REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON BASIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Issues of access, quality, equity and impact

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June 2014
Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to many individuals who contributed to the compilation of this report.

First, we should also like to express our gratitude to the Honourable Minister for Education, Barr. D.C. Uwaezueoke, and to the Department of Basic and Secondary Education in the Federal Ministry of Education for their helpful comments and suggestions.

The authors would also like to acknowledge the detailed and instructive feedback from the following external reviewers:

- Murray Macrae
- Pai Obanya

In addition, valuable insights and/or documents were provided by:

- Sulleiman Adediran
- Olatunde Adekola
- Máiréad Dunne
- David Theobald

From DFID, appreciation is due to Esohe Ehibike for her comments and insights, and to Emily Oldmeadow for her continuous support.

From within EDOREN and OPM, valuable support and critical feedback was received from:

- Oladele Akogun
- Sourovi De
- Chidi Ezegwu
- Florian Friedrich
- Ian Macauslan
- Steve Packer

Further research support has been provided by:

- Stella Adagiri
- Vincent Adzahlie-Mensah
- Francesca Salvi

Thanks are also due to Allan Findlay for furnishing the authors with a host of contacts and education statistics.

The authors would also like to express their appreciation to those in UBEC, the NCCE, NCNE, NERDC and in other government departments and parastatals in Nigeria for providing them with documents. Similarly, thanks are due to various personnel in DFID and colleagues with other international development partners who have spent time retrieving and sharing reports, in particular to those from Action Aid, the British Council, ESSPIN, UNICEF and USAID.

Finally, we would like to thank Marin Hirschfeld and the OPM office for formatting the document and My Blue Pencil for some assiduous copy-editing.

All remaining errors are the authors’. 
Executive summary

Background

Initially commissioned by the DFID-funded programme Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN) to inform its operational research stream, this literature review has now been expanded and is aimed at national and international audiences, as well as at readers both familiar and unfamiliar with basic education issues in Nigeria. The review is designed to inform the work of government officers involved in basic education – both policy-makers and implementers at federal, state and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) levels – consultants working on educational development projects, and academics working in the field of basic education. In particular, the review examines the findings of empirical studies from between 2000 and 2013 that relate to factors affecting educational access, quality, equity and impact in basic education. It also considers related grey literature and policy documents. Most of the literature refers to public primary education, predominantly in northern Nigeria, with an emphasis on girls’ education since this has been the focus of recent development efforts, which have produced most of the available documents.

As well as pulling together some of the insights from the available literature, the review aims to identify the gaps in the research – both substantive and methodological – and point to ways in which we might increase our knowledge.

The drive to improve the quality of basic education in Nigeria has been given tremendous impetus over the last decade. Examples of the Nigerian government’s commitment to improvement include: the expansion of compulsory education from primary level to junior secondary level in the 2004 Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act, and the subsequent revised national policy on education; the apparent increase in the number of children accessing secondary education; the establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) with its associated advisory and funding mechanisms; sustained collaboration with international development partners (IDPs) such as DFID, UNICEF and USAID; the funding of a major collection of studies in a wide-ranging review of basic education in 2004; and the more recent establishment of a presidential task force on education in 2011. In addition, through a range of government initiatives, there has been sustained effort at improving equity and widening participation in education, in particular increasing access to basic education among girls, nomadic and Muslim children. However, given the size and diversity of Nigeria, and the fact that the education sector is still recovering from its neglect during the years of military dictatorships, huge challenges still remain. It is unsurprising then that, despite the significant achievements in basic education, such as those mentioned above, much of the research literature focuses more on what still needs to be done.

1. GENERAL ISSUES

The unavailability, paucity and unreliability of available statistical data on education, especially as regards the Education Management Information System (EMIS), has made it difficult to plan and budget effectively for education, to collect meaningful baseline and evaluation data, and to undertake large-scale survey research.

However, while most studies acknowledge the inadequacy of the statistical data, they simultaneously use them as evidence of the positive impact of particular programmes. This problem of data quality is exacerbated by the increasing number of schools that may not be included in government figures, such as unregistered private schools and religious schools that may be teaching some secular subjects. Inclusion of data on over-age pupils, grade repetition and on pupil absenteeism as well as a robust definition of what constitutes ‘dropping out’ would be extremely useful.

Since much of the empirical research is associated with development programmes, it has been driven by project agendas, and has therefore primarily been evaluative and quantitative so as to enable outputs
and outcomes to be measured against programme targets and to facilitate impact assessments. Even where qualitative data were gathered they were often then quantified.

Furthermore, articles in national journals generally lack an empirical basis or report small-scale surveys on very specific issues.

There are very few in-depth qualitative studies. More in-depth qualitative data (including ethnographic, longitudinal and comparative case-study research) are needed to unravel some of the more complex processes affecting children in particular social contexts hinted at in some of the survey data.

Research on education in Nigeria would benefit from greater collaboration and synergy between Nigerian university academics working in education and education and development specialists (both Nigerian and international).

Greater public availability of government policy documentation on education (e.g. statistics, policy documents, research reports and the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) exercise data) would also help improve research.

Geographical coverage in the available research (outside national surveys) has been uneven, with some states hardly featuring.

With one of two notable exceptions, the voices of women and children and marginalised groups such as nomadic pastoralists, almajirai, street children, and children with disabilities are not often very well heard in the evaluation studies, often because there was a tendency to focus on ‘key informants’ such as state and Local LGEA officials, traditional leaders and head teachers, who are predominantly men from dominant social groups.

Since the drive at the school level has been to get more children – particularly girls – into schools, less research attention has been given to the quality of teaching and learning, in both schools and teacher education colleges. However, increased school enrolments mean very little if no meaningful learning is taking place.

There are also concerns about the financial sustainability and political will to sustain many of the education development programmes.

2. ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION

EMIS data suggest an overall decline in primary enrolments from 2006 to 2010 (the latest available data nationally), except in the North West. In contrast, the data suggest an increase in public Junior Secondary School (JSS) enrolments. That said, the figures are unreliable and much of the private school data in particular are absent. Household survey data from between 2004 and 2010 suggest little change in primary attendance, at around 60% of school-age children nationally, although there is considerable variation across the country.

Broadly speaking, attendance is lower in the north than in the south, in rural areas rather than urban, for poorer households than richer, for girls more than boys in northern states, for Muslims more than non-Muslims, and for nomadic and migrant children and children with disabilities. Enrolment data from Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN)-supported states show huge variation between states and within states between LGEAs.

1 While the term originally derives from a corruption of the Arabic ‘almuhajirun’, which means ‘migrant’, referring to boys who would leave home in search of Qur’anic learning, it has been debased in common speech in Nigeria to refer to Muslim boys begging in the street.
Qualitative data suggest that in some states enrolments are increasing following social mobilisation and school development efforts.

The 2010 Nigeria Education Data Survey (NEDS) suggested that formal dropout and repetition are not large problems, although other studies’ data suggest the NEDS figures are gross under-representations. That said, the 2010 NEDS and other studies have shown pupil absenteeism to be a major issue, especially in rural areas.

The 2010 NEDS stated that the main reasons parents and guardians gave for their primary-aged children having never attended school were the distance to school, child labour needs at home, and the monetary costs. Other common factors were the perception that the child was too young or immature to attend school, and the poor quality of schools.

Out-of-school factors contributing to non-enrolment, absenteeism and/or dropout from schools include: illness or hunger; the need to do paid/unpaid work (including caring for siblings and sick relatives); an inability to pay school costs and fees; lack of uniforms or other materials; and parental attitudes.

In-school factors contributing to non-enrolment, absenteeism and/or dropout from schools are related to quality and generally revolve around: poor infrastructure and facilities; lack of space or overcrowding; teacher absenteeism; pupil avoidance of harassment, bullying or corporal punishment; an inability to understand the medium of instruction (MOI); and the poor quality of teaching and learning taking place.

The quantitative data are generally of poor quality, but are particularly sparse in the case of unregistered private schools, Islamic schools and nomadic education.

There is not a good understanding of what the most important barriers to access are ('out-of-school' and 'in-school' factors) in specific contexts and the way they interrelate.

3. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

School supply

Many states have recently been investing in building new schools. However, according to EMIS data, there are no clear patterns on school supply nationally from 2006 to 2010, although in part this is because of the lack and/or unreliability of data on the number of schools. Data for the private sector, in particular, are missing for many states. However, the 2010 NEDS reported long distances for many children in more rural and northern areas, especially at secondary level, thus suggesting school supply issues.

School infrastructure and facilities

Many states have invested heavily in the development of educational infrastructure over the last few years, although progress has been uneven. Many schools are still dilapidated, in part because government funding is unevenly distributed among states, LGEAs and schools – some schools receive no government support – and it is widely claimed that a lack of transparency in the awarding of construction contracts can lead to sub-standard buildings.

The provision of water and gender-segregated sanitation is clearly vital to keeping pupils (and staff) in schools, and reports suggest recent improvements in provision in project-supported states, but there are clearly issues around the maintenance and cleanliness of both. These need to be investigated more thoroughly, including the impact of shared community use, fee charges for water, safety for girls around toilet areas, and hygiene and equity issues surrounding the cleaning of toilets. The reasons why children are not using toilets in some cases also need to be explored.
School security is a matter of major concern to parents, pupils and education personnel, particularly the need for a perimeter fence to better regulate teacher and pupil attendance, intrusion from outsiders (including attacks on pupils, vandalism and theft of school property), the presence of motor vehicles, community dumping and encroachment.

**Classroom conditions and resources**

Classroom conditions vary across states, LGEAs and schools but many schools lack classrooms or the classrooms they do have are dilapidated and overcrowded with inadequate furniture and no usable chalkboard, making it virtually impossible for meaningful teaching and learning to occur.

A major concern is the evidence suggesting that improvements in infrastructure and resource supply are failing to keep pace with increased demand, having a negative impact on educational quality and thereby threatening retention and undermining any gains in increased enrolment.

There are severe shortages of textbooks, although there have been recent improvements in supply associated with development projects funded by a combination of government, donor agencies and community-generated funds, e.g. through school-based management committees (SBMCs).

However, books are often locked up and unused because they are considered too precious for pupils to use, teachers are not sure how to use them, or LGEAs lack funds for distribution.

**4. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Curriculum**

Following widespread criticism of the curriculum for being overloaded and outdated, with an overemphasis on transmission of knowledge rather than acquisition of transferable skills, new curricula are currently being rolled out at primary and JSS level.

Many schools lack the relevant curriculum documents (including syllabuses and teaching guides) and there is generally a shortage of Science and Technology teachers and adequate Science facilities in school, combined with low ICT penetration.

**The medium of instruction**

National policy is that the ‘mother tongue’ will be used for Primary 1–3, before a ‘progressive’ transition to English-medium teaching. In practice, teaching at primary and JSS level generally involves a lot of code-switching between Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba and other community languages.

English as the MOI is a major impediment to teaching and learning and a cause of dropout and low learning outcomes, as exams and textbooks are in English. Low proficiency in English runs right through basic education, with many teachers as well as pupils having limited English. It is therefore a matter of concern that English is even being used in some lower primary and pre-school classes.

Attitudes toward the MOI issue differ: most senior education officials want English as the MOI, most pupils want bilingual teaching, and parents’ and teachers’ views are mixed. English as MOI is associated with better educational and socio-economic opportunities despite language-learning research evidence in other African contexts indicating that pupils need a good foundation in their first language(s) before changing to another MOI.
More research is needed on language use in the Nigerian classroom and its impact on learning, teaching and assessment, with greater inclusion of pupils' views on the subject, especially those of minority ethno-linguistic groups. In particular, the actual practices of bilingual and multilingual classroom teaching – especially in urban areas – need more in-depth research, followed by consideration of the implications for teacher deployment, teacher education and textbook production.

Teaching methods and assessment

Although poor teaching is also a cause of non-enrolment, truancy, school dropout, poor performance and migration to the private sector, few published empirical studies have focused solely on the quality of teaching and learning, beyond two large-scale and predominantly quantitative surveys (one funded by UNICEF (Hardman et al. 2008) and one by ESSPIN (Davison 2010)).

In particular, there is little in-depth classroom-based research available on the processes (both formal and informal) of teaching and learning at either the primary or the JSS level. Information is also lacking on the specific interactions that pupils find most helpful in learning and on whether/how they differ in different types of school (e.g. Islamiyya, government, single-sex, boarding, etc.).

Research suggests there is very little variation in lesson structure across subjects or levels, with traditional didactic methods predominating. In some project-supported states there appears to be some change toward more interactive and ‘learner-centred’ teaching but robust evidence is lacking as to whether the recorded surface features of such teaching (e.g. putting pupils into groups, praising pupils or using a teaching aid) actually constitute better teaching or whether they have helped improve learning.

Teachers clearly need more support and guidance in the area of assessment – both formative and summative – and in record-keeping in order to be able to monitor pupil/student progress.

Teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil relations

Very little is known about teacher–pupil relations, or about their effect on participation in school and on pupil learning, beyond what has been said in several studies about high levels of corporal punishment and ‘psychological violence’ by some teachers, reported in the national study on violence in schools (Federal Ministry of Education (FME) 2007b). A national teacher motivation study (Sherry 2008) suggests such behaviour is a result of teacher frustration at being unable to help pupils learn in difficult circumstances.

The research suggests that teachers are not necessarily aware of the negative impact some of these activities can have on individual pupils. More research is needed in this area, and teachers and pupils need to be sensitised to such issues.

There is similarly very little research on pupil–pupil relations. Some research has provided evidence of peer bullying and physical and sexual harassment based on gender and age. Although there is some suggestion that antagonistic peer relations may result in truancy and eventual dropout, much more research is needed in this area, including on ways in which children play and interact socially in schools.

In general, more needs to be known about the emotional, affective side of teaching and learning, from both the teachers’ and the pupils’ perspectives.
5. OUTCOMES OF BASIC EDUCATION

Overall, the evidence base on the outcomes of basic education in Nigeria is weak. There is no nationally institutionalised system for the regular measurement of learning outcomes. However, those measures that do exist suggest very low learning levels.

Longitudinal tests (currently lacking) and surveys measuring individuals across time would improve understanding of the progress (or lack thereof) that pupils/students are making, and in which years.

There is an apparent disjunction between the evidence that shows that learning outcomes are generally very low for most pupils/students and that which shows other positive outcomes of schooling, in terms of labour market and health outcomes. It may be that there is other learning going on in schools that is not captured by tests of specific skills such as literacy and numeracy.

In regard to the labour market, increased earnings come mostly from secondary and tertiary schooling, which can provide access to government and formal sector jobs. Schooling at primary level appears to have a much smaller impact on individual productivity and wages.

There are also no studies that explore the social impacts on schooling in terms of pupils’ wellbeing, self-confidence or ability to interact with others.

6. GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOLING

The decentralised system of governance with overlapping responsibilities at federal and state level is made more complex by the existence of numerous parastatals at both levels. This has resulted in some tensions between state governments and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), as well as duplication of effort in some areas and a lack of focus on others.

Progress in the implementation of UBE has been uneven across states. UBEC’s impact assessment (UBEC 2012a) suggests that states that have been able to fully or almost fully access funds have had the greatest success in implementation.

There is no clear, up-to-date and comprehensive information available on spending on basic education, and actual spending deviates substantially from planned spending. The overall actual level of public spending on education is relatively low.

Furthermore, spending is divided roughly evenly between primary, secondary and tertiary, despite the much smaller numbers of students at the post-primary levels.

A deeper understanding is needed of public expenditure on education, the relationship between planning and budgeting systems, and the constraints (political, technical, organisational and capacity related) to better planning and implementation of education budgets, as well as the relationship between these systems and pupils’ learning outcomes. Detailed state-specific research on this would be highly relevant.

State governors have substantial control over policy and finances in the decentralised system. Local government tends to be weak as it obtains the majority of its funding from the state government. Unclear delineation of responsibility and poor coordination between levels of government, combined with low capacity in some areas, means that service delivery is often ineffective and the lack of publicly available data results in low levels of transparency and accountability and also hinders planning.
Most accountability is upwards to higher levels of government rather than outwards toward communities, although decentralised school governance through SBMCs is attempting to address this issue. Crucial to its success are consistent funding and LGEA support.

There are wide variations in funding between states, LGEAs and even between individual schools. Interview evidence from several studies suggests that funding and appointments across the board may be political or based on personal influence rather than on need or relevant professional experience and qualifications. This has resulted in low levels of trust between different government layers and between educational authorities and communities. Many stakeholders have expressed a desire for this culture to change. Where LGEAs and SBMCs are now working well together, however, matters do seem to be improving.

Although there is currently very limited available information, education development programmes would benefit from more in-depth political economy analysis (PEA) at the planning stage.

The netmapping methodology used in Kano State underlines the importance of ‘local resilience networks’ to manage unpredictable resource flows, using informal connections to government agencies to increase their resources. This can widen disparities in funding between better-connected schools that can access funds and those with weaker networks. This methodology could usefully be applied to other states in order to capture the complexity of official and informal power relations within the system and how they affect resource distribution and blockages in resource flows.

7. NON-STATE PROVIDERS OF EDUCATION AND NON-FORMAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Across Nigeria, a quarter of primary school students are enrolled at for-profit private schools, and many more attend religious schools and schools for nomadic populations. Numbers attending private schools are higher in urban areas than in rural areas, and more prevalent in the south. The majority of the ‘out-of-school’ children in northern Nigeria receive some form of Islamic schooling.

Parents are increasingly sending children to low-fee private schools because of proximity to their home and perceived better quality.

Although there is very little actual evidence of the quality of teaching/learning on offer in low-fee private schools (beyond the fact that teachers are more often in the classroom), the limited survey data do indeed suggest that learning outcomes are at least as good if not better on average than in public schools, although they are still low.

Many Muslim parents in northern Nigeria give similar reasons for sending their children to purely Islamic or Islamiyya, Qur’anic and Tsangaya Education (IQTE) schools, referring to their perceived better quality rather than to religious motivations per se. Some studies show that a small, although seemingly decreasing, number of parents still consider government schools to be un-Islamic and too westernised.

Not enough is known about the learning outcomes from religious schools, and how the process of integration is progressing. If IQTE schools are doing slightly better, as suggested by the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) results in Sokoto and Bauchi, as well as in ESSPIN-supported IQTE schools, what is it precisely that leads to these better results?

More also needs to be known about the prevalence of Christian faith schools and the quality of teaching/learning in them.

Our understanding of how the growth of the private school sector is affecting public schools and equality of access needs to be deepened.
Greater understanding is needed too on non-formal education regarding attendance patterns, teaching methodologies and outcomes. What are the reasons for the apparent decline in enrolments and female participation in non-formal education as suggested by official figures?

More information is needed on the numbers and experiences of nomadic and semi-nomadic children in both nomadic and mainstream schools, identifying the factors that encourage and constrain access, retention and learning.

Virtually no literature is available on the numbers, needs and experiences of children with special physical or learning needs (both those who are in and out of school) beyond the categorisation of children with disabilities in the EMIS data.

More needs to be known about early childhood care and education (ECCE) in al its forms. What are the implications for equity given the relative high costs and what are the implications of teaching being predominantly in English, as research suggests, when policy demands that the language of the immediate environment should be used?

8. GENDER AND BASIC EDUCATION

Government and IDPs have focused on girls’ education in northern Nigeria, especially on getting girls enrolled in school.

Barriers to girls’ sustained and meaningful participation in formal education are multiple and interrelated, and are a combination of ‘out-of-school’ factors that pull girls out of school and ‘in-school’ factors that push girls out of school. They are also often connected to poverty, in the form of home chores and the need to earn money, especially through hawking. Other issues include: parental/community attitudes; sibling care; early marriage/pregnancy; hunger/ill health; distance to school and concerns about safety; corporal punishment; gender violence including bullying and ‘teasing’ in school; and a lack of water and clean sanitation that assures privacy. It should of course be noted that many of these issues affect boys too.

Various initiatives claim to have helped improve girls’ participation (and often boys’ too). They include: increased female and youth representation on SBMCs; the abolition of school fees; material assistance; girls’ clubs; improved infrastructure; micro-credit services targeting women; girls-only schools; and grants to females to train as teachers in some northern states (i.e. the Female Teacher Training Scholarship Scheme (FTTSS)).

Although interview data suggest these initiatives have helped increase enrolment, there is only limited evidence in certain states and/or LGEAs from administrative enrolment data or survey-based attendance data on increases in school participation in regard to either girls or boys. It is also not known whether the beneficiaries of such initiatives have persisted in school and have been learning.

Boys’ schooling

Boys are often ignored due to the focus on girls’ schooling. Issues affecting boys in particular include harsher and more frequent corporal punishment and more bullying/fighting. Boys are withdrawn or drop out to work in agriculture in rural areas or for trade/apprenticeships in urban areas; they generally have more employment opportunities as they get older. The reasons for boys’ low participation rates in regard to formal schooling in the South East particularly need exploring.

Concern has been voiced about a possible backlash and antagonistic gender relations if boys are ignored in development initiatives; for example, a scholarship scheme for girls in Niger State was opened up to boys as well after there was a protest that highlighted the discrimination against boys.
Looking at gendered processes

There is a need to move beyond the gender parity approach (i.e. primarily considering numbers of girls versus numbers of boys) and a focus on enrolment and attendance toward a focus on inequalities in processes and the way they relate to outcomes.

There is also a need for a more holistic gender analysis of schools, with gender conceptualised as relational – i.e. boys and girls, considering similarities and differences between and within gender categories – and looking at the gendered structures and processes of educational institutions, as well as at numbers of female and male pupils and teachers.

The FTTSS has supported over 2,300 trainees but research is needed on their levels of commitment/attrition over two years, their impact in schools/communities and on the kind of support they need to be successful.

While the literature considers the constraints of cultural practices of Islam on girls’ schooling, there is nothing on the impact of Christianity or African traditional religion (ATR) on girls’ participation, or on the way in which ethnicity interacts with gender and religion (with the exception of two studies on female Fulbe nomadic pastoralists).

9. OUT-OF-SCHOOL ISSUES AFFECTING ACCESS (‘pull factors’)

Provision of schools

Despite an impressive drive to increase the number of primary schools and JSSs across the country in recent years, government welcomes the participation of private education to help it achieve UBE, including for-profit private and faith schools such as IQTE schools where there are some secular subjects on the curriculum, provided that they meet government standards.

Poverty, the cost of schooling and the need for children to work

Direct costs such as Parent–Teacher Association (PTA) levies and the cost of uniforms, writing materials and textbooks constitute a major barrier to equitable access: inability to pay costs is a cause of non-enrolment, refused entry and/or corporal punishment and dropout among pupils, particularly among children from the poorest households.

Pupils also miss school to earn money for their own or for siblings’ school fees/costs. Many working children earn money in order to pay for schooling.

In particular states or communities in northern Nigeria, initiatives have been carried out, with some degree of success, to provide conditional cash transfers, free school uniforms, and free writing materials, textbooks, bags, sandals, bicycles and sanitary pads (for girls). These have often been achieved with SBMC/PTA funds and are sometimes tied in to school development plans (SDPs); such schemes are also mainly aimed at girls.

While interview and survey data indicate that these initiatives have increased enrolment, there are rarely hard figures and robust evidence as to whether the beneficiaries have persisted in school and are learning.

Health

Child ill health – often related to poverty, poor water and sanitation and/or conditions of child labour – impacts heavily on schooling. There is speculation in the 2010 NEDS report that the discontinuation of
the Home Grown School Feeding programme in the majority of states may have helped discourage additional enrolment after 2007.

Hunger is identified by pupils and teachers as a major problem, sometimes resulting in pupil latecoming and absenteeism and cited as affecting concentration and learning.

Other major health challenges include malaria, intestinal parasites and HIV infection and AIDS. Not enough is known about the specific impacts of these health challenges on pupils/students and teachers.

**Cultural issues**

Various gendered cultural practices related to religion and/or lifestyle have an impact on girls’ and boys’ participation in schooling.

Where children attend Qur’anic school in the morning before going to public school, greater flexibility is needed in timetabling to ensure pupils are not disadvantaged by being repeatedly late for class in public school (i.e. due to late release by the mallam), which means they are therefore prone to receiving punishments.

Government has been steadily increasing the number of nomadic schools. Although the number of nomads attending these schools is rising, dropout rates are said to be high and learning outcomes low (notwithstanding that, once again, reliable statistical data are lacking). Contributing factors include: lack of fit between school timetabling and nomadic lifestyles (e.g. boys’ needs to herd cattle from mid-morning and nomadic girls’ need to sell their dairy products, resulting in absenteeism); teacher truancy and absenteeism; lack of funding for nomadic schools and lack of support at state and LGEA levels; and inappropriate teaching methods and irrelevant curriculum in government schools plus corporal punishment, which is generally deemed unacceptable by nomadic parents.

As stated in Section 7 above, more needs to be known about nomads and schooling in both nomadic and mainstream schools.

There were no available socially situated studies that looked at other cultural/ethnic groups and their traditional practices that might have an impact on school access and children’s experience of schooling, particularly in rural areas.

**Conflict**

Studies are lacking on the effects of conflict on education and the ways in which the quality or forms of education may also have an impact on conflict.

**10. TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATION**

**Teachers**

While comprehensive data are again lacking, EMIS figures from 2010 indicate that around two-thirds of public primary teachers and a much higher proportion of public JSS teachers are qualified, although regional variation is great. The lack of qualified teachers is generally worse in the more rural, northern regions of the country: in the North East and North West well under half the teachers are qualified whereas in the South West almost all teachers are qualified. There is also great variation among states and within states among LGEAs.
The vast majority of female teachers are located in the south of Nigeria, and male teachers in the north. A higher proportion of female teachers is qualified than male teachers nationally, although with huge regional variations. Qualitative data suggest that it is difficult to get female teachers to accept postings in rural areas.

There is also gender stereotyping in subject specialisation in teacher education, with low levels of female teachers in Science and Technology.

Qualifications are no guarantee of adequate knowledge or teaching skills, as ESSPIN teacher assessments have shown. In short, the quality of pre-service and in-service education needs to be improved. In addition, unqualified teachers may sometimes be appointed in preference to qualified teachers for political reasons or to save money.

Teacher appointment and deployment

Teacher appointment and deployment tends not to be based on supply and demand, in part due to a lack of reliable data, but also because the process is prone to political interference. Teacher shortages exist in some states and/or LGAs and not in others and ten to be higher in remote rural areas. Inevitably the lack of teachers in some schools results in overcrowded classes, which can lead to low levels of teacher morale and to pupil absenteeism and dropouts.

Furthermore, there is a mismatch between teacher training specialisations and appointments, with primary-trained teachers often ending up as secondary teachers and secondary subject specialists being deployed to primary schools.

The pupil–teacher ratio (PTR) figures published in the Annual School Census (ASC) tend not to reflect the reality in the classroom; often the figures are in line with or better than the recommended PTR when observations suggest that in reality teachers often have to deal with much larger classes.

Pay, conditions and teacher motivation

Teacher motivation is low at the national level and attrition rates are said to be high. Teachers feel undervalued and neglected by government, especially in rural areas. Their main complaints relate to their poor salary, irregular payments, non-standardised salary structure (varying among states and even within schools, depending on contacts) and the low social status of the teaching profession. Promotion is based on years of service rather than competence, which is demotivating to some. Although a standardised salary structure is in the pipeline, several states are rejecting its implementation. Teachers are offered incentives for rural postings by some authorities but the incentives are often not paid.

Other teacher complaints relate to poor working conditions, including dilapidated, overcrowded classrooms with insufficient numbers of textbooks, and a lack of access to professional support, including meaningful continuing professional development.

Low morale and frustration result in low levels of teacher professionalism, such as high levels of absenteeism, especially in rural areas, and unsanctioned use of corporal punishment.

In contrast, teachers involved in professional development programmes report increased job satisfaction and enhanced self-confidence, usually feeling that their teaching has improved (although actual improvements in teaching and learning are sometimes hard to determine).
Teacher education

Initial or pre-service teacher education is widely criticised on the basis of its outdated curriculum and teaching methodology, inadequate facilities and staff shortages, a lack of capacity on the part of some lecturers, the poor calibre of trainees and a lack of monitoring of student progress.

However, there is very little empirical, observation-based research on the processes of teaching and learning that go on in teacher education institutions, including when students are on teaching practice. This is urgently needed.

The emphasis in teacher education appears to be on the technical (pedagogical) aspect of teacher development, while the equally important social and affective aspects of teaching have merited less attention.

There have been strong efforts by government in recent years to increase the number of qualified teachers across the country through in-service training — part of a nascent process of professionalisation. However, this has resulted in less of an emphasis on improving teaching and learning.

Access to in-service training is uneven among teachers, with some teachers having attended several workshops over several years, and others — especially in rural areas — receiving no in-service training whatsoever.

Recent development projects have included in-service teacher education components, including use of detailed lesson plans or interactive radio, aimed at improving teaching by making it more interactive and ‘learner-centred’. However, details on what these interventions entail, and on how intensive they are, are scarce in the literature; evaluation reports tend to highlight the presence or absence of particular behaviours/activities (such as group work, use of teaching aids, teacher praise, etc.), while interview data report increased teacher confidence and pupil enjoyment rather than giving a more thorough assessment of whether teaching and learning is improving. The evidence, however, suggests interventions underestimate teachers’ proficiency in English (in understanding and using manuals, teaching materials, etc.) and the amount of sustained contact time and support needed to facilitate change.

11. HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHER MANAGEMENT

Head teachers

There is no national policy on head teacher roles and responsibilities and no additional qualifications are needed for the post. The main criterion for head teacher appointment is years of service. Head teachers currently receive no induction to the post.

Although there is no nationally agreed remuneration for the post, some head teachers receive a stipend from the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) or LGEA.

Several studies note how head teachers are crucial to supporting change and to improvements at the school level (including teacher professional development) but that they have very little power and few resources to effect change. They further state that they are in need of capacity development to assume leadership, management and supervisory roles. The limited research on head teachers indicates that most of their time is spent on administration.
The head teacher training offered by development programmes in northern Nigeria has so far had very limited impact. However, the introduction of SDPs tied with school grants has resulted in head teachers feeling motivated and empowered to effect change at their school.

Head teacher–teacher relations vary, depending on whether teachers feel the appointment has been made on merit and the extent to which the head teacher backs them in disputes with parents.

**School inspection and supervision**

Monitoring and evaluation and professional support to head teachers and teachers is carried out by the LGEA. The limited available research indicates that school supervisors usually focus on administration, checking registers, lesson notes and whether or not teachers are in class teaching, rather than on pedagogical support or development. LGEA officials also have capacity-building needs themselves in terms of giving professional, pedagogical support to teachers and often lack the funds for transport to carry out school visits.

School inspections are periodically carried out by federal and state teams but there is a lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities regarding inspection among the three tiers of government, which also results in duplication of effort. There is a lack of information on what exactly is monitored in schools, the types of recommendations that are made, and what (if any) follow-up occurs to see whether recommendations have been acted upon.

Recently some SBMCs have started to monitor teacher attendance, which has reportedly improved as a result.

**Teacher discipline**

There are no available studies on the operation of the Teachers’ Investigative Panel (TIP) and Teachers’ Disciplinary Committee (TDC), which exist at national and state level and are there to investigate complaints made by the public.

Disciplinary procedures often go up though head teachers, to the LGEA and then to SUBEBs regarding issues concerning teachers’ professional misconduct. However, in practice disciplinary sanctions are often applied in an ad hoc fashion, and it may depend on the teacher’s connections as to whether any action is taken.

The most common complaints by educational officials, communities and pupils concern widespread teacher absenteeism and use of corporal punishment. Other complaints include: non-preparation of lessons; missing out parts of the syllabus; verbal or psychological abuse of pupils; and sexual harassment or abuse of pupils. All barring the last issue have often been attributed to teachers’ frustration and inability to cope in difficult circumstances, for which they have been inadequately trained, and to their resulting low morale.

All of the above factors have a negative impact on educational quality, and are known to be factors in pupil non-enrolment, absenteeism, dropout or withdrawal and poor learning outcomes, although it is not known to what extent.

**12. PUPILS AND PUPIL MANAGEMENT**

The very limited available data on pupil management suggest that, as currently practised, it often has a detrimental effect on pupil access and educational quality. There are clearly high levels of violence in many schools that threaten pupil retention and educational quality.
There is an absence of national data on pupil (or teacher) attendance and latecoming and there is no known research that has focused on the issue despite its critical impact on pupils’ access to learning opportunities and retention. However, survey and qualitative data both indicate that pupil absenteeism and latecoming are common, especially at particular times of the year in rural areas (e.g. during planting and harvesting, when labour is needed in the fields). Attendance is also low on market days (when pupils go to trade and hawk), when it rains heavily or during the Harmattan season, as well as early in the morning if Muslim pupils are released late from Qur’anic school and in the afternoons in double-shift schools.

There are reports of some communities through the SBMC starting their own community-based data-management systems to try and monitor attendance and/or making home visits to encourage children back into school, with some apparent degree of success.

There is, however, little evidence so far of flexibility and community negotiation in timetabling school holidays and school hours to coincide more with community needs, in order to improve pupil attendance. Little is known about the timetabled contact time in class, which in one study was as little as 2hr 35min, once time had been subtracted for assembly, cleaning, breaks, etc.

**Duties**

School duties – particularly cleaning – can take up much of the school day in Nigeria. The one study that looked at school labour found it to be a source of complaint among some pupils, impacting negatively on educational quality and gender equality as tasks are often gender specific and gender stereotyped.

**Pupil discipline**

Although corporal punishment is now forbidden in schools, excessive corporal punishment is widely reported and is often for ‘offences’ for which children are not responsible (e.g. non-payment of PTA levies). It has been found to result in: emotional distress; pupil inability to concentrate and reduced pupil participation in class; pupil absenteeism and dropout (especially among nomads); parental conflict (including withdrawal of pupils from school, despite the fact that there is widespread approval for the practice in principle); and permanent physical damage to pupils in some extreme cases. Beating is often gender-differentiated, with boys reportedly being beaten more often and more harshly than girls.

Alternative or complementary punishments, however, are often still physical and/or humiliating and/or take time away from learning, such as being made to run round the classroom or pick up litter during lesson time, carrying a heavy stone, or frog-jumping. Pupils are also sometimes excluded from school as punishment for not having the complete uniform or their writing materials.

There is no available documentation on whether less punitive disciplinary systems of pupil management are in operation (such as in UNICEF’s Child-Friendly Schools (CFSs)) and, if so, what the effects are on pupils, teachers and community–school relations. Teachers and head teachers appear to need in-service support on alternative strategies for pupil management.

**Prefect/monitor system**

The limited available research suggests that, although prefects sometimes provide support or give a ‘voice’ to pupils, the system is more concerned with perpetuating violent disciplinary practices, given that it is prefects and monitors that often physically discipline peers. It is unknown how much of the

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2 The Harmattan is a dry trade wind that blows south from the Sahara from the end of November to mid-March, blocking out the sun and bringing thick dust, which affects visibility.
bullying/violence discussed elsewhere is in fact officially sanctioned through the prefect/monitor system.

The prefect system also works against gender equality by underlining an explicit gender hierarchy in the school, as the head girl is in charge of disciplining girls and the head boy is the head prefect and thus in charge of both boys and girls. Jobs that carry status and responsibility are usually given to boys whereas domestic jobs are more often given to female pupils.

**Pupil–pupil relations**

Several studies have investigated bullying and peer violence among children and found it to be widespread (as in many other countries), with both girls and boys bullying and being bullied and girls and younger boys generally being bullied more by older boys. Over-age pupils, and over-age boys in particular, are prone both to bullying and being bullied. Nomadic children and almajirai are also often bullied in government schools. There is some evidence of truancy and dropout on account of bullying, although the effects of bullying need investigating more fully.

The need for ‘safe spaces’ for children to talk has been highlighted. Research is also needed on the availability and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in schools and student experiences of them.

Much more information is needed on pupils’ lives inside (and outside) school and their views on various aspects of school life, including peer relations and the ways in which gender, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status and age have an impact on pupils.

**13. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING**

Increasing community involvement in schooling is a key strategy in decentralised government, which aims to help improve the quality of education, to improve school accountability and to share the financial burden of education.

Financial sustainability and equity are two important issues that need addressing to ensure the future of the SBMC model of decentralised governance. Simply put, without government funding SBMCs cannot function. Guidelines on accessing funds need to be equitable; systems need to be put in place to make sure that poor communities that are unable to provide matched funding and/or do not have the capacity to produce a development plan are not further disadvantaged by receiving no financial support.

Formal involvement of parents is through the PTA and, to a lesser extent, the SBMC, although schools may also be supported by other community-based organisations (CBOs) and religious organisations. There is confusion over the roles and functions of SBMCs and PTAs and some evidence of tension when both are operational, although there are other examples of them working well together.

The PTA is the more established organisation; its activities are funded through PTA levies, which are outlawed or theoretically limited in some states but provide the only source of income for some schools. PTAs usually provide finance and/or labour and materials for construction and repairs, salaries for supplementary teachers and a channel of communication between the school and community, albeit generally from the school to the community. The PTA is not usually involved in school management. There have been complaints of political interference in PTAs, a lack of transparency in relation to funds and the lack of a ‘voice’ for the ordinary community member.

The SBMC is a more recent development. Where supported by donors/government, monitored and given access to grants, SBMCs have succeeded in improving school infrastructure and mobilising communities to increase enrolment levels, especially in regard to girls. Involvement in management has
started with some SBMCs but capacity building is needed to enable them to fulfil their envisaged management functions.

However, in many places SBMCs are non-existent or barely functioning. Those that receive no financial support from government or donors are reliant on fund-raising, which once again raises issues of equity given that poorer communities are likely to be less able to raise funds.

In a positive drive toward more inclusive community participation in schooling, SBMCs are mandated to have a more broad-based membership than PTAs, including a specified number of female and youth representatives. Since SBMCs are at an early developmental stage, progress on this has so far been uneven.

The involvement of traditional and religious leaders has been vital to SBMC success, although it has been noted that SBMCs need to try harder to access more marginalised, hard-to-reach people, such as nomads.

School–community relations are said to be improving where SBMCs are active and there is a feeling of mutual responsibility for the success of the school. However, tensions and conflicts have also been recorded on issues such as: access routes through the school; shared water supply, community encroachment and dumping on school land; and incursions by gangs, vandals, etc. A tendency has been noted in some communities for schools and SBMCs to treat parents in a derogatory and punitive fashion, telling them what to do and threatening them with fines for non-compliance, as well as demonstrating a lack of understanding as to why parents might not want to enrol/keep their child in school.
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<td>ASC</td>
<td>Annual School Census</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATR</td>
<td>African Traditional Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUCGHD</td>
<td>Boston University Center for Global Health and Development</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Continuous Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community-Based Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>Child-Friendly School</td>
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<td>CMA</td>
<td>Conscientizing Male Adolescents programme</td>
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<td>COMPASS</td>
<td>Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector</td>
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<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continuing Professional Development</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>ECCE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Education</td>
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<td>EdData</td>
<td>Education Data for Decision-Making</td>
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<td>EDOREN</td>
<td>Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education For All</td>
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<td>EGMA</td>
<td>Early Grade Mathematics Assessment</td>
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<td>EGRA</td>
<td>Early Grade Reading Assessment</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>ES</td>
<td>Education Secretary</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
<td>Education Sector Analysis</td>
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<td>ESSPIN</td>
<td>Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria</td>
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<td>FCT</td>
<td>Federal Capital Territory</td>
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<td>FGN</td>
<td>Federal Government of Nigeria</td>
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<td>FOS</td>
<td>Federal Office of Statistics</td>
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<td>FME</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>FMWASD</td>
<td>Federal Ministry for Women’s Affairs and Social Development</td>
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<td>FTTSS</td>
<td>Female Teacher Training Scholarship Scheme</td>
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GAR  Gross Attendance Ratio³
GEP III  Girls’ Education Project (Phase 3)
GER  Gross Enrolment Ratio³
GPI  Gender Parity Index⁴
HRW  Human Rights Watch
ICAI  Independent Commission for Aid Impact
IDP  International Development Partner (DFID, USAID, World Bank, etc.)
ILO  International Labour Organization
IQTE  Islamiyya Qur’anic and Tsangaya Education/Integrated Qur’anic and Tsangaya Education
IRI  Interactive Radio Instruction
JSS  Junior Secondary School
LCE  Learner-Centred Education
LGA  Local Government Area
LGEA  Local Government Education Authority
M&E  Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG  Millennium Development Goal
MICS  Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLA  Monitoring Learning Achievement
MOI  Medium of Instruction
NAR  Net Attendance Ratio⁵
NBS  National Bureau of Statistics
NCCE  National Commission for Colleges of Education
NCE  National Council on Education

³ GAR/GER: Total pupil attendance/enrolment at a particular level of education irrespective of age, expressed as a percentage of the total population of the appropriate age for that level of education. Due to over-age pupils GARs and GERs can exceed 100%. The GAR uses attendance data from household surveys, while the GER is calculated using EMIS returns on school enrolment.
⁴ GPI: Ratio of female to male of a given indicator; 1 = parity between female and males; 0–1 = a disparity ‘in favour of’ males; above 1 = a disparity ‘in favour of’ females.
⁵ NAR/NER: Total attendance/enrolment of the official age group for a particular level of education expressed as a percentage of the total population for that age group. The NAR is based on household survey data on school attendance, while the NER is based on EMIS enrolment data.
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<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>NCNE</td>
<td>National Commission for Nomadic Education</td>
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<td>NDHS</td>
<td>Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<td>NECO</td>
<td>National Examination Council</td>
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<td>NEDS</td>
<td>Nigeria Education Data Survey</td>
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<td>NEI</td>
<td>Northern Education Initiative</td>
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<td>NER</td>
<td>Net Enrolment Ratio$^5$</td>
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<td>NFE</td>
<td>Non-Formal Education</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NMCP</td>
<td>Nigeria Malaria Control Programme</td>
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<td>NMEC</td>
<td>National Mass Education Commission</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Population Commission</td>
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<td>OOSC</td>
<td>Out-of-School Children</td>
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<td>OPM</td>
<td>Oxford Policy Management</td>
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<td>OVCs</td>
<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
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<td>PEA</td>
<td>Political Economy Analysis</td>
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<td>PGDE</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
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<td>PTR</td>
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<td>PTTE</td>
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<td>SBMC</td>
<td>School-Based Management Committee</td>
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<td>SbTD</td>
<td>School-based Teacher Development</td>
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<td>SDP</td>
<td>School Development Plan</td>
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<td>SMoE</td>
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<td>SPARC</td>
<td>State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>SUBEB</td>
<td>State Universal Basic Education Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDC</td>
<td>Teachers’ Disciplinary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEGINT</td>
<td>Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TIP Teachers’ Investigative Panel
TRCN Teachers’ Registration Council of Nigeria
TSS Teachers’ Salary Scale
UBE Universal Basic Education
UBEC Universal Basic Education Commission
UIS UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
USAID United States Agency for International Development
VSO Voluntary Service Overseas
WAEC West African Examination Council
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and scope of the review

This literature review focuses on basic education in Nigeria. Most of the available research\(^6\) relates to public primary education and to issues of access and enrolment since they have been the focus of most recent development efforts, driven by the MDGs. Although private education of various types forms an increasingly important part of the Nigerian government’s efforts to achieve UBE, there has so far only been limited research on the private sector.

In particular, the review examines the findings of empirical studies concerning factors that affect educational access, quality, equity and impact. Evidence is drawn from national and international studies on Nigeria, and from two previous major reviews of the literature: Theobald et al. (2007) and Akyeampong et al. (2009). Also of major importance to this analysis is the comprehensive Education Sector Analysis (ESA) by the FME (FME 2005), which reports on the findings of 43 studies carried out across the country. These were primarily quantitative surveys involving self-reported data from multiple stakeholders (including learners), with most surveys covering all or most states. Although some of the recommendations have been or are being addressed, many of the findings are still of relevance now in 2014. Consequently, the executive findings of the report as they relate to basic education have been included as an appendix (see Appendix I). The impact assessment of 10 years of UBE (1999–2009), which drew on surveys and focus group discussions of a range of stakeholders in a ‘low-performing’ and ‘high-performing’ state in each of the geo-political zones, is another key source of information (UBEC 2012a).

Two other national surveys that inform the review are the 2010 Nigeria Demographic and Health EdData Survey – referred to throughout as the 2010 NEDS (National Population Commission (NPC) and RTI International 2011) – and the related 2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, which is referred to as the 2008 NDHS (NPC and ICF Macro 2009).

Many of the international studies (and some of the national ones) relate to development programmes predominantly located in a variety of states in northern Nigeria and in Lagos State, in the South West. In particular, the DFID-funded ESSPIN programme has generated a wealth of studies, evaluations, position papers and other reports, which have been drawn on extensively in this review. Also of major importance to the review is the recently completed Adamawa State Primary Education Research (Dunne et al. 2013), which was groundbreaking in being a Nigerian state-initiated and fully SUBEB-funded collaborative research project,\(^7\) exploring multiple aspects of school access, quality and equity, and including a substantial qualitative research component.

As one of the ESSPIN reports points out, although there have been a lot of development projects in northern Nigeria in recent years and much valuable experience, ‘there has so far been little systematic sharing of lessons learned or documentation of findings or evaluation of impact’ (Poulsen 2009: 22). In a similar vein, reflecting on the fact that several similar interventions were being carried out in northern Nigeria, one evaluation report notes, ‘there is no coordination between different projects, no formal or informal exchange of information about the approaches used and about the results of the interventions’ (Gabrscek and Usman 2013: 41), resulting in ‘very little synergy dividend’ (UNICEF/UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) 2012: xiv). One of the aims of this review is to start to pull together some of the insights from the available research and development literature on basic education in Nigeria and point to some of the gaps in our knowledge and ways in which we might increase our knowledge.

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\(^6\) Throughout the review the term ‘research’ is used in a broad sense to also include evaluation studies, despite research and evaluation being very different in aim and function.

\(^7\) Collaboration was with the Centre for International Education, University of Sussex, UK.
1.1.1 Audience

The original literature review that constitutes the core of this piece of work was initially commissioned by EDOREN to inform its operational research stream and as such formed part of the project’s inception report to the project funders, DFID. It was subsequently decided to expand the review and to make it accessible both to national and international audiences, as well as to readers both familiar and unfamiliar with basic education issues in Nigeria. We have attempted to achieve this broadened aim by accessing more of the ‘hard-to-reach’ literature, by seeking feedback from a wide range of reviewers (national and international), and by making structural additions and amendments, such as adding a brief section on the Nigerian context for readers less familiar with Nigeria. Specifically, we hope that this review can help inform the work of government officers involved in basic education – both policymakers and implementers at federal, state and LGEA levels – consultants working on educational development projects, and academics working in the field of basic education.

1.2 The Nigerian context

Although estimates vary enormously, Nigeria is by far Africa’s most populous country, topping 140 million at the time of the last census in 2006 (NPC 2010) but now reaching over 160 million according to more recent estimations. Over 10 million live in the country’s commercial capital, Lagos; the other more densely populated areas lie in the south-eastern states, with the federal capital Abuja and Kano the most notable urban centres in central and northern Nigeria respectively (NPC and ICF Macro 2009). The national primary school-age population is estimated at around 20 million for those aged 5–9 and 16 million for those aged 10–14. For the 5–9 age group, the female-to-male ratio is 48% to 52% while for the 10–14 age group the ratio is 47% to 53%. In all, the primary school-age population (6–12) accounts for about 20% of the total national population figure (FME 2009a). Other estimations suggest 42% of the population are under 15 (e.g. UNICEF/UIS 2012).

1.2.1 The economy

Since the return to democratic civilian rule in 1999, Nigeria has become one of the world’s fastest growing economies; it boasts annual GDP per capita growth of over 8% over the last decade (Litwack et al. 2013), not least because it is Africa’s greatest exporter of crude oil and holds the continent’s largest gas reserves. Oil and gas revenues are the main earners of foreign exchange, providing 80% of government revenue and contributing 27% to GDP despite only employing 1% of the population (UNDP 2009). In contrast, over 50% of the population are engaged in agriculture – primarily subsistence agriculture – which contributes a further 42% to GDP (ibid.). Nigeria’s estimated 6.5 million pastoral nomads control over 90% of Nigeria’s cattle (Umar 2006). The declining manufacturing and expanding service industries are other notable contributors to the economy (UNDP 2009).

1.2.2 Geo-political boundaries and populations

Having gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960, the Federal Republic of Nigeria now comprises 36 states, plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja, grouped into six geo-political zones: South East, South South, South West, North Central, North West and North East. These zones are further subdivided into 774 local government areas (LGAs). Various Nigerian academics have explained this federal system as a strategy to ‘manage ethnic diversity’ within Nigeria (e.g. Osaghae and Suberu 2005; Ukiwo 2005). The extent of this diversity, however, is unclear, with estimates of the number of ethnic groups ranging from 150 to around 500 (Osaghae and Suberu 2005). According to the CIA’s World Factbook, the largest group is the Hausa-Fulani, estimated to comprise 29% of the population, and who

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8 Section 1.2 is adapted from Dunne et al. (2013: 18–21).
predominantly inhabit the north; the Yoruba (21%) originate from the South West; the Igbo (18%) live in the South East and the Ijaw (10%) are concentrated in the South South (www.cia.gov/library/publications). The three most widely used national languages, unsurprisingly, are Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo; however, there are over 500 other national languages (www.ethnologue.com) in addition to the official language, which is English.

In terms of religion, around 50% of the population are estimated to be Muslim, predominantly inhabiting the northern states, with 40% Christian, residing more in the south, although this is a gross oversimplification. About 10% of the populace practise some form of traditional religion (www.cia.gov/library/publications). The 2008 NDHS indicates that most households (81%) in the country are headed by males, also noting that the female-headed households are more common in rural areas than in urban areas (NPC and ICF Macro 2009).

1.2.3 Health

Major health challenges include malaria and child and maternal mortality; pregnancy-related death is one of the leading causes of death for women aged 15–49 in Nigeria, which still has one of the world’s highest rates of child mortality (Boston University Center for Global Health and Development (BUCGHD) 2009), although figures are gradually improving (NPC and ICF Macro 2009). HIV/AIDS is another concern; despite infection rates having slowed, Nigeria’s huge population means that around 3.5 million people are nevertheless thought to be HIV positive (National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) 2012). In particular, the country has one of the highest numbers in the world of children living with HIV and around a quarter of Nigeria’s estimated 9.7 million orphans are calculated to have become orphaned on account of the virus (BUCGHD 2009). Child poverty and malnutrition is of increasing concern, as are escalating numbers involved in child labour; an estimated 39% of children aged 5–14 undertake some form of labour (Federal Office of Statistics (FOS)/International Labour International (ILO) 2001; BUCGHD 2009), which relates to increased levels of adult poverty and is likely to impact heavily on enrolment, attendance and retention in schools.

1.2.4 Social inequalities

In spite of an abundance of human and material resources, the majority of Nigerians still live in poverty (UNDP 2009; Foster and Pushak 2011; Litwack et al. 2013). Exclusion of certain groups from access to basic services, land and employment, and from decision-making processes, which influence the allocation of resources, contributes to the creation and sustenance of poverty in the country (DFID Nigeria 2008). In particular, serious inequalities exist between urban and rural areas, southern and northern states, richer and poorer households, non-farming and farming households, and between women and men (NPC and ICF Macro 2009; UNDP 2009). The northern states have above average poverty levels, with the North East experiencing the highest poverty incidence (ibid.).

As the Human Development Report Nigeria 2008–2009 (UNDP 2009) also emphasises, gender inequalities are marked: men, on average, have better access to education, employment, land and credit, as well as better wages and treatment under the law, and customary law in particular. The report goes on to note that although women make up the majority of the agricultural workforce, their more limited access to resources is often mediated through men, and female-headed households have smaller and inferior plots of land (Saito et al. 2004, cited in UNDP 2009). Additionally, women are often denied inheritance rights by customary and Islamic laws (Para-Mallam 2010), are less involved in household decision-making, and many experience high levels of domestic violence (NPC and ICF Macro 2009).

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10 It is not clear where these estimates – and those on religion – originate from, since neither ethnicity nor religion has previously been included in the Nigerian census, although there are plans to include them in the 2016 census.
Table 1.1 Selected core welfare indicators, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Poor rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Poor urban</th>
<th>South West</th>
<th>North East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to safe water</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to safe sanitation</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has electricity</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to improved waste disposal</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate (15–24) (in any language)</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>78.5%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to primary school</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to secondary school</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to medical health services</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from UNDP 2009 (71)

Table 1.1 illustrates some of these inequalities in relation to selected core development indicators, comparing national averages with figures for the South West, which is generally seen as the most developed zone, and the North East, which is usually considered the least developed. The table also highlights differences between and within rural and urban locations. Across the indicators, poor populations are below the national average in terms of access to services and literacy levels. Conditions are worse for poor populations in rural areas than for poor populations in urban areas (with the exception of access to primary schooling), although the level of access to safe sanitation and improved waste disposal remains very low across the whole country. Beyond these regional inequalities, there are also variations in access to basic services across states and within states across LGAs.

1.2.5 The education system in Nigeria – in brief

Education is seen as a key instrument for achieving Nigeria’s national development goals of sustained, equitable socio-economic development and the eradication of poverty (FME 2004a; FME 2009a; FME 2011a). As a proportion of GDP, Nigeria’s expenditure on education by both regional and global standards is high (World Bank 2006). However, as a percentage of total federal spending the education budget has recently been decreasing (FME 2011a; UNICEF/UIS 2012). Nevertheless, billions of Naira have been spent, and yet there has been an increase in the number of children out of school; the latest figures from UIS (www.data.uis.org), from 2010, estimate the number of primary-age out-of-school children (OOSC) to be around 8.7 million (see Chapter 3), up from around 7.4 million in 2006.

What follows is a brief sketch of the education system in Nigeria, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6.

Basic education includes ECCE, which currently very few children participate in, followed by nine years of compulsory schooling (six primary and three junior secondary) – the main focus of this review. Basic education also includes non-formal education (NFE), such as adult literacy programmes and special programmes directed at nomadic and migrant children, for example.
Post-basic education can comprise three years of senior secondary schooling, a three-year Science and Technology programme or continuing education in a vocational institution (NPC and RTI International,
Tertiary education is delivered through universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education provided by a mixture of federal, state and private institutions.

Given the ever-increasing demands for basic education, the government now explicitly acknowledges the need to include non-state providers as a means of achieving its educational aims, provided they meet government standards (FME 2004a; Larbi et al. 2004). These include for-profit schools, religious schools (generally Muslim or Christian) that include some secular subjects in their curriculum, and voluntary or community-based institutions.

The official age for entering Primary 1 is six years old. There is now a system of automatic promotion, and policy dictates that the Primary School Leaving Certificate awarded at the end of Primary 6 should no longer be a standard terminal exam but based purely on continuous assessment (CA) (FME 2004a). However, in reality, practices vary (see Section 4.5). Similarly, the Junior School Certificate awarded at the end of JSS III should be based on a combination of CA and state exams (FME 2011a). Three years of senior secondary schooling culminate in the Secondary School Certificate Examination, issued by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) or the National Examination Council (NECO), depending on the examination board used.

Public education at the federal level is directed by the government-funded FME, under which lies the more recently formed UBEC, whose responsibilities are outlined more fully in sections 6.2 and 6.3. Although a government-funded department, it is also supported by international development agencies such as UNICEF (in particular), DFID, UNESCO, and the World Bank, and supported on the ground by various local and international NGOs. At state level, SUBEBs are responsible for basic education, while within each LGA the LGEA is responsible.

1.3 Methodology

This review is neither systematic nor exhaustive but is as wide-ranging as possible and selective within certain parameters. Literature is included from 2000 to 2013, and mostly literature specifically about Nigeria. Reports that covered West Africa and/or sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) were generally only considered if there was a whole chapter devoted to Nigeria.

Occasional reference to literature outside of Nigeria has been made when there was a paucity of relevant literature on a particular topic or to reinforce a point, but on the whole we have tried to avoid including too much of the more general literature on SSA or even West Africa in order to keep the review focused.

Various search strategies were used to access the literature. For the grey literature, EDOREN team members contacted various government organisations – such as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and the Nigerian Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) – to seek specific reports that were already known about or that were mentioned in other literature. They also made enquiries to see what other reports had been produced or studies carried out by the department that they were able to share.

International journal articles and reports were sought via the usual international search engines such as ERIC, JSTOR, OCLOC World Cat and Google Scholar using a list of search terms (see Appendix II).

Some articles in Nigerian journals were available online; others were only available in hard copy. Most did not involve empirical study but we have cited some articles that were general in nature and gave an overview of an issue (for example, about the difficulties of implementing UBE) or which covered topics where empirical data were scarce.
In addition, web searches were made of international development agencies, such as DFID, USAID, the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, Save the Children, ActionAid, Plan International, Oxfam etc., for project reports. These also often proved to be equally difficult to access.

A snowballing technique was also used to search for articles found in the reference lists of reports and articles found through regular searches.

1.3.1 Limitations

There are several limitations to this review of the literature. First, it was not possible to access some of the relevant research or evaluation reports (see also Okojie 2012: 25), so at times we have referred to other reports citing their findings, while at other times we have not been able to refer to them at all. The grey literature, that is to say government documents such as the Nigeria Digest of Education Statistics 2006–2010 (FME 2011b), was equally difficult to access and frequently electronic copies were unavailable. As the Presidential Task Team on Education (PTTE) candidly explained:

Placing information in the public domain is not normal practice in departments and agencies of ministries of education in the country. Someone seeking information is told ‘but it’s there’ … ‘we’ve got it’, etc. but one has to strive extra hard to dig out something of any use. Education statistics are a problem, public display of activity reports is not common practice, and functional ministry websites are at an embryonic stage. … The habit of ‘my schedule’ and officer-in-charge have not helped the cause of public information. There is no way one can access information on any aspect of ministry work if the officer-in-charge is ‘not on seat’ (FME 2011a: 31).

Moreover, a devolved federal system of 36 states means a lot of variation at state and even LGEA level that is impossible to capture in such a review. As has been pointed out:

What we know is far less than what we don’t know in a Nigerian fiscal federalism structure, i.e. there is variation on most issues especially between and within states, LGAs and schools. The fact that we do not know whether a report is available does not mean it does not exist (Adekola, personal communication).

In addition, as government stakeholders have readily acknowledged (e.g. FME 2005; FME 2011a), there is still a problem of conflicting and unreliable data on major educational and other social service issues in Nigeria, despite recent improvements (Santcross et al. 2010; UNDP Nigeria 2010); inevitably too, the various studies we refer to will have relied upon different data sets.

In terms of research methodologies, there is a preponderance of quantitative studies and surveys; even where qualitative research has been done, the results have often been quantified in their presentation, or details glossed over. We found very little in-depth ethnographic, socially situated research available. One of the results of this over-reliance on large-scale surveys and quantitative research is that the cultural specificities and social complexities of such a vast and diverse country as Nigeria have failed to filter through in much of this review, the exception perhaps being in the area of pastoral nomads and almajirai. This apparent homogeneity is also due in part to the fact that formal schooling – the focus of this report – is itself a homogenising force that attempts to flatten out socio-cultural differences.

The final point to be made about the review relates to coverage. As mentioned above, most of the empirical literature relates to development programmes in northern, predominantly rural Nigeria. We found only limited research focusing on other areas of the country and on major urban environments, with the exception, perhaps, of Lagos. That said, there is some coverage in the review of some generally questionnaire-based studies conducted by university researchers in the south.
1.4 Structure of the review

Chapter 2, ‘Access to basic education’, considers educational access in the narrow sense of the word: identifying who is in and out of school and who drops out of school and why, in broad terms.

Chapter 3, ‘Educational quality – The school context’, begins to look at school quality, by considering the school in terms of infrastructure and teaching resources. This then leads to an examination of the teaching and learning process itself in Chapter 4, ‘Educational quality – Teaching and learning’. This chapter reviews what we know about curriculum issues, including school subjects, the MOI, teaching methods, assessment, and teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil relations.

Chapter 5, ‘Outcomes of basic education’, focuses on the impact of basic education both in terms of further learning and beyond: on the labour market, as regards the macro-economy, on fertility, and on the intergenerational effects of schooling.

Chapter 6, ‘Government and schooling’, considers the broader picture and the political economy and governance structures of the education system, highlighting the key issues affecting educational governance and focusing on the financing of education.

Chapter 7, ‘Providers of non-state, non-formal and special education’, looks at private education, which includes for-profit secular schools and various faith-based schools, including Islamic schooling and government initiatives to integrate Qu’ranic schooling. Pre-primary schooling is also considered here because although it has become part of basic education its provision still resides primarily within the private sector. NFE is considered next and then special education for nomadic populations and people with disabilities.

Chapter 8 is entitled ‘Gender and basic education’, and focuses on the barriers to girls’ schooling and recent initiatives to improve female participation in school. However, it also pays some attention to boys and schooling, especially the particular situation of almajirai boys. In this chapter, we also suggest ways in which future gender-focused research might productively be reconceptualised.

In Chapter 9, the ‘out-of-school’ factors that often ‘pull’ children out of school are put under the spotlight, including the demand for schooling, poverty, children’s need to earn money and/or help with domestic tasks, health issues and other cultural factors. Particular attention is given to nomadic communities’ learning needs and experiences.

Teachers are the focus of chapters 10 and 11. In Chapter 10, ‘Teachers and teacher education’, we first consider matters concerning teacher qualifications, appointment and deployment, then pay, conditions and teacher motivation. Attention then turns to teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, and recent initiatives taken in relation to the latter. Chapter 11 continues with discussion of head teachers and their role in teacher management, as well as issues related to teacher support, school inspection and teacher discipline.

After considering teachers and their perspectives, we then look at what little is known about pupils’ lives in school in Chapter 12. This includes discussion of school duties, timetables, discipline, and peer relations.

Chapter 13 then moves on to school–community relations, particularly through SBMCs and PTAs.

Throughout the chapters we have attempted to highlight equity issues in terms of identifying the groups of children least likely to be in school or performing well, and/or whose identity and lifestyle needs put them at a disadvantage in relation to full participation in formal schooling.
In the Conclusion, we summarise the gaps in the research evidence in both substantive and methodological terms and point to possible directions for future research.

After each chapter there is a paragraph highlighting issues arising and identifying gaps in the evidence in relation both to substantive and to methodological issues.
CHAPTER 2: ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

According to the most recent UIS estimations, for 2010, Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school primary-age children in the world (www.data.uis.org) at around 8.7 million – making up over 15% of the global total, although it should be noted that figures for some countries (such as China, for example) are missing from that total. In addition, many children in northern Nigeria who count as being ‘out of school’ are in fact pursuing Qur’anic schooling.

The 2010 NEDS estimated that 11.8 million children aged 5–16 in Nigeria had never attended school, in addition to 1 million who had dropped out of school two or more years previously (NPC and RTI International 2011).

This chapter paints the broad picture of school access to basic education in relation to the numbers of children in or out of school. It draws on the data from school returns but primarily on the 2010 NEDS report (NPC and RTI International 2011), which predominantly uses 2008 NDHS data on school access and attendance.

After a brief caution on the quality of the data, be they from surveys or administrative returns from schools, we consider patterns of enrolment and attendance, including variations according to geographical region, location (urban/rural), wealth and gender. We also highlight factors related to vulnerability in terms of access to schooling, as relating to under- or over-age pupils, Muslim pupils, pupils affected by poverty and nutrition-related issues, orphans, and pupils who are absent from school. Finally, we touch on dropout and repetition and sketch some of the reasons for non-attendance at school. The above issues are all considered in greater depth in subsequent chapters.

2.2 Data quality

Across household surveys, different sources of the same indicators frequently conflict, due to differences in the definition of variables or the timing of reporting. In addition, estimates of the school-age population are based on limited and controversial analysis (World Bank 2008).

Administrative data, including enrolment data, are collected through the ASC, which is a devolved responsibility to the states and makes up the EMIS. EMIS data are available for most states up to 2010 but serious concerns remain about the overall quality of this administrative data: the PTTE put it bluntly in stating that ‘data ... are virtually non-existent and unusable’ (FME 2011a: 17). Support has been provided through ESSPIN in the six states it operates in and an external survey validated the quality of the data in those states from 2010 to 2011. However, similar support has not been provided to all states (Findlay 2013). Härmä (2011c), in a study of one LGA in Kwara State, found a total of 294 schools, which is three times as many as the 97 on the official list from the ASC. Importantly, unregistered private schools are not included in the data. It is worth pointing out that whatever the data-validation procedures at LGEA and state level, for enrolment figures government is ultimately reliant on accurate returns completed at the school level by head teachers, who may in some cases lack the capacity to complete returns correctly (Dunne et al. 2013) or may have incentives to inflate pupil numbers, such as the pursuit of extra funding and/or teachers (ActionAid 2011). Thus, the figures and trends for school enrolment and attendance presented in this chapter need to be treated with extreme caution.

Of course, although data quality is a serious concern here, it is by no means one limited to Nigeria; Omoeva et al. (2013), for example, lay out the gaps and issues in measuring OOSC around the world.
2.3 Enrolment

As highlighted in the Introduction, the national primary school-age population is estimated at around 20 million for those aged 5–9 and 16 million for those aged 10–14. For the 5–9 age group, the female-to-male ratio is 48% to 52% while for the 10–14 age group the ratio is 47% to 53%. In all, the primary school-age population (6–12) accounts for about 20% of the total national population figure (FME 2009a). However, there are no reliable age-specific data available to help determine the net enrolment ratio (NER) (FME 2005), although the 2008 NDHS gives estimations of the net attendance ratio (NAR) (see Section 2.4).

The EMIS data shown in Table 2.1 suggest that nationally there has been an overall decline in enrolment in public primary schools between 2006 and 2010, except in the North West where the number of both girls and boys enrolled in school has risen and the gender gap has narrowed. The increase in the North West might in part be attributable to the fact that several states in the region have been the focus of recent development efforts (e.g. ESSPIN and the Girls’ Education Project (GEP)) aimed at improving enrolments, especially of girls. Conversely, the drop in enrolments in public primary schools in southern and central states might be due, at least in part, to the migration of some children to the low-fee private sector in urban areas, as reported in a number of studies (e.g. Urwick 2002; Larbi et al. 2004; Tooley et al. 2005; Härmä 2011 a, b and c; see also Section 7.3).

Table 2.1 Pupil enrolment* in public primary schools 2006/07 to 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F (%)</td>
<td>M (%)</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>F (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(39.7)</td>
<td>(60.3)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(40.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42.1)</td>
<td>(57.9)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(43.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central**</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(47.0)</td>
<td>(53.0)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(46.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50.6)</td>
<td>(49.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(50.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South***</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50.4)</td>
<td>(49.6)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(36.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(49.6)</td>
<td>(50.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(49.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>11.09</td>
<td>20.47</td>
<td>8.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(45.2)</td>
<td>(54.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(43.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Numbers in millions.
*** Numbers missing from the South South for 2008/09 from Bayalesa and Edo states.

Note: Numbers may not add up perfectly due to rounding.

Source: FME (2011b)

An alternative explanation might relate to the general unreliability of the data, either current or previous. The absence of data for several states in 2008/09 would explain, at least in part, the huge drop in enrolments in 2008/09, for example.

One fairly consistent gender pattern is that more girls than boys attend public primary school in the South West and South South; these gender ratios have remained fairly steady across the four-year period while in the South East there are only slightly more boys than girls in enrolled in public primary schools.
2.3.1 Transition to JSS

In contrast, as Table 2.2 shows, there has been a steady increase in enrolment at government JSSs across the same four-year period, from almost 3 million in 2006/07 to over 4 million in 2009/10.

Table 2.2 Pupil enrolment* in public junior secondary schools, 2006–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>197.4</td>
<td>443.5</td>
<td>640.9</td>
<td>227.1</td>
<td>443.2</td>
<td>660.3</td>
<td>670.3</td>
<td>508.9</td>
<td>1179.2</td>
<td>309.8</td>
<td>580.7</td>
<td>890.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30.8)</td>
<td>(69.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(33.9)</td>
<td>(66.1)</td>
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<td>(67.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(34.8)</td>
<td>(65.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>148.4</td>
<td>211.5</td>
<td>359.9</td>
<td>153.4</td>
<td>243.0</td>
<td>396.4</td>
<td>180.6</td>
<td>310.9</td>
<td>491.5</td>
<td>167.1</td>
<td>280.1</td>
<td>447.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(48.9)</td>
<td>(58.8)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(38.6)</td>
<td>(61.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(63.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(37.4)</td>
<td>(62.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>219.1</td>
<td>306.3</td>
<td>525.4</td>
<td>180.8</td>
<td>249.9</td>
<td>430.7</td>
<td>172.3</td>
<td>243.4</td>
<td>415.7**</td>
<td>262.9</td>
<td>325.2</td>
<td>587.1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(41.7)</td>
<td>(58.3)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(58.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(42.7)</td>
<td>(57.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>377.3</td>
<td>308.7</td>
<td>686.0</td>
<td>483.5</td>
<td>487.6</td>
<td>971.1</td>
<td>522.0</td>
<td>528.8</td>
<td>1050.8</td>
<td>526.4</td>
<td>511.1</td>
<td>1037.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(49.8)</td>
<td>(50.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(49.8)</td>
<td>(50.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(50.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(50.7)</td>
<td>(49.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South***</td>
<td>175.0</td>
<td>170.4</td>
<td>345.4</td>
<td>219.1</td>
<td>216.1</td>
<td>435.2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>— ***</td>
<td>290.6</td>
<td>279.6</td>
<td>569.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50.3)</td>
<td>(49.3)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(50.3)</td>
<td>(49.7)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>178.6</td>
<td>161.8</td>
<td>340.4</td>
<td>287.2</td>
<td>259.2</td>
<td>546.4</td>
<td>315.7</td>
<td>277.3</td>
<td>593.0</td>
<td>307.8</td>
<td>276.5</td>
<td>584.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(52.5)</td>
<td>(47.5)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(52.6)</td>
<td>(47.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(53.2)</td>
<td>(46.8)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(52.7)</td>
<td>(47.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1296.1</td>
<td>1674.0</td>
<td>3970.1</td>
<td>1551.3</td>
<td>1899.0</td>
<td>3451.3</td>
<td>1599.9</td>
<td>2023.4</td>
<td>3309.3***</td>
<td>1864.9</td>
<td>2280.6</td>
<td>4165.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.6)</td>
<td>(56.4)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(44.9)</td>
<td>(56.1)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(45.7)</td>
<td>(54.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(45.2)</td>
<td>(54.8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Numbers in thousands
** Numbers missing from North Central for Plateau State for 2008/09 and 2009/10.
*** Data unusable from the South South in 2008/09 as there was an obvious input error for Rivers State and the totals did not add up.

Note: Numbers for females and males may not add up perfectly due to rounding.

Source: FME (2011b)

This increase is consistent with the fall in dropout rates from Primary 6 reported by the NEDS between 2004 and 2010, meaning that more children are making the transition from primary school to JSS (NPC and ICF Macro 2009; NPC and RTI International 2011), and is likely to be linked to the steady increase in government provision of JSS, from around 8,200 schools in 2005/06 to almost 12,700 in 2008/09 (FME 2011b). This increase occurs even in the southern zones, and may be explained by pupils re-joining the government sector after attending private primary schools. The drop in the overall enrolment total in 2008/09 is explained by the lack of usable data for the South South. Overall, the gender gap has decreased, although a significantly higher proportion of boys are studying at JSS than girls, with a much higher proportion of girls studying at this level in the south than in the north.

Table 2.3 compares the actual transition rates for girls and boys for 2006/07 with those for 2009/10, which confirms the overall improvement in transition rates nationally and across the zones, except in the North West, which has remained steady. The zonal averages, however, mask considerable differences among states, although some of the extreme differences in rates raise questions about the reliability of some of the data. The striking increase in transition rates in the South West is inflated by transition rates of well over 100% for Lagos, Ekiti and Ogun states in 2009/10, which, as highlighted above, suggest a large influx back into the public sector from the mushrooming larger private primary sector in those states (see Härmä 2011 a, b and c; see also Section 7.3). This therefore gives us less of an indication of the proportion of Primary 6 pupils in public schools that move on to JSS. The equally striking increase in the transition rate among girls in the South South is due to improbably high transition rates in Akwa Ibom and Edo states.
Although Table 2.3 points to positive increases in transition rates, it also highlights that there is still a long way to go to reach UBE as only the southern zones have achieved transition rates of over 50%, although over 50% of boys are making the transition to JSS in the North West and North Central. The UBEC impact assessment found that a shortage of accessible JSSs was a major obstacle to completing basic education in a number of states (UBEC 2012a).

Table 2.3  Transition rates (%) from public primary schools to public junior secondary school by geopolitical zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East*</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central**</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South***</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data from Bauchi were excluded because of an obvious data input error.
**Data are missing for Plateau State.
*** Data from Delta State were excluded because of an obvious input error.

Source: FME (2011b)

2.4 Attendance

Attendance data from the two NEDS, which relate to both public and private schools, show little change between 2004 and 2010. 61% of primary school-aged children (age 6–11) attended school at some stage during the survey year for the 2010 NEDS, compared with 60% in the survey year for the 2004 report. Even in the North West, where much international assistance has been focused, net primary attendance ratios have remained almost unchanged from 41.7% in 2004 to 41.0% in 2010. This stagnation in school attendance rates contrasts with many other countries in SSA, which have shown marked improvements in school attendance over the same period (Antoninis 2012).

Broadly speaking, in Nigeria school attendance levels are lower in the north than in the south, in rural areas than in urban, and in poorer households than in richer. School attendance rates are also lower for girls than for boys and for Muslims than for non-Muslims (NPC and RTI International 2011).

Rates are also particularly low among nomadic children and migrant children (NCNE 2008) and children with disabilities (Lang and Upah 2008), although government initiatives are in place to try to address these issues. These disparities among different social groups are discussed in brief below, and in more detail in later chapters.

Of all children aged 6–16 surveyed in the 2010 NEDS, 31% were reported as never having attended school (NPC and RTI International 2011).

2.4.1 Geographical regions

As Figure 2.1 clearly illustrates, attendance rates are particularly low in the northern regions. The 2010 NEDS reports the primary NAR to be just 41% in the North East and North West zones, compared to 80%
in the three southern zones (NPC and RTI International 2011). Primary attendance ratios are also much lower in rural areas (55%, down from 56% in 2004) than in urban areas (74%, up from 70% in 2004).

Of all children aged 6–16 surveyed who had never attended school, 90% were from rural areas, with 84% being from the North East and North West regions (ibid.). There are also substantial variations in attendance between and within states, as Figure 2.1 also shows. In the North East average primary attendance ratios are 21% in Borno State but 58% in Adamawa. In the North West rates are 18% in Zamfara but 69% in Kaduna (ibid.). The NEDS does not allow disaggregation at LGEA level, but administrative data suggest that there are also very high variations between LGEAs within states.

**2.4.2 Gender**

The 2010 NEDS indicates that primary attendance ratios for males and females are roughly similar in the southern and North Central zones but are much lower for females in the North East and North West zones (38% and 35%, respectively) than for males (43% and 47%, respectively). There is a smaller gender gap in attendance ratios at the JSS level, where overall attendance is lower than at primary level (NPC and RTI International 2011).

The overall national net primary attendance ratio for males is 63.5% and for females is 58.4%. At secondary level rates are, on average, the same, at 44% for both females and males, albeit with disparities according to region, wealth quintile and urban or rural location that are similar to those that exist at primary level.
There is also a strong gender dimension to the north/south divide, with most of the southern states being essentially equal in terms of male and female attendance ratios (a gender parity index (GPI) value of close to 1) but a large difference in most of the northern states (GPI values as low as 0.5 in Sokoto) (ibid.).

**Figure 2.2: Primary school attendance Gender Parity Index, 2010**

![Gender Parity Index Map](image)

*Source: Adapted from the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011). Note: Higher values of the index indicate greater equality*

However, the greater GPI in the southern, more urban areas may be due to boys not attending or leaving school because of the greater work opportunities in these locations as much as it is attributable to higher numbers of girls attending school. This is reflected more clearly in the difference between the primary and secondary NAR, presented in Table 2.4, which shows how in the South East and South West a smaller proportion of boys make the transition to and/or persist in secondary school, relative to girls.

There is a range of out-of-school and school-related factors that affect the ability of girls to attend school. These are expanded on in Chapter 8, but include out-of-school factors such as parental and community attitudes, household responsibilities, and early pregnancy and marriage, and school-related factors such as a lack of female teachers, inadequate water and sanitation, gendered expectations held by teachers, parents and children, and gendered curricula, as well as gender violence. Boys too have gender-specific reasons that affect school attendance (see Section 8.6).

### 2.4.3 Economic status

Economic status also plays a pivotal role in who attends school, with only 31% of primary-age children from families in the bottom income quintile attending school (down from 40% in 2004), compared to 82% in the top income quintile (down slightly from 83% in 2004) (NPC and RTI International 2011).
Economic status also interacts with gender: the gap between enrolment for boys and girls is largest for the poorest households. Economic status and school enrolment are also closely linked to geography, with the poorest households and lowest attendance rates in the northern states and in rural areas (ibid.).

Economic status plays a similarly important role for JSS attendance – just 12% of children in the bottom wealth quintile attend JSS, compared with 73% in the top quintile.

Table 2.4  Primary and secondary net attendance ratios

|                      | Primary NAR |          | JSS NAR |          |
|----------------------|-------------|----------|---------|
|                      | Female      | Male     | Total   | Female   | Male     | Total   |
| **Residence**        |             |          |         |          |          |         |
| Urban                | 73.0        | 75.7     | 74.4    | 60.1     | 60.5     | 60.3    |
| Rural                | 52.2        | 58.5     | 55.4    | 35.8     | 36.2     | 36.0    |
|                      |             |          |         |          |          |         |
| **Region**           |             |          |         |          |          |         |
| North West           | 35.5        | 46.7     | 41.0    | 20.9     | 27.4     | 24.4    |
| North East           | 38.0        | 43.5     | 40.8    | 21.7     | 21.8     | 21.8    |
| North Central        | 65.2        | 67.7     | 66.4    | 36.0     | 38.8     | 37.4    |
| South West           | 78.0        | 80.2     | 79.1    | 66.1     | 63.8     | 65.0    |
| South South          | 79.9        | 79.3     | 79.6    | 58.4     | 58.5     | 58.4    |
| South East           | 80.0        | 80.3     | 80.1    | 60.2     | 57.8     | 59.0    |
|                      |             |          |         |          |          |         |
| **Wealth quintile**  |             |          |         |          |          |         |
| Lowest               | 26.7        | 34.0     | 30.5    | 10.0     | 14.0     | 12.2    |
| Second               | 47.5        | 55.4     | 51.4    | 25.0     | 29.0     | 27.2    |
| Middle               | 68.1        | 73.9     | 71.1    | 43.7     | 43.4     | 43.6    |
| Fourth               | 76.3        | 79.9     | 78.1    | 59.0     | 58.9     | 58.9    |
| Highest              | 81.0        | 82.1     | 81.6    | 72.3     | 73.4     | 72.8    |
| TOTAL                | 58.4        | 63.5     | 61.0    | 44.2     | 44.0     | 44.1    |

Source: 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011)

2.4.4  Attendance in ESSPIN and GEP III-supported states

The DFID programmes ESSPIN and GEP III are focused in the north, with the exception of Anambra, Enugu, and Lagos states. The programmes cover six of the seven states in the North West, Kwara and Niger in North Central, and Bauchi in the North East.

We do not intend here to draw any conclusions about the impact of ESSPIN and GEP by looking at overall attendance ratios, as these programmes were purposely targeted at states where performance was relatively poor. However, a comparison of the state-level data illustrates the huge variation between the north and south in terms of overall attendance, and in terms of the relative attendance ratios of girls and boys.

Primary NARs for ESSPIN states are roughly in line with zonal averages, although Jigawa and Enugu are substantially below their zonal averages. Kaduna performs substantially better than zonal averages. All of the GEP III states are worse than average in their zones. Zamfara has the lowest attendance ratio in
the country, at just 18%. The state-level analysis also reveals some large differences between states within the same zone.

Female attendance ratios are generally lower than male at the state level, including in all of the north-western ESSPIN and GEP III states, and the northern states of Niger and Bauchi. There is a marked contrast between the two North Central states Niger and Kwara, with very low overall enrolment rates and a large gender gap for girls in Niger, compared with much higher enrolment rates in Kwara, which also actually has higher NARs for girls than for boys.

Table 2.5  Primary net attendance ratios for ESSPIN and GEP III-supported states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female NAR</th>
<th>Male NAR</th>
<th>Total NAR</th>
<th>Zonal NAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ESSPIN states</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>North West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>South East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>South West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GEP III states</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>North West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamfara</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>32.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>North East</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011).*

2.5  Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

2.5.1  Over-age and under-age pupils

The official age for entry into primary schools is six years old. Children are considered to be under-age for each class if they are one or more years younger than the official age. They are considered to be over-age if they are two or more years older than the appropriate age (NPC and RTI International 2011).

Across the six primary year classes, 20% of children are under-age, 37% of children are over-age, and just 43% are the right age for their class (ibid.). In USAID’s assessment of early grade reading (EGRA) and Maths (EGMA) in Bauchi and Sokoto states, figures were found to be even higher: in Bauchi 57% of Primary 2 and 69% of Primary 3 pupils were over-age; in Sokoto 31% of Primary 2 and 50% of Primary 3 were over-age. High proportions of over-age pupils have implications for learning, retention, and completion (USAID 2013a). Over-age children are less likely to complete primary schooling than children who start on time (Lewin and Sabates 2011; NPC and RTI International 2011).
2.5.2 Muslim pupils

The 2010 NEDS gathered data on Muslim school-aged youth (6–14) since it is in the predominantly Muslim northern areas that most children are considered to be out of school, and girls more than boys (NPC and RTI International 2011). According to those surveyed:

- One-quarter do not attend any form of school;
- One-quarter attend a ‘formal academic school’;\(^\text{11}\)
- One-quarter attend an IQTE school; and
- One-quarter attend both a formal academic school and an IQTE school.

Total enrolment in Nigeria in IQTE schools, which traditionally only teach the Qur’an, is estimated to exceed 9.5 million, with more than 8.7 million of those in the north (UBEC 2010). The differences between these Qur’anic schools and other types of Islamic schooling are explained in Box 2.1, while issues surrounding Islamic schooling are discussed in more detail in Section 7.5.

Part (but not all) of the reason for the difference in school attendance between the north and the south is the predominance of informal IQTE schools in the north. Children who attend informal schools that teach only the Qur’an or other Islamic disciplines are not counted as being in school in household survey or EMIS data. By contrast, children who attend unregistered (but non-religious) private schools in the south are counted in household surveys (although not in EMIS data) as they study a secular curriculum. Thus, although 39% of primary-aged children are reported not to be attending school nationwide, around 38% of these children are actually attending a Qur’anic school (NPC and RTI International 2011).

The reasons that parents enrol their children in Qur’anic schools are varied and not always necessarily related to religion (Antoninis 2012). Although discussed in greater detail in Section 7.5, reasons for preferring Qur’anic schools include: their greater proximity to home; greater community involvement; the perception that teachers are more committed and responsive to the needs of parents; and the perception that government schools are of poorer quality (ESSPIN Briefing Note: n.d.).

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\(^\text{11}\) According to the 2010 NEDS, a formal academic school is defined as a public or private religious or non-religious school that teaches some secular academic content, e.g. Mathematics, English, etc.
Box 2.1: Islamiyya, Qur’anic and Tsangaya Education

Tsangaya is the traditional Hausa name for a Qur’anic school (meaning literally ‘study centre’). These schools are a mix of day schools (sometimes called Tahfeez) and boarding schools, which traditionally only taught the Qur’an, although some are now being integrated to teach elements of the state-approved secular curriculum. Some children at informal IQTE schools, especially if boarding, need to provide for their own subsistence, through either working on farms in rural areas or by petty trading or begging in urban areas.

Mallam is the Hausa name for a man learned in the Qur’an.

Almajiri is a corruption of the Arabic ‘almuhajirun’, for ‘emigrant’, and is used to refer to the boys who leave home in search of Qur’anic learning under the tutelage of a mallam, and make their livelihood through agriculture in the rural areas and casual labour or begging on the streets in urban areas. Many almajirai are orphans and vulnerable children.

Islamiyya is the name for the more modern Islamic school, which teaches a range of Islamic disciplines, not just the Qur’an. Most Islamiyya schools are privately owned by individuals, communities or societies. Some are ‘integrated’ and teach a state-approved curriculum including secular subjects. These schools are counted in official statistics (both administrative data and survey data).

Sources: Hoechner 2011; Antoninis 2012; ESSPIN Briefing Note 8 n.d.; Yusha’u et al. 2013.

A particular issue with Islamic education is the almajirai – young boys living and studying with an itinerant mallam and providing for their own subsistence through farming, begging or hawking (see Box 2.1 and Section 8.6.2). There are currently an estimated 9.5 million in Nigeria, according to the Executive Secretary of UBEC (Umejei 2011), with 8.5 million of those in the north (Hoechner 2011) and around 300,000 (12.5% of all 6–21-year-olds) in Kano alone (Kano SMoE 2008). Many state governments have banned the practice of begging on the streets and are establishing Almajirai Integrated Schools with government funding (Yusha’u et al. 2013). Further details on these are given in Section 7.5.

2.5.3 Poverty and nutrition

School attendance is strongly associated with poverty (Lincove 2009; Morgan et al. 2010; NPC and RTI International 2011), with children from the poorest quintile having just 30% NARs, compared to 82% for the richest quintile (NPC and RTI International 2011). This is also reflected in the correlation between school attendance and nutrition. OOSC who have never attended school are twice as likely to be stunted as children who have some pre-school or primary education, and twice as likely to be wasted and underweight as children who have some primary education (NPC and RTI International 2011: 39; see also Section 9.5). The 2010 NEDS hypothesised that the cessation of the Home Grown School Feeding Programme in the majority of states might have been a major contributory factor in the lack of increase in school attendance between 2004 and 2010 (NPC and RTI International 2011; see also Section 9.5).

2.5.4 Orphans and vulnerable children

There are an estimated 17.5 million orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) aged 6–17 in Nigeria (FMWASD 2008), of which 10 million are orphans and 7.5 million vulnerable (i.e. children with inadequate care, with chronically ill parents or caregivers, living outside of family care, or infected with HIV).

12 Sometimes also referred to as Integrated Islamic, Qur’anic and Tsangaya Education.
A USAID-funded study (Boston University, 2009) found that primary attendance rates for OVCs are around 60%, roughly in line with the national rate of 61%. OVCs, though, may be more likely to be absent from school more often if they have more responsibilities at home, need to earn income or provide care, and are more likely to be ill themselves (ibid.).

The prevalence of OVCs is similar in rural and urban settings, although there are significant regional and state-level differences (Samuels et al. 2012).

### 2.5.5 Absenteeism

It is important to note that, although pupils may be reported in surveys as attending school, absenteeism is high. According to the 2010 NEDS only 80% of pupils on average attend all school days. Those who do not attend all days miss an average of 5.5 days per month at primary level and 5.1 days at secondary level (NPC and RTI International 2011), which equates to around a quarter of school time. Absenteeism is similar for females and males but is higher in rural than in urban areas, for poorer than richer children, and varies substantially by zone (e.g. 5% in the South West but 31% in the North East) (NPC and RTI International 2011).

However, these figures are likely to be an underestimation either because parents may not know whether children have been absent from school (see Dunne et al. 2013) and/or because children may not want to admit to having been absent from school if the reason is not perceived as legitimate, i.e. when playing truant. On the days when USAID’s EGRA and EGMA assessments were carried out in a sample of primary schools across Bauchi and Sokoto states, 30% of public school pupils in Bauchi were absent and 60% were absent in Sokoto (USAID 2013 b & c). Rates of absenteeism were slightly lower in the IQTE schools in the sample (ibid.)

In addition, the observed tendency for pupils to drift away from school in afternoon shifts, on market days and/or from unfenced schools, as reported in smaller, school-based qualitative studies (e.g. Boulton et al. 2009; UNICEF 2009a; Dunne et al. 2013), also raises questions about the actual amount of time pupils who are technically attending school are actually in school.

Absenteeism is important both because children are inevitably not engaged in formal learning when not in school but also because absenteeism is often a precursor to dropping out (Lewin and Sabates 2011).

### 2.6 Dropouts

Dropout rates, as defined in the 2010 NEDS, are the percentage of children in a grade of the previous year who are not now attending school (NPC and RTI International 2011). Analysing 2008 NDHS data, the national study on OOSC (UNICEF/UIS 2012) estimates that while 5% of primary school-age children drop out of primary, the proportion of JSS-age dropouts is 20%.

The 2010 NEDS shows that primary school dropout rates are fairly low and concentrated among Primary 6 students. The study on Nigeria’s OOSC argues, however, that one of the reasons dropout is relatively low is because of the high number of children out of school in the first place (UNICEF/UIS 2012). Even so, according to the 2010 NEDS, dropout rates for Primary 6 have improved since 2004, falling from an overall level of 17% to 11% (NPC and RTI International 2011).

Dropout rates are less than 0.5% for Primary 1 to 5, but are 11% for Primary 6 (NPC and RTI International 2011). However, the 2010 NEDS report also points out that this much larger figure is also likely to include ‘push outs’, i.e. pupils who ordinarily would have gone on to JSS had there been an adequate supply of secondary schools. The report supports this hypothesis by pointing out that the dropout rate is substantially higher in rural areas, where the supply of JSSs is much sparser. On the other hand, under 10% of all dropouts (albeit across the grade spectrum) cited the inability to attend a JSS as a
reason for dropping out, suggesting push out is only one of a number of reasons. It may also be because many failing children have been automatically promoted through the grades, but, having finally reached the end of the primary cycle, have decided they have had enough. Although exam failure was only given as a reason for leaving school by 5% or respondents in the 2010 NEDS, ‘lack of interest’ or ‘had enough schooling’ when combined were mentioned by 38.9% of dropouts (NPC and RTI International 2011).

2.6.1 Transfer

An under-researched area is the extent to which school transfers affect both school attendance and dropout figures and the affected children’s experience of school. One of the surveys for the 2004 ESA collected data on school transfers both in and out from the sampled JSSs (FME 2005). While the data lack credibility to the extent that the absolute numbers of transfers in for the 2000–2003 period were almost three times the number of transfers out, the survey nevertheless points to an important yet under-researched phenomenon – the lack of a record-keeping culture that also has implications for students’ CA marks (FME 2005).

Table 2.6 Primary dropout rates by grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary school grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Dunne et al. (2013) also note that some pupils that are technically attending school may actually drop out for several months due to a variety of factors, such as migration, ill health, or sibling care, before ‘dropping back into’ school.

Dropout rates are slightly higher for females than for males, and are higher in rural areas and in the northern zones. In many states, boys have marginally higher dropout rates than girls, as boys can be more likely to leave school early to become child labourers (Theobald et al. 2007).

2.6.2 Repetition

Despite the official government school policy of automatic promotion (FME 2004a), many pupils repeat years. According to the 2010 NEDS, repetition rates range from 1.1% for Primary 5 to 2.8% at Primary 6.
There is no clear pattern by gender or urban/rural location, although the North Central zone has a comparatively higher proportion of repeaters across the grades, but especially in Primary 6. The sharp rise in the percentage of over-age pupils between Primary 2 and Primary 3 found in the EGRA and EGMA surveys in Bauchi and Sokoto states (from 57% to 69% in Bauchi; from 31% to 50% in Sokoto) would seem to suggest that in some states, at least, the proportion of repeaters is much higher than the household survey data indicate. The number of repeaters has implications in terms of increasing the proportion of over-age pupils, who, as highlighted earlier, are less likely to complete a cycle of schooling.

2.7 Reasons for children not attending school

According to the 2010 NEDS the main reason that parents and guardians gave for their primary-aged children having never attended school was the distance to school (see Section 3.2.2), cited by almost a third of respondents on average, with higher numbers in the North West and North East (NPC and RTI International 2011). Child labour needs at home and monetary costs (see Section 9.3 for both) were also important factors in children never attending or dropping out of school or starting school late. School costs was the most frequently cited reason for children starting school over-age (32%) or for dropping out (33%).

Almost a quarter of respondents in the 2010 NEDS whose children started school late ascribed it to their children being too young or immature (NPC and RTI International 2011). However, nationally, ‘other factors’ was actually cited by high percentages of respondents as a cause of dropout (34%) or for children never attending school (27%), suggesting that there are aspects of school attendance not adequately captured by the survey. Even the fact that children had ‘no interest’ in school, given as a reason for dropout by over a quarter of respondents, needs further explanation. It is possibly related to poor school quality, which was also identified nationally by 17% as a reason for never having attended school, particularly in the North East, and/or related to preference for a more appealing alternative, such as paid employment. Consistent with this latter interpretation is the fact that it applies to boys dropping out far more than to girls.

Children who attend pre-school are much more likely to go on to attend primary school. There are large differences in pre-school attendance between the poorest and richest households, and between the northern and southern zones (NPC and RTI International 2011). Given the relatively high costs of pre-school attendance, with the sector being predominantly in the hands of the private sector (FME 2005; see Section 7.6), this has serious implications for equity.

One notable aspect of household circumstances not included in survey data is the household’s exposure to conflict (see Section 9.8).

2.7.1 Statistical analyses of factors affecting attendance

Several studies have carried out statistical analyses of school attendance based on household survey data. Kazeem et al. (2010) estimated a model of school attendance based on household characteristics taken from 2004 NDHS data, controlling for various demographic aspects such as wealth and location. They found that household wealth, religion, mother’s and father’s education, and distance to the nearest school were the most important determinants of child school attendance. Gender was also a factor but not as important as socio-economic status. Large variations by state and urban/rural location were also almost wholly accounted for by differences in household wealth. Parental attitudes (such as to child labour) were also important.

Lincove (2009), using 2004 NEDS data, controlled for school costs in a model of determinants of schooling and had similar findings. Household wealth, mother’s education and religion were important determinants of attending school for both girls and boys. Specifically, being Muslim decreased the likelihood of boys attending school, and both Islam and ATR decreased the likelihood of girls attending
school. Other determinants that had a negative association with school attendance for both girls and boys included travelling far to primary or secondary school, and living in the North East or North West. Importantly, controlling for school costs, girls were more likely to attend if they had school-age siblings but less likely if there were infants in the family to care for (ibid.).

Aluede and Ikechukwu (2003) found that the key factors in Edo State were out-of-school factors such as financial barriers, home duties, social attitudes, and personal characteristics of the adolescents, rather than in-school factors such as school quality.

2.8 Issues arising and gaps in evidence

In summary, at the national level little overall progress seems to be being made in terms of school enrolment and attendance, with some exceptions, although in the case of enrolments the apparent trend may be simply be due to missing and/or faulty statistics from previous and/or current data.

There is a wide range of factors that may act as barriers to access (both ‘out-of-school’ and ‘in-school’ factors) and there is no clear understanding of which of these barriers are most important and how the barriers interrelate.

While explanations are offered in broad terms for the variation between northern and southern regions, urban and rural locations, and girls and boys, research is lacking on the specific factors that can explain some of the extreme variations in enrolment/attendance in specific states, especially within the same geo-political zone.

In general, the quantitative data – especially those found in the EMIS – are unreliable, with data missing from states or internally inconsistent, low levels of returns from private schools, and particularly sparse data around unregistered private schools and Islamic schools.

The lack of age-specific school census data makes it impossible to calculate NERs.

There is sparse available data on over-age pupils (linked to the lack of age-specific school census data) and repetition rates, both of which are important in terms of understanding patterns of dropout, which is another area that merits further research.

A major under-researched area is that of pupil transfers in and out of schools, which has implications for access, assessment and children’s experience of schooling. Reliable school-level data will again be essential for such research to be undertaken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Strength Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of evidence: Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of body of evidence: Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of results: Fairly Consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely matched to topic: High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall assessment: Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 3: EDUCATIONAL QUALITY – THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is essentially concerned with the context of school quality, specifically with school availability, school infrastructure and material resources, which together provide the learning environment for the curricular issues and learning processes considered in Chapter 4. We draw on the 2010 NEDS, the 2004 ESA, and on a range of quantitative and qualitative studies.

In the 2010 NEDS ‘poor school quality’ was a factor for 16.8% of children never attending school, a figure that was much the same for urban and rural populations but exceeded 20% for the poorest wealth quintile and was highest in the North East (28.6%). It was also a factor in primary school pupil dropout – although the numbers of dropouts were generally low – particularly in the North East and North West (NPC and RTI International 2011). Conversely, good-quality new infrastructure has been shown to improve pupil enrolment at primary level (Takahashi 2010; Dunne et al. 2013).

The 2010 NEDS also suggested that in-school factors are important determinants of pupil absenteeism. After illness, the second most cited reason given for absenteeism was that the child ‘did not want to go to school’, which applied nationally to around a fifth of all pupils (21.7%), with over twice as many children not wanting to go to public schools (24%) as private schools (11%); furthermore, this was more pronounced in rural areas than in urban areas. Not wanting to go to school might therefore suggest concerns with school quality, which may relate to poor infrastructure and resources, as discussed in this chapter, or may have more to do with curriculum relevance and/or the processes of teaching and learning (see Chapter 4), or teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil relations (see sections 4.6 and 4.7).

3.2 School supply

3.2.1 School availability

School supply has an impact on both pupil access, because distance to school is a major factor in children’s non-enrolment, and on school quality, since insufficient schools to satisfy demand for schooling can lead to overcrowded classrooms (NPC and RTI International 2011). Table 3.1 shows recent trends at the zonal level in the supply of public primary schools. Patterns for the four-year period are mixed, with the number of schools rising in 2007/08 before dropping again in 2009/10 in the North West, South South and South East, rising steadily in the North East and North Central, and dropping steadily in the South West. Drops in the number of schools, however, are perhaps not surprising if the falling numbers of public primary enrolments in some regions over the same period are actually correct (see Section 2.3). However, there is variation among states. In the South West, for example, which shows an overall decline in public primary schools, Osun and Ogun states nevertheless both post increases in the number of public primary schools.

More importantly, perhaps, the statistics need to be treated with extreme caution. Some of the state-level data show the number of schools rising in 2007/08 and then dropping in 2009/10 (e.g. from 1,325 to 2,885, then 1,967 in Sokoto, or from 1,029 to 1,367 to 1,038 in Anambra), which seems unlikely. Even more unlikely, the digest indicates that Ondo State lost 809 primary schools between 2007/08 and 2011/12. What is more, the ASC figures in FME (2011b) for Kaduna and Kwara for 2009 to 2010 (4,341 and 1,658, respectively), to take just two examples, are not the same as the figures quoted in their respective state ASC, at 3,956 and 1,448 respectively (Kaduna SMoE 2010; Kwara SMoE 2010).

13 School quality was assessed in reference to one or more of the following: teachers not performing well, lack of pupil safety, poor quality buildings and facilities, and classroom overcrowding.
The non-availability of a nearby JSS was identified as a major access issue by stakeholders in a number of states in the UBEC impact assessment (UBEC 2012a).

Table 3.1  Supply and distribution of public primary schools by geo-political zone, 2006/07 to 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09*</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>17,288</td>
<td>19,092</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>18,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>9,757</td>
<td>10,170</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>14,279</td>
<td>14,731</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>15,415**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>10,924</td>
<td>10,751</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>6,800</td>
<td>6,821</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>6,683</td>
<td>7,150</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>65,731</td>
<td>68,715</td>
<td></td>
<td>66,979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data unavailable.
** Data missing from Plateau State.
Source: FME (2011b)

3.2.2 Distance to school

Rather than looking at school provision directly, the 2010 NEDS considers school provision in terms of school proximity. This is particularly important as distance to school was the most widely cited reason in the survey for children never having attended school, mentioned by almost a third of respondents and by a higher proportion of poorer and more rural households. It is also confirmed as a major determinant of school attendance in statistical analyses of household survey data (e.g. Lincove 2009; Kazeem et al. 2010). School proximity may also be related to concerns about safety on the way to and from school, which was specifically mentioned by about 16% of respondents nationally, with higher figures for the North East and South West. Other qualitative studies also report pupil concerns about the distance from school being a potential deterrent from educational participation, especially for girls (Okojie 2008; Chege et al. 2008; Bakari 2013; Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

According to the 2010 NEDS, around 68% of families nationally are said to be within a kilometre of the nearest primary school, a figure that drops to 62% if only government schools are counted, and to 54% and 56% for the North East and North West respectively (NPC and RTI International 2011). However, for around 7% of households nationally – and almost double that percentage of households in the North East – it takes over an hour to travel over 6 km to reach the nearest primary school. Seventeen percent of children nationally travel over 3 km. Inevitably, these figures are much higher for rural areas. In addition to possible safety concerns, the long distance will have an adverse effect on the many pupils who, as statistics testify, are hungry, malnourished and of poor health (see NPC and RTI International 2011).

There are far fewer secondary schools available across the country and therefore the situation is worse at this level, with much more pronounced rural and urban differences, thereby lessening the chance of rural children making the transition from primary school to JSS. Although around a third of pupils are within 15 minutes’ walk to a secondary school, almost a quarter of them take over an hour to walk to school (and therefore an hour to return home), with figures much higher in the rural and northern areas (ibid.). Similarly, in the 2004 ESA survey of secondary head teachers, over a quarter reported having some pupils who had to travel 4 km or more to school (FME 2005).
3.3 School infrastructure

The state of school infrastructure has been shown to have a major impact on perceived and actual educational quality and on sustained pupil access in Nigeria (UBEC 2012a; NPC and RTI International 2011), as well as on teacher motivation (Sherry 2008; Takahashi 2010; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013).

Despite large amounts of money being allocated to UBE, studies have consistently commented on the poor state of repair of many Nigerian public primary schools (e.g. Urwick and Aliyu 2003; FME 2005; Hardman et al. 2008; Holfeld et al. 2008; Ikoya 2008; Ikoya and Onoyase 2008; Sherry, 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; Coppinger 2009; USAID 2009; Okojie 2012; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013), which FGN readily acknowledges (FME 2009a). In the 2010 NEDS, over 40% of respondents perceived that there were problems with primary school buildings and facilities, as well as classroom overcrowding. Regional variation was substantial, with figures of well over 60% for the North East and North West and higher figures too for poorer households. The difference between government and private schools was also considerable, with parents/guardians of children in government schools around four times more likely to consider the school to have ‘big problems’ with infrastructure, and around five times more likely to consider overcrowding to be a ‘big problem’ than parents/guardians of children in private schools (NPC and RTI International 2011).

The most comprehensive national survey of primary school infrastructure was carried out by Ikoya and Onoyase (2008) using existing survey and household data from five LGAs in each of two sample states from each of the geo-political zones and the FCT. They also concluded that infrastructure was in a bad state. Specifically:

- 53% of schools lacked fundamental structures;
- Only 20% had sufficient infrastructure in terms of quantity and quality and 92% of them were not regular public schools attended by the majority of children but rather model or unity schools;\(^{14}\)
- Over 68% had no functioning library; and
- 65% had no electricity, 54% had no pipe-borne water, and 78% had no school transport.

However, it is not clear whether only public schools were considered in the study; nor was the zonal breakdown of infrastructural facilities presented.

An ESSPIN assessment of basic education facilities in Kano, Jigawa and Kaduna states concluded that around 75% of school infrastructure was ‘very poor’ (Coppinger 2009), while the 2009/10 school census inAdamawa State deemed 67% of public primary school classrooms to be in ‘poor condition’ (Dunne et al. 2013).

More recently in many donor-supported states, primarily in northern Nigeria, substantial infrastructural development has been reported, both state and donor-sponsored. Table 3.2, taking figures from the relevant 2011/12 ASC reports, shows the current situation in Kano, Jigawa and Kaduna states in the North West and also in Lagos State. The figures illustrate both the continued need to improve school infrastructure and the variation in infrastructural provision between states. Lagos State fares best overall at primary level, but is the worst of the four states at JSS level, as shown in Table 3.3. With the exception of Lagos State, a comparison of tables 3.2 and 3.3 suggests that on average the provision of school infrastructure is slightly better at JSS than at primary school level. Perhaps even more significant is the huge range in infrastructural quality across the LGEAs within each state. Thus, for example, as shown in Table 3.2, one LGEA in Kano State has 16% of primary classrooms without a good chalkboard, whereas another LGEA has 93% of classrooms without one.

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\(^{14}\) ‘Unity schools’, formally known as federal government colleges, were instituted in the 1970s, following the civil war, in an attempt to foster national unity; they aimed to bring together the best students from around the country irrespective of ethnicity, religion or location. There are currently two in each state. ‘Model schools’ are also generally better resourced than the average school.
The general view from stakeholder interviews is that the wide variation in the quality of infrastructure is due to government funding often being politicised and uneven at state, LGEA and even school level (Ikoya 2008; Ikoya and Onoyase 2008; Williams 2009; ActionAid 2011; UBEC 2012a). School buildings are often sub-standard, and the awarding of building contracts has been found to lack transparency (Coppinger 2009; Ikoya 2008; Dunne et al. 2013). Citing several studies, Ikoya (2008) also argues that, where head teachers were not involved in the awarding of contracts and the contractors were not answerable to them, supervision of their work was often inadequate or even absent. It has also been suggested that it would be more cost-effective to demolish buildings that are structurally unsound and rebuild them rather than spend money on rehabilitation that would be a ‘short-term cosmetic job on a defective shell’ (Coppinger 2009: 2). This would seem to be aptly illustrated by the external evaluation of the Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) project, which noted that the self-help grants awarded to PTAs and generally used on infrastructural development had not significantly improved the learning environment because the original buildings had been too dilapidated (Holfeld et al. 2008).

### Table 3.2 Selective characteristics of public primary schools in selected states, 2011–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage of usable classrooms</th>
<th>Percentage of schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In need of major repairs</td>
<td>With insufficient seating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>23 (12–38)*</td>
<td>38 (22–58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>19 (5–47)</td>
<td>68 (24–81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>35 (14–53)</td>
<td>65 (16–80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>34 (16–54)</td>
<td>29 (6–56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Figures in brackets give the percentage range across the LGEAs within the state.

**Source:** Annual School Census 2011–2012 for Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna and Lagos states.

### Table 3.3 Selective characteristics of public junior secondary schools in selected states, 2011–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage of usable classrooms</th>
<th>Percentage of schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In need of major repairs</td>
<td>With insufficient seating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Annual School Census 2011–2012 for Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna and Lagos states.

### Water and sanitation

Lack of safe sanitation and clean water adversely affects educational participation and learning (Ikoya and Onoyase 2008; UNDP Nigeria 2010; British Council 2012). However, provision of potable water and sanitation has been shown to be poor both in schools and, more generally, for households in Nigeria. Table 3.4 shows the availability of ‘safe water’, ‘safe sanitation’ and electricity for households.
Table 3.4  Provision of basic services in selected areas of Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICE</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Rural poor</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Urban poor</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>NW</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>SW</th>
<th>Total percentage of households with access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe water</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe sanitation</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Several studies and project reports note pupil, teacher and community dissatisfaction with the absence or poor quality of water and sanitation provision in schools (e.g. Keating 2005; Sherry 2008; Coppinger 2009; Antoninis 2010; Coinco 2012; UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013, etc.).

The consequences of poor water supply and sanitation include:

- Pupil and teacher absenteeism (as they leave school to find water, or a place to urinate, and may not return) (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Girls’ non-enrolment or dropout (UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013);
- Ill health, which can also lead to absenteeism and dropout (Bakari 2013);
- Valuable learning time is wasted as pupils go in search of drinking water or are sent to fetch drinking water for use in school (Chege et al. 2008; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013); and
- Disputes with communities over access to water (Dunne et al. 2013).

Guaranteeing privacy through gender-segregated toilet provision is considered particularly important in terms of improving the enrolment and retention of girls in school (Theobald et al. 2007; Chege et al. 2008; Bakari 2013; British Council 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). One report claims that dropout rates for girls are higher in schools (primary and secondary) that do not have separate toilet facilities (UNDP Nigeria 2010), while another report puts it more strongly: ‘evidence from GEP suggests that girls’ attendance rates can rise by as much as 30% when issues such as water and sanitation facilities are addressed’ (British Council 2012: 30). Takahashi (2010) also suggested that the 5% rise in girls’ enrolments might be due to the improved water and sanitation facilities. However, it is unclear in all three cases exactly how the figures were calculated.

Improved access to safe water and sanitation has been the focus of government and donor-aided developments in some states over the last few years, often through SBMCs and PTAs with the aid of school grants, with many gains recorded (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; UNICEF 2009a; USAID 2009; Adediran 2010; Takahashi 2010; Pinnock 2012). Bauchi State boasts a 44% increase in boreholes in schools in three years and a 27% increase in hand-washing facilities in schools (UNICEF 2012). In Katsina, SBMCs have been encouraging pupils to ‘wash’ their hands with ash and to set up water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) committees and health clubs (ibid.). A key focus of the UNICEF CFS initiative across 900 schools in FCT, Ebonyi and Niger states was improving sanitation and hygiene in school; measured on a Hygiene and Sanitation Scale, 30% of the sampled 23 schools in the final evaluation were adjudged to be excellent in this regard. 15

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15 The composite scale included issues such as access to potable water, whether latrines were safe, in good repair and clean and sanitary, whether students and staff washed their hands after using latrines, and whether school buildings were clean.
That said, maintenance is clearly an issue (Coppinger 2009; Takahashi 2010). Water sources are sometimes damaged, especially when shared by communities, with delays before they are repaired; equally, wells or water tanks can be dry (Coppinger 2009; UNICEF 2012). The external evaluation of JICA’s primary school construction project (Takahashi 2010; see also Box 6.1) emphasised the importance of maintenance training and understanding of shared responsibilities. Thus, in Kaduna, where the head teachers who had been trained were still in post and where there was an understanding that schools and the PTA would do small-scale repairs and SUBEB would take over the rest, the school facilities were still in good order when visited. On the other hand, in Plateau and Niger states, where there had been changes in personnel and lack of clarity as to maintenance roles and responsibilities, some schools were already beginning to show signs of wear.

Importantly, the baseline for the USAID-funded COMPASS project in Bauchi, Kano, Lagos, Nasarawa and the FCT found that, even where schools had safe water, pupils did not necessarily have free access (Keating 2005).

Moreover, provision of toilet facilities is in itself insufficient to address the issue of inadequate sanitation provision. For example, only 32% of pupils in the GEP II evaluation said they actually used the school toilets (UNICEF 2012). This could be due to a number of reasons, including safety, cleanliness and cultural sanitation practices. As the UNICEF and other studies have noted, toilets may have doors hanging off, therefore not giving privacy, or can be filthy and vandalised, therefore unhealthy and not in use, or dark and poorly ventilated (Boulton et al. 2009; UNICEF 2009a; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). This is often the case where schools lack the appropriate security and/or a secure compound fence to protect the facilities from outsiders (Boulton et al. 2009; Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). The strong odour in extreme heat has also been identified as a factor preventing use (Evans et al. 2009), while studies of gender violence elsewhere in Africa (e.g. Leach et al. 2003 in Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe) have highlighted how toilets are often danger spots where girls are particularly prone to harassment and therefore avoid them.

Cultural issues may also contribute to lack of toilet use. A study of communities in Jigawa and Benue has echoed findings in other studies in West Africa in showing that without addressing the various cultures of sanitation practices and involving community members in the process of design, location and alignment of toilets/latrines, people may not use the facilities (Dittmer 2009; Evans et al. 2009).

### 3.3.1 Electricity

Access to electricity is a problem countrywide, particularly in northern regions, rural areas and among the urban poor, as Table 3.4 indicates (UNDP 2009). The national educational survey mentioned above found 65% of schools to be without electricity (Ikoya and Onoyase 2008), although even where electricity is theoretically available the supply is often erratic. A World Bank report noted that there are power outages 320 days a year, according to enterprise surveys, which is worse than anywhere else in Africa (Foster and Pushak 2011).

In schools without electricity and with dark classrooms, it has been found to be too dark to see the chalkboard when the sky is overcast in the rainy season or during the Harmattan, which has a negative impact on educational quality (Dunne et al. 2013). Where there is electricity, it may be restricted to the IT suite and head teacher’s office (Boulton et al. 2009).

Given the issues surrounding the supply of electricity and the concomitant problems with telecommunications in Nigeria (Foster and Pushak 2011), it will be a long time before the government’s stated desire (as articulated in the National Education Policy (FME 2004a)) to integrate ICT into the curriculum is realised (Agyeman 2007). Unreliable and sparse electricity will also impede initiatives using mobile phones for education purposes – as is being proposed for nomadic education, for example (Aderinoye 2007) – as it will be difficult to charge them.
3.3.2 Security

The killing of around 50 students at a College of Agriculture while they were asleep in their dormitory in September 2013 brought into sharp relief the importance of security in educational institutions in Nigeria. Even setting aside such extreme cases (see Section 9.8 for further details), school security is still a matter of major concern to parents, pupils and education personnel (Bakari 2013; Coinco 2012; NPC and RTI International 2011; Pinnock 2012; UBEC 2012a; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). This is often related to a lack of school perimeter, which has been found to have the following effects:

- It encourages pupils to drift off, thereby affecting attendance (Boulton et al. 2009; Pinnock 2012; Dunne et al. 2013);
- It makes it difficult or even impossible for head teachers to monitor the coming and going of pupils and staff (Dunne et al. 2013);
- It makes it difficult to control the incursion of outsiders during the day, sometimes exposing pupils to violence (Coinco 2012; Amnesty International 2013; Dunne et al. 2013);
- It allows vehicles to cross the compound, which can result in injuries to pupils (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013);
- It exposes the premises to vandalism, theft and the use of school property, including classrooms, as toilets for humans and livestock (Boulton et al. 2009; Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). This last issue has gendered health implications since girls generally do more of the classroom cleaning than boys (Dunne et al. 2013); and
- It allows building encroachment and dumping in school grounds (Coppinger 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

On the other hand, communities need to be consulted on the fencing off of schools, so as not to close off community access routes without community consent; a lack of consultation can otherwise result in conflict (Dunne et al. 2013).

3.4 Classroom conditions and material resources

Classroom conditions provide the immediate environment within which learning can either be enhanced or impeded. As highlighted in Section 3.3, classroom infrastructure is often very poor in public schools and classrooms can be very overcrowded, with inadequate furniture, although the situation varies across zones, states, LGEAs, schools and even within schools. There is evidence across various studies that the recent increases in enrolments that have followed from successful social mobilisation have exacerbated the issues of overcrowded primary classrooms as infrastructural development and the supply of human and material resources have been unable to keep pace with demand. As a result, the very success of increasing enrolments is said to be having a detrimental effect on educational quality, thereby threatening retention and undermining the gains in increased enrolments (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).
Table 3.5  Pupil–teacher ratios in public primary schools in selected states,16 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>All teachers</th>
<th>Qualified teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>45 (30–81)*</td>
<td>79 (48–214)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>47 (24–86)</td>
<td>63 (32–99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>29 (13–50)</td>
<td>47 (17–91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>30 (18–49)</td>
<td>31 (19–60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures in brackets give the percentage range across the LGEAs within the state.

Source: Annual School Census 2011/12 for Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna and Lagos states.

The recommended PTR at primary level is 35:1, while at secondary level it is 40:1 (FME 2004a). Table 3.5 above shows the PTRs for public primary schools in selected ESSPIN-supported states. According to these figures, only Lagos managed to achieve or better the recommended PTR. Importantly, however, the state PTR is not necessarily a reflection of the classroom realities. As the figures in brackets show, the mean PTR masks greater diversity at LGEA level, which is also probably true at the school level. Class sizes may be even larger due to flawed data, to staff deployment practices within schools, or to classroom or staff shortages that may result in two classes being put together (see Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). Adamawa State, for example, had a mean PTR of 24:1 at the time of Dunne et al.’s research, with the case-study LGEAs’ PTRs ranging from 22 to 30:1. However, classroom observations showed classroom numbers of up to 70 pupils, with even greater numbers of pupil actually enrolled (Dunne et al. 2013). Observation across a sample of schools in Kaduna, Kwara and Kano indicated PTRs of 100:1 and even up to 200 (Boulton et al. 2009), which are at odds with the official PTRs presented in Table 3.5. Similarly, observations for the GEP II evaluation recorded some classes ranging from 90 to 150 pupils (UNICEF 2012). In addition, volunteer teachers and teachers that are privately contracted by communities, for example, are not included in the figures.

Box 3.1 Teachers’ difficult working conditions

‘We have to buy water to give to the children every day as we are not connected to the water main. We have no power here and so we cannot even use fans; it gets terribly hot with a hundred children in the classroom and the sun on the roof all day. We have five toilets for the entire school, but they don’t work. We relieve ourselves in the bushes behind the main building. The children relieve themselves everywhere in the school yard.’ (teacher)

‘I am already tired when I come to school. And then I have to teach a group of 80 or more hungry and unruly children. Sometimes, when one of my colleagues does not come to school, it is double that number. And I simply don’t have the energy to keep them under control by any other means than the cane...’ (teacher)

‘All the schools I have seen are hugely overcrowded. In one record case, in a rural school, I saw a class of over 200 pupils of ages ranging from 11 to 21 with only one teacher to attend to them.’ (VSO researcher)

Source: Sherry (2008: 39–40)

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16 PTRs were taken from SMoE reports in selected ESSPIN-supported states since the data were not available at the national level for primary schools.
Teaching resources – in the form of a legible chalkboard and a supply of textbooks – are frequently reported to be non-existent or inadequate (e.g. FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Hoffeld et al. 2008; Antoninis 2010; Davison 2010; UBEC 2012a; UNICEF 2012; USAID 2013b and c; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). In the baseline survey for COMPASS of almost 900 public primary and Islamiyya schools in Bauchi, Kano, Nasarawa and Lagos states plus the FCT, only 4% of teachers said they had access to ‘basic instructional materials’, a figure which had only increased to 6% by the mid-term evaluation (Keating and Maloney 2007). Only around half of the secondary schools sampled in one of the 2004 ESA surveys reported having an adequate amount of chalk (FME 2005).

As with other levels of resourcing, supplies of textbooks can vary among zones, states, LGEAs, schools and within schools, and can sometimes be due to politicised distribution of resources (UBEC 2012a). Where textbooks are lacking, the cost is often borne by the family (FME 2005; Lincove 2009; NPC and RTI International 2011) and failure to provide textbooks can lead to pupil exclusion and corporal punishment. Lack of teaching materials was found to be the second most demotivating factor in the national teacher motivation survey, after issues related to pay and conditions (Sherry 2008; see also Dunne et al. 2013, and Section 10.4). In the most recent USAID-funded EGRA and EGM in Bauchi and Sokoto states, reported access to learning materials (i.e. reading books in Hausa and English and a Mathematics exercise book) correlated positively with pupil performance (USAID 2013a). Similarly, the 2001 UBE national primary assessments in English and Maths found that pupils that said they had textbooks performed significantly better in the subject than those that did not (UBEC 2001).

On the other hand, school visits have often uncovered piles of unused books in the head teacher’s office or in the corner of the classroom or library (Adekola 2007; Ahmed et al. 2008; Chege et al. 2008; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013); according to some, this is because books are considered to be too precious for pupils to use (Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013).

There have also been isolated reports of some teachers or government officers selling government textbooks (Chege et al. 2008; Dunne et al. 2013) and of books remaining unclaimed at SUBEB or LGEA level, in some cases because of a shortage of money for fuel to distribute them to schools. In Adamawa State, the SUBEB reported addressing this ‘leakage’ of textbooks and blockage in the supply chain both by customising books with a ‘not for sale’ watermark and initiating direct distribution to schools (rather than via the LGEA), backed up by follow-up visits to schools by state monitoring teams to ensure that the books had arrived (Dunne et al. 2013).

3.5 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

There is a substantial body of evidence on the widespread poor condition of many schools, but the differences in infrastructural conditions between LGEAs raises serious questions about the processes of resource allocation for school renovation and the processes by which construction contracts are awarded.

A major concern is the evidence suggesting that improvements in infrastructure and resource supply are failing to keep pace with increased demand, thus having a negative impact on educational quality and thereby threatening retention and undermining any gains in increased enrolment.

The provision of water and gender-segregated sanitation is clearly vital to keeping pupils (and staff) in schools, and reports suggest recent improvements in provision in project-supported states, but there are clearly issues around the maintenance and cleanliness of both. These need to be investigated more thoroughly, including the impact of shared community use, fee charges for water, safety for girls around toilet areas, and hygiene and equity issues surrounding the cleaning of toilets. The reasons why children are not using toilets also need to be explored.
Consideration needs to be given to alternative ways of assessing classroom overcrowding, to complement PTR rates, as the latter do not necessarily give an accurate indication of the numbers on the ground and can give the impression that classes are of manageable size when in reality they are not.

The continued shortage and uneven supply of textbooks is serious, as is the evidence suggesting textbooks may stay unused in store rooms or offices (although the extent of this issue is unknown; see Section 4.4.2 for further discussion).

There is little evidence of the impact on pupil learning of having no electricity when studying in ordinarily dark classrooms during the rainy season and/or during the Harmattan, when skies can make the classroom even darker.

**Evidence Strength Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of evidence:</th>
<th>Size of body of evidence:</th>
<th>Consistency of results:</th>
<th>Closely matched to topic:</th>
<th>Overall assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High to medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: EDUCATIONAL QUALITY – TEACHING AND LEARNING

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the curriculum. Specifically, we consider the subjects laid down in the National Education Policy (FME 2004a) to be taught at primary and JSS level, and the accompanying teaching and assessment methods.

The formal and informal interactions between teacher and pupils, as well as those among pupils, are critical to educational quality. In turn, this interaction can be greatly enhanced or impeded by the MOI used in class and by the use or lack of teaching and learning materials in the classroom. Despite the centrality of classroom interactions to the learning process, very little research has focused on this beyond a couple of large-scale observational surveys that have quantified behaviours and a few lines in evaluation studies that have outlined in brief a few observed features of the lessons.

In this chapter we first examine the curriculum subjects for the primary and JSS levels before reviewing the fairly substantial body of research on the MOI. We then summarise what is required by policy in terms of teaching methods and pupil assessment and what is known about actual classroom practices. Finally, there is consideration of teacher–pupil relations and pupil–peer relations and how they relate to pupil learning.

4.2 Basic education curriculum

Until very recently the basic education curriculum followed the 2004 National Education Policy (FME 2004a), offering 10 compulsory subjects and three electives in lower primary, 11 compulsory subjects and three electives at upper primary, and 12 compulsory subjects and four electives at JSS (Awofala and Oludola 2013). However, following widespread criticism that the curriculum was inadequate (FME 2005) and pupils/students were suffering from ‘curriculum overload’, a revised and streamlined basic curriculum (see Table 4.1) is due to be rolled out during the 2013/14 academic session following three years of piloting (ibid.). The number of subjects has been reduced to seven or eight in Primary 1–3, to eight or nine in Primary 4–6 and nine or 10 at JSS level, ‘in line with international best practices’ (ibid.: 104). The aim was not to cut a significant amount of content but rather to compress the subjects. Thus, for example, the separate subjects of Islamic Studies, Christian Studies, Social Studies and Citizenship Education have been amalgamated into the new subject of Religion and National Values, which also includes a recently added aspect called ‘Security Education’. The only elective subject at all three levels now is Arabic and the major addition to the curriculum is to make the French language compulsory from Primary 4 onwards.

What the streamlined curriculum will not do, as Awofala and Oludola (2013) point out, is address the shortages of trained personnel to teach the ‘new’ subjects that were introduced as far back as the 2004 education policy (FME 2004a), such as ICT and Civic Education, since most faculties in universities and colleges of education are not yet offering courses and certification in these areas. They also voice concern about the financial commitment that would be needed to implement the revisions successfully (ibid.).

At the same time, the PTTE comments that overall there is too much emphasis in the curriculum on academic learning outcomes and certification and that educational quality should be about the holistic development of the child. The report urges the inclusion of activities to help foster creativity and promote ethical values, and for schools to have more co-curricular and social activities (sports, clubs, societies, etc.) (FME 2011a).
4.2.1 Curriculum documentation

One of the 2004 ESA surveys looked at the availability of curriculum documentation in over 800 secondary schools (the majority were junior and senior schools combined) across the country: only in a quarter of schools were curriculum guides, teacher guides and textbooks considered to be ‘available and adequate’. In regard to syllabuses and schemes of work, schools fared slightly better, with just under half reporting ‘available and adequate’ syllabuses and well over half reporting the same for schemes of work (FME 2005). Stakeholders across several states in UBEC’s impact assessment and in some of the national assessments have similarly lamented a shortage of curriculum guides (UBEC 2007, 2009 and 2012a). For a successful rollout of the new syllabus, this will need to be addressed to avoid a repeat occurrence of what the PTTE called ‘policy shock syndrome’, meaning haphazard and uncoordinated policy changes that are often not given enough time to allow people to judge their effectiveness (FME 2011a).

Table 4.1 Revised basic education curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower Basic Curriculum Primary 1–3</th>
<th>Middle Basic Curriculum Primary 4–6</th>
<th>Upper Basic Curriculum JSS 1–3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core compulsory subjects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Studies</td>
<td>English Studies</td>
<td>English Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One major Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba)</td>
<td>One major Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba)</td>
<td>One major Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Science and Technology</td>
<td>Basic Science and Technology</td>
<td>Basic Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and Creative Arts</td>
<td>Cultural and Creative Arts</td>
<td>Cultural and Creative Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-vocational Studies</td>
<td>Pre-vocational Studies</td>
<td>Pre-vocational Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and National Values</td>
<td>Religion and National Values</td>
<td>Religion and National Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French Language</td>
<td>French Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Business Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elective subject</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic Language</td>
<td>Arabic Language</td>
<td>Arabic Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Awofala and Oludola (2013:104)*

4.2.2 Science and Technology

Despite widespread recognition of the importance of emphasising Science and Technology in school curricula from primary level upwards, the Nigerian government faces huge challenges in relation to these subjects. Most of the limited literature available on Science and Technology in education relates to post-basic level and to tertiary education in particular (e.g. World Bank 2006; Agyeman 2007). However, it has relevance here since the continued dearth of adequately trained personnel and the lack of facilities (e.g. computer suites, laboratory facilities and technical support staff) in many universities and colleges of education mean that there is an even greater shortage of adequately trained personnel at the school level (Agyeman 2007). ICT faces additional problems of damage to equipment due to irregular power supply and the high levels of dust during the dry season (Iyamu and Ogiegbaen 2007).

In the meantime, ICT in education remains the preserve of elite private schools in urban areas and a tiny handful of universities (Agyeman 2007).
As regards teaching Science, a World Bank synthesis report on Science and Technology education at post-basic level was positive in highlighting the strong political will to prioritise these subjects in Nigeria and the fact that relevant policies are in place (World Bank 2006). However, it also underlined the need for better coordination among the various actors and the need for more reliable data systems to gather the relevant information to be able to assess progress (ibid.). The school Science curriculum too was criticised for being overloaded and content driven rather than focused on skills acquisition. This problem is exacerbated by teacher education institutions that lack the facilities and materials necessary for developing teachers’ skills in these areas (Akinbote 2007; Thomas 2011) and by teacher education programmes that are overly theoretical, with insufficient emphasis on classroom practice and relevant pedagogies (World Bank 2006; Adekola 2007).

The 2004 ESA, citing an NCCE survey in 2001, also pointed out that teachers were not being trained in accordance with educational needs as articulated in policy. Thus, although policy dictates a Science (and Math) to Arts ratio of 70/30 in terms of trainee recruitment, training establishments were still producing far more Arts graduates (FME 2005). More recent data were not available to see whether the situation had changed.

4.3 The medium of instruction

The MOI is a critical determinant in pupils’ ability to access the curriculum, as the following line of Hausa illustrates: *Idan baka fahimci wannan yaren ba, to zaka yi gwagwarmaya kafin ka koya*.17 In a paper on the state of literacy in Nigeria presented at the UNESCO Eighth E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting on Education For All (EFA) held in Abuja in 2010, the FME candidly admitted, first, that the MOI was a ‘much overlooked factor that closely explains the poor learning achievement of basic, post-basic and secondary education learners’ and, second, that ‘Nigeria only pays lip-service to mother-tongue teaching’ (FME 2010: 57).

4.3.1 Effects of learning in English

Several studies in Nigeria have highlighted how pupils’ lack of proficiency in English can impede their learning (Adekola 2007; Hardman *et al.* 2008; Salami 2008; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; Dunne *et al.* 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013; USAID 2013a, b and c); it can also be a cause of non-enrolment, absenteeism, dropout (Dunne *et al.* 2013) and poor learning outcomes (Adekola 2007). Adekola reported on a comparison of UBEC criterion-referenced national assessments in 2001 and 2003 for Primary 4, 5 and 6 on the four core subjects (Maths, English, Social Studies and Science). The study found a strong correlation between higher overall scores and competence in English. Even in Maths, questions requiring lower literacy were answered more easily, while the study concluded that results were generally lower in Social Studies and English precisely because they were dependent on literacy in English. The overall low performance of pupils was attributed to pupils’ inability to read the test papers. Pupils in more urban areas with professional parents and at private schools scored slightly better overall (Adekola 2007). In the UBEC national assessments, test administrators also pointed out that pupils were hampered by not understanding test instructions in English.

Furthermore, in summarising findings from several national studies, Adekola concludes that, ‘Children were barely literate in either a Nigerian language or English and had little foundation in Maths and Science concepts that might have been acquired in the early grade if the children had been taught in a language they understood’ (ibid.: 11). This may well provide at least a partial explanation for the observation in the large-scale ESSPIN mid-term pupil assessment that noted: ‘As children progress through school, an ever-increasing proportion falls behind grade-appropriate standards of numeracy and especially literacy’ (ESSPIN 2013a: 14). While the report attributed this phenomenon to the limitations of the teaching force and of school leadership, it is likely that having English as the language

17 Which translates into English as ‘If you can’t understand this language, you’ll struggle to learn’.

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of instruction and assessment plays a major part in poor attainment – a view endorsed by the recent EGRA and EGMA in Bauchi and Sokoto states (USAID 2013a, b and c) – but this was not considered within the ESSPIN report.

The EGRA results clearly indicated the benefits of learning in a first language/language of the immediate environment. Although there were very few pupils performing well, the relationship between their results for reading in the two languages suggested that reading Hausa has an important role to play in learning to read and understand English:

Children who are among the high performers in Hausa reading comprehension also tended to perform well in English reading comprehension. Conversely, there were no children who performed well in English reading comprehension who did not also perform well in Hausa reading comprehension, suggesting that learning to read Hausa plays an important role in learning to read and understand English (USAID 2013b: 45, and c: 47).

The reports also concluded that children should be taught to read in Hausa, while English should be taught as a foreign language:

More attention needs to be placed on instructional approaches that focus on teaching English as a Foreign Language. Improving children’s Hausa reading ability and improving instruction of English as a subject will both facilitate English language acquisition (USAID 2013b: 69, and c: 72).

4.3.2 Language in education policy in practice

National government policy on the MOI dictates that the ‘language of the environment’ should be used for the first three years of primary schooling, with English taught as a subject, before a ‘progressive’ transition to English-medium teaching (FME 2004a). However, practice varies and there is no policy guidance for children in multilingual environments. Theobald et al. (2007) claim that lessons in primary schools in all years are predominantly carried out in one of Nigeria’s three main languages, i.e. in Hausa in the north, Igbo in the South East and Yoruba in the South West.

In contrast, Adekola (2007), summarising findings from several national studies, claimed that teachers taught in English up to 70% of time, even in Primary 3. Similarly, a study of lower primary Science classes in 12 schools in Lagos State found teachers predominantly used a mix of mother tongue and English with an increase in the intensity of use of English from Primary 1 to 3 even in the more rural schools, where there was greater homogeneity of mother tongue (Okebukola et al. 2013). Even at pre-school level, according to the 2003 ASC, over 70% of pre-schools claimed to be teaching in English (FME 2005).

At lower primary level the ESA survey found that out of the sampled 1,000 schools English was most widely used (44%), followed by one of the three main Nigerian languages (36%) and then the language of the community (19.1%) (FME 2005). However, the report also claimed that information gathered from field visits organised by the ESA Unit under the auspices of the DFID-sponsored Task Force on School-Level Management found that in a state where the language policy was being properly adhered to, the performance of Primary 4 and 6 pupils on the MLA exercise was ‘exceptionally higher than all the other states’ (ibid.), although no statistical data were presented to back up the claim.

The use of English is much more marked in the more multilingual, urban environments, when it is often used as the default language, especially when the teacher does not share the mother tongue of the dominant linguistic group (Dunne et al. 2013; Okebukola et al. 2013). Yet, as Adekola (2007) points out, there is a lack of preparation in initial teacher education for bi- or multilingual education and a shortage of textbooks in Nigerian languages (Adekola 2007; Iyamu and Ogiegbaen 2007).

Code-switching is a common feature of most classrooms (Hardman et al. 2008; Salami 2008; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013; Okebukola et al. 2013). In Hardman et al.’s (2008) survey of Primary 6 Maths and English lessons in 20 schools, primarily in the north, code-switching was observed
in around three-quarters of lessons, although fewer than a quarter of teachers admitted to the practice in the questionnaires. Similarly, in Salami’s (2008) study of code-switching in primary schools in the South West, close to two-thirds of teachers code-switched between English and Yoruba, even when teaching English, whereas the vast majority claimed to use only English in class. The difference between professed and observed practice is likely explained by teachers not wanting to admit to contravening government policy (Hardman et al. 2008; Salami 2008).

4.3.3 ‘Mother-tongue’ teaching

Importantly, as Salami (2008) points out, language-learning theory posits that cognitive development is best achieved through a solid foundation of learning in a child’s first language(s), before embarking on learning in a second or foreign language (see also Benson 2004; Alidou et al. 2006; USAID 2013 a, b and c). Studies in other West African countries have found that ‘mother-tongue’ teaching has been found to benefit girls and rural children in particular (Hovens 2002). Additional benefits of mother-tongue teaching demonstrated in other studies in SSA have included:

- More active pupil participation, involving greater numbers of pupils (Benson 2004; Hovens 2000; Heugh et al. 2007; see also Adekola 2007 on Nigeria);
- More relaxed teacher–pupil relations (Hovens 2002; Benson 2004; Brock-Utne 2007); and
- Better pedagogy (Hovens 2002; Brock-Utne 2007).

Box 4.1 The ‘mother-tongue’ experiment

A longitudinal language and literacy programme funded by the World Bank in the 1980s in South West Nigeria showed that after six years of Yoruba-medium teaching pupils attained better results, including in English, than in English-medium schools (Ejieh 2004; Adekola 2007). Intensive school-based teacher development and mentoring, community mobilisation, availability of textbooks in Yoruba, and parental support – given after they could see improved results after the first year – were all vital to its success. There were not the same results with the Hausa-medium and Igbo-medium programmes, attributed to the greater overcrowding in classrooms, the absence of textbooks in Hausa or Igbo and the fact that community support was not mobilised so successfully.

Source: Adekola (2007).

Yet Salami (2008) noted that in her study that, judging from the high level of code-switching, there was little lasting trace of the successful Yoruba-medium policy experiment conducted in the 1980s (see Box 4.1). This suggests that sustained political (including financial) and community commitment is necessary for such a policy to succeed in the long term, whatever its apparent success in the short term. Any policy promoting multi-lingualism would need to be accompanied by the production of textbooks and materials in the relevant Nigerian languages (Ejieh 2004).

4.3.4 Pupils’ views on the medium of instruction

Pupils, whose views are rarely sought, generally prefer a bilingual approach to teaching; for example, over 60% of the children in Salami’s study expressed a preference for teaching in English and Yoruba. In Dunne et al.’s (2013) study most pupils preferred learning in a mix of English and Hausa. Salami concludes that ‘mother-tongue’ teaching should be given an enhanced role alongside English in Nigeria so that teachers can enjoy the ‘educational benefits [of code-switching] in a situation of bi-/multilingualism, low English proficiency, lack of or poor language teacher education training, and lack or scarcity of material resources in mother-tongue education’ (Salami 2008: 109).
4.3.5 Teachers’ and parents’ views on the medium of instruction

The evidence on teacher and parental preference, which is more extensive, is more mixed. Ejieh’s (2004) study of second- and third-year student-teacher attitudes in a predominantly Yoruba-speaking college of education in Osun State noted how, although the majority recognised that teachers could express themselves better in their mother tongue and pupils could understand better and would find lessons more interesting, the vast majority (85%) were adamant they would not engage in mother-tongue teaching after finishing their training, even though almost half said they were willing to undergo training that would enable them to do so. Most respondents also displayed popular misconceptions about mother-tongue teaching, believing that it negatively affects pupils’ ability to learn English, and that their subject could not be taught through a Nigerian language (see also Salami 2008). Tellingly, over 60% thought that mother-tongue teaching would degrade the teaching profession.

Ango et al.’s review (2003, cited in Akyeampong et al. 2009) also highlights teacher and parental preference for English-only tuition, even at pre-school level (see Ajayi 2008). In particular, English-medium teaching is associated with private schools (and by implication higher-quality teaching) and with better socio-economic opportunities (Ejieh 2004; Osokoya 2004; Salami 2008) and higher prestige.

In a study of parental preference in selected schools in the South West, Osokoya (2004) found that the majority of the respondents (66.7%) preferred English, irrespective of the language of interaction at home. One school inspector in Salami’s (2008) study explained that it was precisely because of competition for enrolments in English-medium private schools in the area that they were actually encouraging teachers to teach in English from Primary 1, contrary to government policy. Additionally, Salami (ibid.) noted how the government officials interviewed were generally in favour of English-medium schooling.

However, parental attitudes can vary. In Sunal et al.’s (2003) study of parental and teacher attitudes to schooling (taking 80 teachers and 80 parents from the South West, South East and the north), all parents thought children could learn better in their home language. Similarly, in Amadi’s (2012) study in urban Enugu, the majority of both teachers and parents (all ‘educated’) chose a bi-literate system involving code-switching and code-mixing over mother-tongue teaching and English as the MOI (although the latter came a close second with parents), ahead of the current transitional bilingual policy. A large-scale survey of 1,500 literate parents and 1,000 primary teachers randomly sampled from across the country were asked about their perceptions of mother-tongue teaching, while the teachers were also given a short questionnaire on the practical constraints of teaching in the mother tongue (Iyamu and Ogiegbaen 2007). Over 70% of parents and teachers agreed with the statements that mother-tongue teaching helped bridge the home and school experiences of young children and that it allowed illiterate parents to better support their children’s learning at home. A similarly high percentage of parents thought that early learning in mother-tongue education can make learning less traumatic for children, whereas only around half of teachers were of the same view. Crucially, however, only 54.3% of teachers and 41.5% of parents thought that children learned better in their mother tongue. Yet these parental views were rather at odds with their views on the later statement that early use of English as the MOI posed learning difficulties for pupils; 80.2% of parents agreed with this whereas a more consistent 40.5% was posted for teachers. More nuanced qualitative research might help unravel people’s often contradictory feelings toward the MOI. Finally, as regards teachers’ views on the possible constraints of mother-tongue teaching, they agreed with eight out of the 10 items with the highest level of agreement (just under 80%) accorded to the statements about the lack of necessary teachers trained in mother-tongue teaching and the lack of instructional materials in Nigerian languages.
4.3.6 ‘Mother-tongue’ teaching for marginalised groups

In contrast, the case for mother-tongue teaching is more widely requested and accepted in relation to the inclusive education of minority and/or marginalised ethnic groups (Usman 2006; Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012), as evidenced in the large-scale implementation of nomadic schools for Hausa-Fulani nomadic pastoralists in northern Nigeria. Greater parental commitment to formal schooling has been demonstrated when learning and teaching materials are in Fulfulde (see McCaffery et al. 2006; Usman 2006). Other studies have also reported positive reactions for minority ethno-linguistic groups when a teacher has been employed who speaks their language(s) (Little and Lewis 2012), although in the case of Hausa-Fulani children learning in a separate class with a Fulani teacher in standard government schools they also caution against reinforcing the group’s isolation from other cultures and languages. In Sunal et al.’s (2003) study half the parents and all the teachers noted that children from ethno-linguistic minorities were discouraged from completing school because of the lack of opportunity to learn in their first language. A few parents from minority linguistic groups involved in the study confirmed that they had not enrolled their children in school because the exclusion of their language made them feel disconnected from their culture. In ESSPIN-supported states, SBMC and other community members have shown some awareness of the need for further recruitment of minority-language speakers in order to improve excluded minorities’ participation in schooling (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012). However, the same authors note the general absence of discussion among SBMC members about English as the MOI being a barrier to learning more generally, speculating that it may be because they see it as being outside their remit (ibid.), although it may also be because they believe that learning in English necessarily equates with better learning of English.

4.4 Teaching methods

The interaction between teachers and learners lies at the heart of educational quality. Put another way:

What teachers do, or do not do, are able or not able to do, are willing, or not willing to do, what they do properly or poorly determines, to a great extent, the effective curriculum (what pupils learn) (FME 2011a: 60).

Improvements to infrastructural facilities are almost meaningless without good-quality teaching, which depends, to a large extent, on the quality of interaction between teacher and pupils. The national policy on education states that one of the goals of primary education is to ‘lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking’ and therefore to aim for teaching that uses ‘practical, exploratory and experimental methods’ (FME 2004a: 14–15). However, classroom observations overwhelmingly show that traditional didactic methods persist for a variety of the reasons explored below.

There are few available empirical studies that have focused on the quality of classroom teaching, although two large-scale, primarily quantitative classroom-based studies reveal similar patterns and come to similar conclusions about pedagogy. Hardman et al. (2008) conducted a video-based analysis of the classroom IRF (initiation–response–feedback) sequence in Primary 6 Maths, English and Science lessons, and a more detailed discourse analysis of some lessons accompanied by 59 teacher questionnaires in a sample of 20 primary schools, from 10 states, mainly in the north. The baseline survey for classroom teaching and learning practices in the five ESSPIN states (Davison 2010) comprised systematic observations quantifying behaviours in over 1,000 Maths and English lessons in over 500 public primary schools and JSSs. In addition, Adekola’s (2007) synthesis report summarises findings from classroom observations from various national studies. The 2004 ESA also interviewed large numbers of teachers and pupils about teaching methods, although there were no reports of observational studies with which to compare the interview data (FME 2005).
4.4.1 Features of classroom teaching

The following features of classroom teaching have been noted in a number of observational studies:

- There is very little variation in lesson structure across subjects or levels: teacher explanation, question-and-answer session, individual pupils’ work – often copying off the board or doing a written exercise, sometimes followed by plenary feedback (Hardman et al. 2008; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Little or no lesson planning takes place (Adekola 2007; Ahmed et al. 2008; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Lessons almost exclusively involve whole-class teaching (97% of the time in four out of five states in the Davison (2010) study) (Adekola 2007; Hardman et al. 2008; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013); no group work was noted even in small multi-grade classes (Adekola 2007);
- A lot of time is spent revising previous material and focusing on propositional knowledge (Hardman et al. 2008; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Teacher talk predominates (Adekola 2007; Hardman et al. 2008; UNICEF 2009a; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Pupils are predominantly silent (two-thirds of the time in Davison’s (2010) study) (Adekola 2007; Hardman et al. 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Code-switching by teachers is common (Hardman et al. 2008; Salami 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013; Okebukola et al. 2013);
- Pupils, and some teachers, struggle to learn/teach in English (Adekola 2007; Hardman et al. 2008; Salami 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; UBEC 2009; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013);
- Drilling and chanting is common at primary level, although less so at JSS level (Davison 2010);
- Questions often demand choral response, and are predominantly closed, focused on factual recall and making limited cognitive demands (Hardman et al. 2008; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013);
- There is a lot of pseudo-checking through ritualised rather than genuine questions (Hardman et al. 2008; Dunne et al. 2013);
- There are commonly no follow-up questions (Hardman et al. 2008);
- Boys are more likely to be asked a question (two times more likely in Hardman et al. 2008), although other studies with more impressionistic data suggest a more mixed picture (e.g. USAID 2009a); regardless, pupil participation as a whole is limited (Dunne et al. 2013);
- Limited critical teacher feedback is given, although some praise is given (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Teachers spend a lot of time at the board (over half the time in Davison’s (2010) study: writing, reading from or watching a pupil write on the board) (Dunne et al. 2013);
- Pupils lack writing materials (exercise books and pen/pencil) (Ahmed et al. 2008; Coinco 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013); even where present, exercise books are not used extensively and homework is not often set (Gabrscek and Usman 2013);
- There is a severe shortage of textbooks and teachers’ guides (Adekola 2007; Ahmed et al. 2008; Holfeld et al. 2008; Antoninis 2010; Davison 2010; UBEC 2009; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013);
- Very little use is made of textbooks even when they are available in class; they are usually used to set homework or a class exercise or occasionally a pupil is asked to read aloud from a text (Ahmed et al. 2008; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013);
- Sometimes there is no discernible pedagogic activity (8–16% of the time in Davison’s (2010) study) (Adekola 2007);
- Teachers sometimes skip parts of the syllabus if the topic is difficult (Dunne et al. 2013); and
• There is widespread use of corporal punishment or humiliating punishments being given out in class for wrong answers, latecoming or classroom indiscipline (Boulton et al. 2009; Pinnock 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; see Section 12.2.4).

Attempts to change this traditional didactic way of teaching to what might be termed more ‘learner-centred’ pedagogies are being carried out through in-service teacher education initiatives, discussed in Box 10.3.

4.4.2 Textbooks

Regarding the limited or non-use of textbooks, Davison (2010) speculated that teachers perhaps do not use the textbooks because not all pupils have access to a textbook. However, some teachers have admitted that they need training on how to use them (Ahmed et al. 2008), while others consider books too precious to be given to pupils (Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013). It should also be noted that most textbooks are in English and not bilingual, meaning they are difficult for pupils – and possibly some teachers – to understand (Gabrscek and Usman 2013). It is noticeable that in the questionnaire answers about in-service teacher development topics at both primary and secondary level in the 2004 ESA textbook use did not feature (FME 2005). This could be because it was not given as an option in the questionnaire, but that in itself gives some indication that teachers’ use of textbooks is not considered to be an important topic for in-service training.

Although some books have been shown to have consciously addressed gender stereotyping, in other textbooks it remains an issue (Samuel 2012; Bakari 2013; see the sub-section on textbooks and curricula in Section 8.3.2). Analysis of a selection of secondary school textbooks in Nigeria (both old and new) has shown that females are generally underrepresented in images and text, and predominantly engaged in stereotypical domestic tasks related to home and family. Men, on the other hand, are predominantly out of the home and engaged in higher-status economic activities, politics, ruling, adventuring and doing heroic deeds (ibid.).

4.4.3 Classroom interaction

Several studies (e.g. Hardman et al. 2008; Davison 2010; Dunne et al. 2013) report a consistently high level of what has been characterised as ‘safe talk’ (Chick 1996): routinised classroom interaction that makes very little cognitive demands of pupils, ‘with little attention being paid to securing pupil understanding’ (Hardman et al. 2008: 55). Such ritualised exchanges have been observed in many African classroom settings (see Dembelé and Miaro-II 2003) and are interpreted as a coping strategy that allows teachers and pupils to save face and maintain the appearance that effective teaching and learning is taking place while actually struggling with the MOI and/or academic content of lessons (Chick 1996), although the huge class sizes are also likely to be a factor.

Views differ on the extent to which teachers are aware of their shortcomings and the negative impact their teaching can have on pupil motivation, attendance and retention. Several studies suggest that teachers are not particularly self-critical of their teaching (e.g. Adekola 2007; Dunne et al. 2013), although it may be that they are unwilling to admit their shortcomings. Most striking are the results from the 2004 ESA survey of primary teachers, in which only 2.5% of the sampled primary teachers accepted responsibility for the poor performance of their pupils (although arguably there was greater admission of some level of responsibility in the acceptance by around 20% that improved teaching methodology would improve matters (FME 2005)). More often pupils were blamed for poor communication skills, poor classroom participation and irregular attendance (ibid.).

Others suggest that teachers are aware and want further training (e.g. Sherry 2008). Adekola (2007) reported that school managers were often more dissatisfied with teaching quality but had limited views on what to do to improve matters.
Pupils are rarely asked their views on teaching. However, where questioned, they have expressed a desire for better teacher attendance, better lessons (namely ‘step-by-step’ processes), more interesting lessons, play methods of teaching, more pupil questioning, better explaining, and more correction of homework and classwork (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). They have also emphasised the need for classroom discipline to prevail to stop ‘noisemakers’ and classroom bullies from distracting them from learning (Dunne et al. 2013).

4.5 Assessment

Teachers clearly need capacity building in assessing pupils’ work and progress, as evidenced in the recent assessments carried out on primary teachers in the ESSPIN-supported states. Diagnostic tests of over 21,000 primary teachers’ ability to monitor and assess pupil learning in Lagos State revealed that 38.6% were unable to use an assessment guide to correct two authentic pieces of primary-level pupil writing, while 15% were only able to use the guide in a ‘limited way’ (Johnson 2010). There may be an issue regarding the degree to which teachers were simply confused by the test and/or ‘froze’ because they had not taken a test for many years (over half the teachers were over the age of 40). Nevertheless, the results would seem to indicate that teachers have problems assessing pupils’ work. This is not surprising given their own low levels of literacy: only 34% were deemed to have ‘sufficient’ or ‘near sufficient’ basic literacy skills (Johnson 2008; see also Section 10.5.1).

Given the above, the lack of reliable data on pupil attainment (ActionAid 2011, 2012; Dunne et al. 2013) is unsurprising. What is more, teachers are also experiencing difficulty in implementing the official policy of CA (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Theobald et al. 2007; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013).

4.5.1 Continuous assessment

The official policy on progression from one grade to the next is one of automatic promotion based on CA. The First School Leaving Certificate was discontinued in 2006 following automatic promotion to JSS (Theobald et al. 2007). At the end of basic education pupils are awarded the Junior Secondary School Certificate: 60% of the marks are allocated to CA and 40% to an exam administered at the state level. However, although CA is now supposed to be in operation it is poorly and unevenly implemented (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Adekola 2007; Theobald et al. 2007; Dunne et al. 2013), and it is frequently more a case of ‘continuous testing’ rather than using the range of instruments, including the more formative assessments expected of CA (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; FME 2005; FME 2011a).

Findings from various national studies have noted a lack of criterion-referenced tests either for diagnostic purposes or for monitoring pupil progress (Adekola 2007). This may be due to a combination of large class sizes (see Chapter 3) or inadequate teacher education (see Section 10.5), as well as insufficient government direction (Moya 2000). Citing findings from an earlier JSS study that indicated that teachers were unable to keep CA records and were using assessment instruments of varying quality, Moya (2000) concluded that the government should have given greater guidance and provided common instruments:

The administrative burden of continuous assessment on teachers and the lack of available instruments other than previous tests raise concerns about the validity and reliability of current continuous assessment practices; cross-school comparisons using the current alignment approach are dubious and moderation is poor or non-existent (Wilmut and Yakasi 2006, cited in Theobald et al. 2007: 20).
The 2004 ESA survey on the in-service experiences of secondary teachers provides some explanation for this as only 14% of teachers sampled reportedly received in-service training on CA (FME 2005). CA did not even feature on the list of in-service training topics for primary teachers.

On top of this, the extremely high levels of student transfer recorded in and out of the sampled JSSs in the 2004 ESA raise serious questions about the way CA is actually working in practice (FME 2005). In the more recent UBEC impact assessment, stakeholders in Abbia, Ebonyi and Kano states highlighted the need for training for better record-keeping for CA and monitoring of pupil progress (UBEC 2012a).

4.5.2 Exam malpractice

Exam malpractice is another feature of assessment that makes it difficult to gauge the progress of learners and to diagnose difficulties for remedial work. The practice of cheating at exams has been found to be pervasive, involving some members of all stakeholder groups to some degree (FME 2005). In an ESA survey of Primary 4 pupils (see Table 4.2), only just over a tenth of pupils claimed that no cheating was going on.

### Table 4.2 Observable behaviours during examinations in primary schools among Primary 4 pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observable behaviours</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils who are not clever spy on clever ones</td>
<td>6,869</td>
<td>43.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clever pupils let weak pupils copy from them</td>
<td>2,863</td>
<td>18.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some pupils copy answers from books</td>
<td>2,737</td>
<td>17.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some pupils get up from their seats to copy others’ work</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher sometimes helps some pupils</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>1,764</td>
<td>11.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Sector Analysis (FME 2005: 267)

According to responses received from students, teachers and parents at secondary level, the major culprits are students (59.7%), invigilators (53.6%), teachers (33.9%), parents (29.0%), schools (25.2%) examination bodies (24.3%) and law enforcement agents (15.4%). This suggests that almost all parties are implicated in exam malpractice, at least to some extent (FME 2005: 267–268), although the scale of these practices was not explored. Around 40% of parents interviewed blamed the fact that exam questions were not related to the syllabus as the main cause of exam malpractice (ibid.)

4.6 Teacher–pupil relations

The classroom is as much a social as a pedagogical arena, and social relations between teachers and learners and among learners can have as much an impact on pupils’ learning, retention and successful outcomes of schooling as pedagogy (Dunne et al. 2007). Yet we found very little research on the nature of teacher–pupil interactions beyond considerations of the purely academic, and even with regard to that, detailed information is sparse.

The PTTE underlined the importance of education focusing on whole-child development in school:
Education is concerned with all-round development of the learner, with due attention paid to the intellectual, physical, social and moral dimensions of personal development. One-sided development is no development at all (FME 2011a: 71).

In terms of teacher–pupil interactions, this means the teacher: showing empathy toward pupils/students; ‘radiating ethical values’; engaging pupils creatively; helping pupils to develop intra- and interpersonal skills and developing emotional intelligence. In addition, the report emphasised that teacher interactions with pupils have to go beyond the classroom (ibid.).

However, even in schools that have been part of the CFS initiative for several years, actually enacting such relations was clearly proving difficult in some cases. The survey data from the 23-school evaluation indicated that most students and teachers thought their school placed a high value on respecting children’s rights, although the picture was mixed on the practice: one in three pupils of the 1,800 surveyed said that teachers said unkind things to pupils and one in three reported that they sometimes did not want to come to school because of the way they are treated by their teachers. The evaluators urged for more guidance and professional support to enable teachers to implement more positive behaviour-management techniques in the classroom and to create a more respectful environment for pupils (UNICEF 2009a: 49).

Fan’s (2012) quantitative study of just under 2,000 JSS III students in a senatorial zone of Cross River State found that there was a significant statistical relationship between good teacher–pupil relations and high attainment in Social Studies. However, with scarcely any details given, little else can be learned from the study.

The little available evidence that exists on teacher–pupil relations derives from a few quantitative studies on school violence and from a small amount of qualitative data on gender violence (generally understood in the limited sense of sexual violence against girls (see Section 8.4)) from some gender-focused studies.

In the national teacher motivation study (Sherry 2008), teachers and other stakeholders recognised the importance of good teacher–pupil relations to teachers’ and pupils’ motivation, which was related to teachers feeling they have succeeded in helping pupils learn. The fact that this rarely occurred was related to teaching classes that were too large in a poor physical learning environment. However, teacher frustration at being unable to help pupils learn and/or manage the class (be it on account of difficult teaching circumstances and/or their own lack of capacity) often spills over into excessive authoritarianism and corporal punishment (ibid.). A high level of ‘psychological violence’ from teachers was also reported in the national study on violence in schools (FME 2007b) and pupils have complained of teachers being verbally abusive if they make mistakes in class (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

In turn, teachers and other educational stakeholders have complained about ‘unruly pupil behaviour’ and problems with pupil control (Sherry 2008; Bakari 2013; Iwu and Iwu 2013). In the 2004 ESA countrywide survey of secondary school head teachers, student indiscipline was identified as the second biggest constraint on effective school administration after underfunding, and was mentioned by around a third of head teachers.

Improved teacher motivation and confidence in the classroom is likely to have a knock-on positive effect on teacher–pupil relations. This was the reported result that came about from involvement in a World Bank school-based teacher development programme that involved reflective practice (Adekola 2007). Similarly, classroom observations evaluating in-service teacher education on ‘child-friendly’ pedagogy reported teachers encouraging pupils to express their views and giving positive reinforcement (UNICEF 2012). Although in neither case were pupils questioned on whether they subsequently experienced improved teacher–pupil relations as a result, the signs seem encouraging.
4.7 Pupil–pupil relations

There is no available research that has focused exclusively on pupil–pupil relations in class, although Dunne et al.’s (2013) Adamawa-based study at primary level and Bakari’s (2013) study in Kogi State at secondary level present qualitative data highlighting some of the issues.

In the Adamawa study, teacher interviews and classroom observations often suggested that pupils generally got on well together in class, and some amicable cross-gender interactions were witnessed (Dunne et al. 2013). Even so, girls more often interacted with other girls and boys with boys; for example, borrowing pencils among students of the same gender, even when seating was mixed. In both studies, however, pupils preferred to sit in gender-segregated blocks in class. This was usually left unchallenged by teachers and ascribed to biology (e.g. the presumed innate shyness of girls or the desire for girls to sit apart during menstruation) and/or religious culture (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013).

Pupils interviewed in the Adamawa study were less positive about peer relations than teachers were (Dunne et al. 2013). In all six schools, girls complained of (some) boys physically and/or verbally harassing, bullying or teasing them. Some boys also complained of being teased by (some) girls and/or other boys, especially for not doing as well academically as girls. Over-age pupils were also identified as a group prone to bullying and being bullied, so tended to self-segregate often at the back of the class, probably to protect themselves from being teased by other pupils (ibid.).

Boys also complained about other boys fighting in class, which was also observed. ‘Teasing’, for sitting next to a member of the ‘opposite sex’, for not answering a question in class or for doing badly in tests, could reportedly result in feelings of shame, non-participation in class or even pupil absenteeism or dropout (ibid.). There have been similar findings in studies elsewhere in SSA (see Dunne et al. 2006), but this is clearly an area that needs further research.

Pupil feedback for the end-of-project report for GEP II noted that they do not like disruption from other pupils in class, including shouting, horseplay or pupils being abusive (UNICEF 2012).

Other studies describing patterns of school bullying (e.g. Egbochuku 2007; FME 2007b; Adefunke 2010) are considered more fully in Section 12.3.2, since they discuss bullying inside and outside the classroom.

4.8 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

Given that teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil interactions form the crux of the teaching/learning nexus, it is surprising how little in-depth classroom research is available on the processes of teaching and learning. Information is also lacking on the specific interactions that pupils find most helpful in learning.

Teachers clearly need more support and guidance in the area of assessment, both formative and summative. If teachers are unable to diagnose pupil difficulties, they will be unable to help pupils overcome these difficulties. Related to this is the issue of record-keeping; especially with such large classes, teachers need support in learning how to keep records that allow them to monitor progress.

Another absence is empirical classroom-based research across the various subjects that describes the curriculum in action at both primary and JSS level.

More classroom research is needed in Nigeria that provides a more nuanced account of classroom processes. To achieve this, one-off observations of a class should be minimised in order to avoid the ‘special lesson’ and magnified observer effects, which are acknowledged as potential limitations in some studies (e.g. Hardman et al. 2008; Dunne et al. 2013).
Studies also need to go beyond quantifying pedagogic behaviours/interactions to include more in-depth, qualitative observational and interview data involving pupils and teachers, including consideration of both the official and the hidden curriculum. Such studies need to be conducted in a range of school types, from Islamiyya schools to all-male boarding schools and co-educational day schools to see what differences, if any, exist between the different school types and which practices promote a conducive learning environment.

The limited available research on classroom ‘teasing’ and bullying suggests that it can impact negatively on pupil learning in class, lead to absenteeism and contribute to eventual dropout. The research also suggests that teachers are not necessarily aware of the negative impact some of these activities can have on individual pupils. More research is needed in this area, and teachers and pupils need to be sensitised to such issues.

There is little emphasis in classroom research (and therefore little is known) on the emotional, affective side of teaching and learning, either from teachers’ or pupils’ perspectives.

The research evidence raises serious questions about the current language-in-education policies and practices and the ways in which they can assist or impede learning, and suggests the need to support multilingual teaching both through appropriate teacher education and textbook production.

Associated with this is the need for more research on actual language use in the classroom in both urban and rural contexts and its impact on learning, teaching and assessment, with greater inclusion of pupils’ views on the subject, especially those of minority ethno-linguistic groups.

### Evidence Strength Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of evidence:</th>
<th>Size of body of evidence:</th>
<th>Consistency of results:</th>
<th>Overall assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium(^{18}) to weak</td>
<td>Fairly consistent</td>
<td>Medium to weak</td>
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\(^{18}\)The quality and size of the evidence is much stronger on the MOI and general features of classroom teaching; a much smaller body of evidence exists in the areas of assessment and teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil social relations.
CHAPTER 5: OUTCOMES OF BASIC EDUCATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the outcomes of basic education. It begins by looking at the effectiveness of education, in particular the impact of schooling on actual learning outcomes, focusing on literacy and numeracy. It then considers a set of expected outcomes of education that have been established in other contexts, before subsequently reviewing the evidence from Nigeria. We consider both financial and non-financial gains, including the social benefits.

Overall, the evidence base on the outcomes of basic education in Nigeria is relatively weak. There is no institutionalised system for the regular measurement of learning outcomes. Measures that do exist suggest very low learning levels, e.g. nearly half (46%) of children who have completed primary school are not able to read a complete sentence (NPC & RTI International 2011).

There is in some sense a contradiction between the evidence on very poor learning outcomes from schooling and the evidence that suggests that schooling has positive impacts on other outcomes such as on labour market performance and health.

In regard to the labour market, increased earnings come mostly from secondary and tertiary schooling, which can provide access to government and formal sector jobs. Schooling at primary level may have a much smaller impact on individual productivity and wages. Education may also function as a signal of ability, which can help individuals get jobs and earn more without increasing their underlying productivity.

In regard to health, it may be that there is other learning going on in schools that is not captured by tests of specific skills such as literacy and numeracy, and that this has a positive impact on health outcomes (although this is speculative). Likewise, for girls, it may be possible that simply remaining in school through secondary school can reduce the chances of early marriage and delay pregnancy.

5.2 Perceived impact of schooling

The 2010 NEDS asks parents about the perceived value to children of completing primary schooling. Over 97% of parents think that schooling is beneficial for both boys and girls. Common benefits cited include literacy (48–49%), the chance to go to secondary school (26–27%), morals and values (19–20%), and critical thinking (15–16%). The chance of finding a better job was cited by 13–14% of parents. The majority of parents reported no disadvantages of primary school completion for girls and boys, with the exception of the North East and North West regions, in which less than half of parents reported that there were no disadvantages from schooling (NPC and RTI International 2011).

5.3 The impact of schooling on learning outcomes

At present there is no institutionalised national system for the regular measurement of learning outcomes (ESSPIN 2009a), and national school examinations are not taken until the end of senior secondary school (see Section 4.5 for discussion of primary school and JSS assessments). What follows is evidence gathered from the very basic assessments of literacy and numeracy from household survey data and more sophisticated assessments made in a selection of states supported by ESSPIN and the Northern Education Initiative (NEI).
5.3.1 National monitoring of child learning outcomes

Nationwide MLA studies were carried out in 1996, 2001, 2004 and 2006, all demonstrating very low learning outcomes. National mean percentage test scores attained by Primary 4 children in the first study in 1996 were 32% in numeracy and 25% in literacy. National mean scores at the JSS level in 2004 were 25% in Mathematics and 32% in English (FME 2010). ESSPIN (2009a) reports that, to the extent these results are comparable with other countries, the 2004 results were the worst in Africa. In Maths, JSS results were not substantially different between girls and boys and between urban and rural areas. Private school students performed slightly better than public school students. In English, urban and female students performed slightly better than average, and private school students again performed better than public school students. However, all results were low.

UBEC too has conducted a series of national assessments: in 2001 in English and Maths in Primary 4 (UBEC 2001); in all four core subjects in all three upper primary grades in 2003 (UBEC 2007); and in Primary 6 and all three JSS grades in 2006 (UBEC 2009). In all three assessments pupil marks were generally very low and it was reported that their low level of English prevented many from understanding the test instructions (UBEC 2007 and 2009). Generally, better results were gained in urban schools than in rural schools but there was a noticeable shift in mean gender attainment patterns between 2001 and 2003 as girls on average performed better than boys in some states including in Mathematics, although results still generally remained low: state averages rarely reached 30% across the grades in English or Social Studies, whereas children fared slightly better in Primary 6 Mathematics and Primary Science with national averages of 36% and 40% respectively. In 2006, Primary 6 mean scores for all four subjects were slightly higher, ranging between 40 and 50%, and higher too than for all the JSS grades, which were exceedingly low.

The 2010 NEDS provides a simple measure of literacy: a person who can read aloud all or part of a sentence in one of the three main Nigerian languages or in English is considered to be literate. This is not a very robust test but does cover a nationally representative sample (NPC and RTI International 2011). A World Bank analysis of the data indicates that, even when using this limited test, two-thirds of children remain illiterate after Primary 6, with even higher figures for the North East (Global Education First Initiative 2013). As Figure 5.1 shows, literacy rates are much higher in the southern part of the country but there is substantial variation among states.

Since the literacy test does not require the respondent to understand the sentence, it clearly does not give an indication of functional literacy, which has serious implications for pupils being able to access the curriculum (see Chapter 4).
Children performed slightly better in the 2010 NEDS numeracy tests, but these are measured by a very simple test of adding two numbers together that add up to less than 10. The World Bank analysis of the data reported that about 10% of school-age children could not do this simple addition at the end of primary school (Global Education First Initiative 2013). Again, regional disparities are marked: while 29% of children in the North East are unable to do a simple addition by the end of Primary 6, all pupils in the south can perform the task by the end of Primary 5 (ibid.)

5.3.2 Project-based monitoring of learning outcomes

ESSPIN produced original data on learning outcomes in the six states it supports through the 2012 Composite Schools Survey (ESSPIN 2013a). The report found that, although ESSPIN-supported schools were doing better than control schools, learning levels are still very low. Overall, just 4% of Primary 4 students had skills for reading comprehension and just 7% of Primary 4 students were able to perform Primary 4-level arithmetic. Of serious concern was the finding that almost half of Primary 4 pupils were ‘not coping well’ with basic number concepts after being in the school system for four years. Similarly disturbing was the finding that, ‘as children progress through school, an ever-increasing proportion falls behind grade-appropriate standards of numeracy and especially English literacy’ (ESSPIN 2013a: 14).

The final early grade literacy and numeracy assessments in Sokoto and Bauchi, conducted under the USAID-funded NEI, also produced sobering results (USAID 2013 a, b and c). The assessments were administered to a sample of Primary 2 and Primary 3 pupils in 40 public schools, and to a sample of Stage 1 and Stage 2 pupils in 40 IQTE schools (see Box 7.1 for further details on the IQTE curriculum structure) in each state. The EGRA in Hausa (the usual MOI for Primary 1 to 3 in northern Nigeria and the home language of almost all the pupils tested in Sokoto and over 80% of the pupils tested in Bauchi) was
administered to a sample of Primary 3 pupils in Bauchi and Sokoto states. This assessment found that the vast majority of Primary 2 and 3 pupils have not mastered any foundational reading skills in either English or Hausa in either government or IQTE schools. The foundational skills measured in the assessment were letter-sound identification, non-word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. More specific findings were:

- Over 50% scored zero on subtasks; 80 to 90% scored zero for some grades and skills;
- Pupils in Bauchi performed better than those in Sokoto;
- Pupils in IQTE schools performed better on average than pupils in government schools, especially in Hausa;
- There was no significant difference in performance between girls and boys in both grades in the government schools, although there was a significant gender difference in Bauchi IQTE schools, especially at Stage 2; and
- Pupils’ scores increased slightly from grade to grade but the additional year of schooling did not produce meaningful gains (USAID 2013a).

Pupils performed best on the task of having a text read to them in Hausa (ibid.), perhaps suggesting the need to include more oracy in literacy activities (see also Section 4.3).

The 2013 USAID EGMA results were similarly poor, while again the pupils in IQTE schools fared slightly better. Most pupils scored zero in the subtasks, which asked pupils to identify numbers, do simple addition and subtractions, discriminate between quantities, complete missing numbers in a sequence, and solve mathematical problems orally (word problems). The pupils performed much better on the contextualised orally given word problems, suggesting children have the capacity to do better if teachers make the linkages between real-life contexts and more abstract concepts (USAID 2013a and b).

Overall, the evidence from the literature is consistent in concluding that learning outcomes are weak in both literacy and numeracy but that they are weaker in literacy, even when literacy is assessed in a language other than English. In contrast, pupils’ oral skills in their mother tongue and/or the language of the immediate environment fared better, and this points perhaps to the need to incorporate more oral work into both literacy and numeracy teaching.

### 5.4 Impact on labour market outcomes

In general, the economic benefit to individuals from education in most of SSA is low for primary and secondary school but rises for tertiary education (Schultz 2004; Teal 2010). This is true in Nigeria. There is a relatively limited body of literature on the impact of education on earnings in Nigeria, based on a standard economic and statistical methodology used in countries around the world. These papers make use of national household survey data that convey detailed information about thousands of individuals, which allow these correlations to be identified. All of these papers are based on several years of the NDHS from between 1996 and 2008. This is one of the major sample surveys carried out in Nigeria, and resembles the World Bank’s Living Standards Measurement Survey in terms of variable coverage. It contains detailed demographic information on individuals, including on their earnings, occupation, schooling and household characteristics.

Oyelere (2011) estimates the income gains to individuals from schooling based on data from 2005. Her findings are that the gains are lowest for primary and secondary education (4% higher earnings per year of schooling) and much higher for tertiary (16% higher earnings per year of schooling). This estimate is based on self-reported income so may be inaccurate, but does set out to cover both formal employment and informal self-employment activities. The numbers of people who enjoy the higher gains from tertiary education are relatively small – only 7.8% of the population aged 15 and over have some post-secondary education (NPC and RTI International 2011). Oyelere also compares how the gains have
changed before and after the end of military rule in 1999, finding that the gains have increased since the return of democracy. She argues that improvements in economic policy have created the opportunities for higher earnings to be attained through schooling. Aminu (2010) finds that gains from schooling at all levels fell for men between 1998 and 2008 but increased for women, although this is not explained.

Aminu (2010) also shows how higher levels of schooling provide access to higher paid public sector jobs, but differences in education are less important for earnings once a public sector job has been obtained.

Several other studies looking at data from 1999 and earlier corroborate the finding that there were positive but small gains from education (e.g. Aromolaran 2002; Ogwumike et al. 2006).

5.4.1 Impacts on sub-populations

Overall, there is very little evidence about how education affects the earnings of different sub-populations – for example, by gender or location. The gains from schooling by gender differ by public/private sector but are on average slightly higher for females (who do, though, have lower wages on average) (Aminu 2010). Aminu (2010) and Aromolaran (2004) also look at the impact of schooling on female labour market participation, and find that there are similarly positive effects, although they are much stronger at tertiary level and the impact of primary and secondary schooling is more muted. These papers do not allow for an estimation of the differences in gains to schooling by state, although Oyelere (2010) estimates gains from education to be higher in urban than in rural areas.

There are also some studies that look at the impact of schooling on agricultural productivity in various specific locations with specific crops. Several, but not all, of these papers find a positive relationship between schooling and productivity, which the authors attribute to better educated farmers being more likely to adopt more progressive techniques and technologies (Liverpool-Tasie et al. 2011).

5.5 Impact on fertility and child health

Education has been shown in various countries to reduce the number of children that women have. Possible explanations for this have included the suggestion that schooling can increase the opportunity cost of child-bearing (by giving women more opportunities outside the home), improve health and thus reduce child mortality rates, and increase female autonomy and bargaining power or access to contraception (Schultz 1998).

5.5.1 Fertility

The 2008 NDHS data show that women in Nigeria with more education have fewer children on average (from a fertility rate of 7.3 for those with no education to 2.9 for those with more than secondary) (NPC and ICF Macro 2009). Women with more education also tend to be older at their first birth and are less likely to become pregnant while still a teenager. Both educated men and educated women are more likely to know about modern and traditional methods of contraception, and to have been exposed to family planning messages via radio, television or newspapers.

These simple correlations are backed up by a statistical analysis that controls for other important factors such as income and location. Osili and Long (2008) investigated statistically the relationship between female schooling and fertility using the 1999 NDHS data. They estimated that an additional year of education is causally associated with a reduction in births of 0.26 (they use the quasi-random introduction of free universal primary education as an ‘instrument’ to attribute causality). Wusu (2012) found similar results looking at the 2003 and 2008 NDHS datasets. His analysis showed that female education both reduces actual children born and female preferences about ideal family size. Another study with similar findings is Akpotu’s (2008), which looked at independent data collected in southern Nigeria.
5.5.2 Child mortality

It was Caldwell’s study in 1979 based on Nigerian data that highlighted the role of the mother’s education in reducing child mortality. The 2008 NDHS data support the theory that female education can improve child health outcomes – neonatal, infant, child, and under-five mortality are all lower for women with higher levels of education. More educated women have children with higher birth weight, space their births more, are more likely to vaccinate their children and use appropriate treatment for malaria and diarrhoea, have appropriate hygiene practices and feeding practices, and are less likely to have malnourished children (NPC and ICF Macro 2009).

The pathways through which the mother’s education reduce child mortality in Nigeria were explored by Smith-Greenaway (2013), who found that maternal literacy (measured through the simple NEDS one-sentence reading test) explains most of the relationship between schooling and child mortality. Adeoti (2009) showed that female schooling increases demand for child vaccinations (based on 2003/04 NLSS data).

5.5.3 Parent and child education

The educational level of one or both parents has been found to be an important indicator of whether or not a child is likely to be in school. Akyeampong et al.’s (2009) analysis of four states found that children who were in school had parents that have more than twice as much schooling as parents of children who were out of school. Similarly, Okpukpara and Odurukwe’s (2006) analysis of the 2001 FOS/ILO child labour survey data also showed that children from households whose mother or father had secondary or higher education were more likely to be in school.

Kazeem et al. (2010) estimated a model of school attendance based on household characteristics taken from 2004 NDHS data; after controlling for various factors including wealth and location, they found that parents’ education at primary level has a positive impact on school attendance, although higher levels of education do not increase this any further.

Lincove (2009) looked at the NDHS 2004 data and found that, controlling for other determinants of school attendance, the mother’s education is statistically significantly positively correlated with school attendance.

5.5.4 Adult literacy and schooling

However, the low levels of adult literacy in many parts of the country, even on the part of those who have completed primary education, for example, raise questions about what exactly it is about schooling that explains the effects mentioned above.

Since the 2010 literacy survey (NBS 2010) gave figures based on self-reported data that are considerably higher than any of the available assessment data, it is probably better to consider the 2010 NEDS figures, even though, as highlighted earlier, their limited literacy test provides an overestimation of functional literacy. The 2010 NEDS found that, among the parents and guardians surveyed, around 55% were literate, with figures ranging widely according to age (older people were less likely to be able to read), urban or rural location (rural 48% and urban 76%) and geographical zone (39% in the North West and North East but 75% in the South South) (NPC and RTI International 2011). There was little difference at the national level according to gender, although figures had dropped for men from 59% in 2004 to 55% in 2010 (ibid.)

In terms of schooling, 62% of the survey’s parent/guardian population had completed primary or higher levels of schooling; 41% of men and 35% of women had never attended school. Rural/urban and
Review of the literature on basic education in Nigeria

north/south disparities were marked, but then it is worth reiterating that IQTE schools, which many in the northern and more rural areas attend, were not counted as formal schooling in the survey.

5.6 Impact on the macro-economy

At the same time as there being strong evidence of economic benefits to individuals from schooling, there is a ‘paradox’ as these economic gains do not show up in aggregate economic growth. Ndiyo (2007) looked at data from 1970 to 2000 in Nigeria and failed to find a relationship between aggregate schooling and economic growth. Pritchett (2001) found a similar situation in cross-national data, offering three possible explanations for the ‘paradox’: first, that education has gone into ‘piracy,’ or individually remunerative but socially unproductive activity; second, that there has been slow growth in demand for skilled labour; and, third, that the quality of schooling is poor and leads to low actual skill acquisition. Ndiyo (2007) suggested that in Nigeria the specific explanations may include a poorly functioning labour market, emigration of skilled labour, industrial disputes, and the low quality of schooling. Ojomite (2010) considered data from 1980 to 2005, finding that, although spending on education leads to economic growth, this is from the direct impact on the economy of spending through teachers’ salaries; there was no causal relationship from capital spending or school enrolment on economic growth.

5.7 Issues arising and gaps in evidence

Schooling seems to result in poor learning outcomes for many students, particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy. However, there is scant information available about progress in learning outcomes. Very little attention is paid to monitoring and measuring how these learning levels may change over time (compared to measuring ‘inputs’ such as teachers and infrastructure as proxies for quality). There are no longitudinal tests and surveys measuring individuals across time, which would allow for greater understanding of the progress (or lack thereof) that students are making, and in which years.

Attention needs to be paid to the extent to which proficiency in English affects learning outcomes in different subjects.

Following this, there is a weak understanding of whether and how years or schooling and/or educational outcomes relate to other outcomes such as labour market performance and health. More research on the other types of learning and knowledge (beyond literacy and numeracy) that pupils might acquire during schooling, which might help explain the positive correlations between schooling and other outcomes, is therefore necessary.

There are also no studies that explore the social impacts on schooling in terms of pupils’ wellbeing, self-confidence or ability to interact with others. This is potentially a serious omission given growing evidence internationally that ‘non-cognitive’ skills such as curiosity and self-control are more important determinants of later life success than technical skills in academic subjects such as Mathematics and English (Tough 2013).

Evidence Strength Assessment

| Quality of evidence: Moderate | Size of body of evidence: Medium | Consistency of results: Fairly Consistent | Closely matched to topic: High | Overall assessment: Medium |
CHAPTER 6: GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOLING

6.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion about education policy and governance structures, before moving on to some of the challenges in implementation. It considers the roles and responsibilities of the three tiers of government – federal, state and local – as well as community structures. We then consider the financing of education by the state and donors. A summary of recent major donor initiatives regarding basic education is then followed by a review of the findings from PEA studies carried out by some of the donor-funded programmes. Finally, the spotlight focuses on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and the difficulties caused by a lack of reliable data.

Most of the evidence for this chapter comes from the background sections of a series of consultancy reports, including Obanya (2010; 2011), Santcross et al. (2010), and the Global Education First Initiative (2013), as well as the PTTE’s report (FME 2011a), the earlier ESA (FME 2005) and the UBE impact assessment (UBEC 2012a).

6.2 The Universal Basic Education programme

Education policy at the federal level is guided by the FME’s 10-year Strategic Plan, which was published in 2007. A central policy initiative is UBE, a programme that was launched in 1999 with the goal of providing nine years of free and compulsory education (six years of primary and three years of junior secondary) and improving quality throughout the system. In 2013 a policy directive from the National Council on Education added one year of compulsory pre-primary education (see Section 7.6).

While the UBE policy preserves the constitutional responsibilities of states and local government to finance and manage basic education, it expands the roles, responsibilities, and investments of the FGN in basic education – a move that has led to some tension between centralised decision-making and increasing decentralisation.

Despite lofty goals, progress on implementation has been slow (Adepoju and Fabiyi 2007; Labo-Popoola et al. 2009; Alude 2006; Tsafe 2013). The enabling legislation for UBE and formation of the UBEC did not happen until 2004 and the introduction of a new federally driven structure has been somewhat duplicative of existing structures. The PTTE summed up the situation rather forcefully, concluding: ‘The precise functions of the professional departments of the Ministry of Education at the Federal and State levels do not seem to have been clearly articulated’ (FME 2011a: 25), adding that ‘There are serious cracks in the practical operations of the coordinating and management mechanisms of the process of education policy development and service delivery’ (ibid.: 29).

UBEC is the national agency in charge of the disbursement of federal intervention funds for primary and junior secondary education and the monitoring of standards in the basic education sector, while the SUBEBs are in charge of the delivery and management of primary and junior secondary education at state level. UBEC and the SUBEBs are thus directly responsible for the provision of primary school and JSS services, while the NCNE is responsible for nomadic education and the National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) for the NFE aspect of UBE. In addition to SUBEBs, state governments have their own state ministries of education (SMoEs).

6.2.1 Impact assessment

While many of the findings of the UBE impact assessment (UBEC 2012a) are to be found in the relevant chapters of this review, we summarise here those that relate specifically to the finance and governance issues of the programme:
• The FGN and all states have passed appropriate legislations and formulated policies to guide the implementation of ‘free and compulsory UBE’;
• There is significant variation across the states in the degree of implementation of UBE. Abia, Adamawa, Katsina, Kogi, Ondo and Rivers were found to be among the ‘top-performing’ states in terms of implementation;
• A ‘significant amount of the UBE intervention funds had been accessed by most of the states’. Those states that had full or near full access to funds tended to record ‘greater positive impact’;
• Funds for UBE have typically been spent on infrastructure, teacher development and teaching materials with ‘far-reaching impacts’, although ‘these resources were far from adequate around the country’; and
• The capacity to deliver UBE had been enhanced by staff training at SUBEB and LGEA level, including the introduction of ICT (UBEC 2012a: xv–xvii).

While the above indicate positive steps toward implementation, the report also highlighted a ‘myriad of challenges’:

Inadequate funding, insufficient sensitization and mobilization, lack of political will on the part of some stakeholders, delays in implementing UBE projects, corruption and lack of accountability in funds utilization, confusion about the goals of UBE, appointment of unqualified and incompetent personnel in some SUBEBs, nepotism, lack of reliable data, apathy on the part of community members … (ibid. xvii).

Suggestions for how to overcome some of these challenges included: a reduction in bureaucracy in the UBE system; continued consultation of stakeholders even after policy approval to sustain political will for implementation; increased funding and more effective management of funds; increased support for monitoring UBE to maintain transparency; and the institution of strategic planning in SUBEBs and LGEAs (ibid.).

6.3 The structure and governance of public education in Nigeria

The Nigerian education system is decentralised under a federal structure and public education is the simultaneous responsibility of the federal, state, and local governments, with the fast-growing private sector also a major player. FGN has the dominant role in the provision of tertiary education, state governments provide mainly senior secondary and regionally focused tertiary education, and local governments provide basic education. At both the federal and state levels, a large collection of parastatals is responsible for the implementation of education policies (FME 2011a).

Constitutionally, both the federal and state governments legislate on the planning, organisation and management of education. Primary, secondary, adult and non-formal education are managed jointly by the LGAs and the states. FGN is responsible for policy-making and the enforcement of standards at the primary and secondary levels (for example, through school inspections; see Section 11.4) but also owns and manages many tertiary institutions. States also establish and manage universities and tertiary institutions (FME 2011a).

The National Council on Education (NCE) is the highest policy-making organ and its members include the Federal Minister of Education and all state commissioners of education (i.e. the heads of SMoEs). It approves a national curriculum for primary and secondary education, determines policies on all aspects and levels of education and receives feedback on the delivery of EFA. It also sets standards for quality assurance and guidelines for national examinations for primary and secondary schools. It advised FGN to establish the UBEC and the SUBEBs to ensure effective implementation of EFA (ibid.).
6.3.1 Federal level

The FME and UBEC provide leadership through broad policy guidance, setting national standards and providing a regulatory framework. These efforts are often made more difficult by the large number of parastatals (over 20), some of which have overlapping mandates in the education sector (Santcross et al., 2010; FME 2011a). The PTTE highlighted the need to determine and address the extent of the overlaps among various parastatals’ functions as well as overlaps with various ministry departments (FME 2011a).

As noted above, UBEC is FGN’s agency responsible for the coordination of all aspects of UBE’s implementation. UBEC manages the FGN–UBE Intervention Fund, which contains a mandatory 2% of the FGN budget (the Consolidated Revenue Fund) and is the primary source of federal funding for basic education. Half of UBEC’s funds are distributed equally on an annual basis to all states that match funding (50/50) via SUBEBs, although states’ funds often remain unaccessed (UBEC 2012a).

6.3.2 State level

Basic education is managed by the SMoE, SUBEB and the LGEA, with the FME providing policy guidance.

The SUBEBs represent UBEC and manage most non-salary education spending. The SUBEBs, together with the SMoEs and a number of implementing agencies, form the state-level education system. The relative independence of each SMoE and each SUBEB means that no two states have exactly the same systems for the provision of quality basic education.

The 2004 UBE Act allows for the enactment of SUBEB laws by the State House of Assembly; as a result, there are variations in the UBE laws among the states. While some states place JSSs under the control of the SUBEB, others put them under the management of the SMoE. States also follow different modalities in appointing the LGEA secretaries. In addition to SUBEB chairs and LGEA secretaries, some state governors appoint special assistants on basic education, further complicating reporting lines.

6.3.3 Local government level

Each LGA is run by a Local Government Council, headed by the Local Government Council Chair, who is appointed by the state governor. The LGA’s primary responsibility in education delivery is to provide funds for primary teachers’ salaries in its area as well as for non-teaching staff. The LGEA established in each LGA is headed by the Education Secretary (ES), often working under the control of the SUBEB.
Table 6.1  Education-related responsibilities of the three tiers of government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-sector</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td>- Implementation through SUBEBs</td>
<td>Management of primary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Early Childhood Care &amp; Development</td>
<td>- Allocation of resources through UBEC</td>
<td>- SMoEs are responsible for policy formulation and inspectorate services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Primary</td>
<td>- Maintenance of standards (inspection and monitoring) (FIS)</td>
<td>(In Kano the Sharia Commission is responsible for registering Islamiyya Schools and will be involved in the development of their curriculum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Junior Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Secondary</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Curriculum</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Inspectorate</td>
<td>- Inspectorate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Examinations through WAEC and NECO</td>
<td>- Technical colleges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Management of unity schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary education</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td>- Universities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Universities</td>
<td>- Polytechnics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Polytechnics</td>
<td>- Colleges of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Colleges of education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Coordination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>- Policy</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Framework (FME 2007: 7)

6.3.4 School-based management

At the local level, SBMCs were introduced in 2005 and are designed to improve the accountability of schools to local communities and support the development and quality of schools. SBMCs should be comprised of the head teacher, teacher and pupil representatives, and elected community representatives, including female and youth representation. In practice, however, there are sometimes question marks about the selection and composition of SBMCs (Dunne et al. 2013).

Although SBMCs are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 13, a brief overview is given here. SBMCs, where they exist, are generally performing well in mobilising community financial contributions to schools and getting parents involved in planning, decision-making, and monitoring teaching and learning when supported by LGEAs and development grants (Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnockk 2012). However, in areas where there has been little or no outside impetus, SBMCs are largely not functioning (ActionAid 2011; Antoninis 2010; Dunne et al. 2013). In their Adamawa-based study, Dunne et al. (2013) found some evidence of SBMCs raising funds but very little evidence of SBMCs systematically fulfilling the functions of providing a community voice in school management, improving
quality, or improving accountability. Importantly, SBMCs are not a replacement for government involvement, and funding for SBMCs remains inadequate (Adediran 2010).

A survey of ESSPIN states in 2010 found that SBMCs had barely been introduced in Lagos and that in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano only one in three schools had held an SBMC meeting more than once in the last year (Antoninis 2010). Even by the mid-term survey less than half of the Phase 1 schools (i.e. those involved since the pilot project) were found to have functioning SBMCs, with far lower percentages of participation in other schools in the ESSPIN-supported states (ESSPIN 2013a).

More recently, in Bauchi and Sokoto, the NEI has been working on expanding community involvement in school governance through community education forums, which involve existing community structures working with SBMCs at the local level with a state-level forum to channel the various forums’ concerns to the state (Larcom et al. 2013).

6.4 Public financial management in the education sector

Understanding education finance in Nigeria is complicated by the federal structure of government. There is no single up-to-date consolidated picture of planned education spending at both federal and state level. Federal and state budgets are published separately, and even then actual spending deviates significantly from budgeted levels (Hinchliffe 2002; Odoko and Nnanna 2008).

The most recent PTTE report was highly critical and focused on the financing of education, identifying the following issues of major concern:

- FGN ministry, department and agency budgets are often undermined by what is seen as an arbitrary budget ‘envelope’;
- There has been a recent widening of the gap between the ‘real budget’ (the money that is actually released for project/programme implementation) and the ‘apparent budget’ (figures that are published and publicised);
- Information is not available on the guidelines for allocating resources to various domains of expenditure (capital, recurrent and overheads);
- Funds are tied to concrete activities and deliverables to a certain extent in the capital budgets, but not in the recurrent and overheads budgets;
- The bulk of the education sector budget is devoted to ‘oiling the system’ (recurrent expenditure), to the relative neglect of developing the system (capital expenditure);
- Budget preparation is done in secret, involving only a small number of government officials;
- Budgeted funds are often released late or not at all; and
- There is currently no synergy among different funding sources (FME 2011a: 37–38).

The most recent public expenditure review of the education sector (World Bank 2008) also held that the current process of formulating and executing budgets is unreliable and poorly organised. The review found that the financing of key inputs is unpredictable, reflecting a lack of clarity regarding which level of government is responsible. According to the report, the budgets of most states are based on an outdated system: the policy, programming, and budget functions are not fully integrated; there is little policy debate on spending decisions; budget execution is ineffective; budget performance is hampered by the short time horizon of the annual budget; and investment budgets are not integrated. In addition, states face an acute shortage of the technical and human capacity needed to design and implement reforms, which is partly due to problems in attracting qualified, experienced professionals and partly due to politically driven appointments taking some precedence over qualifications. Several states are attempting to improve their budget systems but, in general, states vary in their reform efforts (Santcross
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et al. 2010). ESSPIN support has improved the information available to state governments but this has yet to be reflected in budget outcomes (Packer et al. 2011).

6.4.1 Levels of education spending

As the 2004 ESA put it: ‘Sourcing the data on public expenditure on education is like trying to pass an elephant through a needle’s eye’ (FME 2005: 231). It is incredibly difficult as it is not normal practice to put such information in the public domain (FME 2011a) and therefore it is unsurprising that estimates of overall public spending on education vary widely, from around 1% of GDP up to 5% (Acosta 2012) and even over 7% (FME 2011a). Others (e.g. Santcross et al. 2010) have concluded that there are no plausible estimates of the total financial resources required to achieve UBE.

The 2004 ESA was even more pessimistic, declaring:

There is no reliable information on the total annual expenditure on education by each tier of government in the last 40 years. The dearth of reliable recorders of expenditure, especially at the state level, and the multiplicity of accounting system across 36 states would make nonsense of any effort at collecting, collating and analyzing financial records (FME 2005: 31).

Despite the lack of reliable data, the PTTE (FME 2011a) calculated that the education budget comprised 7.6% of total federal spending, as averaged out between 2008 and 2010; this broke down into 5% of the total federal spending and 11% of total recurrent spending, showing a decreasing trend.

As well as there being no robust estimate of financing requirements, there is also no up-to-date consolidated picture of present planned or actual expenditure by all levels of government. A study in 2006/07 that estimated overall spending on education based on a sample of just nine states found that:

- Public expenditure was split roughly
  - 32% on primary;
  - 31% on secondary; and
  - 30% on tertiary (with the remainder spread across other activities).
- Of total expenditures:
  - State governments funded 43%;
  - FGN funded 31%; and
  - Local governments funded 26% (Bennell et al. 2007).

Oil revenues are divided roughly 54% to FGN, 31% to state governments, and 15% to local government. In 2005 these federal account transfers made up 71% of total revenue for states and 91% for local government (Eboh et al. 2006).

There is no single source of information on teacher salaries, which form the largest single item of expenditure on education (2013) and which vary by state. Teacher salaries are discussed in more detail in Chapter 10.

6.4.2 Federal government expenditure

FGN expenditure on education has been increasing. In real terms, the budget for education increased by 47% between 2001 and 2006 and the sector’s share of total FGN expenditure increased from 11.7% to 14.5%. Most expenditure is for tertiary education through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund. Funded by a 2% tax on private company profits, the fund disperses directly to federal and state tertiary education institutions.19

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19 See www.tetfund.gov.ng
However, recurrent expenditures on education increased sharply in 2005 and 2006 largely as a result of the introduction of the FGN–UBE Intervention Fund and the Virtual Poverty Fund. Although the latter is no longer in operation, the Conditional Grants to Local Governments scheme is another potential source of federal income for primary education. Funded by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the MDGs from Debt Relief Gains, states and LGAs can apply annually to access funds for development projects related to the MDGs, so primarily in health, primary education, water and sanitation. The NGN 100 million from FGN needs to be matched in total by the state and beneficiary LGA.

6.4.3 State and local government expenditure

Basic education in Nigeria is funded by federal, state and local government. Although the main responsibility for financing is at state level, states and local governments rely heavily on federal transfers for their revenues. The total revenues of state and local governments in Nigeria have amounted to not more than 5% of total government revenues (World Bank 2008).

Funding of education was increased following the introduction of the FGN–UBE Intervention Fund, which FGN uses to support the delivery of basic education at the state level. The fund is divided into five main categories:

- **Matching grants to states** – 50% of the fund is divided equally among the 36 states (and the FCT) that match the funding and have submitted, and had approved, state action plans;

The remaining 50% of the funds available to states are allocated to the following specific areas of development in the given proportions:

- **Imbalance funds** – 14% aimed at addressing disparities in educational development among states and among communities within the Educationally Disadvantaged States (the 14% is itself divided among the following programmes: 70% for community-initiated self-help programmes, 10% for the all-girls schools initiative, and 20% for the National Almajirai Education Programme);

- **Good performance grant** – 5%;

- **Special needs grant** – 2%, aimed at supporting children with special needs in inclusive education;

- **Provision of instructional materials** – 15%;

- **Teacher professional development** – 10%, focused on methodology and content, with a preference for localised, cluster-based CPD;

- **UBE implementation fund** – 2%; and

- **UBE monitoring fund** – 2% (UBEC 2012b).

States do not always manage to access the funds, however. Reasons for this include states’ lack of clarity regarding the regulations (UBEC 2012b) and their low capacity to make evidence-based education plans to meet requirements, excessively strict rules for accessing funds, and competition between state governments and SUBEBs for control over funds (Schiffer et al. 2013). While acknowledging the need to increase funding to achieve UBE, UBEC’s impact assessment noted that:

Up to August 2010, there used to be in excess of N60 billion in the Central Bank as un-accessed funds … with some states failing to access funds for as many as four years running (UBEC 2012a: 295).

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20 There are 24 Educationally Disadvantaged States, including all the states in the three northern geo-political zones, the FCT, Ebonyi in the South East, and Akwa Ibom, Bayalesa, Cross River and Rivers states in the South South.
That said, state governments spent a total of NGN 256 billion on education in 2010 (0.9% of GDP) (Central Bank of Nigeria 2011) but variations in expenditure on education across states and local governments are very wide – ranging from 15% to 27%, with even greater variation across local governments of between 12% and 34%. Education expenditure shares tend to be significantly higher in the southern states than in the northern states (World Bank 2008).

With Lagos State as an exception, around 85–90% of all state government expenditures and around 90–95% of all local government expenditures are funded through transfers from the Federation Account (see Table 6.2). These allocations are distributed equally across states but topped up with some allowance for factors such as differences in population and land area, and the contribution of the state to oil revenues.

### Table 6.2  Allocation of the Federation Account as a percentage of total state government revenue in SEPER states, 2000–2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross River</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td></td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCT</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td></td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank 2008 (taken from Bennell et al. 2007, and SEPER reports)

Notes: Data from state ministries of finance. The ‘SEPER states’ are the nine states for which a State Education Public Expenditure Review is available.

As highlighted earlier, there are no accurate data on public expenditure in education in Nigeria because of a lack of information on the education expenditures of state and local governments (Freinkman 2007; FME 2011a). Although Bennell et al.’s (2007) nine-state Public Expenditure Review has partially addressed this issue, gaps still exist in collating the total expenditure on education from both the federal and state governments. Within the existing structure, there is no constitutional obligation for state governments to provide funding information, yet transparency in funding is critical in order to obtain a broad picture of funding, as well as to enforce accountability (ibid.).

#### 6.4.4 Donor funding for education

Aside from debt relief, total external aid to Nigeria has been comparatively small (around 1.5% of total government expenditure). Between 1999 and 2005, the average annual commitment to the education sector was USD 69 million and in 2006 it was USD 80 million – around just 7% of all sector allocable aid, and (very) roughly 1% of total public expenditure on education. There was a major increase in 2007 to USD 489 million – including USD 249 million from the International Development Association and USD 211 million (over six years) from the UK. However, as the PTTE points out, non-FGN financial contributions are not captured in government budgets in education (FME 2011a).
Box 6.1 Recent donor initiatives

Major recent international donor initiatives in education include the following:

**DFID – Capacity Building for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) 2006–2008** – Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, and federal level – technical assistance provided to improve policy planning. Many lessons were learnt through CUBE, which helped to inform the design of ESSPIN, and achievements were made, although the project completion report makes clear that the planning, governance, implementation and monitoring of education policy were seriously inadequate (CUBE 2008).

**DFID – Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) 2008–2012** – Working in five northern states and Lagos and implemented by a consortium of private companies and NGOs, this programme provided support to state governments with the key aim of school improvement.

**DFID – Girl’s Education Programme – 2012–2019 (GEP III)** – Now in its third phase, all implemented by UNICEF, this programme provides support to five northern states, with a focus on raising the educational participation of girls. GEP I ran from 2007 to 2009 and GEP II ran from 2009 to 2012.

**JICA – Japan Grant Aid Project 2004–2008** – operated in Niger, Plateau and Kaduna states, with school infrastructural development being the main strand of support. A total of 70 new primary schools were built across the states using a new, improved design that used local materials, was low on maintenance and more durable. Furniture, water and sanitation facilities were also provided, as well as a soft component in training on operation and maintenance. Training on Maths and Science teaching at primary level was another JICA programme.

The external evaluation on the school construction project was positive in Kaduna, where the proper maintenance training had taken place, but more cautious in Plateau and Niger states where changes in the SUBEB personnel meant the appropriate training had not always taken place, meaning some schools were already showing signs of poor maintenance. In addition, the aim of helping to reduce class size by supplying more classrooms was not achieved due to a rise in primary enrolments that was higher than anticipated. Indeed, the increase was said to be partly due to the new facilities (Takahashi 2010).

**USAID – Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) 2004–2009** – operated in four states (Bauchi, Lagos, Kano, and Nasarawa) to increase access to education and health care. The programme was implemented by a consortium of NGOs led by Pathfinder International and focused on direct delivery of services rather than working through government systems. It included radio instruction, teacher training, community mobilisation, school grants, and school health programmes.

The external review concluded that: the consortium approach had been cumbersome, expensive and difficult to manage; capacity-building elements had failed to build sufficient capacity; the geographical spread had been over-ambitious; it was futile to try to integrate the administration of health and education; the in-service teacher education at school level had been insufficient to effect change; and self-help grants to PTAs had been inadequate to significantly improve the learning environment (Holfeld et al. 2008). More positively, the review considered the pre-service teacher education programme to have been more effective and noted its success in establishing good relationships and social mobilisation at the community level (ibid.)

**USAID – Northern Education Initiative (NEI) 2009–2013** – operating in Sokoto and Bauchi, the project aimed to strengthen local government capacity to deliver quality basic education by focusing on strengthening local government capacity to deliver basic education and increasing access of OVCs to

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21 Programmes starting in 2013 are not included, for example DFID’s LOCOPE and TDP programmes, USAID’s teacher development programme, and the Global Partnership for Education.
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basic education. The EGRA and EGMA assessment programmes, which have provided valuable assessment data, especially regarding the comparison between IQTE and mainstream government schools, were also carried out as part of NEI (see USAID 2013 a, b and c).

The mid-term evaluation (Larcom et al. 2013) stated that NEI had had a positive impact: establishing non-formal learning centres; setting up community education forums (which build on SBMCs and existing village structures) at LGA and state level, which had reportedly helped states to accept civil society contributions to policy development; and undertaking OVC interventions such as strengthening the OVC support teams (although the increase in internally displaced people from the conflicts in neighbouring states had increased the pressure on resources). It was also recognised, however, that many of the developments were at incipient stages.

6.5 Other issues in educational governance

6.5.1 Provision of infrastructure

New school buildings, repairs and extensions, and learning materials are the joint responsibility of both local and state governments; however, in practice most funds for these purposes derive from the state governments (Santcross et al. 2010). In general, the SUBEB is responsible for primary schools’ and JSSs’ infrastructure but there is some overlap with the SMoEs, which results in duplication and dilution of responsibility (Coppinger 2009). This is particularly an issue for JSSs, which fall under UBE as provided centrally by the SUBEB and are covered as part of the ‘traditional’ six years of secondary education provided by state governments.

Ikoya and Onoyase (2008) carried out a survey of 650 schools nationwide, documenting the generally poor and inadequate state of schools’ physical infrastructure (see Section 3.3). One of the issues they identified as a barrier to improvement is over-centralised procurement, with individual schools having insufficient control over new capital spending.

Funding for infrastructure is allocated according to unreliable enrolment data, which may be artificially inflated by schools aiming to receive more money (ActionAid 2011). Moreover, there are often long delays to disbursement (Ikoya 2008; UBEC 2012a). In addition, the awarding of construction contracts can lack transparency, sometimes resulting in sub-standard constructions (Ikoya 2008; Coppinger 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

6.5.2 Staffing

LGEAs are headed by a local government ES, who in most states is appointed by the executive governor and, in a few states, on the recommendation of the local government executive chair. Local government ESs are thus political appointees, who are nevertheless required to have a professional educational background, and may serve up to two four-year terms (Santcross et al. 2010).

Local school supervisors are employed to play a key role in the regular supervision and support of schools in their areas. In practice, however, limited budgets mean they have little access to transport, with the result that schools receive variable and infrequent support (UBEC 2012a). Primary and JSS teachers are employed by the SUBEBs and the LGEAs (Santcross et al. 2010), with LGEAs the main employers (FME 2011a).

Local governments are charged with paying the salaries of primary school teachers, but the payment of JSS teachers still lies with the state governments (albeit with some lack of clarity about the division of responsibilities between the SUBEB and SMoE) (Santcross et al. 2010).
Within SMoEs, two reviews of staff capacity found ‘poor job definitions and inappropriate work methods and procedures’ (Orbach 2004), as well as:

... a lack of clear of roles and responsibilities and overlapping functions between departments; a high proportion of ex-teachers with no management training working in senior positions; no functioning appraisal or performance management system and few professional development opportunities for individuals (Johnson et al. 2007).

The need to improve teacher recruitment, management, and training has been highlighted in several government reviews (e.g. FME 2005; FME 2011a). Thomas (2011) notes that there is no process for effective planning for the placement of teachers, which is centrally driven, leading to an unequal distribution between LGEAs. Appointments are often politicised or based on personal influence. Assessment processes need strengthening, as do promotion procedures and opportunities for professional development (see Section 10. 2).

Citing a World Bank study on the staffing situation in 26 local governments in 13 states in Nigeria, the 2004 ESA concluded that, ‘there is hardly any discernible norm for recruitment and deployment of staff across the states’ (FME 2005: 234).

6.5.3 Monitoring and evaluation

As already highlighted several times in this review, the lack of accurate data for the education sector – nationally and at state levels – is widely acknowledged in Nigeria and regarded as a major problem by both federal and state governments in carrying out M&E (FME 2005; FME 2011a; UBEC 2012a). Santcross et al. (2010) argue, however, that there is a slowly growing demand for better data, as some state governments realise they need an evidence base for decision-making and informed planning.

Abalu et al. (2013) make the case that there is latent capability in M&E that is not utilised. They argue that M&E could be politically successful if framed in terms of enhancing politicians’ credibility and as a means of improving learning about policy rather than enforcing accountability. Despite these optimistic assessments about future possibilities, however, they do note that at present there is very little monitoring of spending and outputs, or evaluation of public policy.

Findlay (2013) reviewed the ASC, which informs the EMIS and provides information on school enrolment. The ASC/EMIS was judged to be poorly implemented in many states. The EMIS was decentralised to states in 2007 with little support or additional funding from FGN. However, Findlay reported some improvement in states supported through ESSPIN, although it is worth reiterating the point that any improvement at LGEA and state level in the EMIS offices will be undermined if individual head teachers do not produce reliable, school-level data; data on teacher and head teacher record-keeping suggests that this is a concern (see Section 11.2).

Information on the number of teachers and their qualifications is more accurate and is collected through the teacher payroll managed by the SUBEBs, although this will not include teachers who are hired locally, paid for by PTAs, for example, or who work in private schools.

Mezger (2013) reviewed the several household surveys that also estimate enrolment levels, noting that many provide inconsistent numbers.

There is no regular data collection on learning achievement, but some ad hoc surveys (e.g. MLA, NAUBE, EGRA, etc.) do provide some information. Results from these surveys were summarised in Section 5.3.

The poor state of expenditure data has been discussed above.
6.6 Political economy analysis

Several donor-funded programmes in education and other social sectors have invested in PEA in order to understand the key drivers of change and to inform their engagement with government. For example, DFID’s State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) has used PEA to make decisions to cut spending where it has been determined that there is a political blockage; SPARC has also used PEA to inform the design of its activities as it has expanded into new states.

A report on the use of PEA across DFID’s state-level programmes (DFID 2011) found that PEA has been useful for understanding the context and informing the design of programmes, specifically involving identifying and understanding the role of politically influential individuals (and to some extent groups and organisations) in each state. It therefore facilitated the design of approaches to advocacy and relationship building.

6.6.1 The role of state governors

As highlighted above, several papers identify the role of state governors as critical in determining policy and spending priorities (e.g. Santcross et al. 2010; SPARC 2012; DFID 2013 a, b, and c; Schiffer et al. 2013).

OPM (2011) looked at the political context for healthcare reform in the states of Adamawa, Nasarawa and Ondo. They found that common features across the three states were the dominant political position of the governor (in terms of control of policy, finance and patronage) and the lack of effective autonomy of local government. Schiffer et al.’s (2013) analysis of non-salary funding in Kano State also found that education spending was determined primarily by the political interests of the state governor, although whether states access UBEC funding was also found to be pivotal (see also UBEC 2012a).

6.6.2 Local networks and funding

Schiffer et al.’s (2013) mapping of networks (netmapping) and power relations in the Kano study also showed how, in the absence of appropriate state funding, schools rely on informal ‘local resilience networks’ to manage volatile resource flows, meaning that the financial and material support a school receives can vary widely between schools depending on their success in building relationships with community groups, NGOs, and international donors and using informal connections to government agencies to increase their resources. This can widen disparities in funding between better-connected schools that can access funds and those with weaker networks (ibid.).

6.6.3 Strengthening capacity and improving accountability

DFID’s PEA to inform the Mobilising for the Millennium Development Goals (M4M) project (DFID 2013b, c and d) focused on case studies of the drivers of change in two LGAs in Jigawa and Kano states. These studies supported the view that state government and particularly the governor play a central role, noting that local governments are almost entirely upwardly accountable to state governments from whom they receive the bulk of their funding, via the LGA. This, combined with the fact that there is limited involvement of civil society in policy and planning, means that there is very little downward accountability between service providers and service users (Santcross et al. 2010; DFID 2013 b, c and d).

Politically driven decision-making is compounded by low capacity within state governments (in particular planning departments); that is to say that, even where political interest in reform exists, the capacity for effective prioritisation, planning and budgeting is low (Santcross et al. 2010).
6.6.4 Overlapping responsibilities at state level

As highlighted earlier, rapid decentralisation has led to overlapping responsibilities, leading in turn to confusion, weakened accountability and duplication of effort (Orbach 2004; Freinkman 2007; FME 2011a). The powerful SUBEBs, as state branches of the federal UBEC, are often in conflict with SMoEs (Obanya 2011).

In their review of education decentralisation in Africa, Winkler and Gershberg (2003) judged Nigeria to be a ‘textbook case in how not to decentralize,’ with limited delineation of authority and responsibility undermining accountability. Freinkman (2007) also highlighted the poor coordination between different levels of government and between agencies at the same level, resulting in duplication of effort and neglected areas. The 2004 ESA had earlier offered the same conclusions, citing the example of school inspections as one area in which there was duplication of effort, at the expense of teacher development (FME 2005:3; also see Box 6.2).

The World Bank Quantitative Service Delivery Survey in Kaduna and Enugu asked head teachers and local government education area directors to identify who has the power to make decisions regarding 16 different issues, and found a widespread lack of shared understanding (Berryman and Gueorguieva 2007).

The World Bank (2007) also commented on the challenges that rapid decentralisation has created. Due to capacity constraints at the sub-national level there has been a slower pace of public financial management reforms in states, as well as weak intergovernmental coordination.

Box 6.2 Overlapping responsibilities, duplication of effort and accountability

A prime example of overlapping responsibilities and duplication of effort concerns the function of school supervision, as detailed in a World Bank report (Orbach 2004):

At the federal level, there is a Federal Inspectorate Service with 1,296 staff that supervises the schools and also grants accreditation and certification. UBEC has a fully-fledged Monitoring & Evaluation department, responsible for monitoring all aspects of the primary education programs. Ten zonal offices across the country aid this department, each supervising three to four states. Monitoring officers at these zones visit the State Primary Education Boards (SPEBs) as well as the primary schools. SPEBs have School Services Departments whose officers too inspect the schools. In addition, the consultants report that it is common for the permanent board members of SPEBs to visit the schools and/or to go over the visitation reports of other officers who visit the schools and report to the chairmen of the boards. Most, if not all, SMoEs too conduct inspections in the primary schools. As indicated above, many SMoEs have organizational units dedicated to Primary education, and these include primary sub-units within their Inspectorate Departments. LGEAs too have school supervisors who visit the schools and compile school reports. Finally, in many cases, SPEBs and SMoEs have special monitoring teams set up to monitor specific projects and programs.

With all these supervision activities, there seems to be no shared, coherent and complementary vision for school supervision within the states and between them. Even fundamental policy matters require attention. For example, supervision has many objectives: to provide pedagogical support to the teachers, to monitor the quality of instruction in the schools to check on the condition of physical facilities, to verify that government policies, rules and regulation are being met, and to monitor the progress of specific plans and programs. The various parties that conduct supervision need to carefully consider these objectives and consciously select a focus for each. They need to complement each other. The consultants’ reports and the documentary materials suggest that there is little coordination among them and that everybody seems to be doing a bit of everything. While some

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22 Now replaced by the current SUBEBs.
schools are visited quite frequently, others ‘have not seen an inspector or any other official for years.’ There is also no evidence that much is being done with all the evidence being collected.

Source: Orbach (2004: 20–21)

6.6.5 Uneven distribution of funds

There are wide state and district variations in government spending, affecting the supply and location of schools (Santcross et al. 2010; UBEC 2012a). Per student spending differs substantially among states. Federal transfers to states are based on various factors, including state oil generation, population, land, and local revenue generation.

State and local governments have considerable political and fiscal autonomy. State governments run independent fiscal and budgetary systems, and are not required to inform or seek approval from FGN on their budget, fiscal performance, or allocation of resources. No national framework encompasses budgets at all tiers (Santcross et al. 2010).

At the school level, many schools do not receive any funding at all. The 2010 ESSPIN schools survey found that a third of schools in Kaduna and Kano and almost half of primary schools in Jigawa received no financial support from either government or the local community (Antoninis 2010). Where SBMCs and other community networks are encouraged or expected to make up for some of this funding shortfall from the community there is a risk of exacerbating existing inequalities, in which the poorest and least well connected communities are least able to support local schools (Poulsen 2009; Schiffer et al. 2013).

The uneven distribution of funds has often been ascribed to politicised funding (Adelabu 2005; Ikoya 2008; Ikoya and Onoyase 2008; Williams 2009) or to the mismanagement or diversion of funds (UBEC 2012a).

In UBEC’s impact assessment, stakeholders across the states identified rural schools and communities in particular as receiving less funding (UBEC 2012a).

6.6.6 Procedure for appointments

Various education officials and school staff members have complained in interviews that appointments at state, local government and school level are sometimes made for political reasons, with unqualified teachers being appointed perhaps for immediate financial savings (Sherry 2008; Williams 2009; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013). Teacher appointments can be made in various official ways (Thomas 2011) but are prone to political interference, even from the state governor, with implications for capacity, trust and competence (Bennell et al. 2007; see also Section 10.3).

Box 6.3 A new politics in Lagos?

Kingsmill et al. (2012) argue that a ‘new politics’ based on service delivery is beginning to emerge in Lagos and that, although this has not yet extended to the education sector, it nevertheless could do in the future (the emphasis has so far been on crime and security).

SPARC 2012 carried out a PEA of nine states, three of which are covered by EDOREN: Katsina, Zamfara, and Lagos. The study concluded that Lagos stands out significantly from the others as one in which there is a substantial middle class and business class who pay sizeable taxes and have an interest in holding the state accountable for service delivery. Some of the other states may have individual governors who are interested in promoting effective service delivery but without a political
constituency pushing for it, these all face the risk that a change in governor could easily stall any reform effort.

6.7 Issues arising and gaps in evidence

The absence, unavailability and/or unreliability of data are again highlighted as major impediments to financing education.

Evidence is sparse on how much money is spent by governments on education, and on how it is spent. A deeper understanding is needed of public expenditure on education, on the relationship between planning and budgeting systems, and on their relationship with pupils’ learning outcomes.

There are also issues around blockages in flows of information between levels of government and schools and the public.

Little is documented about what constraints (political, technical, organisational, and capacity related) exist that hinder better planning and implementation of education budgets. Detailed state-specific research on this would be highly relevant.

Although there is currently very limited available information, education development programmes would benefit from more in-depth PEA at the planning stage.

Most accountability is upwards to higher levels of government rather than outwards toward communities, although decentralised school governance through SBMCs is attempting to address this. Crucial to its success are consistent funding and LGEA support (see Section 13.4).

The netmapping methodology used in the Kano study (Schiffer et al. 2013) would seem to be a productive research methodology that could be applied to other states in order to capture the complexity of official and informal power relations within the system that affect resource distribution and blockages in resource flow.

Evidence Strength Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of evidence:</th>
<th>Size of body of evidence:</th>
<th>Consistency of results:</th>
<th>Closely matched to topic:</th>
<th>Overall assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low/medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 7: PROVIDERS OF NON-STATE, NON-FORMAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

7.1 Introduction

Policy in regard to non-state providers of basic education is set by the 2004 National Policy of Education (FME 2004a: 17), which states that:

Government welcomes the contributions of voluntary agencies, communities and private individuals in the establishment and management of primary schools alongside those provided by the state and local governments, as long as they meet the minimum standards laid down by the Federal Government.

Furthermore, the UBEC impact assessment concluded that there should be an ‘expanded role for private schools’ (UBEC 2012a).

Across Nigeria, around a quarter of primary school pupils are enrolled in private schools, some of which are religious (NPC and RTI International 2011). The bulk of the pupils in religious schools are Muslim children attending Qur’anic schools, which in parts of the country are being integrated into the public school system to varying extents.

The chapter first considers for-profit private schools before looking at religious schools and ECCE. Strictly speaking, ECCE should not be a topic of focus in this chapter as it has now become part of the government commitment to basic education; however, since it was initiated in the private sector and is still predominantly provided by non-state providers, it is included here.

The spotlight then turns to adult NFE provided by the government for those who have missed out on basic education. NFE focuses on basic literacy training and is overseen by the NMEC. We then report on schooling for nomadic populations, before considering educational provision for pupils with disabilities.

7.2 School choice

NEDS 2010 contains some analysis of the factors affecting school choice, finding that 72% of pupils attend the primary school closest to their house. There are substantial urban/rural differences in this regard, however, reflecting the greater choice of nearby school afforded by dense population in the large cities (NPC and RTI International 2011). Children from poorer households are also more likely to attend the school closest to their house than children from wealthier households. When asked directly about the reasons for choice of primary school, proximity was in general the most common response (53% of parents), followed by school quality (30%) and cost (13%), with only 1% reporting religious or security issues.

Quality and price are more important factors for wealthier households and in the wealthier southern regions. Proximity is more important for poorer households and in the poorer northern regions, where there is likely to be less choice and distances to school are longer. Interestingly, religion and security are consistently rare reasons given for school choice by all different kinds of households (ibid.).

At secondary level (both JSS and Secondary School), the 2010 NEDS notes that school quality takes priority over distance to school (44% to 32%), followed by cost (21%). Once again, security and religion pay insignificant roles in school choice (NPC and RTI International 2011).
7.3 For-profit private schools

According to the 2010 NEDS, around a quarter of primary school pupils attend private schools, including both secular and religious private schools (see Table 7.1). This is considerably higher in urban areas (44%) than rural areas (17%) and in the southern states (NPC and RTI International 2011). The percentage of children attending private schools is also increasing, up from 20% in 2004 (ibid.). This is particularly true for Nigeria’s major cities. Most of the evidence on private schooling in this section is based on research carried out in Lagos State.

Lagos State has a particularly high number of low-fee private schools – around 10,000 primary schools measured by the official 2011/12 Lagos School Census, compared with just 1,000 public primary schools (Lagos SMoE 2012). This may be an underestimation of private schools if small, unregistered schools are not counted. The census counts 54% of primary students as attending private school while an earlier ESSPIN study (Härmä 2011a) on Lagos State found closer to 60% attending private schools, and an even earlier 2003 school census estimated this number as being up to 75% of children attending private schools, including unregistered schools (Tooley et al. 2005).

Table 7.1 Distribution of primary school pupils by school type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>% at public schools</th>
<th>% at private schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>% at public schools</th>
<th>% at private schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>% at public schools</th>
<th>% at private schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011)

7.3.1 Why do parents choose private schools?

The main reason for choosing private over public schooling is that parents/guardians perceive private schools to be better quality (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Tooley and Dixon 2005; Adebayo 2009; Härmä 2011a and 2013; NPC and RTI International 2011) and have become disenchanted with the quality of schooling on offer in the public sector (FME 2005; Härmä 2013).

Certainly, low-fee private schooling offers several advantages over public schooling, including: a greater combined provision of pre-primary with primary schooling (Urwick 2002; Tooley et al. 2005); generally lower PTRs; and greater teacher accountability to parents (Tooley et al. 2005; Härmä 2011a, 2013), although the percentage of qualified teachers is likely to be lower (FME 2005; Härmä 2011a). An additional draw of private education is that it often offers English as the MOI throughout primary school (thus
ignoring the ‘mother-tongue’ policy for years 1 to 3) (Onuka and Arowojulu 2008; Salami 2008), with the social advantages that that is perceived to bring.

7.3.2 Quality

A survey of the parents of children in private secondary schools by Adebayo (2009) explores the reasons for these parents’ choices, finding that parents perceived private schools to provide better quality education because of better motivated teachers and better facilities.

In an examination of the factors that determine parents'/guardians’ patronage of private primary schools in Ogun State, Abeokuta et al. (2009) found the following considerations to be most important: teachers’ perceived dedication to work; the high level of discipline among teachers and pupils; the early opportunity to train a child; good physical facilities; and teaching and use of English as the MOI. Cost did not deter parents from enrolling their wards or children once the above factors were present.

Tooley and Dixon’s (2005) survey in Lagos State found that teachers spend more time teaching in private schools, and that the schools offered comparable or better infrastructure. Their survey also found substantially better pupil test scores at both unregistered and registered private schools.

The ESSPIN study (Härmä 2011a), also in Lagos State, likewise explored the reasons behind parent choice, concluding that, although government schools are cheaper, parents perceived government school teachers to be lacking in motivation, to deliver poor learning outcomes, and to be unresponsive to parents and children as customers. Interestingly, proprietors or head teachers of private schools in the study expressed very little concern about the quality of teaching (Härmä 2011b).

The 2011/12 Lagos ASC shows that class sizes are substantially larger in public than in private schools (Lagos SMoE 2012).

Larbi et al. (2004) found that the private schools visited in Lagos and Enugu were less affected by teacher absenteeism due to moonlighting and strikes, and un-unionised unqualified teachers are cheaper and easier to fire for poor performance. Even so, they concluded that there was very little evidence on the actual quality of teaching and learning, which, even if better than public schools, ‘may not be good enough’ (Larbi et al. 2004). This view is endorsed by parents/guardians in Härmä’s Lagos study in which 95% of parents thought private schools needed to improve despite their greater propensity to choose private schooling (Härmä 2013).

More classroom-based research still needs to be done to evaluate the actual quality of teaching and learning across the range of private schools.

The midline survey carried out in Kano, Lagos, and Nasarawa for the USAID COMPASS project (Keating 2007) found that private schools were much more likely to have basic infrastructure and furniture than public schools, although fewer than 10% of both public and private schools had any basic instructional materials. The argument that private schools generally have better infrastructure is backed up more broadly with results from the 2010 NEDS. Parents/guardians were questioned on whether they perceived primary schools to have big, small or no problems with school buildings and facilities, classroom overcrowding, and pupil safety. Parents/guardians of children who went to private school were four to five times less likely to consider these issues serious than parents/guardians of children in public schools (NPC and RTI International, 2011). Within the private sector, there is said to be an overlap in quality between the ‘lower end’ of approved schools and unapproved schools in these studies (Larbi et al. 2004; Tooley et al. 2005).

In terms of actual learning outcomes, the 2001 UBEC MLA study found that private primary schools had better scores than government primary schools in both Mathematics (40% in private vs. 34% in public) and English (48% in private vs. 38% in public) (FME 2010). The same was true at JSS level in the 2003
MLA (FME 2004b), although the mean combined score of 27.4% (as opposed to 24.9%) led the panel to conclude that overall performances were ‘very poor’ whether in private or public schools.

The case studies by Larbi et al. (2004) in Lagos and Enugu found that many private schools have a nursery school attached, and also stay open after school hours providing childcare.

7.3.3 Fees and equity concerns

One of the main concerns regarding private schooling surrounds issues of equity and cost. Although free public schooling is not actually free, given the cost of books and uniforms, PTA levies and other school charges (Urwick 2002; Lincove 2009; NPC and RTI International 2011), public schools are still generally cheaper than low-fee private schools (NPC and RTI International 2011).

The 2010 NEDS concluded that mean household costs per pupil for private primary education far exceeded those for government schooling (which had halved on average since 2004), particularly for tuition fees and school development levies; however, costs were only slightly higher on average for uniforms, books and supplies (NPC and RTI International, 2011). On the other hand, most low-fee private schools (at least in Lagos State) generally complete the primary curriculum in five years, thereby allowing households to save a year’s expenditure (Härmä 2011a).

Tooley and Dixon (2005) found that average term fees for Lagos’ private low-fee primary schools were around USD 30. They also found that the fees for unregistered schools were consistently lower than for approved schools. In addition, around 3% of places in private schools were free places and just less than an additional 2% were concessionary (Tooley et al. 2005).

Härmä (2011b) concurred regarding fees for Lagos private schools, reporting an average total annual fee at approved schools of 48% of the minimum wage, and at unapproved schools of 20% of the minimum wage. Even so, she found that many of the poorest families were not able to afford even the very low-fee private schools (ibid.). Adams and Arowojolu’s study (2008) in Ogun State found that cost did not deter many parents from enrolling their wards or children in low-fee private education provided other quality criteria were met.

In terms of gender, the 2011/12 Lagos ASC reports that girls make up 50% of private primary school students, compared to just 33% of public primary students. Härmä (2011c) too found gender parity in attendance at private schools in Kwara State and for all except the very poorest families in Lagos State (Härmä 2011b).

Nevertheless, there are also equity concerns regarding teaching staff (Härmä 2013). Teachers in Lagos were found to be paid more than three times as much at government schools (USD 130 per month) than at private schools (less than USD 40 per month) (Tooley et al. 2005), although most teachers in low-fee private schools were unqualified. Government teachers also have greater job security whereas teachers in low-fee private schools can be hired and fired at will (Härmä 2013).

7.3.4 Regulation

In general, although official policy encourages the role of the private sector in the provision of education, the relationship between private schools and government can be antagonistic, involving threats of closure for unregistered schools and excessive regulation (Larbi et al. 2004; Kingsmill et al. 2012). In some states, registered private schools have lobbied the government for the closure of unregistered schools so as to limit competition (Larbi et al. 2004).

One of the problems of gaining government approval is that it is costly and the stipulations are difficult to fulfil (Härmä 2011b); indeed, in Härmä’s Lagos census most government schools failed to fulfil the
requirements demanded of private schools (ibid.). Moreover, government frequently does not have capacity for effective supervision of either public or private schools (Larbi et al. 2004).

7.4 Christian schooling

Mission schools provided much of the first education available in Nigeria, but many of these schools were nationalised in the 1970s (Larbi et al. 2004). There has more recently been a trend in many states toward re-privatising many of these schools, in the hope of improving the quality of education (Oguntola 2012).

There is, however, very little research on the prevalence of Christian schools and no statistics on enrolment, attendance, or quality.

7.5 Islamic schooling

The majority of the OOSC in Nigeria live in the north of the country. However, four out of five of those so-called ‘out-of-school’ children receive some kind of Islamic education (Antoninis 2012). For this reason, one of the national policy goals in education is ‘the integration of basic education to the programme of Qur’anic schools, to ensure equal opportunity and effective implementation of UBE’ (FME 2004a: 5).

As mentioned in Chapter 2 (see Box 2.1), there are two main forms of Islamic school in Nigeria – traditional Qur’anic schools that focus on the memorisation of the Qur’an and are typically more informal, and Islamiyya schools, introduced in the 1950s, which go beyond the Qur’an to cover other Islamic subjects, such as the Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and the Hadith (sayings of the prophet), and follow a more formal structure in terms of time schedules and approaches to teaching. Some but not all Islamiyya schools are ‘integrated’ and also offer secular subjects and receive government support (Antoninis 2012). Some of the Tsangaya schools are also beginning to offer some secular curriculum subjects, often taught on the Thursday and Friday when the Tsangaya schools usually do not operate (UBEC 2010). Box 7.1 explains how the system works in Bauchi and Sokoto.

Box 7.1 Overview of IQTE schools in Bauchi and Sokoto

IQTE schools were included in the 2013 EGRA/EGMA to gain insight into levels of learning within this complementary basic education system. The purpose of the IQTE schools, which are designated to receive government support, is to integrate elements of the basic education curriculum into traditional Qur’anic education. IQTE school oversight is provided by SUBEB, the Adult Non-Formal Education Agency (ANFEA), and the State Agency for Mass Education (SAME) (in Sokoto, the Ministry for Religious Affairs also plays a role). IQTE schools are divided into stages (as opposed to grades), which cover the following subjects:

- **Stage 1**: This stage lasts for one year, with curriculum material designed to be the equivalent of P1–P3 of formal schools. Subjects taught are local language literacy and numeracy, in addition to Arabic and Islamic foundation studies.
- **Stage 2**: This stage lasts for two years, with curriculum material designed to be the equivalent of P4–P6. Subjects taught are Literacy (including English), Mathematics, Basic Science, Life Skills, and Social Studies, plus Arabic and Foundation Studies.

Specific ages for each stage are not identified. A minimum of four contact hours per week is designated to implement the curriculum. Although IQTE head teachers (proprietors) may not have previously taught in formal schools, almost all the teachers for the basic education subjects are recruited from the formal basic education schools, and the SUBEB is designated to pay their salaries. Data collected during EGRA/EGMA revealed that many children attend both government and IQTE
In the 2010 NEDS, 27% of the school-age children from Muslim households surveyed attended exclusively Qur’anic schools and another 24% attended both Qur’anic and formal academic schools (which include integrated IQTE schools). Numbers were highest in the northern states; in the southern states less than 5% of children from Muslim households only attend Qur’anic schools (NPC and RTI International 2011).

However, the actual scale and nature of this provision is hard to establish. Antoninis (2012) cites an ESSPIN school census from three out of 44 LGAs in Kano State, stating that 1,185 Qur’anic and Islamiyya schools were identified – eight times the number of secular schools. In terms of inclusion in EMIS data, as highlighted in Chapter 2, this depends on whether the school teaches secular subjects. Even then it is not that straightforward: citing two ESSPIN surveys in Kano State, which has been particularly proactive in backing the integration programme, Antoninis (2012) reported how religious authorities vastly underestimated the number of religious schools by not including unregistered Qur’anic schools, whereas the secular school authorities overestimated the number of Islamiyya schools that had actually been integrated in practice. Like secular government schools, Islamic schools that are aiming to integrate suffer from a lack of capacity and funding to implement the integration (Antoninis 2012). In 2009/10, Jigawa State, for example, had only managed to integrate 27 out of the 270 Islamic schools it had aimed to convert per year (Jigawa SMoE 2010).

7.5.1 Reasons for choosing Islamic schooling over secular schooling

Several studies (e.g. Abd-El-Khalk et al. 2006; Antoninis 2012) suggest that the motivation of parents/guardians in enrolling their children in Islamic schools is not necessarily entirely religious; parents/guardians consider many Islamic schools to offer a better quality of education too, with greater community involvement and teachers that are more committed and responsive to the needs of parents (ESSPIN Briefing Note n.d.; see also Section 2.3). The 2010 NEDS data would appear to confirm this too, as religion was only chosen by around 1% of parents/guardians as the most important factor in school choice, lagging well behind quality and school proximity (NPC and RTI International 2011).

Although perceptions of low quality in government schools are substantiated by the limited research there is on school quality (see chapters 3 and 4), religious schools are not necessarily substantially better in terms of conditions and learning outcomes (see USAID 2013a). For example, although USAID’s EGRA and EGMA in Bauchi and Sokoto found that pupils in the schools had higher scores in both states than children in government primary schools (particularly in relation to Hausa), their performance level overall was still low (USAID 2013a, b and c). ESSPIN’s report on their IQTE programme claims good attendance rates (around 65%) and ‘impressive learning outcomes’, with a pass rate of 75% on standardised tests administered by SUBEB and LGEA teams (ESSPIN 2013b). However, these test results do not appear to have been independently assessed.

In addition, IQTE is also said to increase the participation of girls in school, where Muslim parents in northern areas in particular may be more willing to send girls to Islamiyya schools than to secular public schools (FMWASD 2010; ESSPIN 2013b). One reason for this is that they are considered to be safer (Okojie 2008). Half of public primary schools in Kano are now integrated Islamiyya schools, according to the 2012 ASC (Kano SMoE 2012), and the figures bear this out: whereas the enrolment ratios for public primary schools as a whole indicate more boys (51.6) than girls (48.4), the figures for integrated Islamiyya schools indicate a far greater proportion of girls (56.8) than boys (43.2).
Although some qualitative research has shown that some more traditional Muslim communities continue to not want to send their children/wards to secular government schools on religious or moral grounds, believing them to be un-Islamic, too westernised, and/or a corrupting influence (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; Nyemutu-Roberts et al. 2009; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013), this would seem to be a small and dwindling minority. In the 2004 ESA survey of traditional leaders, mistrust of ‘western’ education came low on the list of possible constraints to their participating in educational management (4%); poverty was cited far more widely as a constraint (57%) (FME 2005). In fact, many mallams are now said to be active partners in IQTE in ESSPIN-supported states (ESSPIN 2013b).

7.6 Early Childhood Care and Education

ECCE began as a private sector initiative but came onto the government’s educational agenda in the 2004 education policy (FME 2005), with the aims of effecting a smooth transition from home to school and to provide care while parents/guardians go out to work (FME 2004a). In order to implement this, government wanted pre-primary provision to be established in existing primary schools so as to encourage private and community efforts to make up the shortfall (ibid.).

Initially only covering children ages three to five, it now covers children from zero to five. As the care of young children has traditionally been a collective practice, many of the younger children were already being cared for informally in the community (FME 2005). A policy directive from the NCE in 2013 now requires all public primary schools offer a compulsory year of pre-primary education.

The 2004 ESA conducted a survey of almost 900 ECC/pre-primary/nursery education centres sampled across all states and the FCT, including both formal and informal centres (FME 2005). The findings were:

- Almost two-thirds were located in urban areas and just over a third were in rural areas;
- Traditional non-formal childcare centres were primarily located in urban areas in southern and central states;
- Three-quarters of formal pre-schools were located in schools; just over a tenth were in residential homes and a tenth were in churches;
- Over a quarter of the sampled schools had children with special needs, albeit with no provision for those needs;
- State curricula were generally being used, although the documentation was not widely available;
- English was the MOI for just under three-quarters of schools, with the language of the immediate environment used for just over a quarter of the schools;
- The main teaching methods included story-telling and ‘indigenous stimulation techniques’ such as games, jokes and role play;
- Resources were lacking in most cases;
- The main health issues for the children were said to be malaria (affecting over a quarter) and coughs (affecting around a fifth);
- Well over half the pre-schools were privately owned and most of the informal centres were unregistered; and
- Attendance or admission records were the most available pieces of documentation but only there in under a third of cases (FME 2005).

One of the ESA studies looked at the unit costs of schooling across the different levels of schooling and found that pre-primary unit costs per annum were significantly higher, on average, than primary unit costs, on account of the greater financial commitment by government to the larger public primary sector (FME 2005). The comparison also therefore underlines the fact that formal pre-primary education is the preserve of the relatively better off.
The PTTE noted the paucity of statistics on the number of children attending pre-school and urged government to restructure primary education to include a preparatory year at primary level for five-year-olds (FME 2011a) in order to help achieve EFA Goal 1, which relates to universal ECCE.

7.7 Non-formal education

According to the 2010 NEDS, 38% of the adult population (aged 15 and over) have had no formal schooling (NPC and RTI International 2011), although again it should be highlighted that these figures do not include people who have a purely religious education. The government addresses this through its Policy for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education, as laid out in the 2004 National Policy on Education. This aims to:

- provide functional literacy and continuing education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who did not complete their primary education. These include the nomads, migrant families, the disabled and other categories or groups (FME 2004a: 25).

The NMEC was established by decree in 1990 and by 2000 each state had its own Agency for Mass Education. At federal, state and local government level many other non-government agencies are also involved in adult literacy work. However, the 2009 literacy survey found levels of awareness about adult literacy programmes and literacy centres to vary greatly among states, with adults in the north generally showing greater awareness than in the south (e.g. Niger 76.7% vs. Ogun 5.5%) (FME 2010).

Box 7.2 Women attending adult literacy classes

‘I initially started primary one then I was withdrawn by my father...in those days women didn’t go to school in our area ... I attended an adult literacy class ... because I wanted to learn to read and write...’ (45 years old, semi-rural community, Kano).

‘... girls here are taken out of school for marriage when they get husbands but the boys continue so it is more important to the boys to be in school ... my parents didn’t think it is important to send me to school when I was young... I attend adult literacy class ... because I am not happy that I did not go to school when I was a child...’ (30 years old, rural community, Kano).

‘...I was married off by my parents ... after primary six ... it was my husband and my parents who realised the importance of education and felt sorry that I was not allowed to continue after primary education... so the only option is to allow me to enrol into the adult education classes... I have been attending for one year...’ (35 years old, rural community, Kano).


Official 2010 monitoring statistics from the NMEC suggest that there are 580,000 people enrolled nationally in basic literacy training (47% female), 358,000 enrolled in IQTE (40% female), 150,000 (43% female) in continuing education, 100,000 in literacy by radio (60% female), and smaller numbers in various other programmes including post-literacy, girl-child education, women’s education, vocational education, nomadic adult education, literacy for prisons, and out-of-school education. Aderinoye et al. (2007) report statistics from the NMEC 2001 statistical digest that enrolment was 1.4 million in 2000 with an even gender split. This would suggest enrolment and female participation in NFE has declined in recent years, although research evidence is lacking on possible reasons why this might be the case.

Bah-Lalya et al. (2011) looked at enrolment in NFE in seven states (one from each geo-political zone, namely: Bauchi, Bayelsa, Enugu, Oyo, Plateau, Zamfara and FCT), and reported 247,000 enrolments in 2005, of which only 37% were female. The largest age group comprised 31–40 year olds (48.2%), followed by 41–50 year olds (39.7%), 15–20 (7.6%), below age 15 (2.8%) and 61–80 (1.7%). Learning facilities were poorly resourced, with just 14.5% having functional toilet facilities and 11.4% with both
water and electricity, although over a third of respondents reported the existence of a community reading room in their area (ibid.).

Theobald et al. (2007) argue that adult, non-formal, and nomadic education have been marginalised due to a lack of strategic planning and inadequate funding. This is recognised by government (FME 2010) and supported by NMEC monitoring data obtained for 2011, which show that actual state government spending on NFE is routinely less than 60% of budgeted expenditure for most states. Amounts budgeted and reportedly spent vary substantially between states, from NGN 1.6 billion in Ondo State to NGN 3 million in Edo State. Data are also missing for many states.

The FME’s candid submission to the 2010 Ministerial Review meeting on EFA with respect to literacy in Nigeria (FME 2010) reported positive feedback from many Nigerians who had successfully participated in adult literacy programmes (see Box 7.2). However, from survey and evaluation data they identified a number of serious challenges to the success, sustainability and scaling up of adult literacy programmes:

- There is a need for better cooperation among the various service providers to ensure greater uniformity in programme objectives, planning and implementation;
- There is only limited participation by professional adult educators in policy-making and planning;
- Literacy education is relatively underfunded;
- Some state governments are unable to match counterpart funding in order to access the UBE grants available;
- Due to lack of funding, many centres lack basic infrastructure and teaching materials;
- Most facilitators are part time and drawn primarily from unqualified teachers but with a high percentage of volunteers, so there is a high turnover of staff;
- 75% of facilitators surveyed were dissatisfied with the low pay, which they said affected their motivation to teach well;
- Although mother-tongue teaching is supposed to be given priority in literacy classes, just under half of people surveyed reported that English was the MOI; and
- In a survey of people who had dropped out a lack of employment opportunities for graduates of literacy programmes and the non-recognition of adult literacy certification by some employers were found to be major reasons for some abandoning their studies.

The 2004 ESA had warned that the increase in ‘schooled illiterates’ passing through the education system was likely to increase pressure on the non-formal system (FME 2005).

### 7.8 Public schooling for nomadic populations

There are an estimated 10 million Nigerians who live a nomadic life, including 6.5 million pastoralists and 2.8 million fisher folk (Bah-Lalya et al. 2011). Pastoralists are found in 31 states. Their ethnic concentration is as follows: 5.3 million Fulbe/Hausa-Fulani spread throughout the 31 states but predominantly in the savannah lands of northern Nigeria (McCaffery et al. 2006), with the Shuwa Arab (1.01), Budama (10,000) and Dark Buzu (15,000) mainly found in the Borno plains and the shores of Lake Chad (Muhammad and Abbo 2010). Migrant fishing communities on the other hand are found on the Atlantic Coast and in riverside areas of the country.

Early attempts to include nomads in mainstream schooling were ill-advised as they neither involved pastoralists in the process nor understood their needs; in addition, the schools and curricula were the same as for sedentary groups. All this resulted in low enrolments and completion rates (Umar and Tahir 2000; Iro 2001). Violence too was also reported, with cases of children being kidnapped when herding cattle and forced into school while protesting parents or community leaders were imprisoned (Usman 2006). Second-wave attempts by government have involved consultation and collaboration with
nomadic community leaders, resulting notably in the establishment of the NCNE in 1989, whose job is to coordinate provision of basic educational programmes and develop relevant curricula and materials for nomadic children (ibid.).

One of the underlying tensions regarding nomadic schooling relates to its purpose, i.e. whether it is a step toward cultural assimilation or a way to assist nomads to engage more successfully on their own terms with the wider social context (McCaffery et al. 2006).

7.8.1 Challenges of providing education to nomadic communities

Providing education to nomadic communities is challenging as they tend to live in remote, difficult-to-access places, moving around and crossing borders (local, state, and international), with livelihoods that depend heavily on children’s labour (Tahir et al. 2005; Usman 2006; Olateju 2010). In addition, the regular basic education curriculum of government schools is unsuited to their needs (ibid.), while school practices can alienate them further (Usman 2006).

7.8.2 Initiatives with nomadic communities

Key NCNE initiatives have included mobile schools with collapsible classrooms, adaptation of curricula to increase relevance, and the production of teaching materials in Fulfulde, the mother tongue of most nomadic pastoralists (Tahir et al. 2005; Usman 2006). The mobile schools initiative, however, has been criticised for initially being rushed into without consideration of issues such as teacher recruitment and M&E (Iro 2001). There is also a concern that fixed schools are inappropriately located in the more sparsely populated areas, away from the camp locations (Iro 2001). Another major initiative includes interactive radio and TV programmes, for which viewing rooms have been constructed (Tahir et al. 2005; Usman 2006). Further details of research on such initiatives can be found in Section 9.7.

Whatever the relative merits of particular programmes, official statistics from the NCNE show that enrolments have been increasing over the years: by 2011, there were 500,000 students (44% female) attending around 3,100 nomadic pastoralist, farmer, and fisher schools, with the greatest concentration in northern Nigeria. These enrolment figures represent a significant increase in enrolments from 400,000 in 2006 and just 193,000 in 2000. However, there is still a significant gender gap as girls only comprise 44% of the intake.

Despite the increase in enrolments, current numbers still represent a small proportion of the estimated 3 million school-age nomadic children (Bah-Lalya et al. 2011), although crucially the figures do not include those for children attending regular government schools. Furthermore, a lack of data, weak coordination, and inadequate financing mean that actual provision can vary substantially between locations (Aderinoye et al. 2007).

According to Tahir et al. (2005), nomadic schooling has helped improve completion rates. Usman (2006), however, disputes Tahir’s claim (1998, cited in Usman 2006) that nomadic education had increased completion rates by up to 65 % for Fulani boys. She found no statistical confirmation in her research and maintained that Fulani boys still had higher-than-average dropout rates and lower enrolment, attainment and completion statistics.

In addition to nomadic schools, the NCNE reaches around 100,000 families through extension services, which include training on herd health management and fodder bank development, as well as encouraging community participation in local school management (NCNE 2012).

Further details on nomadic lifestyles and how they interact with formal schooling are given in Section 9.7.
7.9 Public schooling for children with disabilities

The 2004 National Policy on Education states that ‘the education of children with special needs shall be free at all levels’ and that this will be FGN’s responsibility, which will encourage inclusive education, conduct regular censuses and monitoring of people with special needs, and provide special education equipment and training (FME 2004a). Moreover, 2% of the FGN–UBE Intervention Fund is available to states for projects aimed at supporting children with special needs (see Section 6.4.2).

In practice, however, there is no information available about how much the government spends on schooling for children with disabilities and little monitoring of how many disabled children there are and the types of disabilities they have (Lang and Upah 2008). Nevertheless, the ESSPIN-supported states have just started to gather data on children with disabilities in their EMIS returns, using the following categories: blind/visually impaired; physically challenged; hearing/speech impaired; and mentally challenged. The 2011/12 state ASCs for each of the ESSPIN-supported states reported numbers of pupils with disabilities at around or below 1% of primary enrolments, although several states reported an increase in the numbers of pupils with disabilities attending mainstream schools (ESSPIN 2013b; see also Box 7.3).

**Box 7.3 Success of a small grants scheme to special schools in Lagos State**

As part of the Lagos Eko Secondary Education Project (www.lagosekoproject.org) – a partnership between Lagos State and the World Bank – grants were given to 12 special needs schools that made a substantial difference to learning for children with special needs. Increased use of Braille books and other special instructional resources enhanced their access to reading. In 2012, all nine visually impaired students who sat for the BECE examination scored 100% in English, Maths and Science. This showed a marked improvement from the baseline scores of 45%, 50% and 50% respectively in 2010. It was also noted that, for the first time in the history of the school, one of the visually impaired students gained admission into a university.

*Source: World Bank (2013)*

According to the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011), 99% of children had no disability. However, other data suggest this is a gross underestimation probably due, at least in part, to the stigma attached to disability. For example, a survey of around 1,000 secondary school students concerning their attitude to pupils with epilepsy found that around two-thirds would neither befriend nor play with someone who suffered from epilepsy (Ezeala-Adikaibe et al. 2013).

In contrast, a survey by the Leprosy Mission of over 1,000 respondents across 30 towns and villages in Kogi and Niger states found 37% of respondents suffered from visual impairments, 32% had mobility issues, 15% were hearing impaired, and 9% were diagnosed with mental or learning difficulties (Smith 2011). Over half had had no formal education (ibid.) and even among marginalised groups those with disabilities find it particularly difficult to complete primary schooling and obtain sustainable employment (Lang and Upah 2008).

A DFID-funded scoping study jointly conducted by the Leonard Cheshire Foundation and the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria (Lang and Upah 2008) concluded that mainstreaming inclusive education, with appropriately trained teachers, rather than having special schools is the most cost-effective and sustainable way of educating children with disabilities. However, the same study noted that many children with disabilities were forced into special schools because of a lack of funding and suitably trained staff to cope in mainstream schools (ibid.). Similarly, the evaluation of UNICEF’s CFS programme in Nigeria noted that:

> Most schools made an effort to reach out to enrol students with disabilities and there seemed to be a positive attitude toward the provision of education for students with disabilities, but schools lacked the
resources to adequately meet their needs. Most schools did not have any teachers who had training in providing specialized instruction to students with disabilities, and several schools did not have infrastructure that was accessible to students with physical disabilities (UNICEF 2009a: 33).

**Box 7.4 Increasing the number of children with disabilities in ESSPIN-supported schools**

The Annual SMoE reports for various ESSPIN-supported states highlight a number of initiatives with regard to pupils with disabilities:

- Following public-awareness campaigns raising the profile of Jigawa State’s free Education Policy for Children Living with Disability, there was a marked increase in enrolments of children with disabilities from 3,500 to almost 5,800 in 2011/12;
- Additional support to increase accessibility in Jigawa includes the provision of hand-tricycles, solar lights for visually impaired children, and the construction of appropriate classroom, toilet and safe water access facilities;
- Initiatives reported by Lagos State aimed at increasing enrolment of children with disabilities included a meal allowance, free transport, providing wheelchair access and sign language in some schools. Furthermore, SUBEB’s partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs) had succeeded in supporting 1,500 children with hearing aids to help them learn in school; and
- With the aim of making all public schools inclusive to accommodate the needs of all children, Kaduna SMoE and SUBEB are working in partnership with the Ministry of Health to assess children with disability to determine if they can be integrated into public schools. This has already resulted in over 1,300 more children with disabilities enrolling in public schools, and tricycles have been distributed to a number of children, who now attend school regularly. The state is also encouraging parents to learn sign language to enable them to communicate with children living with hearing impairment.

While it seems clear that the number of pupils with disability is increasing in some states, it is not clear how many persist in school and what their experience of schooling is.

*Source: ESSPIN (2013b)*

### 7.10 Issues arising and gaps in evidence

Very little is known about the prevalence and quality of unregistered private schools, as well as about Christian schools.

There is also a poor understanding of how the private school sector affects public schools and equality of access, as well as the quality of teaching/learning in private schools.

There is very little research on the wider implications of the growth in private schools for the public school system.

Not enough is known about the learning outcomes from religious schools, and how the process of integration is progressing. If IQTE schools are doing better – as suggested by the EGRA and EGMA (USAID 2013a) and in ESSPIN-supported IQTE schools (ESSPIN 2013b) – what is it precisely in this form of schooling that leads to better results?

In addition, what are the implications for public schooling if IQTE schools are managing to cover the core basic education syllabus in less time (three years for NEI-supported schools and four years for ESSPIN-supported schools) than it takes a regular public school, and with better results (see USAID 2013a; and ESSPIN 2013b)?
More needs to be known about ECCE in all its forms. What are the implications for equity given the relatively high costs and what are the cultural and pedagogical implications of learning in English (if indeed that is happening in practice) when policy demands that the language of the immediate environment should be used?

Greater understanding is needed too on NFE regarding attendance patterns, teaching methodologies and outcomes. What are the reasons for the declines in enrolments and female participation in NFE that are suggested by official figures?

There is a dearth of information on the numbers of children with physical or learning disabilities, both those who are out of school and those who are in school, be it a regular government or a special school. In the case of children with disabilities who are now in school, we know nothing about their needs and experiences of schooling.

**Evidence Strength Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of evidence:</th>
<th>Size of body of evidence:</th>
<th>Consistency of results:</th>
<th>Closely matched to topic:</th>
<th>Overall assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Fairly Consistent</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 8: GENDER AND BASIC EDUCATION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the literature on gender and education in Nigeria. As elsewhere in the world, the gender focus of the literature is predominantly on girls and women; there has been little consideration thus far of boys and men. This is reflected in the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (FME 2007a), which identifies the following factors as having inhibited female participation in basic education: lack of political commitment; poor planning and management; gender-insensitive teaching materials and a gender-blind curriculum; girl-unfriendly school infrastructure, such as lack of separate toilets for girls and boys; skewed male–female teacher ratios; gender-biased attitudes toward girls; sexual harassment; poverty; and cultural factors such as the erroneous interpretation of religious teaching. In addition, the Federal Ministry for Women’s Affairs and Social Development (FMWASD) has produced a compendium of best practices on improving girl-child education in Nigeria (FMWASD, 2010).

There is a sizeable body of literature that predominantly considers girls’ access to schooling, which derives from the GEP and Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT) projects, as well as from a few independent studies.

8.2 Gender disparities

The focus of many of the gender initiatives, driven by the international development gender agenda, as epitomised in the MDGs and EFA goals, has been on access, i.e. on simply getting more girls and women into and through school, with the emphasis in the first instance on eliminating gender disparities in enrolment.

Gender disparities in educational participation have been found to exist at all levels of formal education nationally, with fewer girls than boys, on average, participating in and completing their basic education and continuing into post-basic and tertiary education (NPC and ICF Macro 2009; UNDP 2009; Bakari 2013; NPC and RTI International 2011; British Council 2012). These gender disparities vary considerably across geo-political zones, states and LGAs, as well as according to urban/rural location, socio-economic status, religion and other contextual factors.

As was explained in Section 2.3, patterns of enrolment and attendance are difficult to disentangle. As Table 8.1 in part shows, even though at a national and zonal level enrolments for girls and boys seem to be decreasing in the public sector (except in the North West, where enrolments are increasing, albeit from a very low baseline), state-level enrolments vary. The state ASC data for Kano and Jigawa, for example, show the actual number of girls in schools increasing as well as accounting for an increasingly higher proportion of enrolments from 2009/10 to 2011/12, accounting for about 48% and 43% of public primary enrolments, respectively. They comprised an even higher proportion of private school enrolments in Jigawa, at 51.2%.
Gender disparities exist in terms of exam performance too. An analysis of the NECO exam performances of female students at the end of secondary school shows that results have been deteriorating in recent years (2003–2007), with fewer female pupils reaching the threshold of five credits (British Council 2012).

Numerical disparities, however, are embedded in broader societal gender inequalities (Bakari 2013), which are discussed in greater detail in Section 8.3.

### 8.3 Barriers to girls’ schooling: key issues

Many of the interlinked issues listed below are covered in more detail elsewhere in this review, but are summarised here in one place. All the issues have been found to result in the non-enrolment, absenteeism and/or eventual dropping out of girls from school, and/or to affect the quality of experience that girls have in school, and/or to impact negatively on their schooling outcomes. In many cases, participation in schooling is affected by a combination of ‘out-of-school’ and ‘in-school’ issues. As the GEP II evaluation summarised:

> Barriers to ‘meaningful access’ are typically many, complex and inter-connected, occurring for different children, in different combinations, at different stages in the basic education cycle (UNICEF 2012: 3).

Although many of these issues affect boys too (see Section 8.6), the references given here relate to works where the impact on girls in particular has been highlighted.

#### 8.3.1 Out-of-school issues

The following socio-economic and socio-cultural reasons can have a negative impact on girls’ full and meaningful participation in schooling; the findings are drawn mainly from research in northern Nigeria. It should be noted that many of the following factors – such as inability to pay school fees, the need to earn money and issues of hunger and ill health – are rooted in poverty.

**Parental/community attitudes**

- Among some Muslim parents/guardians public schools are considered un-Islamic, and/or too westernised, and/or corrupting (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; Nyemutu-Roberts et al. 2009; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Any economic ‘benefit’ from formal education will go to the husband’s home (Dunne et al. 2013);

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**Table 8.1** Primary school enrolment* by gender and school type, 2006/07 to 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th></th>
<th>Private</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (%)</td>
<td>Male (%)</td>
<td>Total (100)</td>
<td>Female (%)</td>
<td>Male (%)</td>
<td>Total (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/07</td>
<td>9.4 (45.9)</td>
<td>11.1 (54.1)</td>
<td>20.5 (100)</td>
<td>0.6 (50.0)</td>
<td>0.6 (50.0)</td>
<td>1.2 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0 (46.1)</td>
<td>11.7 (53.9)</td>
<td>21.7 (100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>8.7 (45.8)</td>
<td>10.3 (54.2)</td>
<td>19.0 (100)</td>
<td>0.5 (50.0)</td>
<td>0.5 (50.0)</td>
<td>1.0 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.2 (46.0)</td>
<td>10.8 (54.0)</td>
<td>20.0 (100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>8.7 (46.0)</td>
<td>10.2 (54.0)</td>
<td>18.9 (100)</td>
<td>0.6 (50.0)</td>
<td>0.6 (50.0)</td>
<td>1.2 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.3 (46.3)</td>
<td>10.8 (53.7)</td>
<td>20.1 (100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>8.8 (46.3)</td>
<td>10.2 (53.7)</td>
<td>19.0 (100)</td>
<td>0.8 (50.0)</td>
<td>0.8 (50.0)</td>
<td>1.6 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.6 (46.4)</td>
<td>11.0 (53.1)</td>
<td>20.7 (100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Numbers in millions

Source: FME (2011b)
• Educating girls may lead to their marrying outside the community, marrying late and running the risk of being childless (Okojie 2008), or damaging their marriage prospects (UNICEF 2012);

• Prioritisation of the socialisation process, for some Muslim Hausa and Hausa-Fulani in particular, demands that girls should be sent to hawk goods as a means of strengthening self-reliance and meeting potential suitors (Robson 2004; Usman 2010);

• Especially if parents/guardians can only afford to educate one child or a few children, boys are often preferred (Sibbons et al. 2006; Para-Mallam 2010; UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013) as they will be the future breadwinners (Okojie 2008); and

• As Table 8.2 indicates, in a survey in the North West, 44% of respondents thought that where funds are limited a boy should always receive an education before a girl, compared to just 13% of respondents in the South South (Afrobarometer 2012).

Table 8.2 Percentage of households that think that a boy should always receive an education before a girl if funds are limited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>% of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South South</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Afrobarometer 2012

Inability to pay school costs (fees, uniform, writing materials, etc.)

PTA levies, school uniform and writing materials, and other ad hoc costs are major causes of non-enrolment, absenteeism and dropout (ActionAid 2011, 2012; Femi 2011; Mahdi and Asubiario-Dada, forthcoming, cited in British Council 2012; UBEC 2012a; UNICEF 2012; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). The TEGINT baseline showed a clear link between high school levies and girls dropping out of school; higher levies were charged in the schools with the largest ‘gender gaps’ and in the survey of girls the most cited obstacle to education was poverty (70%) (ActionAid 2011).

Need to earn money

Hawking is the main money-making endeavour of girls, but working in shops or as domestic servants to earn money either for themselves (which may include their own schooling) and/or the family are also prevalent (Fawole et al. 2002; Sada et al. 2005; Audu, Geidam and Jama 2009; Usman 2010; ActionAid 2011; Femi 2011; Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). This situation has been exacerbated by the recent economic downturn (Femi 2011). When mothers are unable to go out to work because they are ill or living in purdah (seclusion) in some Muslim families, they are particularly dependent on their daughters’ income (Sada et al. 2005; UNICEF 2012). Cases of transactional sex have been reported too, to earn money for school, home or for personal use (ActionAid 2011).

Home chores

Home chores affect both boys and girls but girls generally more, especially in poorer, more rural households (Okojie 2008; ActionAid 2011; NPC and RTI International 2011; UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013).
Sibling/relative care

Girls often have to look after younger siblings and/or care for sick relatives either because they have been orphaned or because the mother needs to go out to work (Robson 2004; British Council 2012; UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013).

Marriage

The tradition of early marriage, especially in rural areas, affects enrolment and retention (Sada et al. 2005; Okojie 2008; ActionAid 2011, 2012; Mahdi and Asubiaro-Dada Asubiaro, forthcoming, cited in British Council 2012; UBEC 2012a; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). Eighteen percent of all women aged 15–49 were married before the age of 15, and 40% are married by the age of 18. Figures for girls married before the age of 15 are much higher for the North West (40%) and North East (31%) and among poorer, rural populations. One in five young women aged 15 to 19 is married or living with a partner, with figures much higher among poorer, rural households in the North West and North East in particular (NBS 2013).

Kayan daki

Among Muslim Hausa and Hausa-Fulani girls the tradition of kayan daki (providing household utensils that serve as a trousseau for their wedding) necessitates girls from poor families having to earn the money to pay for them (Robson 2004; Sada et al. 2005; Okojie 2008; Usman 2010; Okojie 2012).

Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a major cause of dropout, especially at JSS level (FME 2005; Para-Mallam 2010; ActionAid 2011; British Council 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013). Just under a quarter of all young women aged 15–19 in Nigeria have started child-bearing by the age of 19, although this average rises to around 40% in the North West and North East, particularly in the poorer, more rural households (NPC and RTI International 2011). Pregnancy is sometimes a result of sexual coercion or rape (Ajuwon et al. 2006; Bakari 2013) and may also result in expulsion from school (FME 2005; Bakari 2013). In the 2004 ESA survey of head teachers, only 17% said pregnant pupils were allowed to return whereas 39% refused readmission to pregnant schoolgirls (FME 2005). The study also noted that in 44% of the schools where pregnancy was said to have occurred there were no NFE facilities in the vicinity, which if present would have allowed the young women to continue their education.

Hunger

Girls have reported hunger as a reason for not attending school and/or being able to concentrate and study well in class (ActionAid 2011). Sada et al. (2005) noted that, although male children are generally preferred in traditional Muslim households, according to Sharia, girls should be given equal or preferential treatment regarding food and clothing.

Ill health

Ill health is another major cause of absenteeism or dropout (ActionAid 2011, 2012; NPC and RTI International 2011) and is often related to poor sanitation (Bakari 2013) and/or hunger and malnutrition (Dunne et al. 2013). This is a major impediment to participation in school and to effective learning, according to pupils, but not as widely recognised as a problem by adults. For example, in the TEGINT baseline study, although ill health was identified as a barrier to schooling by over 40% of girls interviewed, it was not recognised as such by any of the adult interviewees (head teachers, SBMC members or village chairs) (ActionAid 2011).
Fear of the law

In some states (e.g. Niger) it is against the law to withdraw a girl from school for marriage. Rather than risk a fine or imprisonment for withdrawal, some parents/guardians prefer not to send their daughter to school in the first place (Okojie 2008).

8.3.2 School-related issues

Distance from school

This issue is especially pertinent in some rural areas and particularly at JSS level as there are fewer schools (Okojie 2008; ActionAid 2011; NPC and RTI International 2011; UNICEF 2012). For girls, the concerns about the distance to school may also be related to concern about their safety on the way to and from school (Antonowicz et al. 2010; UNICEF 2012).

Corporal punishment

While corporal punishment and fear of corporal punishment affect both girls and boys, girls in particular are affected by the shame of being beaten in public, which can result in absenteeism, withdrawal and/or dropout from school (ActionAid 2011; British Council 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

Water and sanitation

The provision of safe, clean gender-segregated toilets and clean water, which is also related to ill health (ActionAid 2011; Bakari 2013), is a concern. For example, in 2005 only 40% of schools had toilets (Theobald et al. 2007).

School duties

Gender-stereotyped duties for staff and pupils and female subordination in the prefect system are issues (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013), although it should be noted that Bakari’s study showed girls and boys sharing most duties.

Lack of female teachers

There is a lack of female teachers, especially in rural areas (Okojie 2008; ActionAid 2011; Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012). In one LGEA in Bauchi State, for example, 84% of primary schools have no female teachers at all (UNICEF 2012).

Female teachers are sometimes seen as ‘role models’ for girls’ educational aspirations (Okojie 2008; USAID 2009; ActionAid 2011; Okojie 2012), but see the relevant sub-section in Section 8.5 for further discussion of the issue.

Limited classroom participation

One classroom-based observational study in seven states found that boys are on average twice as likely to be asked a question as girls (Hardman et al. 2008), although as other research in Africa (e.g. Dunne et al. 2005) has shown this may still mean that many boys as well as girls have no questions directed at them.

Gendered expectations and gender stereotyping

The gendered expectations of teachers and pupils (e.g. presuming some girls to be passive and ‘shy’ and better at so-called ‘feminine’ arts subjects rather than Maths and Science) perpetuate gender
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stereotypes that can limit girls’ experiences and potential achievements (Para-Mallam 2010; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013). Indeed, such stereotyping can also limit boys’ experiences (Dunne et al. 2013).

Textbooks and curricula

The gender stereotyping and underrepresentation of females and female experiences and the use of gender-insensitive language found in some textbooks sends powerful gender messages to pupils (Para-Mallam 2010; Samuel 2012; Bakari 2013).

8.4 Gender violence

Gender violence is a key concern that can ‘inhibit girls’ access to schooling, may result in poor performance at school and deprives society of the full participation of women in development’ (Osakue 2006: 3). Although a serious issue, and one that is prevalent in educational institutions worldwide in one form or another (see Leach and Mitchell 2006), it is often not discussed, is underreported and/or denied (Adelabu 2005; FME 2007b; ActionAid 2011; Dunne et al. 2013).

8.4.1 Understandings of gender violence

The term ‘gender violence’ (or the more commonly used ‘gender-based violence’) is frequently used in the narrow sense of violence by males against females, and often with the emphasis on sexual violence. This is the understanding in most of the studies reviewed in this section. However, the term can also include issues such as corporal punishment, verbal abuse, bullying and ‘teasing’; furthermore, it can include violence among females, among males, and by females on males (see, for example, Dunne et al. 2006). However, most of the studies in Nigeria (and indeed in many other countries) on these less often recognised aspects of gender violence have not been researched within an understanding of gender (although they have generally provided gender-disaggregated data). As a result, they are discussed separately in sections 4.6 and 4.7 on teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil relations in the classroom, and in Chapter 12 on pupil management.

8.4.2 Sexual violence

Just as it is explicitly recognised in the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (FME 2007a), so it is also widely known that sexual violence, which includes sexual harassment, occurs in schools. Specifically, there are major safety concerns about female pupils and teachers being harassed and abused verbally, emotionally and/or physically or sexually (including rape) either on the way to and from school or in school itself. Both male teachers and pupils have been implicated (FME 2005; FME 2007b; Para-Mallam 2010; ActionAid 2011; British Council 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013), as well as other authority figures including religious instructors (Para-Mallam 2010). Similarly, sexual harassment and violence against female trainee teachers has been reported in colleges of education (Leach and Bakari 2008; UNICEF 2012).

Although a serious issue, and one that is prevalent in educational institutions worldwide in one form or another (see Leach and Mitchell 2006), it is rarely acknowledged and/or is underreported (Adelabu 2005; FME 2007b; ActionAid 2011; Dunne et al. 2013).

On the way to school bus drivers, okada riders and school boys have also been found to verbally abuse school girls with comments laced with sexual innuendo (ActionAid 2004, cited in Antonowicz et al. 2010). The same study noted that girls’ fear of sexual harassment combined with verbal abuse from (some) boys and male teachers resulted in a lack of trust between classmates. Some girls also felt culpable in some way (ibid.).
One obstacle to addressing this issue is the apparent level of acceptance of violence against women in Nigerian society more generally, even by women themselves. For example, in one national survey around 46% of women agreed that it was acceptable for their male partner/spouse to beat them for one or more reasons such as burning the food, refusing to have sex, or going out without telling their partner/spouse (NBS 2011). Figures were higher for rural and less educated women.

In the TEGINT study, sexual harassment and violence was widely reported by girls in some states (FCT and Niger), although not in others (Katsina, Bauchi and Kaduna). This was thought to be due to underreporting (ActionAid 2011); nomadic Fulbe girls and women, for example, are explicitly told not to talk about such matters to strangers (Usman 2010).

The TEGINT study also reported frequent denial by head teachers or other officials that violence was taking place, as well as a lack of effective action taken in the event of it being reported (ActionAid 2011). Following project interventions, the endline survey concluded that schools and communities showed greater willingness to discuss violence, and girls had greater confidence in reporting and challenging violence, but that there were still ‘troubling silences and a lack of understanding of gender inequalities and violence’ (ActionAid 2012: 22).

A similar denial of sexual violence by teachers and other adults interviewed was a feature of the FME’s national assessment on violence in basic education (FME 2007b); although around 11% female learners admitted they knew of cases of rape in school, not one female teacher acknowledged its existence and only 2% of male teachers did. Adolescent girls at JSS level were more at risk of sexual predation than at primary level, or at least were more willing to report it. Unsurprisingly, violence – particularly sexual violence – was often not reported (ibid.).

In the 2004 ESA survey of head teachers, around 13% admitted that female students had been sexually harassed in their schools, with male teachers identified as the main culprits in 39% of the cases (FME 2005). However, these are likely to be underestimates given that findings from the same survey suggest higher numbers of girls dropping out due to pregnancy (FME 2005).

School-age female hawkers, as reported above, are particularly at risk of sexual violence and therefore vulnerable to pregnancy and HIV infection (Sada et al. 2005; Ikechebelu et al. 2008; Aransiola et al. 2009; Audu et al. 2009; see also Section 9.3).

### 8.5 Initiatives to improve female participation in education

Over several years now there has been a donor-driven acceleration in the push to increase female participation in basic education, in northern Nigeria in particular. State and LGEA social mobilisation units have been active in many northern states, often working with traditional and religious leaders and SBMCs to help change community attitudes regarding female education and to encourage traditional Muslim families in particular to send girls to school, especially at primary level.

There are widespread reports of changing attitudes in many communities and of increased enrolments of girls at primary and JSS level (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscsek and Usman 2013), although reliable statistical data to back up the claims are harder to come by, as most authors acknowledge. Some studies have presented statistical data; TEGINT, for example, claimed an overall 15% improvement in gender parity for primary and junior enrolment and completion in their project schools, and an increase of 6% in primary school exam passes, enabling girls to transition to JSS (ActionAid 2012). Yet primary enrolment data for Bauchi and Katsina (where TEGINT also took place) in the GEP II evaluation show that, while girls’ enrolments in Bauchi increased as a percentage of total enrolments from 41% in 2007/08 to 44% in 2010/11, total enrolment for both girls and boys had decreased (UNICEF 2012). Moreover, there was considerable
variation across the LGEAs and it was suggested that there was likely to be a similar variation across schools within LGEAs (ibid.).

While various strategies have reportedly helped to increase girls’ enrolment – such as community drama and use of billboards (Chege et al. 2008) – the active support of traditional and religious rulers has been highlighted above all as critical to success in changing attitudes toward girls’ education and making things happen (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; Adediran 2010; UNICEF 2012). SBMCs too have played an important role in community mobilisation, including raising funds for school improvement and girl-focused material support (Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; UNICEF, 2012; see also Chapter 13).

8.5.1 Strategies to assist girls’ participation

Strategies that seem to have helped girls’ participation in schooling are discussed below:

*Increased female and youth representation on SBMCs*

Increased female representation has been uneven, with some reports of SBMCs with up to 50% women and others with fewer than the stipulated number (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; UNICEF 2012; see also Section 13.4). Some studies claim women to be increasingly vocal and active in supporting girls’ education (e.g. Coinco 2012), while others suggest that generally women’s voices are still rarely heard (e.g. Little and Lewis 2012).

**Box 8.1 Women’s participation on SBMCs**

‘The women in the SBMC are really working. They are doing wonders. They have visited most of the households in Abor, including the Igwe’s palace and the Churches. They visit homes, discussing with parents whose wards have challenges in school how to go about addressing identified problems. They make visits to school to monitor the activities of both the pupils and the teachers. In December last year, they were instrumental to the counterpart funds raised for the purchase of the water tank they have in the school. The women here have been using the ‘heart of a mother’ to cater for the school. There was a case of a family who brought two girls as house helps and refused them go to school. When the women in the SBMC got wind of this happening, they immediately approached the family, and now the children are in school.’

(Female CSO Programme Manager, Rural Community, Kwara).

*Source: Coinco (2012: 39)*

*Abolition of school fees*

School fees for girls have been abolished in Jigawa State (Jigawa SMoE 2010).

*Material assistance*

Numerous initiatives by government and/or through money raised by the SBMC or PTA committees have provided scholarships, conditional cash transfers, provision of uniforms, sandals or textbooks for girls (Chege et al. 2008; Adediran 2010; Jigawa SMoE 2010; Kano SMoE 2010; Dunne et al. 2013; ESSPIN 2013b).

*Household mapping*

In order to identify families with children of school-going age and persuade parents/guardians to send their children to school, some communities are attempting household mapping. In Bauchi State they
were also tracking truancy (Chege et al. 2008); similarly, several SBMCs have been monitoring the attendance of pupils and/or teachers (Coinco 2012).

Hawking opportunities in school

Bauchi State is giving girl-hawkers who go to school the opportunity to sell goods in school during break and after lessons (Chege et al. 2008; Gabrscek and Usman 2013).

Girls’ clubs

A TEGINT initiative, members reported enjoying the clubs as places to gain new knowledge (about gender rights, including responses to violence, and HIV and AIDS), have fun, access some material help and improve their reading and writing skills. Girls in clubs in rural schools demonstrated higher levels of empowerment than girls not in clubs in rural schools (there was no relationship in urban schools) in terms of better knowledge on HIV and gender equality and greater levels of confidence to speak out against gender inequality and report violence. However, as the report acknowledges, knowledge and attitudes do not necessarily equate to altered behaviour (ActionAid 2012).

Improved infrastructure

Better facilities, especially improved water and sanitation, often provided through small grants from LGEAs and/or donor agencies, together with SBMC/PTA funds, have encouraged enrolment (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008; UNICEF 2012). Greater accessibility to water sources shared with communities has meant that girls do not have to walk so far to fetch water in the morning (ibid.).

Sports facilities

In a survey of girls who had benefitted from the ESSPIN’s pilot girls’ education initiative in three LGEAs in Jigawa State, which included providing sporting facilities, 96% of the beneficiaries thought that sporting facilities were important in encouraging more girls to enter and remain in school. More girls reportedly want to participate in athletics, football, volleyball and table tennis as a result of the intervention (ESSPIN 2013b).

NFE and ‘second-chance’ schools

Improved facilities (including knitting and sewing machines and rice and maize threshing machines as well as materials for English and Maths) have helped increase uptake by young married women who completed primary school but had to abandon their schooling either for marriage or because of pregnancy (Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012). As well as the economic benefit to the women themselves, they need opportunities for economic empowerment so as to be able to afford to educate their daughters (Okojie 2012). However, the improved infrastructure and resources are still struggling to keep up with increased demand (ibid.).

Some women are reportedly able to attend the evening classes by leaving their young child with an older sibling (Okojie 2008). However, since the sibling doing childcare is likely to be a girl, in furthering her own education the mother may well be increasing the domestic burden on her daughter.

Micro-credit to women

Micro-credit support to women is enabling some women to run small businesses, be less financially dependent, and pay for their daughters’ education (Chege et al. 2008).
Increase in girls-only schools

There has been an increase in girls-only schools (Okojie 2008; FMWASD 2010). Ten percent of the beneficiary girls surveyed in the three LGEAs participating in ESSPIN’s girls’ education initiative in Jigawa State thought that girls-only boarding secondary schools would help improve the retention of girls in school (ESSPIN 2013b). Provision of all-girls schools is one of the three funding priority areas of the ‘imbalance funds’ from the FGN–UBE Intervention Fund (see Section 6.2).

Increase in provision of integrated Qur’anic and Islamiyya schools

GEP I claimed that the number of Qur’anic schools using the integrated curriculum rose by 75% in GEP-supported communities, by 50% in GEP-supported LGAs, and by 30% in GEP-supported states by the end of the project (Chege et al. 2008). This, they also claimed, has resulted in an increase in female enrolments since IQTE schools are preferred for girls by many parents/guardians (FMWASD 2010) on account of being considered safer (Okojie 2008). However, it is not specified why they are thought to be safer; nor was any evidence presented as to whether they actually are safer.

Gender-disaggregated data gathering


Female teachers and female participation in education

It is widely believed that having more qualified female teachers encourages greater female enrolment, retention and attainment in school (USAID 2009; ActionAid 2011; Okojie 2012; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). Part of this belief is based on the notion of female teachers being ‘role models’ (USAID 2009; ActionAid 2011; Okojie 2012), presumably in terms of girls’ educational aspirations, although generally this is not specified. In response to the shortage of female teachers, especially in rural areas of northern Nigeria, the FTTSS was initiated, which is ‘aimed at increasing the number of female teachers to serve as role models in rural communities where female enrolment in basic education is low’ (Okojie 2012:47).

Yet the relationship between female participation in school and female teachers is not straightforward. The British Council review of national data concluded that the near doubling of female teachers at secondary level has not been matched by a comparable increase in female enrolment at that level, suggesting perhaps that other factors are of greater importance (British Council 2012). Similarly, after comparing the attainment of girls with schools’ gender profiles, the TEGINT baseline noted: ‘the presence of female teachers does not appear significant in supporting girls’ progression and attainment’ (ActionAid 2011: 17), concluding that female teachers needed better ‘training and support to improve female teachers’ capacity to be role models for girls’ (ibid.: 19). Qualitative data from Bakari’s (2013) study in a handful of secondary schools in Kogi State and Dunne et al.’s (2013) primary-level case studies in Adamawa appear to back up this point. Although there is evidence to suggest that girls are more likely to go to female teachers with health concerns, for example in Bakari (2013), there is also evidence that female teachers may hold gender-stereotyped expectations about girls’ (and boys’) behaviour and capabilities – in the same way that male teachers and indeed pupils (female or male) can do – that serve to perpetuate gender inequalities (see Bakari 2013).

Box 8.2 The Female Teacher Training Scholarship Scheme

The FTTSS is viewed as one of GEP’s highlights (UNICEF 2012) and is aimed at increasing the number of female teachers, seen to be a major deterrent to girls’ enrolment in school. So far over 2,300
female trainee teachers have benefitted from the scheme in Bauchi, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto, with the first awardees about to graduate at the time of GEP II’s evaluation (UNICEF 2012).

Garuba (2010) did the first evaluation of the scheme and made the following points:

- Communities are positive and, in some villages, girls’ enrolment has reportedly increased just at the prospect of the awardee returning from training (also UNICEF 2012);
- The scheme was said to be helping to change attitudes toward girls’ education (also UNICEF 2012); and
- Awardees themselves are generally positive and feel more confident (also UNICEF 2012).

However, there are major difficulties that threaten the initiative, which include:

**Delays in payment of the stipend**

Those on the UNICEF payroll were being paid promptly; those on the government payroll were not, which was a cause of friction among the awardees. State payments were at least 12 months behind in at least two states at the time of the later evaluation (UNICEF 2012).

**Extra costs**

Trainees struggled to pay the extra costs not covered by the scholarship, such as transport for teaching practice.

**Poor hostel accommodation**

Hostel accommodation lacked adequate kitchen, sanitation and childcare facilities, and security was also an issue (UNICEF 2012).

**Overlong teaching commitment**

There was a request for the two-year teaching commitment that goes with the scholarship to be reduced to one year since some saw it as a potential obstacle to marital aspirations, although the later evaluation (UNICEF 2012) said that the majority of the 150 awardees interviewed had ‘no problem’ with the bond.

**Safety**

There have been reports of sexual harassment and assault. Approximately 50% of the awardees said they felt unsafe in the accommodation (UNICEF 2012).

**Awardee performance**

Most of the awardees were struggling to learn in English and could ‘scarcely communicate in English’ after two years of training. Almost all had at least one course they would have to repeat and all lecturers interviewed commented on the awardees’ low performance levels, which meant they were unlikely to complete in three years (Garuba 2010). In response, remedial English courses and pre-NCE courses were being planned by the colleges (Garuba 2010; UNICEF 2012).

**Gender imbalance on the college staff**

No female staff members were in senior management positions in the colleges of education visited, nor were any included on the FTTSS management committees (UNICEF 2012).
Sustainability of the project

Garuba (2010) had doubts about who would shoulder the financial burden after UNICEF funding finishes, although the final evaluation for GEP II noted that 77% of the costs were being borne by state funding and NGOs while LGEAs in Bauchi and Niger had sponsored additional scholarships in 2010/11.

Both evaluations highlighted the need for a proper impact evaluation of the scheme, and it was suggested that female teachers be tracked for a couple of years to see to what extent commitments are honoured to remain in rural schools (UNICEF 2012). Neither evaluation considers in detail whether this scheme is going to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching in rural schools.

8.6 Boys and schooling

The picture on boys’ schooling is limited, being hidden within the gender-neutral term ‘children’. As a result, most of the issues affecting both girls and boys are covered in other sections of the report. Where boys are specifically mentioned, the picture is mixed. Several reports note that initiatives aimed primarily at boosting girls’ participation in schooling have also boosted boys’ participation (Chege et al. 2008; Adediran 2010). At the same time, GEP I evaluations reported that boys were dropping out of school in increasing numbers (Chege et al. 2008; Okojie 2008).

8.6.1 Factors affecting boys

Boys as well as girls may be denied access due to poverty (actual and opportunity costs) (FOS/ILO 2001). The desire or need to earn money has resulted in the non-enrolment, withdrawal or dropout of boys in rural areas to undertake agricultural labour, and in the case of nomadic Hausa-Fulani boys to herd cattle (Okojie 2008; Chege et al. 2008). Within more urban areas, boys drop out to trade, carry loads, or work as bus conductors (FOS/ILO 2001). Boys from more socially deprived backgrounds are also more likely to join gangs, cults or become ‘area boys’ later, and therefore be both perpetrators and victims of violence (although some all-female gangs exist) (Matusitz and Repass 2009).

Most children living on the streets are boys. Aransiola et al.’s (2009) study of 1,500 street children in Kaduna, Lagos and Port Harcourt, which included adolescents who had either never been to school or had dropped out, were predominantly male (83.1%). In Kaduna the proportion of male respondents was higher (93.4%), where a number could probably be categorised as almajirai, though the term was not used in the paper. Boys living on the street were found to be vulnerable to abuse by the police authorities, who often reportedly molested, detained them and/or extracted bribes (ibid.). Almajirai are similarly at risk (see below).

Within schools, boys seem to be subjected to more and harsher corporal punishment based on gender-stereotyped notions of boys being stronger and naughtier (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013; see also Section 12.2.4). Furthermore, boys – especially younger boys – also tend to experience higher levels of bullying and peer violence than girls (Egbochuku 2007; Adefunke 2010).

Okojie (2008: 13) noted: ‘Increasing female access to education should not be at the expense of boys dropping out of school.’ In addition, Chege et al. (2008: 36) warned: ‘The risk of side-lining the boys in the process of promoting girls and women’s education may reverse gains made in overall enrolment and participation,’ on account of ‘possible backlashes that may manifest [themselves] in hostile gender relations between boys and girls’. Thus, for example, what was initially promoted as a scholarship scheme for girls in Niger State was opened up to boys as well after there was protest at the discrimination against boys (Okojie 2012). It is claimed that one of the reasons boys in the South East drop out from school is because where schools have more girls and female teachers the minority
position of boys schooling is for girls while business and acquisition of material wealth is for ‘real men’ (Nworgu 2011, cited in UNICEF/UIS 2012).

8.6.2 Almajirai

An exception to the dearth of literature on boys and education is the topic of almajirai, a product of the over-enrolment of young boys in Islamic schools that are unable to provide for them, which results in their spending more time begging than studying (Usman 2008). There are currently an estimated 9.5 million almajirai in Nigeria, according to the Executive Secretary of UBEC (Umejei 2011), with 8.5 million being in the north (Hoechner 2011).

A few, very small-scale qualitative studies have explored the almajirai situation. A study in Kano (Hoechner 2011) considers some of the fundamental inequalities that propel young boys into an almajirai existence, namely the poor quality of public schooling (especially in rural areas), low returns on education in terms of employment, the erosion of the rural economy and modern schooling’s historical association with Christianity (FME 2008, cited in Hoechner 2011), all of which encourage seasonal or permanent migration to cities. Hoechner draws on interviews with teachers in a number of rural and urban schools and fathers of almajirai, as well as on observations, group conversations and casual interactions with boys (mainly 10–15-year-olds) in two Qur’anic schools. She argues that parents are making strategic decisions both on account of the high regard for Qur’anic learning but also in the belief that a degree of hardship leads to moral development. Importantly, she points out that in the rural schools, almajirai generally help the mallam with farm labour whereas in urban areas the degree of begging varies, depending on the availability of alternative paid employment (e.g. working as a home help, load carrying or petty trading) and the degree to which the boys are expected to contribute to the mallam’s livelihood.

Two main factors in the almajirai experience were identified in Hoechner’s study (ibid.). The first was the close contact many had with Muslim families who sent their children to Islamiyya or secular schools; they often performed errands for them while the family’s children were away at school or on account of the women being in purdah. The second factor was the critical or hostile attitudes the boys encountered in the city, which they endeavoured to rise above by constructing a strong moral identity. Although parents felt that access to materials other than the Qur’an distracts boys from learning the Qur’an properly, the boys themselves disagreed, wanting access to other Islamic texts available to the children in the Islamiyya schools and approving of ‘modern’ education more generally as they believed it would lead to economic success. Many felt they would gain access to modern education later, while those who had been withdrawn from government schools regretted their withdrawal.

Recent initiatives with almajirai

FGN has been keen to address the almajirai situation, particularly itinerancy and begging, predominantly through IQTE but also by introducing more Islamic disciplines into conventional government schools (UBEC 2010). One of the three priority areas for the 14% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund available to states to address ‘educational imbalance’ is the National Almajirai Programme (UBEC 2012b).

The government has already established model almajirai schools, including boarding schools, across 25 states, as well as developing curriculum materials and working with the NCCE to develop an NCE curriculum in Almajiri Education Studies in order to train specialist teachers (ibid.). At the time of writing, 55 of the planned 89 model schools had been completed and UBEC expressed the hope that states would take over the maintenance of the schools and expand the programme (UBEC 2013). At the same time, concerns were expressed about the programme’s sustainability (ibid.).

Usman’s (2008) small-scale phenomenological study highlighted some of the challenges in Kaduna State’s initiatives to improve the educational participation of almajirai. The ‘free lunch’ incentive succeeded in encouraging partial attendance until just after the meal, but the boys considered the food
both ‘foreign’ and insufficient so left school to beg for the next meal. A lack of instructional supervision meant the boys could easily slip away. Free furniture and materials such as uniforms and textbooks was another strategy. Yet they were considered ‘alien’ and, according to one government officer, forced all but 50 children in one school to run away, which one teacher interpreted as a reaction to the ‘westernisation’ of Qur’anic schools.

Visits by interested boys from Qur’anic schools to mainstream government schools – another strategy – were hampered by bullying and negative attitudes from peers from other ethnic groups on account of their ‘unkempt appearance, skin diseases and general lack of hygiene’ (Awofeso et al. 2002, cited in Usman 2008).

8.7 Beyond gender parity

The external evaluation of UNICEF’s GEP II highlights the need to move beyond ‘gender parity’ – which typifies most development efforts regarding girls’ education in Nigeria – toward ‘gender equality’.

With most efforts have focused on closing the primary school enrolment gap between girls and boys, insufficient attention has been paid to factors contributing to or constraining retention and achievement, the quality and relevance of education, or the gendered aspects of the same (UNICEF 2012: xiii).

The report goes on to state:

> There is need to look at the more complex processes that take place within schools and communities, that contribute to or constrain the health, safety, personal development, wellbeing and relevant learning of girls, and boys (ibid.: xiii).

Such a change essentially means focusing on the ‘gender regimes’ of schools (Kessler et al. 1985), looking at the taken-for-granted rules and processes that both inscribe and produce gender relations. These gender regimes are located within the wider ‘gender order’ (Connell 1987) of society, which includes other social institutions such as the family, community, religion and government. In Nigerian society, according to the Federal Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Youth Development in 2000, ‘the synchronized effect of traditional, colonial and religious patriarchy produces deeply entrenched gender stratification’ (Para-Mallam 2010: 249).

The GEP II evaluation also highlighted the fact that ‘the gender parity approach does not sufficiently engage boys and men in confronting norms and attitudes that perpetuate inequality’ (UNICEF 2012: xiii). In this respect, there are perhaps lessons that can be learned from the internationally renowned Conscientizing Male Adolescents (CMA) programme (see Box 8.3), which has been running for a number of years in Cross River State, and later Akwa Ibom, in the South East (Girard 2003). Although the programme involves older adolescent males, the notion of engaging males in discussions and activities related to gender and power relations is one way of helping to address the issue.

Box 8.3 Conscientizing Male Adolescents – a programme in South East Nigeria

Initiated in 1995 in Calabar, Cross River State, by respected journalist Eddie Madunagu, this long-term programme focuses on sexism and developing adolescent males’ critical thinking. The programme was initially designed to complement the Girls’ Power Initiative (GPI; see www.gpinigeria.org) from which it drew on initially, but has subsequently evolved in its own right. As Madunagu explained:

> … he felt concern for the GPI girls, who, with all their newly acquired knowledge, would have to face ‘uneducated’ boys and patriarchal families. ‘There is no point offering prayers and supplications to someone who is ignorant . . . Women cannot achieve liberation by supplication.’ Madunagu was also thinking of the boys’ own development and growth. He explains, ‘It is also necessary to let boys know that ultimately, men cannot win and cannot be truly happy and liberated as long as they hold down a
The programme is aimed at young males aged between 14 and 20 who are in school and social leaders. It now lasts three years. Level I still comprises weekly discussions; Level II, for the more committed who want to continue, involves monthly day-long gatherings, working on ways to intervene in communities and further developing more abstract thinking and communication skills; a more recent smaller core of Level III boys are trained to involve themselves more in community gender activism.

Discussion topics range from issues such as sexual health, intimate and family relationships to human rights and democracy, using a Freirian-inspired pedagogical approach and with a constantly evolving curriculum. Observations of sessions showed a high level of frank and thoughtful discussion, although there were varying degrees of understanding of the issues among participants.

Initially, interested secondary teachers were recruited and trained in a less didactic and more dialogic facilitative methodology; more recently, graduates of the two-year programme have become involved. The 'field officers' continue to receive training, sometimes from GPI staff, and those interviewed felt that they too were learning.

Challenges the programme has faced include:

- Boys struggle with conflicting ideas relating to religion (predominantly Christianity);
- Some boys do not really understand gender equality and most struggle to reflect on the concept of masculinity;
- Even at graduation some boys have persisted with some sexist beliefs;
- Absenteeism and dropout is an issue, sometimes because boys find it difficult to cope with the content, sometimes for financial reasons;
- Some parents are suspicious about the project;
- Boys, when they have spoken out about issues in the community, can face difficult social situations – although CMA has established a counselling service to try and address such issues;
- Some field officers who are teachers find it difficult to abandon ingrained didactic methods;
- CMA graduates who contribute to the programme are under pressure to contribute more to household incomes; and
- There are money issues and tensions between staff who are committed to the cause and others who are more interested in the pay.

Although no formal external evaluations had been carried out on the project, the questionnaire comparisons of baseline and mid-term assessments showed many boys were improving their knowledge but there was recognition of a need to develop ways of determining to what extent this was leading to behaviour change. In the 10 in-depth interviews the writer held with a range of Level I, II and III boys, all said they had changed as people on account of the programme.

Source: Girard (2003)

Another important point, which the UNICEF GEP II evaluation does not highlight, is the fact that girls and women can also contribute to sustaining gender inequality, for example by sustaining similar gender stereotypes. This is amply illustrated in Bakari’s (2013) case-study research on gender in five secondary schools in Kogi State. The study found that even when schools required that both boys and girls fetch water, (some) girls as well as boys wanted boys to be excused because fetching water is considered to be a female task. Similarly, female students in the all-girls school complained that (some) female
teachers verbally and physically harassed them, accusing them of seducing male teachers, whereas the girls themselves complained that male teachers were sexually harassing them but they were too afraid to complain (ibi d.).

Bakari’s study was part of a wider Commonwealth study (Page and Jha 2009) and so far is the only available study in Nigeria to focus wholly on gender and school processes, although Dunne et al.’s (2013) Adamawa-based study has also paid some attention to these issues. It is beyond the scope of this review to go into the many interesting findings of the Kogi study, but in summary it revealed highly gendered processes both inside and outside the classroom, and the persistence of gender stereotypes by teachers and students in every aspect of schooling, notably in school regulations, appointments, social relations between and among staff and students, teacher expectations, textbooks, learning activities, language and behaviours. Bakari (2013) concluded that the schools exhibited ‘strong male bias’ and polarisation of male and female based on male superiority and female inferiority, as well as being masculinist institutions valuing individualism, aggression and competitiveness, which affected the access, retention, participation and performance of boys and girls. Thus, Bakari called for gender-sensitive rather than gender-neutral23 policies to address gender-discriminatory practices. Bakari (2004) carried out a similar gender analysis of a college of education in northern Nigeria and found similarly gendered processes and inequalities and a high level of sexual violence.

The primary school study in Adamawa (Dunne et al. 2013) also noted a ‘gender dynamic’ in teacher appointments, promotion and deployment, which needs further exploration, as well as a degree of gender stereotyping among teachers and pupils and gender inequalities in school duties, the prefect/monitor system and corporal punishment.

Furthermore, Para-Mallam (2010), in her qualitative study of educated Nigerian women, religious leaders and women’s rights activists, highlights the importance of considering gender within the context of religion and culture.

8.8 Gender and education – a summary

Most of the studies on gender in Nigeria (as elsewhere in the world) have focused on girls, particularly as regards access to school, within a gender parity framework. Numerous barriers to participation have been identified both inside and out of school, although with a particular focus on issues outside school, related to culture and religion (predominantly Islam since most studies have taken place in northern Nigeria). In response, according to various reports, initiatives by government in conjunction with IDPs and CBOs, or by communities via SBMCs, have claimed some success in increasing girls’ enrolments (and retention, to a lesser extent), although reliable statistical data are often unavailable to support the accounts. These initiatives have often focused on ‘inputs’, such as scholarships and free uniforms, some of which (e.g. renovated classrooms and provision of textbooks) have increased the enrolment of boys too, but in so doing have ignored the processes of schooling. A few commentators have highlighted the need to include boys (and men), both because they too face different disadvantages both inside and outside of school and should not feel rejected or excluded (which in turn could be detrimental to positive gender relations) but also so that they are encouraged to confront the gender norms that perpetuate gender inequalities. The issue of almajiri in northern Nigeria is the main research topic focused on boys that has attracted some interest in the literature.

23 ‘Gender-neutral’ policies include equal opportunities policies that argue that the same rules should apply for girls and women as for boys and men without giving due recognition to existing social barriers that affect particular groups of females and males in different ways. In contrast, ‘gender-sensitive’ policies recognise that there may be a need for gender-specific interventions that treat or target particular groups of females and males differently in order to achieve gender equality.
8.9 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

The FTTSS has supported the training of over 2,300 female trainees; there is a need to track them to assess their levels of commitment/attrition over two years and the impact in schools/communities on girls’ education, as well as to establish the kind of support they need to be successful.

More generally, there is a need to move beyond the gender parity approach (considering numbers of girls versus numbers of boys) and a focus on girls’ enrolment. Rather, gender needs to be conceptualised as relational – as being about girls and boys – considering similarities and differences between and within gender categories. A more nuanced understanding of gender is needed that recognises that pupils’ and teachers’ gender identities are differentiated by, and interact with, religion, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, sexuality, disability and location, for example.

While the literature considers the constraints of cultural practices of Islam on girls’ schooling, there is nothing on the impact of Christianity or ATR on girls’ participation, and very little on the way in which ethnicity or disability, for example, interact with gender and religion, except for two studies on Fulbe nomadic pastoralists (see Usman 2006 and 2010). This emphasis on Islam and silence around Christianity and ATR is reflected more generally in the development literature in Nigeria (Nyemutu-Roberts et al. 2009).

The specific difficulties particular groups of boys face, beyond those of almajirai, are often overlooked in the gender literature.

Institutional analyses of gendered structures and processes need to be explored within an expanded notion of gender in different types of schools. How are they similar or different in all-girls schools, all-boys schools, in public and private schools, in boarding and day schools, or in IQTE schools, and in the colleges of education that train the next generation of teachers? There seems to be nothing outside of Bakari’s (2013) work at JSS level.

A gender analysis of schools could usefully scrutinise: the gendered processes for teacher appointment and promotion; the extent to which teacher and school duties (including the prefect and monitor system and the arrangements for assemblies) reinforce or contest gender stereotypes and are equitable; the ways in which the disciplinary system promotes or contests violent masculinity as epitomised in corporal punishment; the gendered expectations of teachers and pupils and the ways in which these influence classroom interactions, subject choice and performance; and the formal and informal relations between and among staff and pupils/students.

More in-depth ethnographic, qualitative research is needed to be able to capture such nuanced processes. Studies of this kind are currently lacking yet are essential to help unravel the complex processes that can perpetuate or challenge gender and other inequalities, which are intimately linked to issues of educational quality.

Evidence Strength Assessment

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CHAPTER 9: OUT-OF-SCHOOL ISSUES AFFECTING ACCESS (‘pull factors’)

9.1 Introduction

The reasons children do not enrol or fail to persist or to achieve in school are often a combination of the ‘pull factors’ related to home and/or community circumstances, lifestyles and cultures and the ‘push factors’ related to what goes on in schools. In this chapter we examine the literature on the ‘out-of-school’ factors located in homes and communities that affect school access, persistence and attainment, on which there is a body of predominantly quantitative research. We draw in particular on the 2003 and 2008 NDHS survey data and the associated 2004 and 2010 NEDS, as well as on the 2004 ESA (FME 2005).

This chapter first considers the evidence on the demand for schooling before moving on to some of the out-of-school factors that inhibit educational participation, such as the direct and opportunity costs of schooling and issues concerning children’s health and that of their family. We then explore the evidence on the relationship between culture and formal education, particularly in regard to pastoral nomads, before briefly considering the impact of conflict on schooling.

9.2 Demand for schooling

The evidence on demand for schooling is not straightforward. On the one hand, as explained in Chapter 2, EMIS figures show that over a four-year period (2006/07–2009/10) numbers of enrolments in public primary schools have declined overall, both for girls and boys (FME 2011b). This is also true at the zonal level except for the North West, where numbers have increased consistently each year. The Annual Statistical Digest 2006–2010 also shows that at the state level the picture is more mixed; for example, within North Central, Kogi State has shown a steady increase in enrolments whereas Kwara State enrolments have dropped by around one-third over the four-year period. National figures for private primary schooling, however, show increases for both girls and boys but when both private and public figures are combined they still show an overall decrease in enrolments for girls and boys (FME 2011b). This might perhaps not tell the whole story since unregistered private schools, of which there are many, are not counted in statistics.

Moreover, plenty of qualitative data (e.g. Adediran 2010; Pinnock 2012, UNICEF 2012) suggest that demand is soaring, especially for girls in northern Nigeria, as a result of successful social mobilisation campaigns and development interventions. This may well be the case in areas where government campaigns have been successful and development programmes are taking place (although reliable statistical data to support the claims are hard to come by) and it is perhaps in other areas where campaigns have not taken place, or development programmes have not been initiated, that numbers are dropping. Again, however, this is speculation.

The 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011), when compared to the 2004 NEDS (NPC and ORC Macro 2004), suggests that school attendance patterns have not changed much over time. Similarly, the disparities discussed in Chapter 2 remain, with lower attendance in the poorer, rural, northern areas for Muslim girls, above all, and higher attendance in the more urban, southern regions.

In contrast, according to EMIS figures, at JSS level enrolments have risen in public schools in the four-year period across all zones, although overall numbers are much lower than at primary level. It may be that some of the pupils from the private system are re-joining the state system to boost numbers, although this is speculation since EMIS returns from private schools are very incomplete.

Increased numbers of nomadic schools and the reported increase in IQTE (see Chapter 7) also suggest an increasing demand for schooling among groups who historically have been wary of secular schooling.
The proliferation of NFE centres also suggests a similar rise in interest in non-formal modes of education (Chege et al. 2008; UNICEF 2012).

Further evidence that demand is high lies in the fact that, according to the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International, 2011), over 97% of parents/guardians considered schooling to be beneficial for girls and boys. Thus, it may be that parents/guardians want to send children to school in theory but that in practice, for one or more reasons, children are either not enrolled or drop out of school. The three main reasons for pupil non-enrolment are: distance from school, the need for children to work (paid and unpaid) and monetary costs. These last two related issues are examined below.

9.3 Poverty and the need for children to work

As highlighted in Chapter 2, the need for children to work in either paid or unpaid employment persists as a major constraint to educational participation in Nigeria (FME 2005; Okpukpara and Odurukwe 2006; NPC and RTI International 2011; UBEC 2012a). This section looks in more detail at the evidence on the relationship between poverty and schooling and at the specific costs – direct and opportunity – that affect children’s access to and persistence in school.

Box 9.1 Being out of school

My name is Gambo Umar. I am 10 years old. We are four in my house that are not in school one of them is older than me. We all want to enter school. I am saving money to enrol in school. I fetch water for people and they pay me to enable me to enter school. I have saved five hundred Naira so far. I want to buy uniform, sandals and socks to enable me to enter school. I want government to provide uniform, sandal and socks for me so I can enter school. My mother will buy books for me. But for the head teacher, I don’t know what he will do for me, because he said if he gets money he will enrol us in school.

Extract from an interview with an out-of-school boy (Dunne et al. 2013: 83)

9.3.1 Direct costs

Costs associated with schooling are frequently cited as a barrier to school enrolment and a cause of dropout in Nigeria. Although UBE is theoretically free for all, the reality on the ground is very different. The 2010 NEDS found that around 60% of households were still paying PTA levies while almost all households had costs associated with books and supplies (NPC and RTI International 2011). Over 90% were paying for school uniforms and other school materials, which Lincoe’s (2009) study found comprised the bulk of school expenses and which other studies have also highlighted (e.g. Urwick 2002; Sunal et al. 2003; FME 2005; ActionAid 2011; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013). More positively, NEDS 2010 also found that household expenditure per pupil in government schools had decreased by around half since 2004. Even so, among parents/guardians whose children had never been to school monetary costs were cited as the third most common reason given for non-enrolment (after distance to school and the need for child labour – also a cost-related reason), affecting around a quarter of children. Moreover, cost was the most commonly cited cause of dropping out of primary school, affecting a third of dropouts nationally – boys (35.7%) more than girls (29.7%) and more in urban areas (40.4%) than in rural areas (30.9%) – irrespective of socio-economic status.

In the 2004 ESA poverty was a major reason for withdrawal from school and over half the parents sampled cited financial reasons for not sending their children to JSS, which pupil interviews confirmed (FME 2005).

Lincoe’s (2009) analysis of combined NDHS 2003 and NEDS 2004 data for just under 4,000 children aged 6–12 resulted in the finding that only 15% of children actually get free education. The study found
that, generally speaking, wealthier children are actually more likely to receive free education. Specifically, free schooling is more likely to be available to access in the relatively wealthier urban areas and southern regions of the country than in the poorer zones of the North West and North East, whose school-age children make up 65% of the data set. Girls are slightly less likely than boys to have free schooling (14.1% to 16%), with Muslim pupils considerably less likely to have free schooling (12.7%) than Christian pupils (19.5%).

The 2004 ESA also collected information on household spending at the ECCE, Primary and JSS levels. At all three levels, clothing and miscellaneous costs (which included transport and lunch) were higher than those for learning materials and fees (FME 2005). The report highlighted the need to reduce such hidden costs of schooling for parents.

The persistence of PTA levies, as well as other fees (for example, for examinations, school registration and/or other ad hoc payments), has been widely documented in studies and has often been attributed to the need for schools to make up for shortfalls in government funding (e.g. Urwick 2002; Sunal et al. 2003, Flett et al. 2005, cited in Theobald et al. 2007; Antoninis 2010; Santcross et al. 2010; ActionAid 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). In the recent TEGINT endline survey in six states across northern Nigeria, it was noted that although around 75% of PTA levies had remained the same as for the baseline survey a few years earlier, over 25% had increased their fees, citing increased running costs due to more ambitious SDPs (ActionAid 2012). In the country’s only national labour survey, inability to pay fees was the most widespread reason for dropping out given by working children who had withdrawn from school (FOS/ILO 2001). More recent studies have confirmed that fees continue to be a major obstacle to participation in schooling in northern Nigeria (UNICEF 2009a; ActionAid 2011, 2012; Mahdi and Asubiario-Dada, forthcoming, cited in British Council 2012; UBEC 2012a; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

Pupils’ inability to pay school fees or levies or to provide the requisite school equipment can also result in their being denied admission to school or can lead to corporal punishment by teachers, which in turn may lead to absenteeism and dropout (Flett et al. 2005, cited in Theobald et al. 2007; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrseck and Usman 2013). Pupils themselves will often be absent from school to earn money specifically to pay for educational costs (FOS/ILO 2001; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013), sometimes for younger siblings (Samuels et al. 2012). The TEGINT study reported that some girls engaged in transactional sex in order to earn money for school (ActionAid 2011). Sunal et al.’s (2003) small interview-based study of 40 teachers and 40 parents from six states in both the north and south (including both parents with children in and not in school) noted that, although parents and teachers were in favour of schooling for all children, they admitted that when money was tight sometimes decisions had to be made about who to school.

However, the relationship between poverty and enrolment in schooling is not straightforward; other factors such as educational quality and potential gains from schooling come into play. Even poor families are prepared to pay to send children to school (Linouve 2009; Härämä 2011b), although consideration of educational quality, however it is defined, is an important factor (Sunal et al. 2003). Data from the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011) back this up. For example, when parents/guardians were asked to identify the main consideration for primary school selection, cost was identified by only 13% of households, and by an even smaller percentage in the bottom two wealth quintiles; school proximity (53%) and school quality (30%) were more frequently cited. For choice of secondary school too, school cost came third again, behind school quality and school proximity, although a higher percentage of parents considered it to be the most important factor (21.1%).
Box 9.2 Being over-age

I want to be a medical doctor when I finish school. The only problem is that I will be old. I am not ashamed, because I am looking for knowledge. I did not start school early because I attended village school where they don’t teach, until the school collapsed. We stayed without going to school for nine years before being enrolled here. I came third in the class last term. Now I want to be first or second. My father tells me to read at home. He checks my books very well for the nine years I was doing petty trading with my father.

Source: Extract from an interview with a 20-year-old man in Primary 6 (Dunne et al. 2013: 230)

9.3.2 Opportunity costs

One estimate claims that 50 million children aged between 5 and 17 in Nigeria are believed to be working, which is about 20% of the estimated total for all SSA (Diallo et al. 2010). In practice, the actual scale of the issue is hard to determine given the widely differing interpretations of the terms ‘child work’ and ‘child labour’ that surveys use to estimate numbers. Importantly, the two main surveys referred to below used differing definitions of child labour, and for the most part adults responded on behalf of children or children responded in the presence of adults, which is likely to have resulted in an underreporting of activities that could be viewed as child labour.

The only national child labour survey to have been conducted so far in Nigeria was back in 2001 (FOS/ILO, 2001), for which the definitions of child labour and work did not actually specify numbers of hours. The survey found that 15 million 5–17-year-olds, who made up almost 40% of the country’s population at the time, were found to be working (7.2 million girls and 7.8 million boys); over 6 million of them were not in school, with almost 1 million having dropped out of school. Two million of these working children, half of whom were in school, were working very long hours. Unsurprisingly, work affected attendance in school; over a third of the children admitted to missing the entire week prior to the survey, although over 80% of the children did not think that work affected their performance. Given the high reported level of absenteeism, this either suggests that the children were not aware of the detrimental effect of absenteeism on their learning, as the report itself speculated, or perhaps that the quality of schooling was so poor that it made little difference whether they attended or not.

The FOS/ILO (2001) survey further reported that just under 40% of children were involved in economic activity as well as housekeeping or domestic work, about a tenth were involved only in economic activity and just over a quarter were engaged in non-economic activities (although it should be noted that there were considerable regional variations). A study on the status of school-age children in the South East and South South zones plus Benue State also identified engagement of children as house helps as one of the major access issues in basic education in those areas (Okeke et al. 2008).

The more recent MICS national survey on the welfare of children and women (NBS 2013) also included a section on child labour, albeit using differing definitions of what it constituted. Among children aged five to 14, around 47% were found to be engaged in child labour, although with great variation among states (Lagos had 31% while Bauchi and Zamfara had figures closer to 60%). However, with a definition for 5–11-year-olds that only necessitated at least one hour of paid economic activity per week (or 28 hours plus of household chores) it is hard to gauge the percentage of pupils whose schooling would be adversely affected. More useful perhaps is to consider the percentages for 12–14-year-olds, for whom the definition is 14 hours or more of economic activity or 28 hours of household chores, and whose hours are more likely to have an impact on schooling. The average is 16.5%, with the highest figures for the North West, where just over a fifth are engaged in child labour as opposed to under a tenth in the South West. Aggregated figures for 5–14-year-olds indicate that this affects children in rural areas more than urban areas and girls slightly more than boys; unsurprisingly, the poorer the household the greater the percentage of children involved in child labour. In terms of paid or unpaid employment most
children are involved in the family business, which for most will be agriculture. This affects around half of all children aged 5–11 and three-quarters of those aged 12–14, irrespective of gender, geo-political zone, location or wealth. Girls and boys are also involved in hawking and petty trading, thus missing school on market days in particular, with some also travelling great distances (see also FME 2005; Boulton et al. 2009; Usman 2010). For girls in northern Nigeria, hawking is a major and widespread impediment to their participation in school (ActionAid 2011; Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012).

The national child labour survey study (i.e. FOS/ILO 2001) revealed that the majority (61.1% nationally and 69.8% in the North East and North West) of school children who combined schooling with working used their income to sponsor themselves in school or to assist their parents in offsetting part or all of their school expenses. In addition, just over 40% of those working but not in school saved their earnings to pay for schooling later (FOS/ILO 2001). A smaller survey of working children in Ibadan, in Oyo State in the South West, also found that almost half of those in school were earning money to continue their studies, although only a similar percentage wanted to go to school full time if they had the choice (Omokhodion et al. 2006).

Dunne et al.’s (2013) study in Adamawa State noted that pupil absenteeism from school due to work is often seasonal in agricultural communities, as both girls and boys are needed for planting and harvesting. Boys, however, also tend to be needed more to work in the fields or to mind cattle both before and during school hours, resulting in latecoming or absenteeism. In Edo State, seasonal absences for farming and fishing were also identified as a major barrier to sustained school access (UBEC 2012a).

On the other hand, it is important to note that in many communities the practice of children working is also considered an important part of the socialisation process and thus not a ‘bad thing’ per se (FOS/ILO 2001; Robson 2004; Oloko 1993, cited in Omokhodion et al. 2006; Usman 2010). Two ethnographic studies in northern Nigeria have noted that, for female children, hawking is also considered to be a legitimate way of meeting potential suitors, as well as allowing girls to save for their wedding (Robson 2004; Usman 2010) (see also Section 8.3).

**Box 9.3 Young female Fulbe street hawkers confront danger**

> Often we stop at the entrance or gates of homes in major streets to solicit customers by announcing loud our products. Sometimes there are no labels or warning signs of danger as ‘beware of dogs’ and we become victims of dog bites. See what a dog did to me a year ago [showing me a dog bite scar on her left leg].

> When the men continue making such comments without addressing the price and quantity of nono [sour milk] and fura [cooked dumplings] purchase, we consider that a bad signal that they are not ‘true’ customers, but have a different motive. We then insist by asking them how much worth of our product they want, but they ignore us and insist on their compliments which often may lead them touching us in inappropriate places. At this point we lift out calabashes and leave immediately before we are harmed.

> Yes, [she laughs!!!] we sometimes also use insulting city language to confront our verbal intimidators [all the girls are laughing in support of the statement]. Often we use the finger sign signifying ‘bastard’. They sometimes push us too far then we also react to stop the insult using city method and it works as the male intimidators or abuser feels challenges and ashamed and leave us alone by walking. Even though we know we are not supposed to do so, but we sometimes need to defend ourselves as the city people do, but what do they expect us to do hav[ing] pushed us too far despite our patience?

*Source: Interview extracts with young rural Fulbe girls hawking in the city, from Usman (2010: 725–727)*
9.3.3 Household chores

Household chores constitute another area of children’s work that can impact heavily on school punctuality and attendance (Dunne et al. 2013; UNICEF 2012). The 2011 survey (NBS 2013) also showed that household chores are an important part of life for all children. Although figures were negligible for children completing over 28 hours per week of household chores, they were high for under 28 hours – at around 60% of the younger age bracket and just over 80% for the older age bracket – affecting girls more than boys and those in urban areas slightly more than in rural areas irrespective of wealth. However, as we do not know whether this means children do chores for one or 27 hours per week, again it is hard from these statistics to gauge the possible impact on schooling. On the other hand, the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011) looked at explanations for absenteeism from primary school the week prior to the interview and found that wealth was significant; the poorer the household, the higher the percentage of children absent from school because they had to complete domestic work. Domestic work was also reported to have caused absenteeism more in rural areas (11.8%) than in urban areas (6.5%) and to have caused girls to be absent (12.8%) much more than boys (8.8%). The qualitative data confirm the fact that girls are generally more burdened by household chores, especially since girls sometimes have to stay at home to look after newly born and younger siblings while the mother goes out to work and are also more likely to have to look after sick relatives (Robson 2004; British Council 2012; UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013).

Interestingly, however, the girls surveyed in the TEGINT study did not specifically identify household chores as one of the three main barriers to achieving their desired educational level (ActionAid 2011); they were poverty, early marriage and ill health (although the need to undertake domestic tasks might well have been included in the broad band of poverty).

9.3.4 Street and trafficked children

Street children, who are predominantly boys, are a particularly important and vulnerable category of working children, which is increasing in number, especially in urban areas (Ikechebelu et al. 2008; Aransiola et al. 2009). They also constitute a large segment of the estimated 17.5 million OVCs in Nigeria, which also includes an estimated 40% of children under 17 who have been trafficked (BUCHGHD 2009). Although both girls and boys are trafficked – generally from rural to urban areas – girls are said to be more vulnerable to trafficking (Jones et al. 2012); gender patterns have been identified that suggest females are often trafficked into domestic service, street trading and sexual exploitation whereas males are engaged in a greater range of activities, including street trading, agriculture, mining, petty crime and the drug trade (Aronowicz 2006, cited in Jones et al. 2012).

Street children are usually behind in the acquisition of basic literacy skills (Lloyd and Hewett 2003; World Bank 2006), restricted in educational participation, and are particularly vulnerable to ill health and abuse (Aransiola et al. 2009). In northern Nigeria a large proportion of male street children are almajirai, whom various states are trying to incorporate into the formal school system (see also Section 2.5 and Section 8.6.2).

In the national labour survey (FOS/ILO, 2001) around 5,500 street children were surveyed, 95% of whom were male. The most common occupation was load carrying (over a third), followed by hawking and then bus conducting. Over 90% of the children were out of school. Hawking predominated among the female respondents. In addition to restricting educational participation, street hawking exposes the children – especially girls – to sexual harassment and violence (Sada et al. 2005; UNICEF 2012). An exploratory study of street hawking in Anambra State (in the South East) (Ikechebelu et al. 2008) found that about 70% of female street hawkers (mean age 13) had been sexually abused while hawking, including almost a quarter who had been raped or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for gifts or food. Aransiola et al.’s (2009) study of 1,500 street children across three cities also found police offering protection in exchange for sexual favours from girls or for bribes from boys.
9.4 Initiatives to reduce school costs

There have been various initiatives to reduce school costs in order to increase access to school; these initiatives have often been donor-driven, aimed at increasing girls’ access to schooling in particular and have been adjudged to have increased enrolments, although it is not known whether beneficiaries have persisted in school. Examples include conditional cash transfers (UNICEF 2012). Free school uniform for Primary 1 girls had been provided in Adamawa State for the last few years, and following its reported impact the system is being extended to all pupils in all primary grades (Dunne et al. 2013). At the local level too SBMC initiatives and/or women’s associations in donor-supported northern states have variously raised money or been given school grants that they have used to provide uniforms, instructional materials, sanitary pads and even bicycles to girls and/or to give financial support to poor families (Adediran 2010; Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012), including specifically to children of families of minority ethnic origin (Pinnock 2012).

9.5 Health

Child ill health, which is often related to poverty, poor water and sanitation and/or conditions of child labour, impacts heavily on schooling and has been identified as a major impediment to Nigeria achieving UBE (UNDP Nigeria 2010). As the 2010 NEDS succinctly summarised:

“School-age children suffer from nutritional problems that may affect their physical and cognitive development, as well as their capacity to attend school, stay in school, and learn while attending school. Previous research has found correlations between nutrition and school enrolment/attendance, performance in school, age-of-entry, absenteeism, repetition, and dropout (NPC and RTI International 2011: 37–38). The survey showed many children aged 4–10 were malnourished, again considerably more in rural and northern regions, and speculated that the discontinuation of the Home Grown School Feeding programme in the majority of states may have helped discourage additional enrolment after 2007 (ibid.: 4). Conversely, the school-feeding programme in Kano State (1999–2003) when all school-age children were provided with a midday meal reportedly led to an expansion of school enrolment (UBEC 2012a).”

Hunger has been identified as a major problem, sometimes resulting in pupil latecoming and absenteeism as they go in search of food, and as having a detrimental effect on concentration and learning (UNICEF 2009a; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

Ill health was identified as the most important constraint to schooling by just under a quarter of the 7,000 sampled primary school and JSS students in the 2004 ESA (FME 2005). Similarly, in the 2010 NEDS, ill health was by far the most commonly cited reason for missing school at primary level, given by over a third of respondents nationally and over half in the South West, although interestingly the percentage increased with household wealth. In the TEGINT study on girls’ education in eight states in Nigeria, illness was also identified as a major obstacle to schooling among 44% of respondents, although this percentage ranged widely across the states (ActionAid 2011). Importantly, however, the majority of adults in leadership positions in this study did not recognise health issues as a barrier to girls’ participation in school (ibid.). In contrast, over half the teachers surveyed in the CFS evaluation recognised that inadequate nutrition prevented pupils from learning as much as they could, although most schools had had to discontinue their school-feeding programmes because of rising food costs (UNICEF 2009a).

9.5.1 Water and sanitation

Poor water and sanitation is considered to be at the root of much child ill health (UNDP Nigeria 2010). The 2010 Nigeria Malaria Indicator Survey found that almost a third of households still have no toilet facility and almost a fifth have only an open pit latrine (NPC, National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) and ICF International 2012). The three most important health constraints on pupil and teacher
Review of the literature on basic education in Nigeria

attendance as reported in the 2004 ESA (FME 2005) – malaria, typhoid and diarrhoea – are all related to water and sanitation issues.

9.5.2 Intestinal parasites

One of the results of this poor water and sanitation is high prevalence rates among children of intestinal parasites (Igagbone and Olagunju 2006; Olaniyi et al. 2007; Opara et al. 2012). Children living in rural or urban slum areas are particularly affected (Olaniyi et al. 2007). Studies across several states reported two-thirds or more of children being infected (and often re-infected) with various intestinal parasites (Igagbone and Olagunju 2006; Opara et al. 2012). These high prevalence rates have showed little sign of improvement over the last 50 years, yet the persistence of parasites arrests children’s physical and cognitive development as well as leaving them prone to disease and malnutrition (Igagbone and Olagunju 2006; Opara et al. 2012).

9.5.3 Malaria

Malaria is endemic in Nigeria but there are limited data available on its impact on children’s and teachers’ school attendance. In the 2004 ESA, however, malaria was overwhelmingly identified as the main health reason for missing school (by over 80% of pupils and just under 50% of staff) (FME 2005).

In addition, the recent national survey on malaria found that a quarter of all household members had had a fever in the two weeks prior to the survey, with the highest figures in the North West, where over a third had reportedly been ill. For children aged 5 to 9 the figure was 26.6%, while 10 to 14-year olds were slightly less affected (19.3%) (NPC, NMCP and ICF International 2012).

9.5.4 HIV and AIDS

Another major health challenge is HIV and AIDS; although overall national HIV prevalence is estimated to have stabilised at around 3.3% (Samuels et al. 2012), an estimated 2.8 million children under 17 are living with HIV, many of whom are not attending school (BUCGHD 2009). Additionally, latest figures from the NEDS reported that around 7% of adults knew of children in the community they believed were absent from school because a parent or guardian was ill with either HIV or AIDS, a figure which was highest for the North Central and South East zones, both at over 12%. Moreover, rural communities were affected more than urban ones (NPC and RTI International 2011). A recent study on HIV vulnerabilities in four states (Adamawa, Benue, Edo and Lagos) highlighted working-age and young children and youth, especially OVCs and young women, as being especially vulnerable to HIV infection (Samuels et al. 2012). Young women (aged 14 to 24) were three times more likely to be HIV positive than young men. Inevitably, poverty was also a factor. Households in difficult economic circumstances with high numbers of dependents are more at risk of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition and therefore at further risk of infection by engaging in risky practices such as transactional sex in exchange for food (ibid.). The study also highlighted the limited awareness of HIV prevention, according to 2008 NDHS data, especially in the three northern zones and among poor, rural women (Samuels et al. 2012).

9.5.5 Family members’ ill health

Adult ill health can also have an impact on children; in the 2004 ESA pupil survey caring for sick parents was identified as a major constraint on school attendance by over 10% of pupil respondents (FME 2005). Some children not only have to look after sick parents but may also sometimes have to go out to earn money, to make up for the lack of household income (Samuels et al. 2012). In so doing, they are at risk of further impoverishment (with its associated health risks) because their income-earning potential is less than that of an adult (ibid.).
Child labourers that work in hazardous conditions are also likely to be particularly affected by health issues (UNICEF 2006).

Joint initiatives between the ministries of health and education have been suggested to enhance pupils’ wellbeing in school (Dunne et al. 2013). However, in the final assessment of COMPASS, it was concluded that such initiatives were difficult to establish because of the separate vertical flows in funding and management that exist in education and health, both in government and within donor agencies (Holfeld et al. 2008).

9.6 Cultural issues

There are many gendered cultural reasons related to religion and/or lifestyle that affect girls’ and boys’ participation in schooling. As regards religious issues, they are strongly gendered, impacting differently on girls and boys.

Many of the issues that hinder girls’ and boys’ participation in schooling that were discussed in Chapter 8 are ascribed to religious culture, and to interpretations of Islam in particular. The way in which interpretations of Christianity, or even ATR, may affect school participation has not attracted the same level of attention on the part of researchers (Nyemutu-Roberts et al. 2009), which in part may be because most research has accompanied development initiatives in the predominantly Muslim areas of northern Nigeria and because Muslim girls have been one of the main targets of educational interventions.

As was highlighted in Chapter 8, Muslim girls – especially those from poor, traditional families – are generally considered to be particularly disadvantaged in terms of opportunities for educational participation because of traditions of early marriage and hawking, which in turn is often driven by the need to save for kayan daki (trousseau or dowry) and the fact that mothers often live in purdah, or seclusion, and are therefore not allowed out of their homes to earn money (Sada et al. 2005; Okojie 2012; UNICEF 2012). Parental concerns about public schooling being ‘western’ and anti-Islam are also found in some communities (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

For Muslim boys the most obvious cultural-religious constraint to participation in schooling is the almajirai system, described in Section 8.6.2.

A number of Muslim children attend Qur’anic school before (or after) attending government school. Dunne et al.’s (2013) study in Adamawa State reported that numerous children (girls and boys) arrived late to public school in the morning after being released late from Qur’anic school, which was due to finish at 8am. This frequently resulted in their being beaten or, in order to avoid being beaten, they would miss school altogether or sneak in after the gate was no longer being patrolled. There was little evidence of schools and religious leaders working together to arrange a timetable that could accommodate both types of schooling (ibid.).

The lifestyles of Nigeria’s many nomads can also impact negatively on participation in formal education, compounded by ill-fitting aspects of school and curriculum organisation and discrimination at school – as described below in Section 9.7.

9.7 Nomads and formal education

Most of this section derives from research on nomadic pastoralists in northern Nigeria. Despite the increasing numbers of nomadic pastoralists attending school, as reported in Section 7.8, participation rates are still relatively low and dropout rates are reportedly still high (Usman 2006). The various reasons for this are reported on below.
9.7.1 Nomadic lifestyles

The pastoralist Hausa-Fulani are increasingly being forced to adapt either to semi-nomadic or fully sedentary lifestyles; only an estimated 8.5% now live a purely nomadic lifestyle (Iro 2001). Despite their major contribution to the Nigerian economy through cattle, the Fulani nomadic pastoralists are some of the most socially disadvantaged groups in the country, with especially poor access to medical services (Iro 2001). Malnutrition in Fulani children has also been highlighted, attributable in part to the move to sedentarism, which has led to a change in diet, the need to sell more of their dairy produce for cash, and competition for resources with other communities (Expo et al. 2008). On the other hand, 71% of those Fulani interviewed in Iro’s (2001) research said that constantly shifting settlements was the main reason that prevented their children’s literacy from improving.

9.7.2 Gender in Fulani communities

In Fulani communities, men look after the cattle and women sell the milk and dairy products and look after the domestic sphere (Iro 2001; McCaffery et al. 2006; Usman 2006), although some girls have been found to help with the herding in families that have few boys (Usman 2010). The male head of the household decides whether boys are to go to school (Usman 2006). In semi-nomadic communities the boys travel with the men and cattle while the girls and women stay with the elderly in the camp (McCaffery et al. 2006). Girls/women generally marry in their mid or late teens, whereas men tend to marry in their 20s (Iro, 2001).

However, one of the aims of a DFID-funded pilot project from 1997 to 2001 in Adamawa and Taraba (McCaffery et al. 2006) was to train teachers from nomadic Fulani communities. In the case of female teachers, there was said to be some progress in changing the attitudes of some Fulani elders who were willing to let girls delay marriage in order to take the teacher education course and then work as teachers within the communities once married. However, the authors noted that the rate of female participation in formal schooling remained low despite changes in attitudes and practices, although again statistics on this were lacking.

9.7.3 Parental attitudes to formal schooling

As a result of low participation rates, nomadic pastoralists are often mistakenly accused of being against formal education. However, Iro’s (2001) survey of around 2,000 pastoralists found an 85% approval rating for formal education as many are keen to learn so as to be able to have a greater say in governance by having Fulani in decision-making positions. There is also a desire to learn how better to engage with markets in selling their products, to deal with government bureaucracy, and to learn modern veterinary methods to enable them to look after their cattle better (McCaffery et al. 2006). Usman’s (2006) study of Fulani boys also reported that the boys viewed school as a welcome break from herding.

Even so, the Fulani have concerns about ‘westernised’ formal education, which threatens their traditional nomadic lifestyle and Fulani identity (Usman 2006). As one Fulani leader memorably put it: ‘We are not opposed to getting our children into schools but we fear that at the end of it they will only be good for eating cattle instead of tending and caring for them’ (Nkinyangi 1980, cited in Usman 2006).

In addition, the small numbers of Fulani that have graduated from university have not returned to the Fulani way of life (Iro 2001). There is also fear among some Fulani about schools attempting to convert them to Christianity, borne out of historical experience with missionaries and the fact that some teachers in nomadic schools have been accused of preaching (ibid.).

An evaluation of a small nomadic literacy programme for both adults and children in Osun State (Olateju 2010) found that there was a strong demand for literacy training, that the training was effective, and
that training for adults made them more likely to send their children to school. However, the need for children’s help with cleaning and looking after cattle was an obstacle to full-time regular attendance for many young people (ibid.).

9.7.4 Conflicting views on the success of nomadic schooling

Atinnmo et al. (2011) conducted an evaluation survey among stakeholders involved in nomadic education across six states – one in each geo-political zone. These included federal and local government officials involved in nomadic education, nomadic community leaders, head teachers and teachers. Over three-quarters were positive about the success of the programme in terms of providing a relevant functional basic education programme to nomads, improving literacy, numeracy, relations with farmers and local government officials and having a positive impact on the nomadic community as a whole. Yet this perceived success was at odds with the results of the questionnaire on the constraints of the programme, in which over 80% of respondents claimed there were problems with teacher truancy and supervision, difficulty in enforcing attendance, and a lack of cooperation between the nomads and their host community. Over half also said the curriculum was irrelevant. Crucially, no pupils’ views were surveyed and nor was there much statistical evidence against which to evaluate the findings.

Box 9.4 Reasons for school absenteeism and dropout among nomadic populations

The reasons for the high levels of absenteeism and dropout rates among nomads are various, related to the disjunction between nomadic lifestyles and the constraints of formal education, exacerbated by discriminatory practices in school. They include:

- Lack of involvement of nomads in planning (Aderinoye et al. 2007), although this is said to have improved more recently (Usman 2006);
- Poor coordination and/or lack of support for nomadic activities at state and LGEA levels (Aderinoye et al. 2007);
- After the initial injection of funds, many nomadic schools are now underfunded, in disrepair and lack materials (Iro 2001; Usman 2006; Aderinoye et al. 2007);
- Teacher truancy and lack of teacher supervision (Atinnmo et al. 2011);
- Inability to pay school levies, so boys reportedly missed school for a couple of weeks to earn the money herding to be able to make the payments, thereby falling behind with their work (Usman 2006);
- Lack of fit between school timetabling and nomadic pastoralists’ traditional lifestyles. Although policy demands that appropriate evening shifts are scheduled in nomadic schools to accommodate boys’ and girls’ herding and milk-selling duties, respectively, in practice some schools have not been operating evening shifts because teachers had to go out to find other work then because of delays to their salaries (Usman 2006). In one survey (Ezeomah 2002, cited in Usman 2006), 60% of teachers confirmed that Fulani boys’ morning labour affected their attendance and ultimately their completion of school;
- Irrelevant curriculum in government schools (Atinnmo et al. 2011);
- Inappropriate didactic teaching methods, which are at odds with the more holistic apprentice-style learning that occurs in Fulani societies (Iro 2001; Usman 2006);
- Use of corporal punishment, which is meted out for latecoming or non-possession of learning materials but is generally deemed unacceptable to nomadic parents (Usman 2006); and
- Use of English as the MOI in some schools (Iro 2001).
9.8 Conflict

There is scarcely any academic literature on conflict and education in Nigeria, although the explicit targeting and burning of schools and killing of students and teachers by the Islamist militant group Boko Haram (which loosely translates as ‘western education is forbidden/sinful’) in the North East has brought the issue into sharp relief. In an Amnesty International report (2013) based on newspaper reports and interviews with a range of government and civilian respondents, primarily in Borno State, it was estimated that over 1,000 teachers have been forced to flee and up to 15,000 children have been forced out of school. The NEI’s mid-term review noted the substantial increase in numbers of OVCs in communities in Bauchi and Sokoto on account of displaced people resulting from the conflict in neighbouring states (Larcom et al. 2013).

In May 2013, Borno SUBEB directed all staff to stay at home and many schools in the state capital, Maiduguri, were closed for several months and students could not sit exams. In addition, teachers have reported threats and intimidation, especially teachers of English, resulting in low morale and adversely affecting their ability to teach (ibid.). Teachers in Borno felt they were not getting sufficient protection and called on government to fence the schools and to investigate the abuses. The report went on to say that the State of Emergency declared in three states in the North East (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe) in 2013 had resulted in a lack of public transport, making it impossible for some pupils and students to reach school. Poor-quality education has also been linked to the violence itself: many militants in Boko Haram have been identified as young secondary school dropouts (Danjibo 2009).

Box 9.5 The impact of Boko Haram on formal schooling

‘I saw the gunmen walking towards the school compound, two of them. I was shouting at the kids to enter their classrooms. I think he was trying to get some peanuts from the woman that sells outside the gate. All the children were there. They parked their car a few yards away and came straight to him and shot him at close range. We all ran for cover when we heard the shot. It was scary. All the children were screaming. Mallam Yusuf has been a teacher all his life. Many young men and women have passed through him in this state. I wonder why anybody would want to kill such a peaceful and quiet person. He was just doing his job as a teacher.’

A colleague who witnessed the killing of Mallam Yusuf Mohammad, a 44-year-old teacher in a primary school in Gwange III, who was shot and killed by unknown gunmen outside his school in Maiduguri in May 2013 (p. 4).

‘I was in my class when all of a sudden I heard a big blast. My sister (in class 3) was killed by the bomb attack. I wanted to see what was happening…we ran away from Maiduguri and came to Kangere (Bauchi state) and I’m now living with my sister in Jos…I have not been able to go to school ever since. I miss a lot of my friends in school. I’d be happy to go back to school in Kangere where my father lives, but not in Maiduguri.’

S.A., a 13-year-old former pupil of Janjeri primary school in Maiduguri, Borno State, who witnessed a bomb attack on his school that killed his younger sister (p. 7).

‘Last month [March 2013], two members of the group came to my house in the middle of the night, with a machete and a gun. They put a gun on my head in front of my children. My wife was crying. They told me to either stop teaching English and start teaching Arabic or close the school... I told them I can’t. I don’t know how to teach Arabic. They said if I don’t, they’ll kill me and my entire family.’

H.H. aged 44, a community schoolteacher in one of the towns in northern Borno State (p. 11).

‘There were no schools operating in the town before I left. One was burned by unknown gunmen. All the pupils were transferred to the other school. Now that school has stopped functioning. It’s a government school. The other teachers said they can’t continue to teach because they are afraid. The children just stay at home now. In fact, many of my colleagues have run away and come to Maiduguri.’

A teacher from a government primary school in a town in Borno State, April 2013 (p. 13).
At least 80% of the pupils in my school were taken away by their parents... In June 2013, Boko Haram warned students not to go to the schools to take the National Examinations Council exams in Bama town. The number of candidates who took the exams reduced drastically.'
Former teacher from Borno currently hiding in Kaduna (p. 15).

The entire town was locked down. No movement is allowed in or out. The army has banned the use of all forms of transportation even within the town. So teachers cannot go to school; parents cannot send their children to school because you have to walk, regardless of the distance.'
A 25-year-old teacher from Old Bama primary school, commenting on the state of emergency restrictions. He fled Bama in May 2013 and is currently seeking refuge in Kaduna (p. 16).

Source: Amnesty International (2013)

Other notable conflicts in Nigeria in recent years have included the inter-communal violence in Plateau and Kano states, which at its height between 2001 and 2004 resulted in the deaths of between 2,000 and 3,000 people (Human Rights Watch (HRW) 2005). There have also been long-running conflicts in the Niger Delta that have escalated since the late 1990s and are typified by violent armed gang warfare, some of it politically sponsored, involving young unemployed men who cite the lack of educational and employment opportunities among their reasons for engaging in such activities (UNDP 2006; HRW 2008; Bagaji et al. 2011). Many children are denied access to schooling as schools and entire villages have been destroyed and communities displaced over the years of conflict (ibid.). In UBEC’s impact assessment, stakeholders highlighted the fact that ‘inter-communal conflict in some states discouraged parents from sending their wards to school’, with nomads singled out as being particularly affected (UBEC 2012a: 286).

Nigeria’s National Commission for Refugees estimated that around 3 million people were internally displaced because of strife between 1999 and 2006 (HRW 2007). Continuing low levels of government investment in infrastructure such as schools and health care further contribute to the social conditions that sustain the violence (UNDP 2006; HRW 2008; Bagaji et al. 2011).

Research from other countries reported in the 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2011) indicates that in situations of armed conflict: the child mortality rate is higher; children are less likely to be in school; children can be traumatised; gender and other inequalities are exacerbated; resources are directed away from education; and poverty is increased – as crops and property are destroyed and access to markets is blocked, which inevitably affects the ability of poor families to send pupils to school. Studies specifically focused on the impact of conflict in Nigeria on education and/or the role education may play in fuelling or appeasing conflict are currently lacking.

9.9 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

There is plenty of evidence that identifies out-of-school factors affecting access and retention in school but there is a lack of studies that explore how these various factors interrelate (and relate to in-school factors) with particular groups of children.

While there is some research about practices associated with Islam and their impact on education (e.g. kayan daki) very little is known about Christianity and ATR or about how ethnicity interacts with religion and relates to schooling in different rural and urban locations in Nigeria.

Pupil tracking and spatial and time mapping would help to understand what pupils’ daily lives are like inside and outside of school and the multiple constraints many face.

Much more needs to be known about nomadic schooling in practice and how it fits in with nomadic lifestyles in particular communities. How do the lives of fully nomadic pastoralists compare with those of
former nomads who have adopted a more sedentary way of life and what is the effect on educational opportunities and outcomes?

There were no available socially situated studies that looked at other cultural/ethnic groups and their traditional practices that might have an impact on school access and children’s experience of schooling, particularly in rural areas.

Studies are lacking on the effects of conflict on education and the ways in which the quality or forms of education may also have an impact on conflict.

**Evidence Strength Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of evidence:</th>
<th>Size of body of evidence:</th>
<th>Consistency of results:</th>
<th>Overall assessment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 10: TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATION

10.1 Introduction

‘Learning outcomes are, to a large extent, dependent on what teachers do (or do not do) at the school and classroom levels’ (FME 2011a: 55).

‘It is generally accepted that the competence and commitment of teachers are two of the most important determinants of learning outcomes’ (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007: 3).

Despite large investments in education in recent years, the quality of teaching and teacher education continues to be of great concern to FGN. This chapter builds on Chapter 4, providing further explanations of why the overall quality of teaching remains very low in many schools across Nigeria by focusing on teachers and the training they receive. First, the chapter looks at teachers and the numbers of qualified and unqualified teachers in both the state and the private sector. Next, we consider the processes of teacher appointment and deployment before reporting on teachers’ pay and conditions and the impact they have on teachers’ motivation and performance. The focus then shifts to teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, and the challenges faced by both, as well as a review of the little available literature on some of the school-based teacher development initiatives that have been taking place in northern Nigeria.

10.2 Teachers

10.2.1 Teacher characteristics

One problem said to be at the root of the low quality of education is the lack of teachers, and lack of qualified teachers and subject specialists in particular (UBEC 2012a; FME 2011a). As shown in Table 10.1, the minimum qualification for teaching at nursery, primary or junior secondary level is NCE.

Table 10.1 Minimum teaching qualifications by level of schooling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Minimum qualification(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>NCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>NCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior secondary</td>
<td>NCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior secondary</td>
<td>BEd/BSc or BA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although absolute numbers are not very meaningful given that data are missing for a number of states, and returns from the private sector are particularly sparse, the percentages give some indication of patterns nationally. As Table 10.2 indicates, almost two-thirds of public primary teachers are qualified, on average, although regional variation is great. The lack of qualified teachers is generally worse in the more rural, northern regions of the country: in the North East and North West well under half the teachers are qualified whereas in the South West almost all teachers are qualified. There is also great variation among states and within states among LGEAs. EMIS returns for Kano and Lagos states in 2011/12, for example, show the mean percentage of qualified public primary teachers to be 63% and 95%, respectively, with LGEA figures for Kano State varying between 40% and 89%. Even at the LGEA level there is variation, with urban areas often having a greater number of qualified teachers than rural areas (Adekola 2007).
Table 10.2  Primary school teachers by gender, qualification and school type, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONE</th>
<th>PUBLIC</th>
<th></th>
<th>PRIVATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%FT</td>
<td>%MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW24</td>
<td>147,390</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>48,893</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC25</td>
<td>105,619</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW26</td>
<td>87,539</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS27</td>
<td>81,070</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>49,283</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>519,794</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* FT = female teacher; MT = male teacher; QT = qualified teacher.
** The percentage of female teachers that are qualified.
*** The percentage of male teachers that are qualified.

Source: FME (2011b)

Table 10.2 also shows that the national average of qualified teachers in the private primary sector for 2010 is substantially higher than for the government sector, at around 80%; this is also the case across most regions, except in the South West and South East.

Female teachers are often said to be important for increasing female enrolment (see Section 8.5). In the public primary sector (see Table 10.2), a far higher proportion of teachers in the south are women – around three-quarters of the teaching force in the South West and South East. This is in contrast to the North West and North East, where only around a quarter of public primary teachers are women. In terms of qualifications, nationally a higher percentage of female teachers are qualified (73.5%) than male teachers (57.5%), with a similar pattern across the regions, except in the North West, where only around a quarter of female teachers are qualified, compared to over half the male teachers.

In the private primary sector, the situation is reversed, with generally a higher proportion of male teachers qualified than female teachers, except in the North East (FME 2011b). Again, however, there are great variations among and within states and data are often lacking for private schools.

The data on teachers for public and private JSSs are even more sparse, especially for private schools, with many states lacking figures, although they suggest a higher proportion of qualified teachers in the public sector nationally (87.5%) than at primary level, whereas in the private sector the percentage of qualified teachers is lower (76.7%) than at primary level. In broad terms, there is a greater proportion of female teachers (in relation to male teachers) in the south and a greater proportion of male teachers in the north, in both the private and public sectors at JSS level (FME 2011b).

Although it may be an important equity issue to determine who gets access to training for certification, it is equally important to note that possessing a paper qualification is no guarantee of greater professional competence (FME 2011a; see also Section 10.5).

As regards who teaches which subjects, one of the 2004 ESA surveys looked at the gender and subject choice in teacher education institutions and found a high level of gender stereotyping. All student teachers of Home Economics were female and over half specialising in primary were also female. In

24 No data on private schools from Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto and Jigawa states.
25 No data recorded from Plateau State and incomplete data on private schools for Kwara, Kogi and Nasarawa states.
26 No data for private schools from Lagos and Ogun states.
27 Incomplete data.
comparison, female student teachers only comprised 8.2% of the Maths intake, 6.3% in Physical Education and 3.4 % in Technical Education (FME 2005).

There was no available research on teachers’ personal characteristics that might enhance or hinder learning.

10.3 Teacher appointment and deployment

Teacher appointment and deployment is another contentious area that affects educational quality. Some states and LGEAs lack qualified teachers; others have too many (see Thomas (2011) for a comparison of Kwara and Jigawa states, for example). Although teacher shortages can sometimes be attributable to a lack of teachers, they are often due to other processes, as explained below.

Inevitably, the lack of teachers in many schools results in higher PTRs and overcrowded classes (see Section 3.4), which can lead to low teacher morale (see below) and to teacher and/or pupil absenteeism and dropout.

Qualified teachers are often lacking in some schools (especially in rural areas), with a surplus in other schools (often more urban ones), for a variety of reasons:

- The overlapping responsibilities for teacher appointment and deployment between SUBEBs and LGEAs and the frequent lack of trust and communication between the two can result in uneven deployment (Adelabu 2005; Williams 2009; see also Box 6.2);
- Teachers, especially female teachers, often refuse rural postings or ask for a transfer, usually on the grounds of needing to be with their spouse in an urban area (Adelabu 2005);
- Teachers transferred from rural areas are often not replaced (Dunne et al. 2013);
- LGEAs will sometimes deploy or transfer teachers to particular areas as a way of spreading political patronage – sometimes because they too are under political pressure (Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Unqualified teachers are sometimes appointed ahead of qualified teachers because they are cheaper and the LGEA lacks funds (Sherry 2008; Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013), but this can have a detrimental effect on teacher morale, which itself affects educational quality (Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013); and
- There are reports of teacher qualifications being faked (Williams 2009).

The lack of reliable data on teacher numbers and qualifications in particular areas makes it difficult to monitor and address irregularities and inequities in teacher appointment and deployment (Williams 2009). Similarly, while teacher attrition is said to be high (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Umar 2006), there are no reliable data on teacher attrition rates with which to assess the scale and to help identify the specific causes of the problem. Some states have initiated incentives for rural teachers, although even where they exist on paper they are often not paid (Adelabu 2005) or are susceptible to favouritism (Sherry 2008). The 2004 ESA reported that teachers in 46.5% of the schools sampled were entitled to a rural posting allowance, but only in 3.7% of the schools was the allowance said to have been paid (FME 2005). Moreover, as studies elsewhere in SSA have shown, financial incentives have to be substantial to outweigh the social and economic advantages of living in an urban area (Mulkeen 2006). In addition, to get the best value out of incentives the classification of rural schools needs to be carefully thought out so that the most remote and isolated schools are targeted (ibid.).

Another issue of concern is the appropriateness of teacher deployment and the mismatch between teacher training specialisations and appointments (FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Thomas 2011). Adekola’s (2007) review of four years of development and research in primary education and teacher education notes that most NCE graduates train as subject specialists aimed at secondary school teaching, yet may
end up teaching in primary schools, and vice versa. He cites a tracer study in which 15% of NCE graduates who specialised in primary education ended up being deployed to secondary schools, and 60% of subject specialist NCE graduates ended up posted to primary schools. Thomas’ (2011) more recent study for ESSPIN in Kwara and Jigawa states had similar findings, as well as highlighting the need for a more systematic process for determining supply and demand. Thomas also suggests that schools should be more involved in the recruitment process and that teachers should be able to express their preference (ibid.).

### 10.4 Pay, conditions and teacher motivation

Studies across Nigeria have shown that low teacher motivation (e.g. Adelabu 2005; Adekola 2007; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013) often lies at the root of widespread teacher absenteeism, described as ‘endemic’ in some public primary schools, especially in rural areas, and is also the cause of high rates of teacher attrition (Urwick and Aliyu 2003). The FME recognises this, and the fact that in part it is due to low pay, inadequate teacher support and inadequate school infrastructure (FME 2009a).

**Box 10.1 The general view of teachers in Nigeria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GET OUT OF TEACHING AND LOOK FOR A JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sitor’s family spokesman:</strong> A-salama-leikun, my people. May I introduce my young man, Ahmatu Tijani. Stand and be seen, Tijani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tijani (Standing):</strong> A-salama-leikun, my elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spokesman:</strong> As you are well aware, we have come to ask for the hands of your daughter, Amina, in marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amina’s Father:</strong> La-kuli-lai! Tijani has grown so big! Looks every inch like his grandfather. What does he do for a living?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tijani (timidly):</strong> I teach at Government Secondary School, Azare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amina’s Father:</strong> Huuum! Well, you are from a good family. I’ll give you my daughter, but... LISTEN CAREFULLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promise me that you’ll look for a job!</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FME (2011)

Teacher pay and conditions are almost universally reported to be the main source of dissatisfaction among teachers, although the 2004 ESA identified teaching’s low status as more important to both primary and secondary teachers (FME 2005; also see Box 10.1). A mixed-methods study on teachers’ voice (Sherry 2008) was carried out across the six geo-political zones and the FCT, involving teachers from public and private primary schools and JSSs, including nomadic and special schools, as well as other educational stakeholders. Teachers generally felt undervalued and neglected by government, having been excluded from the decision-making process, and had therefore lost trust in government. The main issues that demotivate teachers relate to pay and conditions:

- Low pay, especially in comparison with other civil servants (Adelabu 2005; FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Sherry 2008; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013; FME 2011a);
- Low pay is compounded in some cases by high accommodation costs and high transport costs to reach school (Sherry 2008);
- There are delays in payments in some states, partly due to the multiple layers of responsibility in a decentralised government and to politicised payments (see Chapter 6) (Adelabu 2005; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013);
• Salary delays sometimes result in teachers having to seek alternative employment\(^{28}\) (therefore adversely affecting educational quality) until they are paid (Adelabu 2005);

• Salary structures currently vary by state and depend on which level oversees the school, although the FME and the National Union of Teachers are aiming to implement a standardised teachers’ salary scale (TSS) (see below);

• Salaries can even vary within the school, depending on who you know (Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Promotion is based on qualifications and years of service rather than competence (Adelabu 2005; Adekola 2007; FME 2011a), a situation that is exacerbated by the lack of agreed teaching standards or benchmarks against which to make objective assessments (FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Thomas 2011);

• There is no system of incentives and promotion (FME 2005; Adekola 2007; Sherry 2008; FME 2011a; Thomas 2011);

• The salary increase due after teachers upgrade their qualifications is often not paid (Adekola 2007);

• Fringe benefits, such as loans for accommodation and transport, vary according to state and are often not received (Adelabu 2005).

Other factors identified that have been found to adversely affect teacher motivation include:

• Poor and unsafe physical teaching conditions: dilapidated schools that lack water, toilet facilities and electricity, and are unfenced (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Adelabu 2005; FME 2005; Sherry 2008; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Overcrowded classrooms (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Adelabu 2005; FME 2005; Sherry 2008; Boulton \textit{et al.} 2009; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Lack of teaching materials, such as textbooks (FME 2005; Sherry 2008; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Lack of teacher involvement in policy-making and/or lack of information on new policies, especially in rural areas (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Sherry 2008);

• Lack of supervision, professional support and opportunities for professional development (Sherry 2008; FME 2011a; Thomas 2011);

• Teacher dissatisfaction with some head teacher appointments when not based on merit (Sherry 2008; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Teacher dissatisfaction with head teacher behaviour, e.g. not supporting teachers where there is conflict with parents (Sherry, 2008; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013);

• Teacher transfers without warning and no resettlement allowance (Sherry 2008);

• Teachers feeling that they have been abandoned/neglected by government (Sherry 2008; Dunne \textit{et al.} 2013); and

• Teachers feeling that they have a low status within society (Adelabu 2005; FME 2005; Sherry 2008; FME 2011a).

Analysis of the questionnaires in the teachers’ voice study (Sherry 2008) also found that teachers in urban areas were slightly more motivated, as were female teachers, which was attributed to the low salary being offset by the fact that teaching fitted more with family responsibilities, whereas for male teachers, who were generally the main breadwinners, the low salary was paramount. Teachers desired incentives such as health care and accommodation (which used to be provided), especially for rural areas (ibid.).

\(^{28}\) It should also be noted that in the 2004 ESA many teachers reported that they had supplementary income: almost half said they also farmed and over a quarter said they traded (FME 2005). The extent to which this was on account of delayed payments or on account of the need or desire for more income is not known.
Various stakeholders and researchers have suggested the need for one or more of the following: salary increases, the implementation of a standardised promotion and career structure based on merit, and the opportunity for teachers to have some say in their posting (e.g. Adelabu 2005; Adekola 2007; Thomas 2011; FME 2011a). However, while in agreement with the need for extrinsic motivation in terms of financial incentives, Adekola (2007) notes that teachers who participated in a three-year school-based teacher development project with no financial benefit reported increased job satisfaction, confidence and enjoyment in their teaching. The teacher motivation study also noted that teachers said they experienced job satisfaction when they succeeded in helping pupils to understand (Sherry 2008), suggesting that both the extrinsic and intrinsic motivations of teachers need to be addressed in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

10.4.1 Teachers’ salary scale

Although a standardised TSS has been approved at federal level, it has only been implemented in some states (Sherry 2008; FME 2011a). The PTTE ascribed the refusal by some states to implement the TSS to the cost of implementation, insufficient consultation with states and, most of all, to a lack of political will (FME 2011a).

10.5 Teacher education

The relatively recent Nigeria Teacher Education Policy starts by highlighting the need for a teacher education policy that links pre- and in-service provision, and underlining the importance of in-service training or CPD to teacher motivation and to teaching quality in schools:

There are few teacher education policies that link pre-service and in-service teacher education in any coherent way, or that fully recognize the role of ISTE [in-service teacher education] in teacher motivation or improving instruction quality over time (FME 2009b).

Pre-service education takes place in universities, polytechnics, state and federal colleges of education, and private institutions. The basic minimum teaching qualification (i.e. the NCE) consists of three years of training, including a three-month placement in a school, which is in the process of being extended to a one-year internship (NCCE 2005). In-service education is currently primarily aimed at upgrading teachers’ professional qualifications (rather than improving teaching), part of a process of professionalisation that is at an early stage in Nigeria. The upgrading of teachers’ qualifications to NCE is the responsibility of the National Teachers’ Institute (Adelabu 2005), while in-service teacher education is coordinated by the Teachers’ Registration Council of Nigeria (TCRN), a parastatal of the FME, which is also the teachers’ regulatory body, but in collaboration with other agencies and development partners. The upgrading of qualifications occurs primarily through distance learning programmes and vacation and ‘sandwich’ programmes run by the colleges of education and university institutes of education (Adekola 2007).

10.5.1 Quality of initial teacher education

Possession of the paper qualifications is no guarantee of professional competence, and the quality of initial (and in-service) teacher education has been subject to persistent criticism (e.g. Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Adelabu 2005; FME 2005; Umar 2006; Adekola 2007; Tahir and Girei 2008; Allsop and Howard 2009; FME 2011a; Thomas 2011). The main criticisms have mirrored many of the criticisms directed at the school level (Adekola 2007) and many are common to other countries in SSA (see Bennell and Akyeampong 2007), namely:

- Outdated curriculum and teaching methodology (Umar 2006; Adekola 2007; Akinbote 2007; Tahir and Girei 2008; Allsop and Howard 2009; Burke 2009; FME 2009b; USAID 2009), specifically the
mismatch between theory-heavy teacher education programmes and the practical skills required in school (Umar 2006; Adekola, 2007; Allsop and Howard 2009; Thomas 2011);

- Overcrowded lecture halls (Sherry 2008; Adekola 2007; Allsop and Howard 2009; Burke 2009; Edelenbosch and Short 2009; FME 2009b);
- Dilapidated infrastructure (Adekola 2007; Burke 2009; Edelenbosch and Short 2009);
- Lack of textbooks (Adekola 2007; Burke 2009; Edelenbosch and Short 2009; FME 2009b));
- Limited or no strategic management (Allsop and Howard 2009; Edelenbosch and Short 2009; Thomas 2011);
- Lack of record-keeping and monitoring of student progress (Allsop and Howard 2009);
- Lack of essential facilities in state colleges of education, especially for Science- and Technology-related subjects, compared to federal institutions or universities, due to lack of funds (Akinbote 2007; FME 2009b; Thomas 2011);
- Lack of capacity of lecturers in teacher education institutions in terms of professional and pedagogical knowledge (Adelabu 2005; Adekola 2007; Allsop and Howard 2009; FME 2009b; Thomas 2011). Many lecturers are graduates with no teaching qualifications (Burke 2009; Thomas 2011); there is a ‘lack of rigour in lecturer recruitments’ (FME 2009b).
- Lack of CPD opportunities for lecturers (Adekola 2007; Allsop and Howard 2009; FME 2009b; Thomas 2011);
- Poor-calibre trainees – often students who have failed to be admitted for other courses (Ejieh 2005; Garuba 2006; Akinbote 2007; Afe 2002, cited in Sherry 2008; Allsop and Howard 2009; USAID 2009) – resulting in only a few having ‘the genuine desire to become teachers’ (Akinbote 2007: 64);
- Student admission numbers are not based on teacher supply and demand needs (Allsop and Howard 2009; Thomas 2011);
- Students struggle to understand lectures in English (Allsop and Howard 2009; Garuba 2010);
- Teaching practice is too short and inadequately monitored (Umar 2006; Sherry 2008; Adekola 2007; Allsop and Howard 2009; Burke 2009), and schools are often selected based on their proximity to save on transport costs rather than on account of the head teacher’s ability to provide support to a trainee teacher (Edelenbosch and Short 2009);
- Some lecturers are open to bribery to pass students either through sexual favours or cash (Bakari 2004; Sherry 2008; Burke 2009), while some sell exam papers to students (Burke 2009); and
- There is entrenched gender discrimination against female staff and students, as well as against males that do not conform to the dominant masculinist ideology (Bakari 2004), resulting in very few females, if any, in senior management positions (ibid.; UNICEF 2012).

Although there are few empirical studies on the effectiveness of pre-service teacher education beyond critiques of the curriculum, the assessments of the persistently poor teaching quality in primary schools and low levels of teacher professional knowledge suggest there is a real need to improve its effectiveness. The most striking evidence lies in the results of the teacher development needs assessments performed among all public primary school teachers in the ESSPIN-supported states.

In Kwara State, 19,000 teachers were tested on basic literacy, numeracy and lesson planning skills, of which only 75 (0.4%) scored the minimum threshold level of over 70% (Johnson 2008). In the assessment, qualified teachers fared no better than unqualified teachers; nor were there any discernible gender differences. In the Lagos assessment, 400 teachers (1.9%) achieved over 70% (Johnson, 2010) and there was a significant difference in performance between the 52% of teachers with higher education qualifications and those possessing the NCE. Literacy in English, however, was particularly

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29 A study asking teachers and head teachers to rate the extent to which aspects of the NCE curriculum prepared primary teachers for the actual tasks they carry out in school found everything (except preparation to teach numeracy) gained around only a 30% approval rating (Adeyanju 2005, cited in Adekola 2007).
problematic: only 34% had ‘sufficient’ or ‘near sufficient’ literacy in English, although more positively over 84% had ‘sufficient’ or ‘near sufficient’ levels of subject knowledge to teach primary Maths. While it is not known how much test preparation teachers received and/or how test-savvy they were (and it should be noted that the assessment was not straightforward), the results are still cause for major concern and ‘it is reasonable to conclude that teacher qualifications bear little relationship to teacher professional working knowledge’ (Johnson 2010). Indeed, in a couple of studies, stakeholders have expressed the view that the now defunct Grade II teaching certificate was of greater practical use than the NCE (Adekola 2007; Thomas 2011).

Johnson (2010) also concurs with Adekola (2007) on the need to target teachers’ literacy and pedagogy skills in relation to how to teach literacy based on good-quality information on teacher capabilities. In addition, Adekola’s (2007) analysis of the national assessments of primary pupils in 2001 and 2003 and a review of studies in teaching and learning led him to suggest a greater emphasis on developing teachers’ communication skills in the languages of instruction. He also noted a need for research into the relative costs and benefits of different ways of delivering teacher education.

The PTTE underlined the importance of teachers improving their soft skills, engaging with emotional intelligence issues and providing psycho-social support for learners (FME 2011a), which would seem to be confirmed by the evaluation of the CFS initiative (UNICEF 2009a).

10.5.2 Quality of in-service teacher education

There have been criticisms that delivery of CPD or in-service training has been neglected by states (Tahir and Girei 2008). Problems that affect in-service programmes include:

- A focus on upgrading qualifications (thus, with the same curriculum issues related above for pre-service education) rather than improving classroom teaching (Adekola 2007; FME 2009b; FME 2011a);
- No recognition of teachers’ prior teaching experience in the curriculum (Adekola 2007);
- Politicised, uneven and/or very limited access to in-service training (Adekola 2007; Garuba 2006; Boulton et al. 2009; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Limited access to CPD opportunities, especially in rural areas (Aledabu 2005; FME 2005; Adekola 2007);
- Often one-off workshops rather than a planned series of professional development (Adekola 2007; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Training is organised by LGEAs or SUBEBs with no input from schools to address specific needs (Boulton et al. 2009);
- CPD facilitators are often the same pre-service educators, with the same capacity needs mentioned above, or others with similar needs for capacity building (e.g. school supervisors) (Dunne et al. 2013);
- Where teachers undergo in-service teacher education, there is no system to replace absent teachers (Boulton et al. 2009; Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013); and
- Teachers often have to pay out of their own pockets to attend workshops (Adekola 2007; Sherry 2008).

According to the 2004 ESA primary school head teacher survey, primary teachers had received ‘a fair spread of training’ (FME 2005) although it is not known to what extent the training was spread evenly among schools and teachers, nor what the quality of the training was like. Stakeholders in the UBEC impact assessment in several states voiced concerns about the quality of in-service training (UBEC 2012a). The main topic was classroom management, which (some) teachers had accessed in just under
half of the schools. This was also the topic that gave the greatest level of satisfaction, reportedly helping to boost teacher morale and improve communication with pupils (FME 2005).

Teachers, educational stakeholders and researchers have expressed a need for more classroom- and school-based in-service training (Adekola 2007; Hardman et al. 2008; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013), although this too has its challenges (see Section 10.6). The PTTE also recommended more in-school and between-school supervision (FME 2011a).

10.6 Recent initiatives in teacher education

While it is impossible to attribute improvements in pupil learning outcomes to specific inputs, reports of recent teacher education initiatives have shown signs of improved teacher motivation and pupil involvement in lessons, which may relate in some way to modest gains reported in pupil attainment. However, the reporting on the specifics of the interventions and the evaluations is patchy and more detailed studies, where they exist, are unavailable, so it is hard to gauge the relative impact of these interventions; moreover, it may be too early to tell (see boxes 10.2 and 10.3).

10.6.1 School-based action research

Positive outcomes were reported from a World Bank-sponsored school-based action research and development programme that involved over 500 schools across 23 states and 34 LGEAs and encouraged reflective practice and mentoring (Adekola 2007), claiming that:

- It increased the awareness of teachers regarding the need for change; and
- It had a positive impact on primary teachers involved in the programmes, who experienced increased levels of happiness and confidence in their teaching, feeling better able to help pupils learn.

Adekola reports that although World Bank funding ceased in 2004, grants for teacher development have subsequently been made available to states through UBEC (see Section 6.4). Some of the states that participated in an action-research teacher development project are said to have applied for funding but evidence is lacking as to whether the teacher development model has successfully been sustained. Moreover, no evidence was presented as to whether classroom teaching and/or pupil learning had improved through the model.

Box 10.2 Evaluating in-service teacher development initiatives

The evaluation of an ESSPIN-supported small-scale literacy and numeracy programme in Kwara State came to the following conclusion about the difficulties of evaluating a literacy and numeracy teacher development programme in Kwara State:

It is difficult to attribute an observed change (in levels of achievement) to a specific input (the literacy and numeracy programme), within a process as organic as school improvement. Work to improve generic teaching skills and ensure that teachers understand and apply the basic principles of how children [learn], and work to improve the way that schools are led and managed, and even more significantly supported by a reinvigorated LGEA advisory service are likely also to have had an impact, as is the hard to quantify, but massively significant, increased sense of purpose within schools and classrooms that has resulted from being part of a comprehensive, integrated reform agenda.

Source: Breakell (2012: 24)
10.6.2 Literature on school-based in-service teacher education

COMPASS, GEP, ESSPIN and the NEI have all included school-based in-service teacher education components in their programmes, including use of detailed lesson plans or interactive radio, aimed at improving teaching by making it more interactive, ‘child-friendly’ and ‘learner-centred’. However, details of what these interventions entail, the precise teaching methodologies involved and the processes of monitoring and mentoring etc. are scarce in the literature. Evaluation reports (e.g. USAID 2009 and Holfeld et al. 2008 on COMPASS; Breakell 2012 and ESSPIN 2013a on ESSPIN; Gabrsek and Usman 2013 on UNICEF’s School-based Teacher Development (SbTD) programme, and UNICEF 2012 on GEP II) tend to be short on specifics and to report one-off classroom observations regarding the presence or not of particular behaviours/activities, such as group work, use of teaching aids, textbooks, teacher praise, etc. (often in a quantified form), while interview data report teacher and pupil feedback on the experience. In addition to the observational and interview data, pupils’ attainment is usually measured, although the difficulty of attributing increases in attainment to specific interventions is acknowledged, as well as the likely time lag and less direct link between interventions and attainment.

The limited evaluation methodologies implied in the above may well be due, to a large extent, to budgetary and time constraints imposed by donors and the pressure to show progress.

10.6.3 ESSPIN teacher development support

A small-scale evaluation of ESSPIN’s support to the Kwara State literacy and numeracy programme quantified behaviours and activities and noted more pupil talking, more group/pair work, less board work, more active learning by pupils (although it is not made clear exactly what that entailed) and greater use of textbooks and teaching aids (Breakell 2012). However, these activities on their own are not necessarily evidence of better teaching/learning (see Box 10.2), although the report concluded that teachers using detailed lesson plans ‘seems to be working’. Similarly, from UNICEF’s 18 20-minute observations evaluating GEP II, it was noted that most teachers encouraged pupils to express opinions, gave positive reinforcement and got some pupils to talk among themselves (UNICEF 2012).

ESSPIN’s large-scale evaluation of teacher competence for the project’s mid-term review (ESSPIN 2013a) observed teachers in 595 schools across six states, and attempted to assess whether teacher competence had improved following up to 16 days of teacher development support on basic teaching skills, basic literacy and numeracy skills, classroom organisation, use of teaching aids, and encouraging pupils’ self-esteem.

Teachers of English and/or Maths had to meet three out of the four criteria listed below, whereas teachers of other subjects had to meet two out of three (i.e. excluding the first) to be judged competent:

- Knowledge of English or Mathematics curriculum (based on interview);
- Use of at least one teaching aid during lesson observation;
- Greater use of praise than reprimand during lesson observation; and
- Class organisation: assigning individual or group tasks at least twice during lesson (or for two contiguous five-minute blocks).

Again, observed group work and use of teaching aids in themselves do not necessarily signify better teaching/learning and although it was concluded that an estimated 67% teachers were judged competent on these criteria, a more in-depth supplementary qualitative and observational study might have yielded greater insights.
10.6.4 COMPASS teacher development support

The five-year USAID-funded COMPASS project in Lagos, Nasarawa, Kano, Bauchi and the FCT also involved several teacher education components. The education component included both in-service and pre-service interventions. Pre-service included working with three colleges of education in Kano, Lagos and Nasarawa states. It supported: a review of the Primary Education Studies curriculum; pedagogical training for teacher educators, involving ICT; an additional proficiency in English curriculum; and the establishment of a Teachers’ Resource Centre. Students following the Primary Education Studies courses were reported to be among the highest attainers in the end-of-course assessments at the colleges, which was attributed to the COMPASS inputs. The external evaluation also deemed this part of the project to have been fairly successful, with faculty employing some of the teaching methods they had been exposed to at the teachers’ workshops (Holfeld et al. 2008).

The COMPASS in-service training at the primary school level included workshops on learner-centred pedagogy, and revolved round an interactive radio instruction (IRI) initiative, which involved a series of 90 programmes per grade. IRI is considered to be an effective form of teacher education in a context where teacher quality is low, so the teacher is developed to become more of a facilitator for the radio instruction than a full-blooded teacher (USAID 2009; Johnson 2010). Despite reported initial reluctance by schools (especially Islamiyya schools) to become involved, pupils reportedly enjoyed the activities and teachers reported increased self-confidence and self-esteem (USAID 2009). Slight improvements in attainment in Mathematics and English assessments were also demonstrated, on the whole, by pupils who had experienced the IRI (ibid.).

However, the external evaluation was less effusive; while agreeing that teachers were appreciative, they saw little evidence of change in practice in lesson observations nor evidence of teacher understanding in interviews, and concluded that the duration of the training had been too short (Holfeld et al. 2008).

Similarly, although the IRI was found to have been very popular with LGEAs, schools, community members and pupils, and was said to have increased enrolment, many teachers also noted that the programmes were often difficult to hear, especially in classrooms with large numbers of students, and that the radio transmission was often poor and unclear. Moreover, the evaluation team deemed the content too limited to be able to attribute the pupils’ modest gains in attainment to the programme. In contrast, they concluded that perhaps it was the actual discipline of teachers and pupils focusing on literacy and numeracy together three times a week that had resulted in the slight improvement, an observation which, if true, has implications for other in-service teacher education programmes. Given the reported high levels of absenteeism by pupils and teachers, it is likely that more time in class and on task for both parties will have some impact.

Box 10.3 Learner-centred education

At the heart of many of the educational reform and development projects in Nigeria, as elsewhere in Africa, has been the desire to implement ‘learner-centred’ education (LCE). It is important not to create a false dichotomy between ‘teacher-centred’ and ‘learner-centred’, and indeed it may be more helpful to think of a continuum or focus on ‘learning-centred’ (O’Sullivan 2004). However, there are clearly certain features of classroom practices that are particularly associated with LCE. These include group and pair work, use of teaching aids, more open questions and encouragement of pupils/students to ask questions of teachers, and more practical tasks.

Recent in-service teacher development initiatives in Nigeria have been directed toward LCE as well as improving serving teachers’ professional content knowledge, particularly of numeracy and literacy (e.g. COMPASS, ESSPIN, GEP and NEI). However, detailed studies on these initiatives are lacking (or at least unavailable). The evaluations have focused on improved learning outcomes and generally quantified observed teaching practices, while acknowledging the limited classroom observation time involved (Holfeld et al. 2008; Breakell 2012; UNICEF 2012). The evaluations have also acknowledged
both the difficulty of expecting much improvement in learning outcomes in such a short time span and attributing improved learning to one specific intervention (Breakell 2012; see also Box 10.2).

However, as a recent review of 72 studies related to LCE across the Global South emphasised (Schweisfurth 2013), in very few cases has implementation of LCE been successful. Perennial problems include: the nature of the reform and the implementation; lack of material and human resources; the interaction of LCE with culture; and the power and agency of participants in the process. Moreover, the review concluded: ‘There is not a great deal of proof that LCE can achieve the grand aims its proponents claim, and the implementation difficulties make LCE a long-term goal difficult to evaluate’ (ibid.:430).

Reflecting on findings of a study on trainee teachers in Malawi, Mitika and Gates (2010) cautioned how it is easy for ‘a label or surface feature’ of LCE to be applied – such as putting pupils into groups – without actually understanding and engaging with the pedagogical theory that underpins it, in this case allowing pupils to continue to work on their own.

Mitika and Gates’ (2010) observation underlines the necessity to undertake more detailed qualitative observational work to complement the quantitative observational evaluations that have dominated in-service teacher development initiatives in Nigeria thus far. They have predominantly enumerated such surface features in order to assess the progress and/or success of teacher development initiatives.

### 10.6.5 UNICEF’s School-based Teacher Development programme

UNICEF’s SbTD, which has been carried out in the four original GEP-supported states, involved an innovative approach to in-service training based around self-instructional materials and manuals to help teachers improve their pedagogical skills in LCE through active learning and reflective practice. The training materials comprised a core module on participatory methodology and four core subject-specific modules, developed by educationalists from various federal and state government bodies.

Following the successful development and implementation of the pilot, the programme’s ‘roll-out and stepping down’ to other teachers was adjudged to have been less successful (UNICEF 2012; Gabrescek and Usman 2013). One the positive side, classroom observations and interviews provided some evidence of active teaching and learning and some teacher awareness about LCE. In addition the number of female teachers involved in the training was proportionate to their ratio in the teaching workforce. Overall, however, it was concluded that there was:

No critical mass of trained teachers present that would provide not only the sustainability of the methodologies learned but also the stepping down to other teachers (Gabrescek and Usman 2013: 9).

Major constraints to the success of the project included:

- Poor school infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms;
- No systematic provision of handbooks and training modules for stepping down and lack of teaching and materials;
- Teachers’ and pupils’ low levels of literacy (in English) and numeracy. Teachers therefore found it difficult to use the self-instructional manuals and teaching materials;
- Trainers and mentors at school had had inadequate training to enable them to ‘step down’ to others, while some mentors were no longer in the schools; thus, the self-learning process

Although, at the same time, the article concludes that we need to get away from an unhelpful success vs. failure binary when considering LCE.
comprising observations, demonstration lessons, monitoring and cluster meetings with other teachers from neighbouring schools appeared not to happen;

- Head teachers lacked the capacity to act as mentors for the teachers; and
- Very limited supervisory or M&E visits were conducted by ‘master trainers’ from colleges of education or by SUBEB and LGEA staff (Gabrescek and Usman 2013).

A major underlying factor in some of the above issues was the inadequate and non-release of budgeted funds. In addition, key aspects of the programme, such as M&E, had not been included and budgeted for at the state level in the State Education Sector Plans and State Education Sector Operational Plans, which would also have involved a clearer delineation of responsibilities (ibid.).

10.7 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

Given that better quality and quantity of teacher education has been identified as crucial to improvements in teaching and learning, it is surprising how little in-depth empirical research is available on the relationship between teacher education and teachers’ classroom practice and the impact on learning. To what extent and in what ways does teacher education prepare students for the realities of classroom teaching?

There is a lack of information on the processes and trainee teachers’ experiences of in-service and pre-service teacher education, including on teaching practice.

Similarly, there is a lack of information on the details of the various school-based teacher development programmes that have occurred, including their challenges and impact. Although there have been reports of improved pupil and teacher attendance and enjoyment, improved teacher self-confidence, and improved focus in class, clearly more ongoing observations and documented monitoring of teacher education programmes is needed to see what kind of learning is going on and what influences whether teachers take up or reject new methodologies.

The difficulties encountered when attempting to introduce and sustain pedagogical innovations in in-service teacher education suggest underestimations of the amount of time and resources (financial, material and human) needed for such transformations. They also raise questions about who should educate the teacher educators and how.

The evaluations of the teacher development initiatives also raise questions about the extent to which observable changes in classroom behaviours (use of teaching aids, groups work, praise, etc.) are indicative of a changed understanding of the nature of teaching and learning, and whether, in fact, better teaching/learning is actually taking place.

An emphasis on more in-depth, qualitative observational research (rather than evaluations) over time – not just the one-off observations, which inevitably suffer from an observer effect – possibly tracking particular classes and individual pupils would also be productive.

Currently, the emphasis in teacher education appears to be on the technical (pedagogical) aspect of teacher development, while the social and affective aspects have merited less attention; yet the evidence in Chapter 11 indicates that issues such as gender violence – in its broad definition encompassing bullying and peer pressure – and corporal and other punishment in the classroom are just as important to successful learning as sound pedagogy.

More research attention could also be paid to issues like teacher and pupil identities (including gender identities) and institutional power relations, including the ways in which they relate to classroom processes and to the persistence of ‘teacher-centred’ teaching methods.
### Evidence Strength Assessment

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CHAPTER 11: HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHER MANAGEMENT

11.1 Introduction

The role of the head teacher is vital to school improvement, and their leadership, management and supervisory skills are central to providing an enabling environment in which good teaching and learning can take place.

This chapter reviews the very limited available literature on head teachers and their roles within the school before considering the emergent use of SDPs. The next section considers teacher management, support and supervision, both within the school and by the LGEA. The focus then moves on to teacher discipline, including both the main disciplinary issues concerning teachers and the disciplinary measures that are taken. Finally, we briefly consider new initiatives with head teachers.

In this chapter we draw heavily on the 2004 ESA survey of almost 1,000 primary head teachers and over 800 secondary head teachers across the country in both public and private schools (FME 2005), although we should stress that in a few sections of that report it is not always clear whether figures refer to primary or secondary head teachers or both.

11.2 Head teachers

There is a dearth of available research on head teachers in school. Head teachers are in charge of day-to-day administration and management of teachers in school, although there is no available national policy on their roles and responsibilities and widely divergent views among stakeholders about what roles they should be playing (Sherry 2008). In this, Nigeria is reportedly lagging behind a number of other countries in SSA such as Rwanda, Ghana and Kenya, which are beginning to adopt national strategies for the training of head teachers for the role of headship and management (Mulkeen et al. 2007).

11.2.1 Head teachers’ appointment and authority

The importance of the head teacher to school management and the successful implementation of school-level interventions is widely recognised in Nigeria (FME 2005; Arikewuyo 2009; Holfeld et al. 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; USAID 2009; Adeyemi 2010; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). In reviewing the five-year COMPASS programme, the end-of-project report concluded:

The level to which some schools complied with the basic quality of education interventions was determined to a large extent by the understanding and oversight of the head teacher (USAID 2009: 48).

Despite this, head teachers generally have very little power to effect change (Boulton et al. 2009). For example, they have no funds available with which to develop the school (other than funds raised through SBMCs and PTAs (see Chapter 13), nor do they have the power to appoint or dismiss staff (ibid.). Arguably this is beginning to change in the few schools that now have access to school development grants (see Section 11.3 below).

Head teachers are generally appointed by the ES at the LGEA level (Williams 2009; see Section 6.6.6); the main criterion for appointment as a head teacher is years of teaching service (FME 2005; Arikewuyo 2009), although, like teachers, head teachers can be appointed for political or other reasons. The 2004 ESA found that only around half had NCE and around a fifth had a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). Moreover, the situation was worse at secondary level, where the largest qualification group in the sample (43%) comprised head teachers with degrees but no teaching qualifications (FME 2005).
The national study on teachers’ voice indicated teachers will only respect and cooperate with the head teacher if they think the head teacher has been appointed on merit, which many complained was not the case (Sherry 2008; see also Dunne et al. 2013). Conversely, when teachers have powerful contacts, head teachers may have little control over them (Williams 2009).

11.2.2 Head teachers’ remuneration and motivation

Although head teachers may receive no extra remuneration for the post, some receive a stipend from the SUBEB or LGEA in certain states (Williams 2009), and there have been calls in other states to do likewise (Dunne et al. 2013). There have also been reports of some teachers seeking headships in order to grant themselves an allowance from PTA funds (Williams 2009). It is not known whether the low salary and lack of extra income for leadership responsibilities affects head teacher motivation in the same way that it affects teacher motivation, although the external evaluation of the COMPASS programme described the head teachers in all the schools they visited as ‘lacklustre’ (Holfeld et al. 2008).

11.2.3 Head teachers’ roles and responsibilities

The job of the head teacher in practice is primarily administrative. An ESSPIN study of daily life in 20 state primary schools in Kwara, Kaduna and Kano states, which included tracking head teachers, found that they spent most time filling in forms, checking teachers’ registers, etc., and were only usually in the classroom to check that teachers were present and that their teaching was factually accurate (Boulton et al. 2009). This focus on bureaucracy and administration rather than pedagogy has also been noted in other studies (e.g. Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

That said, the 2004 ESA survey of head teachers clearly indicated the need for improved record-keeping, given the internal inconsistencies in some of the data provided (e.g. on school transfers; see Section 2.6.1) and the lack of record-keeping by some head teachers. Under 80% of head teachers kept teacher attendance registers, a similar percentage kept class attendance registers and just over 80% held admissions registers (FME 2005). Given that these form the basis for national EMIS data this is worrying. Moreover, the quality of the record-keeping is not known.

The allocation of teacher responsibilities within the school is something head teachers have the authority to do, including the appointing of the assistant head teacher(s) (Thomas 2011; Dunne et al. 2013) (although these positions also come without extra recompense). While there is little research on the topic, the case-study research in Adamawa and Kogi states suggests a tendency to gender-stereotype in duty allocation, with male teachers often appointed as assistant head teachers and left in charge of discipline and school labour whereas female teachers were more likely to be in charge of health. This inevitably holds implications for gender equality among teachers and for the gender messages being transmitted to pupils (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013; see also Section 8.7).

11.2.4 Head teachers’ management styles

In terms of head teacher management styles, the national teachers’ voice study (Sherry 2008) reported that some teachers wanted the head teacher to involve them more in decision-making, others wanted head teachers to be less dependent on staff input, and many thought head teachers were too tyrannical and reported cases of bullying and verbal abuse. There were also complaints by some teachers about a lack of support from head teachers in the face of dissatisfied parents, including stories of parents complaining about student exam marks resulting in head teachers upgrading failures to passes (Sherry 2008). A survey study of head teacher leadership styles in all 281 senior secondary schools in Ondo State found that over two-thirds of teachers (68.4%, including head teachers) thought that their head teachers adopted a ‘democratic’ leadership style, with a much smaller proportion characterising the style as ‘laissez-faire’ and an even smaller proportion characterising it as ‘autocratic’. There were strong
correlations between perceived teacher competence and performance and autocratic or democratic leadership styles, but not with laissez-faire.

11.2.5 Head teachers’ training

CPD, which head teachers and assistant head teachers can reportedly access, tends to focus on administration rather than on how to develop the school or support learning (Boulton et al. 2009). In the large-scale survey of head teachers for the 2004 ESA, just under half stated that their most urgent training need was in school management (FME 2005). Only just over a quarter of the head teachers surveyed had had any induction for the job. Although over 40% had attended some job-related workshop, only 14% had received any management training, 3% had been trained in record-keeping, and only 1.4% in school development and planning. Thirteen percent said they had never received any training. Many head teachers reported that as well as boosting morale the training had improved their communication skills with parents (ibid.).

The National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration was established in Ondo, Ondo State, to train those who want a career in educational planning but, according to Arikewuyo (2009), it only provides occasional workshops and seminars rather than the lengthier and more thorough training the job requires in reality.

Head teachers that have had some training have reported feeling more comfortable in their jobs and generally consider themselves to be better appreciated by teachers (Sherry 2008). In addition, head teachers are reportedly often more aware than teachers that the quality of teaching and learning is low in the school, but they only have ‘limited views’ on how to improve matters (Adekola 2007).

The recent and continuing decentralisation of education, however, underlines the need for head teachers to acquire new management and leadership skills (Winkler and Gershberg 2003), which several studies have noted are often lacking (FME 2005; Holfeld et al. 2008; Arikewuyo 2009; Little and Lewis 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

Various development programmes have included head teacher development training, generally in the form of a series of one-day workshops (e.g. ESSPIN – see ESSPIN, 2013a; COMPASS – see USAID 2009; GEP – see Chege et al. 2008; UNICEF 2012), including on book-keeping, school data collection and management, development of SDPs, teacher development and supervision, gender-awareness and inclusion, and working with communities. However, in ESSPIN’s mid-term review (ESSPIN 2013a), head teacher effectiveness was adjudged to have been one of the least successful elements of the programme to date. Despite having access to up to 16 days of training on academic leadership, only 24% of Phase 1 head teachers satisfied five out of the seven criteria of assessment, to be deemed ‘effective’, although this was better than the figure for head teachers in control schools (11%). Only 24% of Phase I schools managed to produce an up-to-date cashbook, although again that was considerably better than the 15% of control schools. Similarly, the GEP I evaluation noted that, despite training, head teachers were still struggling to keep accurate and accessible accounts and enrolment data (Chege et al. 2008).

11.3 School development plans

SDPs have become an integral part of the decentralised school improvement drive and fall under the head teacher’s responsibility, often being developed together with the SBMC (of which the head teacher is a member). Funding in the form of small grants from government and/or IDPs is usually attached to the SDP in order to carry out development activities.

One major positive effect of head teacher involvement in SDPs appears to be on motivation: head teachers reported feeling motivated and empowered to effect change at school through the grant and SDP system and to move beyond being merely administrators (Boulton et al. 2009). Similarly, GEP-
trained head teachers felt more able to complete school returns following training (UNICEF 2012; see also Box 11.1).

**Box 11.1 The Lagos Eko Secondary Education Project**

The Lagos Secondary Education Project is a USD 90 million partnership between the World Bank and Lagos State aimed at improving the quality of education in the state’s 620 public junior and senior secondary schools. Evidence of the project’s success is plain to see in the improvement in the students’ exam results. Results in English, Maths, Basic Sciences and Biology in 2012 rose substantially from the baseline in 2008. In the externally administered West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (WASSCE), for example, 38.5% of students achieved five credits or more in their exams, as against 10.4% in 2008, resulting in the World Bank rating the project as ‘highly satisfactory’.

As the project website states, the ‘premise [is] that better results are achieved when power is devolved to schools’ (www.lagosekoproject.org). School grants have been the main tool to drive the project’s achievements. Schools have been able to access NGN 1–3 million discretionary grants annually for the duration of the project in order to carry out development plans put together with the involvement of the SBMCs. School grants focused predominantly on teacher development in the first two years, but have subsequently shifted more toward purchasing equipment and teaching materials.

Other features of the project have included:

- Standardised student assessments, both for tracking student progress and as a tool for supporting teacher development. Teachers have been trained in item writing and exam moderation for WASSCE;
- Ongoing head teacher and teacher CPD. More than 25,000 teachers have now been trained in English, Maths, Science, management, and other areas such as ICT, health and safety, classroom management, budgeting and leadership, both in Nigeria and internationally (e.g. in Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania);
- Annual Governor’s Award for outstanding schools, head teachers and students. Cash awards are spread across 128 schools that have shown most improvement over the year;
- Support for low-attaining schools, for example by supplying grants for activities such as coaching after school hours and Saturday support. Likewise, practical sessions in Science subjects were implemented and the training of teachers in WASSCE marking. Improvements have been observed in the performance of some of the schools;
- Engagement of sanitation managers in school (paid for through school grants). Each school has at least one, resulting in improved cleanliness and an improved overall school environment for teachers and students;
- Grants to 12 special needs schools; and
- Six-month mentoring programme for 200 teachers in MELT (Model of Effective Learning and Teaching), with the mentors to be distributed throughout the six education districts. Moreover, 25 ‘master mentors’ are also to be subsequently trained.

*Source: World Bank (2013)*

Notwithstanding the above, the GEP I evaluation (Chege *et al.* 2008) noted that, despite training on how to complete the SDP template, head teachers struggled to do so, even with the aid of a manual. However, the report also acknowledged that the template was perhaps too complicated, not very user-friendly and needed review. On the other hand, it may be that head teachers were hampered by low literacy and/or numeracy levels, as many classroom teachers are (see Section 10.5) – a possibility that is often overlooked in discussions of head teacher management and leadership capacity.
In an initial survey of 330 public primary schools across the five ESSPIN states, over half the schools had no SDP, a figure that escalated to 71% in the follow-up survey (Antoninis 2010). However, by the mid-term review, 94% of Phase 1 schools could produce an SDP and just under a quarter of the schools provided evidence of four or more SDP activities having been completed (ESSPIN 2013a).

11.4 Monitoring and evaluation: school inspections and school support

M&E and professional support to head teachers and teachers is supposed to be carried out by the LGEA through the ES and school supervisors. Each school supervisor, who may receive an allowance with their salary, oversees a cluster of schools, which should be visited several times a term. However, urban schools tend to be visited more often and some remote rural schools are rarely, if ever, visited (FME 2005; Williams 2009; Schiffer et al. 2013).

School inspection should be a supportive, collaborative process – not a fault-finding one – in which constructive ideas are formulated for teachers’ and schools’ improvement (FME 2011a). The limited available research has shown that, like head teachers, school supervisors usually focus on administration (e.g. checking registers, lesson notes and whether or not teachers are in class teaching) rather than giving pedagogical or development support (Boulton et al. 2009; Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

The Adamawa study reported that LGEAs were aware that school supervisors also have capacity-building needs, and that some were appointed for reasons other than merit (Dunne et al. 2013). That said, there were reports of LGEAs offering training to teachers on specific issues, such as how to use teaching aids or make lesson notes, although it is not known how frequent or effective the training was or what proportion of teachers had access to it (ibid.).

School inspections are also periodically carried out by federal, state and LGEA teams, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6. The lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, one study concluded, can ‘result in many visits but few tangible benefits’ (Boulton et al. 2009: 7). Lack of funds at LGEA level can also limit the number of school visits school supervisors can do (Williams 2009; UBEC 2012a). There is certainly a lack of information on what exactly is monitored in schools, the types of recommendations that are made, and what (if any) follow-up occurs to see whether recommendations have been acted upon.

However, most head teachers in the 2004 ESA survey at both primary and secondary level reported school inspection visits being ‘rewarding and enlightening’ and listed various improved practices that resulted from the visit, such as adopting new ideas, improved lesson planning or record-keeping and better CA practices (FME 2005). Even though no observational data were offered to confirm the improvements, the fact that head teachers were positive about the experience (provided their responses were genuine) means that inspection visits may indeed provide important morale boosts.

11.5 Teacher professionalism

11.5.1 Main disciplinary issues

There are no available reports from the TRCN documenting the type and frequency of complaints filed against teachers, nor what action (if any) is taken. However, there is a fair amount of qualitative evidence gathered from interviews and school observations, which highlights the following major areas of concern:

- Widespread teacher absenteeism (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Adelabu 2005; Adekola 2007; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013);
• Unregulated or unsanctioned use of corporal punishment against pupils (Chianu 2000; Urwick and Aliyu, 2003; Oluwakemi and Kayode, 2007; Sherry 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; Mahmoud et al. 2011; Dunne et al. 2013);
• Unsanctioned verbal or psychological abuse of pupils (FME 2007b);
• Non-preparation of lessons (Adekola 2007; Dunne et al. 2013);
• Misuse of government loans (Dunne et al. 2013);
• Missing out parts of the syllabus (Dunne et al. 2013); and

Many of the unprofessional actions that teachers are reported as being prone to have been attributed to teachers’ frustration and inability to cope in difficult circumstances for which they have been inadequately trained, and to their resultant low morale (Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013; see also Section 10.4). Teacher absenteeism or lateness has also been attributed to a lack of nearby accommodation for teachers, especially in rural areas (Dunne et al. 2013). This mirrors the situation in other countries in Africa and Asia (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). Adelabu (2005), in his study of teacher motivation, reported that respondents denied that teacher lateness and absenteeism was an issue but also noted that they sometimes ‘massaged the records’ (see also Dunne et al. 2013).

Whatever the reasons for the types of professional misconduct listed above, they do have a negative impact on educational quality and are known to be factors in pupil non-enrolment, absenteeism, non-participation in class, dropout or withdrawal (Dunne et al. 2013), although to what extent needs to be determined.

11.5.2 Teachers’ professional code of conduct

Teacher discipline, like teacher appointments, has primarily been devolved to the sub-national level despite the existence of a relatively recent code of conduct for teachers across the country (i.e. the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers (TRCN 2011)) and the recently reinvigorated TRCN. This is the national body that aims to control and regulate the teaching profession at all levels. It includes the TIP, which was constituted in 2007 to investigate allegations of misconduct against registered teachers in order to help maintain high standards in the teaching profession (TRCN 2008). This is open to any member of the public to register a complaint about a teaching professional, although there is no available empirical evidence on the frequency or nature of the allegations that have been made and by whom.

Complaints, in turn, should be investigated by the TDC, which exists at national and state level. Again, research evidence is lacking as to what extent these bodies are functioning, what issues are brought to their attention, and what actions (if any) are taken.

There are also disciplinary procedures involving verbal and written ‘queries’ that go up through head teachers to the LGEA and then SUBEBs regarding issues concerning teachers’ professional conduct (Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013). While LGEA and school officials seem aware of the procedures, however, there is little written evidence on how this works in practice. In Dunne et al.’s (2013) study in Adamawa, the situation seemed more ad hoc, with interviewees talking about head teachers ‘counselling’ teachers and reporting ‘persistent offenders’ to the LGEA, without giving any details on what might constitute persistent offending and whether anything was done about it. Some cases of collusion or cover-up at the school or LGEA level were also recounted (Dunne et al. 2013), and it has also been reported that nothing may be done if the teacher involved has powerful connections (Williams 2009). In a landmark case in Adamawa State that hit the national headlines, Adamawa SUBEB dismissed three male teachers who had been found guilty of raping schoolgirls (Dunne et al. 2013).
Box 11.2 SBMCs monitor teacher recruitment, attendance and performance

The government partners and CSO SAMARIB who are working together in Kano State highlight in their mentoring report of February 2012 that SBMCs have agreed ways with the school and teachers to monitor the performance of the teachers and the quality of lessons in the classroom. SBMC members take it in turns to visit the school and sit in on some lessons to monitor. They have agreed that their observations will be part of a report provided to the LGEA and district head at the end of each month. The CGP [civil society and government partners] report that SBMCs and head teachers are already seeing positive differences in teaching, in lessons and in children’s learning in the classroom.

Source: Taken from narrative reports related to questionnaire findings (Pinnock 2012: 51)

11.5.3 Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment merits further elaboration since it has a major impact on school access and on the quality of education. It is also a highly gender-differentiated practice, with particular gender effects (see also sections 8.4 and 12.2).

The recently published document on Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers states: ‘Teachers do NOT [original emphasis] under any circumstance administer corporal punishment on learners’ (TRCN 2011: 39). Until recently, however, it was permitted in school throughout Nigeria, with the consent of the school head and provided that the punishment was recorded, although state legislation may have varied on other specificities. Moreover, in the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International, 2011) parents/guardians were overwhelmingly in favour of caning pupils to maintain discipline (86.5%–95.5%), irrespective of region, economic status, area of residence, or gender. The Adamawa study also reported some parents specifically bringing their child to school to be beaten (Dunne et al. 2013). It is clear that any attempt to abolish corporal punishment in practice is going to necessitate extensive negotiation with parents/guardians.

Importantly, the unregulated application of corporal punishment impacts negatively on school access and pupil learning (to be discussed in Section 12.2).

Surprisingly, UNICEF’s assessment of violence in basic education in 48 schools across four states (two northern, two southern) suggested relatively low levels of corporal punishment in comparison to the high levels of psychological violence by teachers, but admitted underreporting by respondents (FME 2007b).

11.6 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

As schooling becomes increasingly decentralised, so the head teacher (along with the SBMC/PTA) becomes increasingly important to school improvement and school quality; however, there is virtually no literature on head teachers in Nigeria, their needs, challenges, relations with staff, pupils and communities, and how they perceive their roles and responsibilities. Currently, gender-disaggregated data on head teachers are not collected.

Studies on the effectiveness or otherwise of particular training on head teacher management or administration would be beneficial, involving ethnographic, observational data on what head teachers actually do in schools on a day-to-day basis.

Overall, we need to know a great deal more about the processes of school and teacher management, including disciplinary procedures and sanctions, both in policy and practice, given teachers’ centrality to school quality and the potential they have to ‘push’ children out of school.
The endemic nature of corporal punishment needs urgent attention: what non-punitive disciplinary systems (if any) are working successfully in schools in Nigeria? How is UNICEF’s notion of the CFS being developed?

Research is needed on the TRCN, TIP and TDC, including on how they function in different states and to what extent they interact with SUBEBs and LGEAs.

**Evidence Strength Assessment**

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CHAPTER 12: PUPILS AND PUPIL MANAGEMENT

12.1 Introduction

There is no available research that focuses purely on pupils’ lives in schools and their perspectives on school issues, although some of the GEP and ESSPIN studies have sought pupils’ views on school processes. Yet what happens to pupils in school – how they are organised in school, how they feel they are treated by staff and each other – has a major impact on whether they come to school, stay in school, learn, and achieve, as well as on attempts to address equity and equality issues. The 2004 ESA and the UBE impact assessment both emphasised the need for schools to provide for non-academic activities so as to ensure the holistic development of the child (FME 2005; UBEC 2012a); furthermore, the move to embrace UNICEF’s CFS concept by FGN arguably demonstrates its commitment to move in this direction (see UNICEF 2009a and Box 12.2).

Much of what follows derives from the primary school case-study research in Adamawa State (Dunne et al. 2013), the secondary school case studies in Kogi State (Bakari 2013), the ESSPIN baseline case-study visits to schools in Kaduna, Kano and Kwara states (Boulton et al. 2009), and the evaluation of UNICEF’s CFS in FCT, Ebonyi and Niger states (UNICEF 2009a).

The chapter considers a variety of pupil management issues that can have an impact on attendance, retention and school quality, from timetabling and school duties to the thorny issue of corporal and other punishments and the prefect/monitor system. The focus then shifts to pupil–peer relations and the issues of bullying and sexual harassment.

12.2 Pupil management: key issues

The limited available data on pupil management issues suggest that, as currently practised, they often have a detrimental effect on pupil access and educational quality.

12.2.1 Timetabling

There is little, if any, available research that has focused on school timetabling, although it can impact heavily on pupils’ access to learning opportunities. Studies in Adamawa, Kano, Kaduna and Kwara (Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013) found that, although accurate data from school registers were lacking, reported and observed levels of latecoming and absenteeism among pupils were high:

- At particular times of year (e.g. during planting and harvesting) when labour is needed in the fields;
- On particular days, e.g. market day, when pupils go to trade and hawk; and
- At particular times of day, e.g. in the early morning when, for example, children have had to do home chores, or when Muslim pupils attend Qur’anic school before attending public school; and/or after break when pupils and teachers drift off in search of water and/or food and do not return; and/or in the afternoons in double-shift schools.

This perhaps suggests the need for greater flexibility and community negotiation in timetabling school holidays and school hours to coincide more with community needs, in order to improve pupil attendance. Pupils have complained about classes starting too early (Coinco 2012) and, in the case of nomadic pastoralists, classes need to fit in with cattle-herding for boys (after around 10am) and cheese-making and selling for girls (Olateju 2010).

Timetabling has also been considered a challenge in Qur’anic schools that were piloting the inclusion of a secular curriculum as the Qur’anic studies take place for the first two hours, when children are fresher...
and more able to learn, followed by the UBE curriculum, when children are more tired and hungry (Usman 2008).

The 2010 NEDS found that the average amount of time primary pupils said they spent on learning-related activities (excluding homework but including extra-curricular activities and travel to and from school) was 6.5 hours (NPC and RTI International 2011). However, a quarter of all children spent less than five hours learning, with higher percentages in government schools, in the North West and North East, in poorer households, and in lower school grades. This means that some children have considerably less time in school than the requisite five hours (ibid.), although once again we note that more time in school, or even in the classroom, may not necessarily result in more learning.

The amount of timetabled lesson time is another quality issue on which there is scarcely any information. After subtracting the time officially allocated to assemblies, school labour activities and break times, the Adamawa study reported that total daily contact time ranged from 2hr 35min in one school (admittedly in a double-shift school) to almost twice that at 4hr 50min in another (Dunne et al. 2013). Since school days often start late due to a variety of circumstances (e.g. poor weather, late release of pupils from Qur’anic schools, distance to school, etc.) (Ahmed et al. 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013), thus reducing lesson time even further, this is clearly an issue of concern.

Some of the statistics related to school timetabling in the ESSPIN-supported states are given in Box 12.1. It is worth bearing in mind that whatever the figures are for schools in ESSPIN-supported states, they are likely to be lower in areas that are not supported by development projects.

**Box 12.1 Timetable variations in ESSPIN-supported states**

The data on head teacher effectiveness from the ESSPIN composite survey (ESSPIN 2013a) give some indication of the differences in timetables (both as scheduled and practised) as four of the indicators related to school timetables. While the validity of such indicators as a measure of head teacher effectiveness might be debated, the findings were nevertheless instructive:

- **School opening time:** More than 50% of teachers and pupils sampled could agree on the school opening time;
- **First lesson:** More than 50% of classes started within 30 minutes of school opening;
- **Length of break:** Over 80% of schools had a break that was not over 35 minutes (15 minutes in Enugu); and
- **Lesson length:** Over 50% of lessons finished within five minutes of the standard 35-minute lesson.

The survey sampled almost 600 public primary schools; some were supported by the project and others were control schools within ESSPIN-supported states but not specifically supported. Across five of the six states, the sampled teachers and pupils could agree on the official school opening time in fewer than half of the Phase 1 project schools, i.e. those that have been involved in the project from the outset. Class start times fared better: just over three-quarters of Phase 1 schools managed to get over half the classes started within 30 minutes of opening. A similar percentage managed to keep to the break timetable but only in just over a third of schools did lessons keep to time; an even smaller proportion of control schools had lessons running to time. All of these findings illustrate the variability and uncertainty of the timetable.

*Source:* ESSPIN (2013a)

**12.2.2 Attendance and attendance registers**

Pupil latecoming and absenteeism, like teacher latecoming and absenteeism, are widely reported in Nigeria (e.g. Ahmed et al. 2008; Adekola 2007; Boulton et al. 2009; Antoninis 2010; UBEC 2007; 2009;
Dunne et al. 2013). The 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011) claimed that the primary school-going children interviewed who had missed school had missed on average 5.5 days of school during the previous month, which is approximately 25% of school time. This is likely to be an underestimation as parents were present when children were questioned. Attendance has also been noted to tail off in particular in the afternoon shift of double-shift schools (Boulton et al. 2009). Pupil attendance is clearly an issue for further investigation, especially in Kano State, where double shifts have been increased in order to improve the PTR (Kano SMoE 2010).

Although registers are supposed to be taken twice a day, at the beginning and end of school, and are checked by school supervisors (Dunne et al. 2013), the matter is not straightforward given the high numbers of pupils in class and frequent pupil and teacher latecoming and absenteeism. Who takes the register when the teacher is not there? What happened if the registers have not been delivered to the school? The ESSPIN study noted that registers were often incomplete and at odds with observed pupil numbers (Boulton et al. 2009). Similarly, in the Adamawa study, in the CFS evaluation and during the EGMA and EGRA assessments in Sokoto and Bauchi states, class enrolment figures were much higher than observed class numbers (UNICEF 2009a; Dunne et al. 2013; USAID 2013 b and c). As highlighted in Section 11.2.3, class attendance registers are often not kept.

Without accurate registers of attendance, it is difficult to gauge how many ‘enrolled’ children are actually in school, how often and for how long. The qualitative data from Adamawa suggest that many pupils drift in and out of school in a constant ebb and flow, with a few missing months of schooling, depending on a variety of factors. However, more in-depth research needs to be carried out on attendance patterns and their causes, as well as in a range of national contexts. There are reports of some communities through the SBMC starting their own community-based data-management systems to try and monitor attendance and/or making home visits to encourage children back into school, reportedly with some degree of success (Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012). Nonetheless, it is not known how much school and classroom observation has been done to confirm these reports.

12.2.3 Duties

School duties take up a fair proportion of the school day in Nigeria, as in other countries in SSA (e.g. in Botswana and Ghana; Dunne et al. 2005). The Adamawa study noted a substantial amount of time was devoted to the daily cleaning of classrooms and sometimes litter-picking in the compound, in addition to the weekly ‘labour day’ or ‘general cleaning’ (of at least two hours), which involved other tasks such as fetching water or working on the school farm (Dunne et al. 2013). The SUBEB was trying to get labour day abolished in schools (ibid.). These duties were sources of complaint among some pupils, especially when very time-consuming and/or given as punishments. They often reinforced gender inequalities and impacted negatively on educational quality:

- The time spent cleaning can be disproportionate to the time spent on learning;
- The tasks are often physically demanding (e.g. weeding, fetching water or sand for construction, cleaning classrooms, working on the school farm), which undoubtedly negatively affects children who may already be hungry, thirsty and/or tired; and
- Tasks are often gender-specific and gender-stereotyped (girls sweep classroom floors while boys weed the compound, with the greater burden usually falling on girls, thereby perpetuating gender inequality. Bakari (2013), however, reported more jobs being shared more evenly between girls and boys).

The Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria in one LGEA in Kwara State reported SBMC success in getting schools to reduce the number of hours that pupils spend on manual labour (Pinnock 2012), although it is not known how widespread this success is.
Discipline – corporal punishment

Corporal punishment, as discussed from the perspective of teachers in Chapter 11, is also important to consider more from the perspective of pupil management and from pupils’ perspectives. Excessive corporal punishment has been widely criticised by pupils, head teachers, parents and community members, and government officials (Usman 2006; FME 2007b; Sherry 2008; Boulton et al. 2009; ActionAid 2011; Femi 2011; Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013).

To reiterate, studies in Nigeria have shown the following negative effects of unregulated corporal punishment on pupils:

- Emotional distress, pupil inability to concentrate and reduced pupil participation in class (ActionAid 2011; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Pupil absenteeism and dropout, especially among girls and nomadic pastoralists (Usman 2006; FME 2007b; ActionAid 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Poor teacher–pupil and parent–teacher relations (Usman 2006; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013; Iwu and Iwu 2013);
- Parental conflict, including withdrawal of pupils from school (Usman 2006; Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013); and
- Permanent physical damage to pupils in extreme cases (Chianu 2000; Oluwakemi and Kayode 2007; Mahmoud et al. 2011).

In addition, its gendered practice – with boys generally being beaten more often and more harshly, based on gender stereotypes of stronger, naughtier boys and weaker girls (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013; see also Section 8.6) – is both inequitable and can promote a boys-versus-girls gender antagonism, which militates against gender equality (Chege et al. 2008).

Box 12.2 UNICEF’s Child-Friendly School initiative

Developed as a partnership between FME and UNICEF, this global initiative was officially launched in Nigeria in 2002 in several states and, at the time of its evaluation (UNICEF 2009a), involved 900 schools that were attempting to be guided by the three interrelated principles of child-centredness, democratic participation and inclusiveness. 31

Direct inputs from UNICEF involved:

- The establishment of SBMCs;
- The provision of resources such as classrooms and better furnishings;
- The provision of latrines, potable water, nutritional support, medical clinics and school libraries; and
- Improvements in the reliability of teacher salaries and other support for teachers.

The external evaluation took place in FCT, Ebonyi and Niger states and involved one- or two-day visits to 23 primary schools in predominantly rural locations, involving school and classroom observations (15-minute snapshots), questionnaires to teachers and pupils, interviews and focus group discussions with teachers, head teachers, parents and other community members (although not with pupils). Most of the schools sampled had been involved in the project for over five years.

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31 The Nigeria programme’s technical committee specified 14 characteristics of CFS: Reflects and realises the rights of every child; sees and understands the whole child, in a broad context; is child centred; is gender sensitive and girl friendly; promotes quality learning outcomes; provides education based on the reality of children’s lives; is flexible and responds to diversity; acts to ensure the inclusion, respect and equality of opportunity for all children; provides education that is affordable and accessible; enhances teacher capacity, morale, commitment, and status; is family focused; is community-based and promotes community cohesion (UNICEF 2009: 9).
The report concluded that:

Although there are still some significant areas of concern that have a long-term impact on children’s outcomes, Nigeria has made substantial progress toward the provision of schools that are child friendly (UNICEF 2009a: iv)

Positive points the report highlighted included:

- Most schools made an effort to reach out to enrol all students, including students with disabilities, despite lacking specialist teachers;
- There was a high level of awareness among staff of the importance of nutrition and health to pupil learning and development (although most of the schools could no longer afford the school-feeding schemes);
- Classroom observations showed teachers were making steps toward ‘student-centred teaching’ and had similarly high expectations for girls and boys;
- Schools were generally clean and tidy and had drinking water and latrines (although the latter were not always used);
- There seemed to be positive relations and open communication between the schools and communities; and
- Most pupils thought their school was a welcoming place for all types of pupil.

At the same time, however, the report underlined the need to: improve social and emotional learning among pupils to reduce peer bullying and aggressive behaviour; provide further support to teachers in implementing positive behaviour-management techniques in the classroom and to create a more respectful environment for pupils; to get communities more involved in raising funds to provide food to the most needy and to improve safety for pupils on the way to and from school; and continue efforts to improve access to education for married and/or parenting young women.

The GEP II evaluation was less enthusiastic, concluding that: ‘it is not apparent that the CFS concept had been concretely embraced and implemented in northern Nigeria’ (UNICEF 2012: 46). It urged stakeholders to ‘think beyond inputs to practices’ (ibid.). While this is an important point, reconceptualising and changing practices arguably requires even more time and resources than providing infrastructure and materials. It was not clear from the later GEP II evaluation whether the schools were still receiving CFS support, and if so, what kinds of support.

12.2.5 Alternatives to corporal punishment

In the Adamawa study pupils often described a good teacher as one ‘who doesn’t beat’. Some schools’ managers, under advice from the SUBEB, were attempting to do away with corporal punishment but were meeting with resistance from teachers (Dunne et al. 2013). Alternative or complementary punishments, however, were still often physical and often humiliating in nature and/or took time away from learning (e.g. being made to run round the classroom, pick up litter, fetch water, carry a heavy stone or frog-jump) (see also UNICEF 2012; Bakari 2013). Inside the classroom in particular, pupils were made to kneel down for a length of time, sometimes with their arms outstretched (‘machine-riding’), or maintain an awkward balancing position known as ‘the cockroach’ (Dunne et al. 2013).

In place of physical punishment, pupils were sometimes excluded from school for not having the complete uniform or not possessing writing materials, although exclusion proved as controversial with parents as corporal punishment in some cases, as they felt their child was being denied an opportunity to learn (Dunne et al. 2013).
Importantly, corporal punishment is often meted out for circumstances that are outside the child’s control, e.g. late coming due to household chores or attending Qur’anic school, non-payment of the PTA levy, lack of school uniform or writing materials, or answering a question incorrectly in class (Usman 2006; Boulton et al. 2009; ActionAid 2011; Femi 2011; Coinco 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

12.2.6 Pupil and parental views on corporal punishment

Although a few pupils have been found to speak up in favour of corporal punishment in some circumstances (Dunne et al. 2013), far more often corporal punishment has been a major source of complaint by pupils/students (Usman 2006; ActionAid 2011; Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Mahdi and Asubiario-Dada, forthcoming, in British Council 2012; Pinnock 2012; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). Girls have been shown to be particularly affected by the shame associated with being beaten or being singled out, causing them to come late or miss school to avoid the humiliation or even to drop out altogether (ActionAid 2011). In the GEP II evaluation, 40% of pupil respondents said they had worries about school attendance related to corporal punishment (UNICEF 2012).

Despite the fact that the 2010 NEDS (NPC and RTI International 2011) indicates parents being overwhelmingly in favour of corporal punishment, as highlighted above, harsh corporal punishment has resulted in the withdrawal of pupils from school, poor teacher–pupil relations and a lack of respect for teachers by parents (Usman 2006; Sherry 2008; Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). Often, unsanctioned implements such as kobokos (horsewhips), sticks and fan belts have been used and/or the pupils have been beaten very harshly (Mahmoud et al. 2011; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). This suggests that it may be the practice rather than the principle that is being contested by parents, although nomadic pastoralists are totally against the practice of corporal punishment (Usman 2006). Studies on corporal punishment in other countries in SSA where the practice has been banned indicate that it is very hard to eradicate (Humphreys 2006). Alternative disciplinary systems need to be developed and negotiated with teachers, parents and communities to have any chance of success.

12.2.7 Positive disciplinary practices

Positive disciplinary practices have been less frequently reported on, although the ESSPIN and GEP programmes – via teacher education as well as SBMC training and SBMC engagement with schools – have been trying to reduce the amount of corporal punishment and promote a less punitive culture in schools. While there are suggestions that this approach is working in some places, with reports by pupils of less beating in some schools (Little and Lewis 2012) and greater monitoring of teacher behaviour (Pinnock 2012), the same studies related that excessive corporal punishment remained a key concern.

The 2004 ESA survey of around 1,000 secondary school students found that around 70% had access to counselling services, mostly for behaviour counselling on referral. Positively, around 60% of students thought that counselling helped ‘to a great extent’ to resolve their problems (FME 2005).

12.2.8 Prefects and monitors

The prefect/monitor system has not been widely researched in Nigeria, although elsewhere in SSA (e.g. in Botswana and Ghana; Dunne et al. 2005; Humphreys 2006) research has indicated that although prefects sometimes provide support, or give a ‘voice’ to pupils, the system is more often pivotal in perpetuating violent disciplinary practices as prefects and monitors physically discipline peers, both when the teacher is present and when they are absent (see also Sherry 2008; Mahdi and Asubiario-Dada, forthcoming, in British Council 2012; UNICEF 2012). For this reason, male prefects are often selected on the basis of size and physical strength (Dunne et al. 2013).

It is unknown how much of the bullying/violence (discussed below in Section 12.3.2) is officially sanctioned through the prefect/monitor system.
The prefect system also works against gender equality in that it underlines an explicit gender hierarchy in the schools, as the head girl is in charge of disciplining girls and the head boy is the head prefect, thus being in charge of both boys and girls (Bakari 2013; Dunne et al. 2013). Jobs that carry status and responsibility, such as ringing the school bell or raising the school flag, are given to male prefects, whereas domestic jobs (such as being the ‘office girl’) are given to female pupils. Such roles send powerful gender messages about the different types of positions and activities appropriate to girls and boys (Dunne et al. 2013).

12.3 Pupil–pupil relations

Very little research in Nigeria so far has focused on pupil–pupil relations in school, even though good peer relations are essential to pupils’ wellbeing and positive experiences of schooling.

12.3.1 Play – gender segregated

Play facilities have been mentioned as important to enrolment and to pupils’ enjoyment of school (UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013), as well as to children’s all-round development (FME 2005). Both Bakari’s (2013) study in Kogi State and Dunne et al.’s (2013) in Adamawa State noted that children usually play in gender-segregated groups. In the Adamawa study, girls were seen chatting, singing, clapping and playing catch-and-throw games. Boys were observed engaged in a greater range of activities, often more physically active, including playing football, wrestling, riding bikes, and playing around the embers of a fire (Dunne et al. 2013).

12.3.2 Bullying and peer violence

Bullying, fighting and ‘rough play’ are widely reported phenomena in the playground, on the way to and from school, and in the classroom (Egbochuku 2007; FME 2007b; UNICEF 2009a; Adefunke 2010; UNICEF 2012; Dunne et al. 2013; Gabrscek and Usman 2013). Several quantitative studies have looked at violence and bullying (physical and non-physical) among pupils, predominantly at JSS level, and, as in many countries in the world, found it to be pervasive (Egbochuku 2007; FME 2007b; Adefunke 2010; UNICEF 2012). The FME study (2007b) was the only survey carried out in several states in both northern and southern Nigeria and at both primary and junior secondary level. It found levels of violence higher in the south and in urban areas, although over 80% of pupils admitted experiencing physical violence at school and around half reported psychological violence, irrespective of location, level of schooling or gender. In the GEP II evaluation report, 37% of pupils said they had been bullied, insulted, discriminated against or physically hurt (UNICEF 2012). Survey results from the CFS evaluation concluded that:

Although most [pupils] experienced a safe and positive peer climate at school, bullying, the social marginalization of some students and lack of intervention by bystanders in cases of bullying all emerged as significant issues (UNICEF 2009a: 39).

Views among girls and boys did not differ significantly. Indeed, almost a third of pupils thought it was acceptable to start a fight in retaliation for an insult, again with little difference in response among girls and boys (ibid.).

In response to this, the report advocated ‘a comprehensive social and emotional learning initiative across all grade levels to reduce levels of aggressive behaviour and bullying by students’ (ibid.: 49), noting that this would also make classrooms more manageable for teachers (UNICEF 2009a: 49). The evaluation for UNICEF’s SbTD programme also noted that pupils wanted ‘no fighting and carrying of weapons’ (Gabrscek and Usman 2013: 62).

Two smaller-scale studies looked specifically at bullying (Egbochuku 2007) and peer victimisation (Adefunke 2010) in a handful of JSSs in Benin City in Edo State and in Osun State, respectively.
Egbochuku’s study (2007) – which encompassed three government and three private/mission schools – found that almost 80% of pupils admitted to being bullied and an even higher percentage admitted to bullying others. Boys generally reported higher levels of bullying and being bullied, with older boys the main culprits, but over half the girls surveyed admitted to bullying too. In the all-boys school in Bakari’s (2013) qualitative study in Kogi State, an unspoken code of ‘seniority’ was reported that enabled older boys to send younger ones on errands, which if refused resulted in the younger boys being punished. Similarly, older boys would sometimes take food or money from younger boys, who were too afraid to report the matter to teachers for fear of reprisals.

Egbochuku’s study (2007) also investigated where the main trouble spots were. Most bullying took place in the playground (40%) for both girls and boys, although in the government schools the figure was higher in the classroom; classroom bullying averaged 23% while 15% on average claimed they were susceptible to bullying on the way home (see also Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013), although this figure was double for girls. The fact that three-quarters of the bullying was said to be by pupils from higher classes and yet such a high percentage occurred in the classroom suggests that the teacher was often absent. However, around half the pupils surveyed said the teachers always stopped the bullying when it was reported, although given the widespread use of corporal punishment ‘stopping the bullying’ is also likely to have involved more physical violence. Adefunke’s study (2010) came to similar conclusions, with just under 60% of pupils being victimised over the previous year and over half having experienced one or more form of victimisation. The most commonly reported forms of violence that had occurred more than once were being beaten, slapped, pinched, verbally abused and having property stolen. Younger pupils were victimised slightly more than older pupils, and boys slightly more than girls.

Although neither Egbochuku’s (2007) or Adefunke’s (2010) study explored the effects of these experiences, the FME (2007b) survey noted that around 6% of respondents admitted missing school because of violence – girls slightly more than boys, and at JSS slightly more than at primary level. The qualitative data from the Adamawa study also suggest that girls might be more affected by bullying and ‘teasing’. In addition, pupils reported that bullying could result in a lack of concentration in class, absenteeism and dropout from school (Dunne et al. 2013).

12.3.3 Over-age pupils, nomads and other victims of bullying

The Adamawa study also identified over-age pupils, and boys in particular, as being especially prone to bullying and to being bullied (Dunne et al. 2013). This is likely to be an important issue in Muslim communities in northern Nigeria, in particular, where boys are often sent to complete a number of years of Qur’anic education before enrolling in a state primary school as very over-age pupils (Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

Nomadic children too are frequently bullied when attending government schools on account of their traditional clothing, tattoos and adornments (Usman 2006). Usman’s research also reported that in such cases the Fulani boys generally do not complain or tell their parents but instead ignore their peers and take a break from school. In the few cases that they reported bullying, teachers tended to ignore their complaints, resorting to the ‘boys-will-be-boys’ explanatory discourse (Usman 2006).

Almajirai too are often bullied because of their unkempt appearance (Usman 2008), as are children with disabilities, such as epileptics (Antonowicz et al. 2010). Given that prefects often physically punish pupils, it is unsurprising that prefects are also reportedly bullied sometimes (Dunne et al. 2013).

12.3.4 Sexual harassment

As discussed more fully in Section 8.3, sexual harassment of female pupils/students by male pupils/students (as well as by teachers and community members) is a concern widely voiced by pupils, although seemingly underreported by adults (FME 2007b; ActionAid 2011; Bakari 2013). The TEGINT
project’s baseline study in eight states in northern Nigeria noted that little official action was reportedly taken where harassment and violence was reported (ActionAid 2011), although action against the perpetrators, when taken, did include physical punishment. After the project, following a number of gender-awareness interventions among girls, school and community members, only a slight increase in the number of formal disciplinary measures taken against the ‘offenders’ was reported in a handful of schools (ActionAid 2012).

The need for ‘safe spaces’ for children to talk about such issues as sexual harassment and bullying, as well as a need for student counselling in general, has been highlighted (FME 2005; FME 2007b; FME 2011a; Little and Lewis 2012). The GEP-initiated Student Tutoring, Mentoring and Counselling programme is aimed at addressing such needs, but has stalled in its implementation (UNICEF 2012).

12.4 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

Aside from a sizeable number of studies on corporal punishment and bullying, there is a dearth of research – both quantitative and qualitative – on pupil management, including timetabling, patterns of attendance, and on pupils’ experiences and interactions in schools in Nigeria. This is a critical area for research as positive teacher–pupil and pupil–pupil relations are vital to improving educational quality, assuring retention, and achieving gender equality through ‘child-friendly’ schools (UNICEF 2009b).

There are clearly high levels of violence in schools that threaten pupil retention and educational quality and which are as important to address as any focus on the technical aspects of pedagogical improvement.

Much more information is needed on pupils’ lives inside (and outside) school and their views on various aspects of school life, including peer relations and the ways in which gender, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status and age have an impact on pupils.

Research is also needed on the availability and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in schools and on students’ experiences of them.

Some longitudinal tracking of individual pupils combined with some time and spatial mapping might help to get a deeper understanding of their experiences of schooling and the reasons for truancy, absenteeism and dropout.

### Evidence Strength Assessment

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CHAPTER 13: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING

13.1 Introduction

Increasing community involvement in schooling is a key strategy in decentralised governance, which aims to help improve the quality of education, to improve school accountability, and to share the financial burden of education. A review of research within SSA (and elsewhere) has shown that community participation works well in the rare instances where there is good understanding and relations between schools, communities and local educational authorities and a genuine commitment to community decision-making (Dunne et al. 2007; see, for example, Academy for Educational Development (2002) and De Grauwe et al. (2005) on some countries in West Africa).

Most of the literature reviewed in this section derives from donor-supported initiatives in northern Nigeria involving UNICEF, USAID (COMPASS), and DFID (ESSPIN and GEP), all involving formal community involvement through the PTAs and SBMCs. The 2004 ESA also reports survey findings from across the country on community and school relations and involvement (FME 2005).

Formal community involvement in public schooling in Nigeria primarily occurs through PTAs and, to a lesser extent, SBMCs, although numerous organisations and individuals have been found to support schools, often focused around different ethnic or religious groups, occupations or interests, or traditional leaders (Poulsen, 2009). At the same time, however, some CSOs have come in for criticism for not supporting education sufficiently (Antoninis 2010).

After considering community–school relations in general, the chapter goes on to look at PTAs and then SBMCs in more detail.

13.2 Community–school relations

Several studies give examples of positive efforts to support schools by community organisations and/or CSOs (see Urwick 2002; FME 2005; Sherry 2008; Poulsen 2009; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012), and communities have often been found to be supportive of schools and appreciative of staff having to work in difficult circumstances and for low pay (Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013). In the 2004 ESA, 74% of school respondents described school–community relations as ‘cordial’ (FME 2005).

However, studies have also highlighted tensions between schools and communities; in the 2004 ESA 3% of schools typified their relations with communities as ‘hostile’ (FME 2005). Along with more specific areas of conflict (elaborated on below), there are more fundamental attitudinal issues. School staff, local government officials, PTA or SBMC and community leaders have been found to hold negative views of parents, especially those whose children are not enrolled in school or whose attendance is sporadic. They variously claim that such parents do not value education or are ‘ignorant’ or not ‘enlightened’ (Sherry 2008; Pinnock 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

Thus, communication between schools and communities has tended to be unidirectional and top down, with schools (sometimes together with the LGEA) telling parents what to do and demonstrating a lack of understanding about the reasons that may prevent parents from sending their children to school (Poulsen 2009; Pinnock 2012; Little and Lewis 2012), which may of course include concerns about the quality of education on offer (Dunne et al. 2013). Community voice has been noted to be particularly strong in Islamiyya schools, and it has been suggested that this is perhaps because they are community owned and because school development is driven by a moral and religious commitment (Boulton et al. 2009).

As highlighted earlier, although SBMCs have generally been credited with improving relations between schools and communities (as well as with LGEAs), they have also been implicated in this negative...
attitude toward some parents, with reports of SBMCs fining parents who send children to herd cattle, denying Fulani herdsman access to water, and asking the police to arrest parents who do not send their children to school (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012). More specifically, teachers often interpret parents’ lack of attendance at meetings or engagement with the school about their children/wards as indicative of a lack of interest, whereas it may instead be due to lack of time (Dunne et al. 2013).

In addition to school complaints about parents not sending children to school, there have been tensions concerning: community encroachment on school land, such as for construction or dumping of waste; access routes; driving vehicles or herding animals across the school; and use of school property for drug-taking, drinking or vandalism by community youths (Boulton et al. 2009; Pinnock 2012; UBEC 2012a; Dunne et al. 2013).

Conversely, parents and community members often see teachers as lacking the requisite qualifications, commitment and professionalism (Sherry 2008; Dunne et al. 2013), with teacher absenteeism and excessive corporal punishment being major sources of parental complaint (Sherry 2008; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; Dunne et al. 2013).

13.3 Parent–teacher associations

PTAs are the most established CBOs connected to schools, providing an important link between the school and community. In particular, they:

- Provide a lot of material support, particularly in financing and/or providing labour for the construction and maintenance of school buildings (FME 2005; Theobald et al. 2007; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Recruit and pay for teachers (Theobald et al. 2007; Dunne et al. 2013);
- Provide learning materials (FME 2005; Theobald et al. 2007);
- Provide a means of communication (and sometimes mediation) between the school and the community (Dunne et al. 2013); and
- Provide the only financial income for some schools in the form of termly levies and other ad hoc fees (Poulsen 2009; Antoninis 2010).

In contrast, PTAs have comparatively little involvement in school management (Urwick and Aliyu 2003; Theobald et al. 2007; Poulsen 2009; Dunne et al. 2013), although in the 2004 ESA 14% of school returns said that PTAs helped with school administration (FME 2005). That said, it is not known in what type of school (private, Islamiyya, etc.) this occurred or what it entailed.

Termly PTA levies finance the PTA’s activities, although since the legislation for free UBE these have been banned in many states. Nevertheless, they are still widespread (FME 2005; Lincove 2009; NPC and RTI International 2011) and for many schools that do not receive LGEA funding they are often the only source of income (Poulsen 2009; Antoninis 2010). Importantly, a percentage of the levy sometimes goes to the LGEA and state education board (Poulsen 2009).

At the same time, however, PTA levies are a financial burden on many families (Poulsen 2009; NPC and RTI International 2011), and therefore a cause of non-enrolment or dropout for children from poor families (ActionAid 2011; Dunne et al. 2013; see also Section 9.3). Non-payment of levies can also result in punishment or exclusion of the child from school, which in turn can result in absenteeism or dropout (FME 2005; Coinco 2012). In the 2004 ESA survey, over a quarter of pupils said that had been sent away from school at some stage for non-payment of school levies (FME 2005).

Other criticisms of PTAs include:

- Political interference (Poulsen 2009);
• Concentration of power and decisions on expenditure in the hands of a minority (often the head teacher and the PTA chair) (Poulsen 2009; Williams 2009);
• Lack of financial transparency and accountability (Williams 2009; Dunne et al. 2013); and
• Lack of ‘voice’ for the ordinary community member (Poulsen 2009; Dunne et al. 2013).

13.3.1 Self-help grants to PTAs

Although the recent thrust of community participation in school improvement has been through SBMCs (see below), the USAID-funded COMPASS project, working in Kano, Lagos and Nasarawa states, included disbursements of small self-help grants to PTAs and training in record-keeping and other skills. While the project’s own completion report considered the school’s infrastructural improvements to have been successful and attributed improved pupil enrolment to them (USAID, 2009), the external evaluation was less effusive, concluding that, although managing the grants had helped build institutional capacity, the grants had been too small in many cases to have much impact on improving otherwise dilapidated buildings (Holfeld et al. 2008). The report also bemoaned the lack of progress in improving transparency and accountability, commenting:

... the descriptions provided by the PTA members of the process, overall planning and management of the school were not very impressive and the commitment to transparency and accountability was not strongly manifested (p. 28).

13.4 School-based management committees

Experience from other parts of the world has shown that where the school-based management concept is properly understood, all stakeholders are clear about roles and responsibilities and communities are sensitised and mobilised, then it can assist in the improvement of the quality of education (Adediran and Bawa 2009). In Nigeria, specifically, reasons cited for the establishment of SBMCs have included dissatisfaction with PTAs, the influence of the GEP and UNICEF, and the need for a response to the crisis of funding and teaching quality in basic education (Poulsen 2009).

SBMCs were approved by the NCE in 2005 for all primary schools and JSSs in the country. The NCE also provided guidelines setting out the composition and structure of SBMCs (Adediran and Bawa 2009). The committee was to have a much broader base than the PTA, including six adult female representatives as well as youth representatives and the head girl and boy. Thus, the aim on paper was, at least in part, to increase female and youth participation as a step toward social inclusion and equality. Various projects sponsored by government and/or IDPs (e.g. DFID, UNICEF, the World Bank, and ActionAid) have involved support for SBMCs in northern Nigeria, in particular in terms of producing manuals, carrying out SBMC training and/or providing development grants (see Poulsen 2009; Adediran 2010).

13.4.1 Key issues with SBMCs

From the outset, one of the key issues with SBMCs has been the lack of clarity as to their purpose. Poulsen’s (2009) study on SBMCs, which included interviews with officials at the federal, state and LGEA levels, concluded that SBMCs were variously seen as a way to:

• Ease the financial burden of government;
• Promote community ownership;
• Inform or ‘sensitise’ communities;
• ‘Educate’ parents;
• Increase girls’ enrolment in school through increased female participation; and
• Check up on schools.
Some LGEA officials (e.g. in Lagos and Kaduna) believed that the SBMC was accountable to the LGEA, despite the fact that the LGEA had no mandate according to the guidance notes and did not provide any resources (ibid.). Some LGEA officials in Adamawa were of a similar view (Dunne et al. 2013).

A lack of awareness about SBMCs at the school/community level and confusion about the differentiation in roles between PTAs and SBMCs has also been noted (Poulsen 2009; Antoninis 2010; Dunne et al. 2013). In some communities, PTAs have metamorphosed into SBMCs; in others, where the PTAs were already strong, some tensions between the two bodies have been seen. Also, it should be noted that GEP-supported SBMCs have a member of the PTA on the committee (Adediran 2010).

Non- or barely functioning SBMCs have also been reported in various studies, both in ESSPIN-supported states and in other states in northern Nigeria, some of which have been receiving support for SBMCs (e.g. Adediran 2010; Antoninis 2010; ActionAid 2011; Dunne et al. 2013; ESSPIN 2013a). In the ESSPIN community survey, the SBMC had met at least twice a year in only a third of the schools, and there were reports of low attendance. Only half the schools claiming they had an SBMC could produce any minutes (Antonis 2010).

SBMC guidance notes have been lacking at the school/community level, even in states where SBMCs are being supported (Poulsen 2009; Antoninis 2010; Pinnock 2012). It is hardly surprising then that the composition of committees often deviates from the government guidelines. In particular, they frequently lack the requisite female and youth committee members, and tend to be dominated by local male elites (PoulSEN 2009; Antoninis 2010; ActionAid 2011; Little and Lewis 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). The ESSPIN community survey of a representative sample of 330 schools and communities, which conducted structured interviews with over 3,000 respondents including children and parents, noted that the existence of a female SBMC member varied from 12% in Jigawa to 32% in Kwara State. It also noted the tendency to incorporate representatives of traditional councils into the committee (Antonis 2010).

On the other hand, getting traditional and religious leaders on board to mobilise communities has been shown to be paramount to successful community mobilisation in support of education (Adediran 2010; Pinnock 2012). Thus, there seems to be a tension between the need to include important figures within communities in order to mobilise support and funds and the need to ensure that the voices of the ordinary and the marginalised are heard.

Funding has also been an issue with SBMCs. As Adediran (2010) points out, in any school-based management system the government authorities specify how the system should be financed and provide resources. As this has not been done, many SBMCs exist in name only, unless they have received support from donor agencies or organisations (ibid.).

Instead, SBMCs have been encouraged to mobilise their own funds – hence perhaps the confusion in roles with the PTA, which has traditionally raised funds for schools. Some have also managed to secure some funding from LGEAs for school improvement projects based on SDPs, but again these grants are often externally funded or jointly funded by government and an IDP (Boulton et al. 2009; Adediran 2010). However, there is widespread concern that without substantial and consistent government funding, the SBMC model of school development will not be sustainable, especially given the increasing demand for schooling (Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012).

Even though investment in SBMCs has brought many positive results in terms of social mobilisation for schooling, social cohesion and material improvements to schools, there is less evidence of SBMCs carrying out their governance function, and a recognition that increased capacity building is needed at school/community and LGEA level (Adediran 2010).

Since these earlier baseline studies, states that have been given external support have shown improvements (both financial and in terms of capacity development), which are discussed below.
13.4.2 Successes with SBMCs

Most of the success stories, and indeed most of the data on SBMCs, derive from the mid-term evaluations of ESSPIN-supported schools in the five states of Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa and Kwara (Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock, 2012; ESSPIN 2013a), the final evaluation of TEGINT in Katsina, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe, Niger, FCT, Nasarawa and Plateau (ActionAid 2012), and the mid-term evaluation of UNICEF’s work with SBMCs in Bauchi, Sokoto, Katsina and Niger (Adediran 2010).

Both internal and external mid-term evaluations of SBMCs in ESSPIN-supported states (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012) point to SBMCs’ many successes, reported by over three-quarters of school/community stakeholders, namely in:

- **Mobilising community resources** – one report (Little and Lewis 2012) suggests they raise more funds through voluntary contributions than PTAs do through levies, which are used for infrastructural development and provision of resources (see also Boulton et al. 2009; Dunne et al. 2013);

- **Mobilising communities**, resulting in increases in pupil enrolment and attendance, including of girls and children in paid employment (see also Antoninis 2010);

- **Improving mutual responsibility for improving education**, including better relations between schools and communities and local government and communities approaching government for support;

- **Improved teacher management**, resulting in reduced absenteeism; and

- **Greater women’s involvement**, involving increased involvement by women (and in a few cases, children) in school improvement activities (see also Coinco 2012; and Box 13.1 below).

**Box 13.1 The contribution of women and children SBMC members in Jigawa and Kano States**

Reports of the work of KHADEV CSO and their government partners in Jigawa State highlight that SBMCs have supported the formation of Children’s SBMC Committees in 23 schools in the LGEA to enhance their participation. The children selected the committee members and the SBMC also linked the school Guidance and Counselling Officers to the children’s committees, where they were these officers were existing. Major roles of the Children’s Committees at this early stage have been to ensure good health habits in and around the school and monitor children who drop out of school or who do not attend regularly. Children’s Committee members have also been trying to represent other school children on the SBMC and raise their ideas for school improvement. In Galadanchi and Sabon-Gida Primary Schools Children’s Committee members have also been tending to trees which were planted during a school tree planting campaign, monitoring their growth and ensuring that they have enough water to thrive. In Fagge Local Government of Kano State, according to the CSO Magajin Malam and government partners, women have been allowed to sit with men for the first time to discuss issues related to school improvement and education, and children have also taken part. They have been involved in school development planning, supporting enrolment, school sanitation and the monitoring of school/teacher performance. Many girls who used to hawk goods on the streets are back in school in Maidorawa, Alfa, Zangina and Kwaciri communities due to SBMC and community support with provision of uniforms and learning materials for these girls. In the mentoring visit 7 & 8 reports of the work of Turaki Educational Services and government partners in Albasu LGEA of Kano State it is stated that there is more acceptance of the role of women on SBMCs than there was in the beginning. Turaki point out that SBMC women members and other community women are taking action on issues of girl-child education as well as other children who remain out-of-school, and that their approach of house-to-house visits is having an impact. Female SBMC members are getting other women/women’s groups in the community involved in supporting school improvement, and there is more general acceptance, whilst challenges do remain, of women speaking out and being listened to in SBMC meetings. It has been suggested by some of the CSOs and government partners working in
the northern states that the children’s committees of SBMCs should allow girls ‘safe spaces’ to meet on their own as they may feel shy to discuss their issues and concerns with boys.

Source: Taken from narrative reports related to questionnaire findings (Pinnock 2012: 55)

The composite mid-term review (ESSPIN 2013a) concluded that just under half of the SBMCs had reached the functionality standard, fulfilling six out of the 10 criteria, most of which required fairly robust evidence. However, there were marked differences between the schools that had received SBMC training and the control schools that had not. It is likely that in states where there is no development initiative pushing SBMCs, figures will be much lower.

The more limited review of UNICEF-supported school communities concurred with all of the above improvements, with some states claiming a rise in girls’ primary completion rates and a decrease in gender gaps (Adediran 2010), although the provenance and reliability of the statistical data to back this up was uncertain. Moreover, the more extensive review of TEGINT, which included three of the same states, reported more mixed findings concerning girls’ education and female participation. It claimed: improved enrolment of girls but irregular attendance patterns; an improved gender management profile of schools overall but a decline in four states; and schools with the most intensive intervention for SBMC training and teacher education taking most action concerning girls’ education.

SBMCs’ access to school improvement grants and the associated training to successfully manage them has also had a positive impact on school development (Boulton et al. 2009; Adediran 2010; ESSPIN 2013a). Whole-school development plans have been highlighted in this regard, the success of which depends on:

- Wide consultation on priority needs;
- Training of SBMC members on plan development; and
- Provision of grants to carry out projects (Adediran 2010).

Supportive, problem-solving mentoring visits have also been crucial to SBMCs’ success (Pinnock 2012).

In communities that have received a lot of input and where SBMCs seem to be more functional, numbers of women are slowly increasing, although children’s participation still has a long way to go (ActionAid 2012; Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; ESSPIN 2013a). That said, there are now said to be over 1,100 children’s committees functioning in ESSPIN-supported schools (ESSPIN 2013b). Coinco’s (2012) qualitative study in the ESSPIN-supported states of Enugu, Kano, Jigawa and Kwara of girls’ and women’s participation in SBMCs and the wider community highlights the strategy of having women’s SBMCs that are attached to (male) SBMCs as a first step. Some women have progressed to being on the main committee, although not on the executive, and most women interviewed thought that genuine participation by women was improving and that there are signs of shifting community attitudes toward women’s involvement in decision-making. This is especially true when people are confronted by positive results from women’s actions, such as the provision of a borehole or funds being raised for school uniforms (Coinco 2012).

However, increased numbers of female participants in SBMC activities, as with increased numbers of female teachers (see Section 8.5), does not necessarily mean increased numbers of girls in school (see ActionAid 2011; British Council 2012) or equate with gender-sensitive planning.

Girl-specific interventions by SBMCs – such as separate toilets for girls and boys, provision of sanitary wares, and scholarships for transitions to JSS – have reportedly had a positive impact on girls’ enrolment (Adediran 2010).

Other notable successes attributed to SBMCs in the ESSPIN and GEP studies, commonly though less extensively reported, included:
• **More teaching and learning resources** delivered by SBMCs (Boulton et al. 2009; Adediran 2010);
• **Increased feeling of ownership by communities** (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012); and
• **Improved teacher behaviour**, such as reductions in corporal punishment (also ActionAid 2012).

### 13.4.3 Challenges for SBMCs

While recounting numerous successes, the various project evaluations recognised the following substantial challenges that still remain for SBMCs:

- **Increasing women’s and children’s full participation on the SBMC committees** (Coinco 2012; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; Adediran 2010). ESSPIN’s mid-term assessment (ESSPIN 2013a) found that across the five states just one in 10 SBMCs reached the standard for women’s inclusion, with only one in 20 achieving the required level of children’s inclusion (however, figures were much higher for schools that had received up to 16 days of SBMC training);
- **Better engagement with the concerns of marginalised groups**, including children from minority ethnic groups, children with disabilities, nomads and street children (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012);
- **Securing a consistent flow of financial support** from government to ensure SBMCs’ sustainability beyond the life of externally supported projects, which in turn depends on sustained political will (ActionAid 2012; Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012);
- **Further increasing the capacity** of LGEA, school and SBMC members (Adediran 2010; Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012; ActionAid 2011);
- **Improving oversight of SBMCs** by having them under one department in LGEAs and SUBEBs, such as Social Mobilisation, and supporting participatory monitoring of community activities (Adediran 2010); and
- **Addressing the punitive measures** some SBMCs are advocating for parents whose children stay out of school and encouraging a more conciliatory, problem-solving approach (Little and Lewis 2012; Pinnock 2012).

In summary, where communities are being supported with training and mentoring support, changes are occurring, albeit slowly and unevenly, with continued strong support needed to ensure their sustainability. However, it seems that in states where there has been no outside intervention and in remote areas of supported states where there has been little input and monitoring, for whatever reason, SBMCs are faring far worse, if functioning at all. ActionAid’s baseline for TEGINT, for example, reported that SBMCs were ‘largely not functioning’ (ActionAid 2011). This relates back to Poulsen’s (2009) point about equity, i.e. that communities in the poorest areas with the fewest resources and least lobbying power are likely to end up with the poorest schools. Similarly, within communities, people who are less able to mobilise resources – particularly women – are less likely to be able to be elected/appointed onto committees (Coinco 2012; Dunne et al. 2013). Notably, the women who were found to be successfully participating in community affairs in Kwara State were the main breadwinners in the family (Coinco 2012).

### 13.4.4 Limitations of the evaluation data

One of the limitations of the above evaluations is that much of the data come from SBMC members or office bearers involved in SBMC projects, who inevitably will have presented matters in a positive light. They will also predominantly have been male and adult; a gender-disaggregated list of respondents is often not provided in the evaluation report. This is important to bear in mind when considering claims about improved female and child participation in decision-making, for example. Antoninis (2010) reported that in 20% of survey responses, a female SBMC member was not available for interview; nor were many parents available. This raises important questions about the difficulty for researchers in...
capturing the ‘voice’ of marginalised groups such as women or nomadic pastoralists, but also that of the ordinary parent. It also raises the same question about their availability to participate in SBMC meetings and community consultations. Coinco’s (2012) study highlighted lack of time as being a major impediment to female participation in community affairs, such as SBMC activities.

It is also difficult to attribute increases in enrolment solely to SBMC activities (Little and Lewis 2012), even leaving aside the unreliability of enrolment statistics. Moreover, increased enrolment does not necessarily equal increased attendance and, more importantly, does not equate with learning; SBMCs alone cannot improve the quality of teaching (Poulsen 2009). However, despite this they are clearly helping to provide a community and school environment that is more likely to support learning, through improved school–community–LGEA relations, infrastructural improvements, increased supply of resources, and more locally relevant and therefore more effective school planning. Many are also helping to ensure that more teachers and pupils are in class. These are important necessary steps but, as the literature reviewed in Chapter 4 shows, the fundamentals of educational quality ultimately lie with the quality of the processes of teaching and learning.

13.5 Issues arising and gaps in the evidence

Financial sustainability and equity are two important issues that need addressing to ensure the future of the SBMC model of decentralised governance. Without government funding SBMCs cannot function. The guidelines for accessing funds need to be equitable; systems need to be put in place to make sure that poor communities that are unable to provide matched funding and/or do not have the capacity to produce a development plan are not further disadvantaged by receiving no financial support.

So far, SBMCs have been involved more in social and resource mobilisation; if they are to fulfil their governance functions then even more capacity building and support will be needed.

More needs to be known about the actual working of SBMCs, how they differ in different contexts (e.g. urban/rural; Yoruba/Hausa, etc.), and how they interact and/or overlap with PTAs. How do committees balance the need to include powerful figures within the community who can mobilise human and financial resources with the need for equity and to include more marginalised voices? What are the specific conditions that allow particular SBMCs to work well? What can be learned from this and applied elsewhere?

### Evidence Strength Assessment

| Quality of evidence: | Medium | Size of body of evidence: | Medium | Consistency of results: | Consistent | Closely matched to topic: | High | Overall assessment: | Medium |
CONCLUSION

The main aim of this review has been to pull together the insights from available research and development literature on basic education and point to some of the gaps in our knowledge and ways in which we might increase our knowledge. The emphasis has been on the factors that affect educational access, quality, outcomes and equity in basic education, particularly in public primary schools and, to a lesser extent, public JSSs.

Despite gathering and examining a copious amount of documents for this review, it is obvious that we have only scratched the surface of what goes on in the widely divergent state, local government and community/school contexts across Nigeria. Just considering the state level, there are several states that have not been mentioned in any of the literature reviewed (excluding their involvement in national surveys): for example, Imo, Abia and Kebbi have not been referred to. That is not to say that nothing is happening in these places; rather, either nobody has written about basic education in those states or they have but we were unable to access it within the time and resource constraints of the project.

Information exchange among states may take place formally and informally through scheduled meetings of heads of SUBEBs or heads of colleges of education, for example. However, the process of putting this report together has highlighted the need for a more formal sharing of written knowledge, for reasons of accountability and transparency but also so that all educational stakeholders can learn from, and in turn contribute to, this growing body of knowledge.

A summary of the substantive research findings according to topic (e.g. on teacher education, educational governance, etc.) is to be found in the executive summary. This conclusion, however, aims to:

• Highlight some of the general cross-cutting issues related to research that have arisen from the review;
• Summarise the research gaps, both substantive and methodological, as they relate to basic education; and
• Offer suggestions for future directions for research.

It is not concerned with offering policy recommendations per se, although many of the issues raised have implications for both policy and practice.

Key methodological issues from the review

School data – issues arising

As has been stated numerous times in this review, reliable statistical data are crucial for evaluating interventions, carrying out evidence-based planning, and for doing research. They are also pivotal in helping to ensure accountability and transparency, provided the data are made publically available. However, EMIS data, as has been said many times, were often found to be lacking or inaccurate and/or unavailable, particularly for private schools. Evidence suggests that in some of the ESSPIN-supported states, in particular, the quality of the EMIS data is improving, with data-validation processes in place and more accessible presentation of data. However, school data are only as good as the information provided by any particular school. The research has shown that the reliability of the returns may sometimes be compromised by the literacy and numeracy constraints of the head or assistant head teacher, by the absence of an admissions register in the first place, and/or by the incentive to inflate figures to gain some material advantage.
While most studies acknowledge the unreliability of EMIS and other statistical data, they simultaneously use the data as evidence of the positive impact of particular programmes, which is problematic.

Some SBMCs are starting community-based education data gathering but here too there may be incentives for inflating enrolment or attendance figures, in the hope of accessing further funding from either government or IDPs. It would be useful to know what different strategies are being used to try and improve the reliability of these statistics.

**Issues around definitions**

In regard to enrolment figures, there is the thorny issue of who counts as being enrolled in, or attending, school. ESSPIN-supported states are providing data on IQTE schools but some schools that are nominally IQTE have been found to lack the curriculum documents and teachers to teach the secular subjects, so should they count? Conversely, should children attending unregistered schools be considered to be out of school?

Age-specific data are absent and so it is hard to calculate NERs and know how many over-age pupils are in school and where they are. The issue of over-age pupils has implications both for their own chances of staying in school and also for classroom dynamics with other children.

Absenteism and dropout are two closely related issues, which both require more robust data. What exactly counts as dropping out? How many days/weeks does a child have to miss to be considered a ‘dropout’? And how is attendance data (in the sense of going to school on a regular basis) going to be captured if, as the literature tells us, teachers may not be there to take the register or the register may not be there to start with? Researchers will need to devise creative ways of investigating attendance patterns.

**Geographical coverage**

Geographical coverage in review documents was very uneven across the country. Apart from national surveys, such as the 2010 NEDS and 2008 NDHS, some secondary empirical studies based on their data, and the 2004 ESA studies, most available studies focused on states in northern Nigeria, and sometimes Lagos in the south. This was because they were generally tied to development programmes, which are concentrated in the north. The exceptions included studies carried out by Nigerian academics in the various established university cities, such as Ibadan in the South West; these studies were often conducted within a single LGEA, or in one or more nearby states, unless they used pre-existing national datasets.

**School coverage**

Most of the research on basic education was focused on public primary schools. Some studies included both primary schools and JSSs in their sample and/or public and private, religious and/or secular institutions, although did not always differentiate between school types in the reporting of the findings, especially in qualitative studies.

In-depth studies are needed on different types of schools – boarding, single-sex, co-educational, private, church and IQTE – in order to identify features that aid or hinder access, retention and learning but at both primary and JSS level. More also needs to be known about ECCE.
The disjuncture between development and university – opportunities for synergy

Independent research by Nigerian academics that was accessible tended to lack an empirical basis, and was often more discursive about aspects of policy, such as UBE, or the curriculum. The relatively small body of available empirical research usually focused on a very specific issue and involved descriptive or statistical analysis of questionnaires, sometimes supplemented by interviews with key informants.

There seemed to be little crossover between the literature being produced through studies associated with development programmes and most of the studies being undertaken by academics in Nigerian universities. Although there are a few Nigerian academics who combine university work with consultancy for government and IDPs in development programmes, more generally there seems to be little interaction between the two domains. This is also perhaps partly a product of the geographical divide and the fact that many of the major universities are in the south whereas most of the development projects are in the north. However, it would be beneficial for research in Nigeria as a whole if more university academics working in education were more involved in educational development programmes.

Limited research methodologies and respondent voices

Since most of the research was tied into development projects, studies were predominantly evaluative, generally being baseline, mid-term or final evaluations of particular programmes or of sub-components, such as SBMCs or a school-based teacher development programme. Evaluation designs (like the initial project designs) are heavily influenced by the pressure from donors to show results.

To enable outputs and outcomes to be measured against programme targets, and to facilitate impact assessments, the studies were also mainly quantitative, with an emphasis on quantifiable indicators and on ‘inputs’. Even where qualitative data were gathered they were often quantified.

Evaluations were often headed by external consultants. However, conducting evaluations over a large area within a very limited consultancy period (typically two weeks) has implications for the sample, which was a limitation most researchers acknowledged. For example, when rural schools were visited, they were often not too far from a main road, while school visits were necessarily brief in order to visit as many schools as possible in the time.

Project personnel on the ground often had some say in the schools selected for visits but are likely to have chosen the places where the project is working best, or at least not where it is barely functioning.

Survey methods predominated and in the international development projects they often relied upon the self-reported responses of interested parties in a questionnaire (e.g. SBMC chair, head teacher, etc.). Such participants will want to present information in a positive light, although sometimes other physical evidence was required.

Apart from a few notable exceptions, the voices of women and children and marginalised groups such as nomadic pastoralists, almajirai or street children were frequently not well heard in studies, often because the ‘key informants’ interviewed or surveyed tended to be state and LGEA officials, traditional leaders and head teachers, who are predominantly men from dominant social groups. In cases where ‘hard-to-reach’ respondents were deliberately sought out, they were sometimes just that: hard to reach and thus unavailable for interview.

Where qualitative research was conducted, interviews and observations were usually one-off events and responses were also often quantified. In the case of one-off classroom observations, as the researchers often acknowledged, the observer effect was often magnified, making it difficult to get a feel for what a ‘normal’ lesson might be like.
Broadening research approaches

Missing from the research evidence were more free-ranging, exploratory studies not constrained by donor agendas and timelines. More in-depth, ethnographic and qualitative studies involving repeated visits to schools, communities and educational offices would be able to provide more nuanced and holistic accounts of the complex micro-social, political and economic processes that have an impact on educational opportunities, experiences and outcomes for particular children in particular contexts.

Case-study comparisons between schools and communities where pupil access, retention and outcomes are faring relatively better or worse could usefully help identify features that support or hinder educational access, school quality and learning outcomes. Comparisons between poor rural communities in a southern state with relatively high enrolment levels and a good GPI with ones in a northern state with a low GPI, for example, would be illuminative.

Longitudinal studies too could provide insights into how the different phases of the agricultural year have an impact on schooling, or the daily lives of particular children, and affect learning.

The netmapping methodology used in Kano could usefully be applied to other states to help grasp the political complexities in operation.

There was an almost total absence of research that applied sociological theory to try to understand educational processes, as well as little participatory research – again possibly on account of time constraints.

Similarly absent were studies exploring the interaction between ethnicity, religion, age, urban/rural location, etc. and how such issues play out in different locations in regard to schooling. That said, the relationship between Islam and gender (generally focused on women/girls) was a frequent topic of interest, whereas the relationship between education and Christianity or ATR was left unexplored. The absence of studies on religion and ethnicity in particular is perhaps because the topics were considered to be too sensitive.

Gender – conceptual limitations

Gender – in the sense of girls and women generally – has been a strong focus of development efforts, especially in northern Nigeria, and has therefore featured prominently in the literature in this review. Although discussed in detail in Chapter 8, it needs reiterating here that conceptualisations of gender need to move beyond the gender binary (girls vs. boys) and the almost exclusive focus on girls to conceptualise gender as relational (girls and boys), thus considering the similarities and differences between and within gender categories. A more nuanced understanding of gender also needs to acknowledge that people’s gender identities are differentiated by, and interact with, religion, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, sexuality, disability and location, for example.

In research terms, a reconceptualising of gender would move beyond a focus on counting girls and boys and female and male teachers (although this needs to be done as a starting point) and on generalising about girls and boys as homogenous groups. Instead, it would consider which particular girls and boys (and in what circumstances) and focus on gender relations and on the gendered structures and processes in particular institutions. Pertinent questions might therefore include the following:

- How are these structures and processes similar or different in all-girls schools, all-boy schools, in public and private schools, in boarding and day schools, or in IQTE schools, and in the colleges of education that train the next generation of teachers?
- How do structures and processes support or work against social equality?
- What kinds of masculinities and femininities are being promoted and/or excluded in these institutions and how does this affect educational quality and gender equality?
• What strategies could be used to address these inequalities?

The financing and governance of education

Before finally looking at some of the key questions that future research could usefully explore in relation to access, quality, equity and impact in basic education, it is important to emphasise the overarching twin issues of the financing and governance of education. Throughout the review, funding shortages, blockages and inequalities have featured as major obstacles to the improvement of educational quality in Nigeria. Related to this has been the other recurring issue of a lack of clarity concerning federal, state and local government responsibility (including financial) and therefore accountability for various aspects of educational governance – a situation made more complex by the existence of numerous parastatals at federal and state levels.

We need to have a deeper understanding of public expenditure in basic education and the relationships between systems for planning and budgeting and the way in which they variously relate to learning outcomes.

The existence of political appointments in education and the influence of politics more generally throughout the educational system, which is apparent in the literature, mean that any research on schooling needs to take account of the political economy. This includes the political economy of the communities within which schools are embedded. Thus, the netmapping exercise undertaken in the Kano study (Schiffer et al. 2013), which analysed the formal and informal networks and hierarchies related to non-salary funding at state, local government and community levels, would be a fruitful starting point for research in any state.

Questions that need to be answered by research

In all the suggested research issues below, studies should seek out examples where possible of where schooling is working well, where there are ‘good practices’, to see what can be learned and applied elsewhere, although at the same time avoiding bland decontextualised ‘what works’ scenarios. Studies should be carried out in a range of contexts – geographical and cultural and in different school types – and attention should be paid to gender and other issues of cultural identity (e.g. age, ethnicity, religion, home language, etc.).

Research methodologies and methods need to be varied and suitable for the research purpose.

What follows covers most of the main issues that have come out of the review, although the list is by no means exhaustive, and readers should also look back at the individual chapters’ ‘issues arising and gaps in the evidence’ sections so as to identify other research areas.

Gaps in research: access to basic education

While survey data give a broad idea of some of the out-of-school factors that affect access (e.g. poverty and the need for child labour/work, distance to school, etc.) and in-school factors that push children away from school (e.g. school quality, etc.), they present an oversimplified picture. Decision-making about schooling is rarely a one-off occurrence but is instead a constant process of re-evaluation as circumstances change, especially for vulnerable households.

In addition, there is also much vagueness, about the in-school factors that play a role in particular: Which aspects of school quality are important? What is meant by ‘did not like school’ and ‘had enough schooling’, which applied to a large proportion of respondents? What sorts of issues are covered by that
catch-all phrase ‘others’, which also applied to a large proportion of respondents? How do these various factors interrelate in order to have an impact on access?

Thus, more in-depth nuanced research is needed, covering a range of contexts, and asking why children, particularly from marginalised groups (nomads, over-age, migrants, almajirai, OVCs, children with disabilities, etc.) are still not in school, and what conditions would be necessary for that to change.

Research is needed on why pupils drop out of school. What are the push and pull factors and processes that lead to dropping out? Poor attendance is usually a precursor to dropout, so what are the attendance patterns of children who drop out and the reasons for irregular attendance? What could be done to help them attend more regularly and keep them in school? Mapping attendance patterns among a cross-section of pupils in different communities over time to find out how their out-of-school and in-school lives interrelate and affect attendance and learning would be beneficial.

The inflexibility of school timetabling (in terms of the school year, week or day) has been shown to have a major impact on pupil punctuality and attendance in areas where it conflicts with other household and/or community priorities. Research needs to explore the ways in which different schools try to accommodate (or not) conflicting household/community needs and/or priorities. What are the barriers to greater flexibility? How could they be overcome?

Social mobilisation would appear to be increasing enrolments in many areas but there is evidence that some schools are struggling to cope with the increased intake and that the resulting drop in school quality results in some pupils later dropping out. How widespread is this phenomenon and what are schools doing to ensure that enrolment translates into sustained access with regular attendance and completion? What are the barriers to this? To what extent and in what ways is gender being taken into account?

Research also needs to identify whether particular school types (IQTE, private secular, public, boarding, single-sex, etc.) are having greater success in improving sustained access and completion of pupils at both primary and JSS level. If so, what are the structures and practices that promote pupils’ successful completion of school?

Although automatic promotion is now the norm, some pupils still repeat years. What sorts of pupils repeat? What are the reasons for repetition? What effect does this have on their likelihood of staying in school? What can be done to reduce repetition?

We know little about what sorts of pupils make or do not make the transition to JSS and why. Again, what are the conditions that support transition? What are the barriers? What could be done to improve matters, particularly for vulnerable groups? How are people from NFE streams being reintegrated into formal education at JSS level? What are the factors that help or hinder this transition?

The 2004 ESA survey suggested that pupil transfer between schools was a common phenomenon. What sorts of pupils transfer and why? How does this affect their learning? How does this relate to household decisions about school choice?

To what extent are IQTE and nomadic schools managing to widen access? What strategies are proving successful? What more could be done? To what extent and in what ways are IQTE and nomadic schools managing to translate that into regular attendance and completion? What are the gendered aspects of these processes?

Studies are lacking on the effects of conflict on access to education and the ways in which the quality or forms of education may also have an impact on conflict.
Gaps in research: school quality – teaching and learning

A substantial body of research has consistently documented many of the features of classroom teaching and learning that characterise the generally poor quality of teaching and learning in many Nigerian schools. Some of these features relate to difficult teaching conditions and lack of infrastructural and teaching resources but more often the reasons lie with inadequate teacher preparation, motivation and/or supervision.

Studies are needed that look more at the classroom processes and that identify the specific features that aid or hinder teaching and learning, with more use of classroom observation that goes beyond merely quantifying particular behaviours. Studies also need to seek pupil and teacher views on particular issues. What do pupils think helps them to learn or prevents them from learning in class? What are the teaching techniques they find useful? What are the classroom conditions, both physical and social, that help pupils learn? What are the out-of-school (e.g. hunger, ill health, etc.) and in-school factors (e.g. MOI, overcrowded classrooms, classroom peer relations, etc.) that have an impact on pupil learning and how do they interrelate?

The MOI is a vital area for research but studies need to go beyond asking respondents for their language preferences, which has predominantly been the research focus so far. Observational studies are needed that establish which languages are actually used in the classroom and in what ways, in both (relatively) monolingual and multilingual settings. What impact does this have on learning? How does the MOI affect teacher pedagogy? How is code-switching used to facilitate learning? How are different languages used to include or exclude learners? How do teachers adapt teaching in multilingual settings? How do minority-language speakers cope in the classroom? What is textbook availability in different languages? To what extent and in what ways does the teacher help pupils understand English-language textbooks by code-switching?

Teacher–pupil and pupil–peer relations and pupil wellbeing are critical to creating a conducive environment for learning. What are the features of teacher–pupil relations that produce a good learning environment? How do issues of gender and culture affect these classroom relations? How could identified difficulties be addressed? In what ways do teachers interact with pupils outside class that impact positively on pupil wellbeing and enthusiasm for learning? What are the features of positive peer interactions? What kinds of peer interactions are having a detrimental effect on learning? Who is affected? What could be done to improve the situation?

Teachers’ two main teaching aids (beyond themselves) are the chalk board and the textbook. How are these teaching aids, where available, being used to facilitate learning? How could teachers improve their use of these teaching aids? How do successful teachers manage to adapt the use of textbooks in their teaching in relation to textbook shortages? To what extent does the language in which the textbook is written have an impact on the way it is used and/or its effectiveness?

Research is needed into what goes on in terms of teaching and learning in IQTE and nomadic schools. In what ways are the processes similar to and/or different from regular public schools? What can regular schools learn from IQTE or nomadic schools that would help improve school quality (and vice versa)? How do gender issues play out and affect learning?

The 2004 ESA and the PTTE talked about the need for schools to educate the whole child, and not just focus on academic attainment. What other types of learning are going on in schools? How could these be further enhanced?

How is inclusion being managed in schools in terms of access and quality? What are teachers, head teachers and pupils’ understandings of inclusion? What are schools actively doing to promote it? What are the obstacles to implementing inclusive practices in school? How could they be addressed?
Gaps in research: school quality – teacher education and supervision to support teaching and learning quality

Research on teaching quality also needs complementary research on teacher education (both in-service and pre-service) and supervision. This review has shown that the response to poor-quality school teaching has often been to increase in-service training and qualification upgrading. On the whole, however, there is little available research evidence to suggest that this has helped improve teaching quality, other than teachers saying that it has. Given that there has also been widespread criticism of teacher education, more detailed research is needed to establish what goes on in teacher education institutions and in in-service training and school inspection and supervision that helps or hinders improvements in teaching quality.

What happens in distance teacher education? How does it compare with face-to-face teacher education? How do NCE and PGDE preparations compare? The Grade II teaching qualification has been said by some to have been a better gauge of teaching competence than the current NCE; if so, what were the specific features of that qualification that helped prepare teachers better for the classroom? What are teachers doing in the classroom that demonstrates the effectiveness or not of particular types of teacher education?

Studies are needed that track trainee teachers through college, teaching practice, and then into school as newly qualified teachers. To what extent are the colleges/universities preparing trainees for the realities of the classroom and school life? To what extent and in what ways do they help students acquire subject knowledge? What are the students’ learning experiences and difficulties in college/university? How do the teacher education institutions help students to adapt to schools afterwards? What type of support is given at each stage by the college/university and/or school and how could it be improved? What kind of supervision/support is given variously by other school staff, head teachers, local government school supervisors, and other state or federal school inspectors? How could it be improved?

What kinds of ‘good practice’ exist in terms of good intra-school and inter-school support (e.g. in clusters, mentoring programmes, etc.) for teachers by other teachers or the head teacher? What features of such programmes have a positive effect on teaching quality?

Research suggests that teachers are unaware of and/or unwilling to admit to their own part, and that of the school more generally, in pupil/student failure to learn. Positive reports on earlier action-research projects in a number of states (Adekola 2007) suggest that action research might be a productive methodology to encourage teachers (and schools) to reflect more critically on their practices, and develop school quality improvement from within.

The research evidence indicates low levels of teacher professionalism on the part of some teachers (e.g. absenteeism, unsanctioned or unregulated corporal punishment, etc.). What are the disciplinary procedures and other practices that are helping to improve levels of teacher professionalism? What role are head teachers, the LGEA and/or state officials playing in this? What roles do the TRCN, TIP and TDC play and how do they interact with SUBEBs and LGEAs? How are PTAs, SBMCs and other community organisations involved in improving teacher professionalism? What are the conditions that support higher levels of teacher professionalism?

Gaps in research: school quality – other issues

What is the relationship between school choice and school quality? Research indicates that parents are increasingly choosing to send their children to private institutions, especially in urban areas, because these schools are perceived to be better quality. Research is needed to look at how this plays out in particular community contexts. Where there are multiple different education providers available in one
location, what determines school choice? In other words, which aspects of school quality are considered more important by parents (e.g. better teacher attendance, preferred MOI, presence of religious instruction, better infrastructure, etc.)? Are these quality indicators perceived or actual in these particular schools? What are the demographics of the pupil intake in the different schools and what are the implications for social cohesion and equity? What impact is the growing private sector having on state schooling in these contexts?

Recent improved infrastructure has been associated with increased pupil enrolments, boosts in teacher and pupil morale, and improved school quality. However, maintenance is proving a problem and sanitation facilities are not always being used. Who is responsible for school maintenance in policy and in practice? What are the maintenance issues in schools and what are the causes? How could matters be improved? Improved water and sanitation is said to be improving access and retention, especially of girls. To what extent is this actually the case? Why are sanitation facilities often not used? What are the issues in this regard? To what extent are schools sharing school infrastructure and facilities with communities and what impact is this having on school–community relations and community involvement in school?

The limited available research evidence indicates that disciplinary systems in schools (including the prefect/monitor system) are often punitive and violent and that children are often punished for ‘offences’ over which they have no control (e.g. non-payment of fees or an inability to answer a question). This has an adverse effect on school quality and pupil retention. In schools where ‘child-friendly’ school practices are being developed, what are the features of schooling that have a positive impact on school discipline? What examples exist of non-violent disciplinary practices and what are the conditions that promote such practices? What are the differences in disciplinary practices among different school types (private, public, single-sex, IQTE, nomadic, etc.)? What influence do the SBMC, PTA, other community organisations and parents have in determining and/or regulating school disciplinary regimes?

Good pupil–peer relations in school are important to pupil wellbeing and retention and conducive to learning. However, little is known about peer interactions in schools beyond what is revealed in a handful of questionnaire-based studies on bullying and violence and some data on gendered violence from gender-focused research. What kinds of peer interactions go on in schools? How are they affected by age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, etc.? To what extent and in what ways do peer interactions enhance or inhibit learning? What impact do they have on retention? How do schools intervene in and manage pupil conflict?

**Gaps in research: improving the impact of schooling**

Great concern has been shown in the literature about learning outcomes, resulting in more testing of pupils (and teachers) recently in project-supported states. However, the evidence would suggest that we also need to consider pupil progress (or lack of progress) in attainment in relation to the number of contact days/hours that particular learners have spent in a classroom with a teacher. This, the research also tells us, varies tremendously – so, how does pupil and teacher attendance interact with pupil attainment?

What role does the MOI play in pupils’/students’ ability to understand tests and exams? How does their proficiency in the MOI affect classroom learning and test/exam outcomes?

There has been widespread criticism of the non-application of CA, which has been dubbed ‘continuous testing’. But exactly what types of assessments are teachers giving and why? What is their understanding of CA and its purpose? How are CA marks being recorded? What kinds of feedback are pupils being given? What sort of CPD support have teachers received and has it helped in the implementation of the CA approach? What kind of support do teachers need to enable them to carry
out more meaningful CA? What other conditions are necessary for CA to be carried out more successfully?

Schooling seems to result in poor learning outcomes for many students, particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy, but what about progress in learning outcomes? In which years are pupils making more/less progress (and which pupils), and what are the factors that determine this? Longitudinal research could usefully measure particular individuals’ progress over time to explore this issue.

What about the broader impact of schooling, on labour market participation and health, for example? What types of learning and knowledge (beyond literacy and numeracy) do some pupils acquire during schooling that might help explain the positive correlations between schooling and other outcomes? How are these skills applied in the outside world? What are the differences among different groups of pupils/students? What other skills and knowledge do pupils feel are needed from schooling? What are employers’ views?

Gaps in research: school governance and community support for improving school quality

There is now a substantial body of literature on community participation in school, almost exclusively related to development programmes and particularly on SBMCs and, to a lesser extent, PTAs. Reports have agreed that so far the greatest successes have involved raising funds, assisting with infrastructural development and resource provision. Advocacy regarding girls’ education and generating interest in formal schooling has reportedly also had positive results. There have also been success tales of community-generated databases being started and community monitoring of teacher and pupil attendance. Some SBMCs are now becoming more involved in school development planning.

However, more needs to be known about the socio-political, economic and cultural contexts in which SBMCs are thought to be working well. What are the processes involved in constituting the SBMC? Who are the SBMC members? To what extent does the composition of the committee adhere to the regulations? Why/why not? What are the implications for inclusion and equity? How might equity and inclusion be improved? What are the processes involved in committee meetings? How are decisions made and by whom? How are views on school issues sought among the wider community? What is the role of the head teacher? To what extent and in what ways are SBMCs involved in school governance? What are the capacity needs that would enable them to participate more effectively? How are they being met? To what extent and in what ways are LGEAs (and SUBEBs) supporting SBMC activity to improve the quality of schooling? Where SBMCs are said to be working effectively, what are the conditions that promote effective involvement? What are the difficulties and how might they be overcome?

Studies are also lacking on the other ways in which community members support schooling outside the SBMC or PTA – through CBOs, alumni associations, etc. What about the engagement of individual parents/guardians and other family members? What are schools doing to encourage their support? What are parents and other family members’ experiences of, and involvement in, school issues? Which parents/family members feel included and excluded from school issues? What could be done to increase parental/family participation?
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The coding following the references relates to an adaptation of the DFID-recommended coding for literature reviews found in DFID (2013a). See Appendix III for a full listing of codes.


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Review of the literature on basic education in Nigeria

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Review of the literature on basic education in Nigeria


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The goal of the Report is to highlight the major issues and challenges of the Educational sector that should provide a ROAD MAP for national policy dialogues and concerted action for the purposeful development of the sector, within the overall context of NEEDS and the on-going reform agenda of Government. These ISSUES AND CHALLENGES are as follows:

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE and EDUCATION

1. Accurate statistics on the number of children aged zero to six in every locality.
2. Adequate pre-natal care for women
3. A systematic programme of parent and community sensitisation to the psycho-social needs of children
4. Comprehensive care and education strategies that fully integrate health, nutrition, socialisation, physical development, and intellectual stimulation of pre-school children,
5. Ensuring community ownership of such programmes, to ensure their sustainability.
6. Expanding Access to ECCE & Pre-Primary Education.
7. Infusion of Indigenous Practices of Child Stimulation in ECCE Programmes
8. Institutionalisation of ECCE Centres in Public Primary Schools
9. Provision of Adequate Instructional Materials by Local Fabricators
10. Training & Re-training of Teachers

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

1. The need for enhanced recognition of the non-formal route and a clearer articulation of these in the National Policy on Education.
2. The need for the national policy to make provision for various extension services (agriculture, family planning, health, and national orientation) to be fully integrated into life skills education programmes.
3. Full integration of non-formal education into UBE.
4. Improved Data and Knowledge Base on non-formal education
5. Improved regulatory control and harmonization: There is a need to introduce some quality assurance mechanisms for enhanced service delivery in the non-formal sector. There must be a means of introducing some regulatory framework for harmonizing the activities of providing agencies and the regulating standards even if these have to be worked out by the non-formal players themselves.
6. Building Appropriate Bridges and Ladders: Mechanisms to be created for the mainstreaming and building of appropriate linkages with the formal sector. Practitioners in non-formal education have time and again encountered difficulties in determining the levels at which a child or youth who has been in the non-formal sector can get back into the mainstream.
7. Drawing on the Strengths of the Non-formal Route to Enhance the Relevance of Curricula and Practices in the Formal Sector: Non-formal education programmes are seen to be learner-centred/driven, democratic in orientation, tapping from and building on learners’ experiences, relevant and immediately applicable to the needs of learners. These are areas from which formal curricular design can borrow much.

PRIMARY EDUCATION
1. Insufficiency data/information for timely policy provisions, to address issues at appropriate times
2. Inadequate funding and lack of appropriate financing framework that would ensure UBE goal attainment nationwide.
3. Low teacher quality, despite the policy provision of national minimum teaching qualification requirement of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) for teachers at the primary education level.
4. Low learning achievements at the primary, as depicted by MLA and other related results at national and state levels.
5. Disparities in educational development among states, LGAs, and between rural and urban areas and by gender and socio-economic groups.
6. Inadequate and dilapidated school structures that require rehabilitation to ensure improved access and retention for the large population to be covered.
7. Absence of a gender-in-Education policy, despite the global focus on the issue.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. Access: While much has been done lately to enhance accessibility of secondary schools to most learners, much still needs be done, in several states. Ideally, a learner should not have to walk more than 2 or 3 kilometres to get to school.
2. From the gender perspective, the imbalance needs be addressed such that girls are stimulated to attend and remain in school for the duration of the course. Although the focus is usually on how to woo more girls to go to school and keep them there; attention need to be paid to places where boys too are no longer interested in secondary education.
3. The need to diversify opportunities for students to take account of various talents and cater for several needs. The practice of catering for just academic interests and talents should change. This calls for a wholesale review of the curriculum to conform to 21st century demands.
4. In virtually all the test results examined, students in the private schools excelled those in the public schools. This indicates that there are certain factors that make the private schools tick. The challenge should be to adequately equip all schools with all the facilities needed to make education meaningful.
5. Similarly, that students in urban schools excelled those in rural settings should counsel that rural schools, which are mostly public, should be consciously beefed up to stimulate attendance and promote performance.
6. Finally, community participation and involvement should be stimulated. The present stance by most states that repel participation even by the local PTAs should be reviewed.

TEACHER EDUCATION: DEMAND AND SUPPLY

1. The need to develop a teacher profile to guide curricula for teacher education. The many years of attempting to upgrade the minimum qualification for teaching in Nigerian schools have not yielded the desired results. This study indicates many ways of addressing this issue.
2. Improved methodology for determining teacher demand: Though there are forums for obtaining and exchanging information on the needs of states, the fact that individual states tailor their needs to what they perceive as in their immediate and best interests do not allow for a logical process of planning. Constitutional provisions could be examined that would encourage all states and stakeholders to give relevant information to the relevant agency to carry out the exercise of determining teacher needs years ahead.
3. Improved teacher support system and supervision: Most respondents identified the failure of management to provide adequate support systems and supervision to drive the whole school system. In particular, better and more effective ways have to be found to raise quality assurance measures.
4. Continued Professional Development of Practicing Teachers: Opportunities abound for teachers for upward professional mobility. However, stricter supervision would seem to be needed in this direction.

5. Teachers’ full involvement in Educational Development: Any school system that does not involve the teacher and the stakeholders is under utilizing its resources and truncating its potentials.

FINANCING OF EDUCATION

1. The Data Problem: Though the Federal Government, State Government and Local Government Areas produce data on executed budgets annually, these are not collated into comprehensive Government accounts presenting global sectoral breakdowns of expenditure. A mechanism must be developed whereby data are generated and made available on all aspects of the financing of education in the country.

2. Dwindling facilities: Several studies in recent years have shown that facilities in schools are in a deplorable condition. It is imperative that steps are taken urgently to beef up the maintenance of all such facilities at all the levels of education. This would stem the tide not only of the infrastructural decay in the institutions, but also of the general decline in morale for learning.

3. Competing demands on government: It has become apparent that there is a limit to which the total revenue generated by Government can go because of the competing demands on Government from all sectors of the economy. It is, therefore, imperative that financing of education should become the ‘responsibility of all’.

CROSS CUTTING CHALLENGES

1. Community participation and partnership in educational development is generally growing but the bulk of the partnership appears largely limited to efforts of Parents.

2. The types of support that groups in the communities provide are largely in the area of provision/repair of physical facilities.

3. Ensuring transparency and accountability has also been a challenge, especially with donor-assisted projects.

4. On Special Education, the need to pursue the following goals of EFA:
   
a. By 2015 all children particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, should have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

b. By 2005, gender disparities in primary and secondary education should be eliminated while gender equality in education will be realized by 2015.
Appendix II: Search terms used in literature search

Nigeria AND ... (West Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa or Africa if not enough articles from a Nigeria search)

primary education; basic education; Universal Basic Education; UBE; secondary education; junior secondary education; special education; disability; nomadic schools; private education; religious schools; faith-based schools; school management; head teachers; teachers; teacher pay & conditions; teacher deployment; teacher careers; teacher education; in-service education; pre-service education; CPD; teacher professionalism; discipline; school processes; pupil peer relations; school duties; school-community relations; community participation; parental participation; PTAs; SBMCs; language; Islamic education; identities – specify e.g. gender identities, ethnic identities, religious identities, institutional identities (e.g. teacher/pupil); access; attendance; dropout; out-of-school children; overage pupils; repeaters; classroom observations; education and health; language(s) in school; medium of instruction; language of instruction; mother-tongue teaching; bi-lingual education; multi-lingual education; costs of schooling; school infrastructure; LGEAs; political economy; school governance; school inspection; M&E; gender and education; girls’ education; boys’ education; Koranic schools; Qur’anic schools; almajirai; Islamiyya schools; Tsangaya schools; orphans and vulnerable children; OVC; orphans; vulnerable children; street children; child trafficking; youth sexuality; school-based gender violence; bullying; pedagogy; classroom interaction; decentralisation; child labour; child health; data quality; educational quality; teaching quality; school quality; school administration; Maths education; Maths teaching; English teaching; Science education; English teaching; literacy; numeracy; early marriage; youth sexual health; early childhood education.
Appendix III: Reference coding system

DOCUMENT/STUDY TYPE:

Baseline [BASE]; mid-term/interim evaluation [EVAL – M]; final evaluation [EVAL – F]

Primary & empirical [P&E]
Secondary & empirical [S&E] – (e.g. original analysis of existing data set)
   systematic review [S – SR]
   other review [S – OR]

Theoretical/conceptual [TC]

Viewpoint [VIEW]

Historical account [HIST]

Needs analysis [NEEDS – AN]

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Quantitative [QUAN]; qualitative [QUAL]; mixed methods [MIXM].

METHODOLOGIES/METHODS:

e.g. Ethnography or ethnographic methods [ETHN]; longitudinal [LONG]; case study [CASE].
Survey [SUR]; questionnaire [QUEST]; interview (group/individual) [INT – GP/INT – I]; focus
   group [FGP]; observations [OBS]; document/desk review [DR]; statistical analysis [STAT–AN];
   assessment [ASSESS]; Participatory Rural Appraisal [PRA]