.¹²
- Access to education is very inequitable with a rich urban boy completing, on average, 12 years of education compared to a poor rural girl who will complete just one year.¹³

Even for those able to access schools, the quality of education is unable to prepare students with the skills they need for the future. Around 3.5 million boys and 5.9 million girls (aged 15-24) remain illiterate.¹⁴



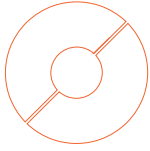
¹⁰ UNESCO (2022) New estimation confirms out-of-school population is growing in sub-Saharan Africa <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382577>

¹¹ Premium Times (2019) Eight million out-of-school children in 10 Nigerian states and Abuja-UNICEF. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/335352-eight-million-out-of-school-children-in-10-nigerian-states-and-abuja-unicef.html>

¹² World Inequality Database on Education (nd) Nigeria <https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/nigeria>

¹³ Gordon, R., Marston, L., Rose, P and Zubairi, A. (2019) 12 Years of Quality Education for All Girls: A Commonwealth Perspective. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2542579/>

¹⁴ UNESCO (nd) Nigeria <https://uis.unesco.org/en/country/ng>



3. CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

a. Access to Quality Education

The government has committed to reducing the number of out-of-school children in the country by at least 70% by 2030.¹⁵ If this promise is to be realised, drastic and sustained action is needed to tackle one of the largest national out-of-school populations in the world.

This would require removing critical barriers to accessing and completing education, such as the cost of education. Currently, Nigeria's legislation only provides for 9 years of free and compulsory education. Children who wish to continue their education up to senior secondary level have to pay fees, but many Nigerians struggle to find the funds to keep their children in school.

Many countries, such as Kenya and Tanzania, have amended legislation and developed policies that increase the right to safe, free, quality education from 9 to 12 years.

Recognising the scarcity of public funding, this needs to be done sustainably and equitably by adopting a progressive universalism approach that prioritises funding provision for marginalised groups, including girls who fail to enter school, or who drop out before completing primary due to poverty, disability and social disadvantage. Kaduna is a great example of this, whereby in 2019 education was declared free for all female students in secondary school in the state.

But this has been down to the discretion of each state and as a country as a whole Nigeria has yet to implement its commitments to ensure all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063.

RECOMMENDATION: Make Free Senior Secondary Education Free

1. The federal government should amend the legislation to redefine 'basic education' to cover up to 12 years of education.
2. Adopt a progressive universalisation approach to the implementation of 12 years education, which prioritises support those at greatest risk of not learning—the poor, the discriminated against, girls, children with disabilities and those facing multiple disadvantages.

¹⁵ Mojeed, A (2022) Nigeria aims for 70% reduction in the number of out-of-school children by 2030 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/538904-nigeria-aims-for-70-reduction-in-number-of-out-of-school-children-by-2030.html> Human Capital Development strategy

b. Financing 12 Year of Safe, Free, Quality Education

Achieving Nigeria's education commitments will require a substantial increase in education financing. This is needed to:

- provide the option to gain 12 years education, as lower and upper secondary levels has far from universal provision;
- improve the quality of education for children that are in school but still not learning; and
- ensure that spending per pupil is sufficient to provide quality schooling for youth, and the extra needs of more marginalised groups, such as girls.

Nigeria has committed to spend 4% of its GDP and 22.5% of its national budget on education by 2025 and maintain this in 2030.¹⁶ This would bring Nigeria in line with international benchmarks and other African

countries, such as Kenya and South Africa who are already spending 19% and 18.4% of GDP respectively on education.¹⁷

In contrast to this commitment the educational sector received its lowest budgetary allocation by the federal government in the last ten years. The 5.39% allocation in 2022 represents a 50% reduction from the 10.79% of the national expenditure allocated to education in 2015.¹⁸ Despite being the second richest country on the continent Nigeria spends less on education than all but one (Somalia) of the 10 poorest countries in Africa. (See graph).

The government's budgetary allocations for education, and the trajectory of those allocations, are the best indication of the governments' priorities and political will.

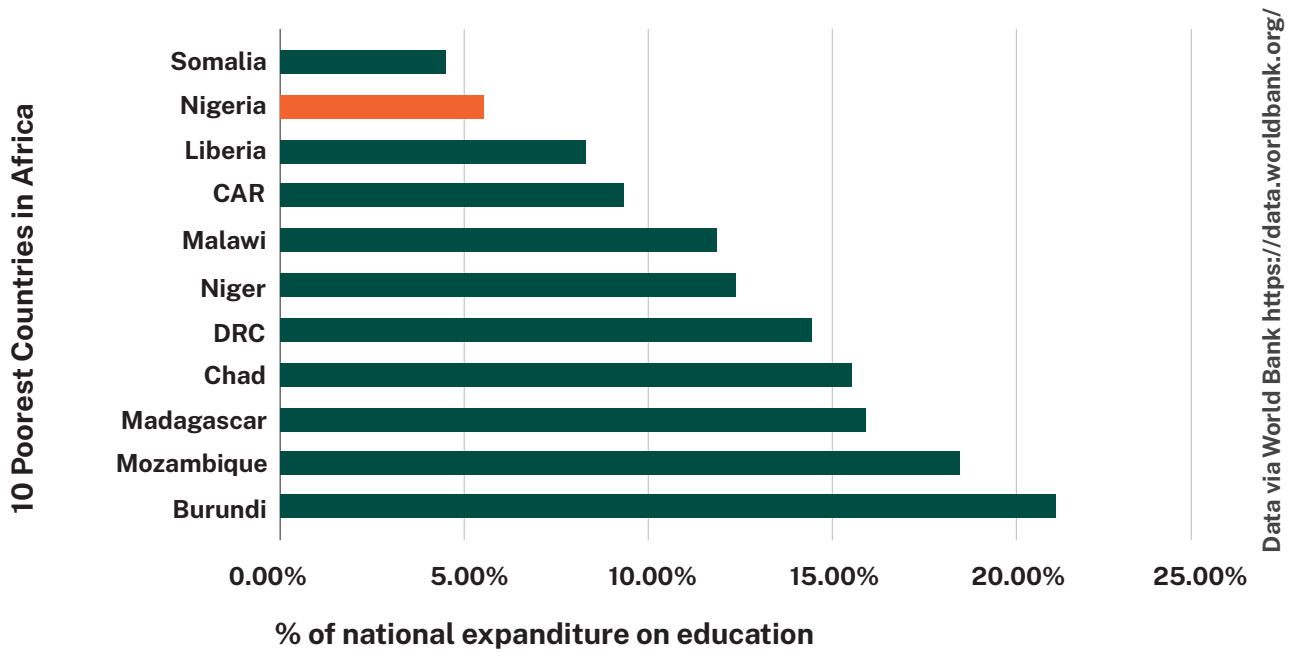


¹⁶ UNESCO and Global Education Monitoring Report (2021) SDG 4 data digest 2021: national SDG 4 benchmarks: fulfilling our neglected commitment

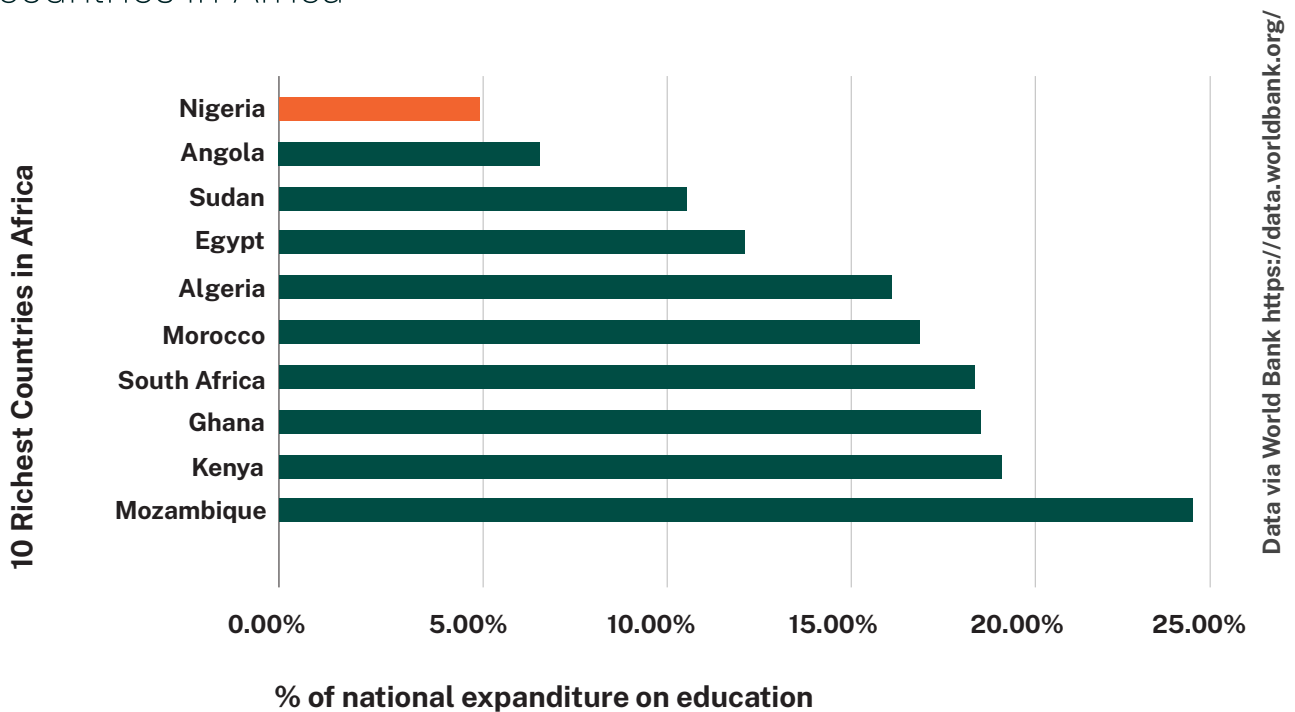
¹⁷ World Bank (nd) World Bank Data <https://data.worldbank.org/>

¹⁸ Eromosele, F (2022) ASUU Strike: FG's budgetary allocation to education lowest in 2022 — Report <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/08/asuu-strike-fgs-budgetary-allocation-to-education-lowest-in-2022-report/>

Nigeria's spending on education compared to the 10 poorest countries in Africa



Nigeria's spending on education compared to the 10 richest countries in Africa



It's not just about spending more on education, but spending it better.

- Nigeria's education budgets are generalised. They assume that everyone is carried along, when many are left behind. They do not take into account inherent peculiarities that mean certain groups, such as girls or children with disabilities, may face specific challenges accessing or staying in school.
- They rarely draw a complete picture of how the country finances education. This makes it difficult to identify gaps, overlaps or misuse in the ways in which education is funded, which-if known-could

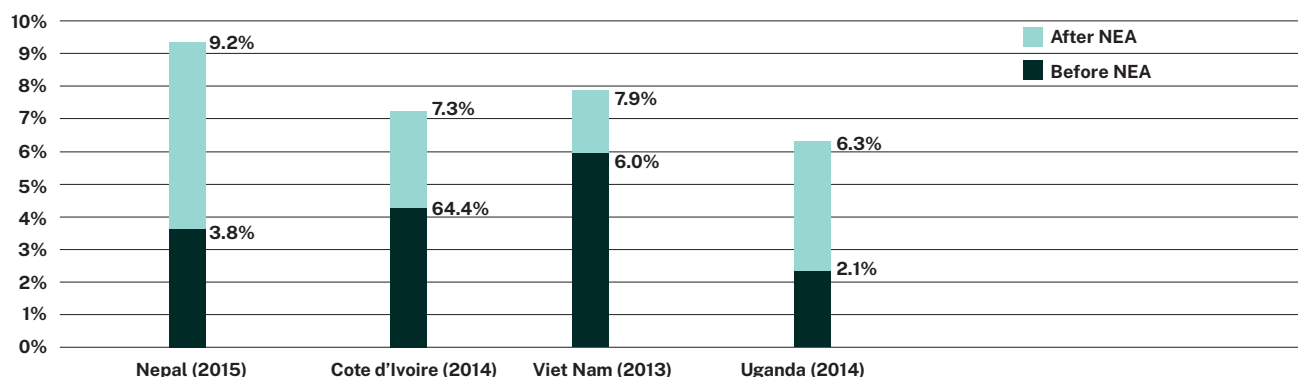
help to better direct resources towards policy objectives.

- The budget that is available is often rarely fully utilised, with 36% or 792.4 billion naira of the education budget was underspent between 2018 and 2020.¹⁹ Official data from Nigeria's Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has shown that between 2005 and 2021, over N48 billion in UBEC funds available for improving basic education was not accessed.²⁰

Benefits of national education accounts

It's highly likely that Nigeria's expenditure on education is vastly underestimated. To gain a truer picture of Nigeria's education expenditure and to elevate Nigeria from being among the worst in the continent for expenditure on education, the government should mainstream the establishment of national education accounts (NEAs).

Countries like Nepal, Côte d'Ivoire, Vietnam and Uganda were grossly underestimating their expenditures. ²¹



Benefits of Gender responsive budgetting

The gender responsive education sector plan (GRESP) model has significant predictive powers and value for explaining education outcomes, particularly among girls. This is especially true where plans are complemented with the following structures and systems: ²²

- Operational plans with strong girls' education focus
- Purposeful budgetting for State Education Sector Plans in state annual budgets
- Supportive administrative structures for implementing plans
- Supportive policies and laws in the ecosystem of the plan
- Training senior officials who can implement learnings

¹⁹ Olaleye,O(2022) Nigeria:Budget Credibility and the Sustainable Development Goals <https://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Nigeria-Budget-Credibility-and-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf>

²⁰ Development Diaries (2022) Nigeria: Addressing Out of School Children Menace <https://www.developmentdiaries.com/2022/11/nigeria-addressing-out-of-school-children-menace/out-of-school-children-in-10-nigerian-states-and-abuja-unicef.html>

²¹ GPE Secretariat (2016) The Benefits of National Education Accounts <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/benefits-national-education-accounts>

²² Development Research and Projects Centre for Malala Fund, (2022) Applying the Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESP) Model to State Education Sector Plans (SESPS) to Explain Girls' Education Outcomes in Nigeria 2010-2022-A Gender Review

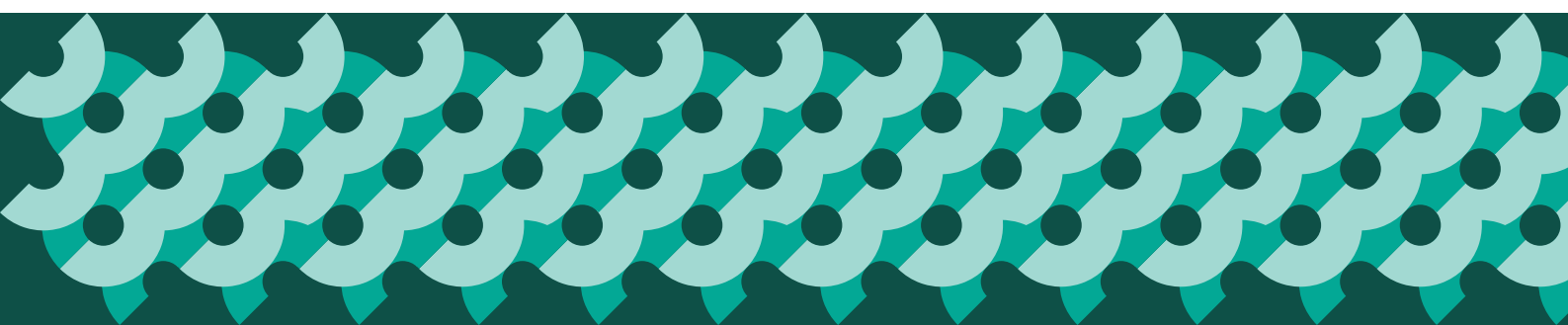
State	BEFOR EDUCATION SECTOR PLANS WERE INTRODUCED 2005-2009			AFTER EDUCATION SECTOR PLANS WERE INTRODUCED 2015-2020		
	Entanglement Rates for Girls at Secondary school Leve in 2006	Entanglement Rates for Girls at Secondary school Leve in 2009	Changes in Rates Between 2006 and 2009	Entanglement Rates for Girls at Secondary school Leve in 2015	Entanglement Rates for Girls at Secondary school Leve in 2020	Changes in Rates Between 2015 and 2020
Jigawa	19.9%	17.4%	-2.5%	38.8%	47.5%	+8.7%
Kaduna	41.5%	42.3%	-0.8%	47.2%	49.5%	+2.3%
Kano	34.0%	33.7%	-0.3%	42.7%	47.0%	+4.3%
Katsina	27.3%	24.1%	-3.2%	39.2%	43.0%	+3.8%
Sokoto	22.8%	23.8%	+1.0%	35.6%	44.0%	+8.4%
Zamfara	21.9%	21.8%	-0.1%	32.4%	38.0%	+5.6%
SESP averages	27.9%	23.6%	-4.3%	39.3%	44.8%	+5.5%
National Average	45.3%	45.0%	-0.3%	46.6%	47.4%	+0.8%

Nigeria has not caught up with many global norms with regards to budgeting, such as mainstreaming:

- Gender-responsive plans and budgets that work for everyone women, men, girls and boys -by ensuring gender-equitable distributions of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. This does not require a separate budget or looking for additional resources for women, girls or any other groups. But rather this is about showing how allocation of the total budget is made and how such allocation benefits women and men, girls and boys in a given society.
- National Education Accounts to better understand education financial flowstracking resources to show where, how and by whom education is funded and who benefits. The data is extremely helpful to governments and their partners as they prepare and implement education strategies, including their financing.
- Purposeful budgeting is proven to lead to improved education outcomes, but guidance on how to do this needs to be mainstreamed.

RECOMMENDATION: Fund More. Fund Better

1. If the government is to achieve this target of 4% GDP/ 22.5% of the national budget for education it must put words into action. The Federal Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education should commission a task force, including members of civil society, to develop a roadmap to achieve Nigeria's commitment to spend 4% GDP and 22.5% of the national budget for education by 2025.
2. The Federal Ministry of Education needs to mainstream gender responsive budgeting or gender-based budgeting. The Federal Ministry of Education should establish and mainstream minimum standards and guidelines for financial planning for education to include guidance on gender-responsive planning and budgeting and the establishment of national education accounts.





c. Safety and Security in Schools

Schools have a critical role to play in violence prevention and response: serving as protective spaces for children and acting as an important arena for broader social change to end violence. Yet schools have become increasingly unsafe.

Between the 2020-2021 reporting period, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) identified at least 21 reported incidents of attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel. At least 1,850 students and educators were injured, abducted, or killed, and more than five were arrested or detained. This marks a slight increase as compared to Education Under Attack 2020, which included approximately seven reported attacks on students and education personnel in 2019 and one attack in 2018. Separately, the UN reported that 1,436 children were abducted from schools in Nigeria between January and September 2021.²³ At the same time gangs of bandits have been pillaging, extorting and kidnapping students for ransom.

Nigeria endorsed the international Safe Schools Declaration in March 2015, as a commitment to safeguard education in armed conflict. This was ratified in 2019, making a commitment that the government would legally implement the declaration. Under the declaration, Nigeria is obliged to ensure programmes and policies to prevent and respond to attacks against schools and to fight impunity for such attacks.

But three years after its ratification, the federal government has failed to implement the emergency programme that was meant to increase access

and quality of education of over 40 million school children.

Even for those not at risk of insurgency or kidnappings, schools may still not be safe places for students. Around 44% of girls and 34% of boys have experienced one or more forms of physical and sexual violence perpetrated by teachers or classmates.²⁴ This leads to depression, low self-esteem, inability to concentrate in school, being absent from schools as the aftermath of the violence and all these may lead to pupils dropping out of school.²⁵

Despite the prevalence, less than 1% received the support and services for school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV).²⁶ Teachers are often the first point for reporting violence in schools, but only half had received training on guidance and counselling.²⁷

Climate change poses a new threat to education that Nigeria found itself unprepared for. The October 2022 floods, as a result of the unprecedented rain falls, killed 600 people and displaced 1.3 million people. Thousands of infrastructure, including schools, are submerged under water destroyed and damaged. With 27 of Nigeria's 36 states impacted, millions of students are unable to access education from this crisis.²⁸

The government needs to live up to their commitments and double their efforts to provide a safe learning environment for children and to ensure justice for victims.

²³ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), Education Under Attack 2022

²⁴ Together For Girls (2022) SRGBV Fact Sheet Nigeria <https://www.togetherforgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-SRGBV-Fact-Sheet-NIGERIA.pdf>

²⁵ YCDEI (2021) Policy Brief: School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV): What Should We Know <https://ycdei.org/2021/06/17/policy-brief-school-related-gender-based-violence-srgbv-what-we-should-know/>

²⁶ Together For Girls (2022) SRGBV Fact Sheet Nigeria <https://www.togetherforgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-SRGBV-Fact-Sheet-NIGERIA.pdf>

²⁷ Ekine, A(2020) Gender-Based Violence in Primary Schools: Nigeria <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Gender-based-violence-in-primary-schools-Nigeria-FINAL.pdf>

²⁸ Newburger, E(2022) Flooding in Nigeria kills more than 600 people, officials say <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/18/flooding-in-nigeria-kills-more-than-600-people-officials-say-.html>

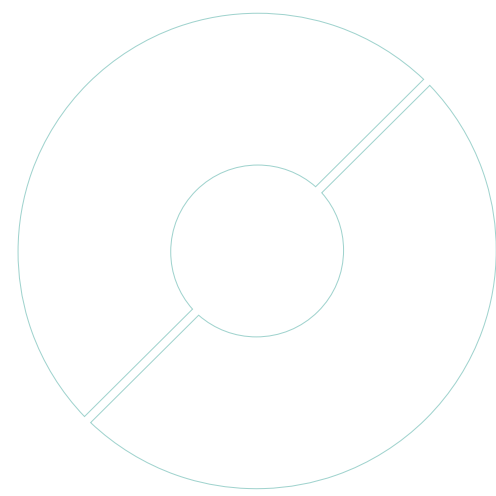
RECOMMENDATION: Make School Safe

1. Ensure that students deprived of educational facilities as a result of the conflict, violence or crisis are promptly given access to accessible alternative temporary schools, in line with the National Guidelines for Accelerated Basic Education. This includes suitable school equipment, and adequately trained teachers, while their own schools are repaired or reconstructed.
2. Effectively and immediately roll out the Safe Schools Plan of Action and the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence Free Schools, working with school authorities, community leaders and parents to ensure better security for the most affected region's schools.
3. The government must ensure that schools are a safe-haven from violence by enhancing teacher training on school related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and create standard operating procedures for responding to rights violations and clear referral pathways for services.



ENDORSED BY:

1. ACE Charity
2. Achieving Girl Pride Initiative (AGIP INITIATIVE)
3. Acthub for Sustainable Development Foundation (Act Hub Africa)
4. Advocacy Centre for Development (AC4D)
5. African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD)
6. Aid for Rural Education Access Initiative (AREAi)
7. Alkhairi Orphanage and Women Development (AOWD)
8. Almajiri Child Rights Initiative (ACRI)
9. Ambassadors of Dialogue, Climate and Reintegration
10. Apex of Child Health and Well-being Foundation (ACHAWF)
11. Association of Nigerian Women in Business (Oyo State Chapter)
12. Basic Rights Watch
13. Borno Women Development Initiative
14. Bramble Network
15. Bridge Connect Africa Initiative
16. BudgIT Foundation
17. Care Best Initiative (CBI)
18. Center for Girls Education (CGE)
19. Centre for Advocacy, Transparency and Accountability Initiative (CATAI)
20. Child Development and Concern Foundation
21. Child is Gold Foundation
22. Child Protection and Peer Learning Initiative
23. Civil Society Action Coalition On Education For All (CSACEFA)
24. Clear View Integrity Foundation
25. Community Advocate for Rural Development
26. Community Development Awareness and Health Empowerment Foundation (CDAHEF)
27. Community Resilience For Youth and Women Empowerment Initiative (CORWEI)
28. Connected Development [CODE] / FollowTheMoney
29. Education as a Vaccine, Nigeria
30. Eduplana Data and Tech
31. Endonamoo Transformation Global Initiative ETGIN
32. First Step Action For Children Initiative
33. FlexiSAF Foundation
34. Forum for the Promotion of Gender Equity and Moral Values
35. Foundation for Alternative Learning in Underserved Communities (FALUC)
36. Future Bright Initiatives
37. Future Resilience and Development Foundation
38. Girl Child Concerns
39. Global Village Healthcare Initiative for Africa (GHIV Africa)
40. Grassroots Life Saving Outreach
41. Green Pasture and Home Initiative



ENDORSED BY:

42. Grow Strong Foundation
43. Hallmark Leadership Initiative
44. Herwa Community Development Initiative
45. Hope for Communities and Children (H4CC)
46. Horn of Hope Vision for Peace and Community development of Nigeria (HOHVIPAD)
47. Humanity Family Foundation for Peace and Development (HUFFPED)
48. Initiative for Research, Innovation, and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD)
49. Invictus Africa
50. Kanem Borno Human Development Association
51. Legal Defence and Assistance Project-LEDAP
52. Life Helpers Initiative
53. LightHope Succor Worldwide Initiative
54. Malala Fund
55. Mari-Care Foundation for Widows, Single Parent, Orphans and Vulnerable Children
56. Muke Aid Foundation
57. Nkafamiya Rescue Mission-NRM
58. Noble Missions for Change Initiative
59. Onelife Initiative for Human Development
60. Peace and Climate Empowerment Initiative
61. Peace Heritage Foundation
62. Plan International, Nigeria
63. Regaining Academic Excellence Global Concept
64. Restoration of Hope Initiative (ROHI)
65. Royal Heritage Health Foundation
66. Sahei Gender Development Initiative
67. Salient Humanitarian Organization
68. Save The Children, Nigeria
69. Society for Women and Child Health Initiative (SWOCHI)
70. Step Up Nigeria
71. Sustainable Collective Advocacy for African Development Initiative
72. Syndicate in supporting Women & Children Initiative
73. Taimako Community Development Initiative
74. The Big Smile Foundation
75. The Inclusion Project-TIP
76. Under-Privileged Grassroot Foundation (UGF)
77. Unified Members for Women Advancement
78. Wazobia International Women and Children Foundation
79. Women in the new Nigeria and youth Employment initiative
80. Youth Integrated for Positive Development Initiative (YIPDI)
81. Youth, Orphans and Widows Empowerment (YOWE)
82. YouthHubAfrica (YHA)
83. Zokam Okoye Motivation for Youth (ZOMY) Foundation

