

## HOW FAR HAVE WE FARED IN ENSURING RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN NIGERIA?

### RIGHT TO EDUCATION INDEX (RTEI) FINDINGS FOR NIGERIA 2015.

#### What is Right to Education Index (RTEI)?

The right to education Index (RTEI) is a new global index designed to drive accountability and progress towards realizing the right to education. RTEI works with civil society, research institutions and governments to collect data on a wide variety of indicators of the right to education to identify progress being made towards the fulfillment of the right to education as well as obstacles to it. RTEI will be conducted on a biennial basis to track such progress, identify trends, and support efforts towards the right to education.



The RTEI looks at 5 themes; Governance, Accessibility, Adaptability, Availability and Acceptability in determining how countries have fared towards guaranteeing right to education.

#### Nigeria RTEI results

The overall RTEI result is calculated from the *RTEI Core Questionnaire* conducted which provides a country specific index result measuring how well a country respects, protects, and fulfills the right to education for its citizens. It is similar to other index-based initiatives, such as the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Index and the Global Integrity Index.

#### The overall Index score for Nigeria is 76.1

|                            |               |                        |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|
| ✓ <b>Governance</b>        | <b>94.560</b> | ✓ <b>Availability</b>  | <b>53.275</b> |
| International Framework    | 100.000       | Classrooms             | 25.600        |
| Domestic Law               | 100.000       | Sanitation             | 50.000        |
| Plan of action             | 100.000       | Teachers               | 37.500        |
| Monitoring and Reporting   | 84.400        | Textbooks              | 100.000       |
| Data Availability          | 88.400        |                        |               |
| ✓ <b>Accessibility</b>     | <b>77.833</b> | ✓ <b>Acceptability</b> | <b>79.967</b> |
| Free Education             | 97.400        | Aims of Education      | 100.000       |
| Discrimination             | 58.300        | Learning Environment   | 44.300        |
| Participation              | 77.800        | Learning Outcomes      | 95.600        |
| ✓ <b>Adaptability</b>      | <b>75.067</b> |                        |               |
| Children with Disabilities | 66.500        |                        |               |
| Children of minorities     | 92.700        |                        |               |
| Out of school education    | 66.000        |                        |               |

The table above shows that Nigeria have laws, policies and plans on right to education but issues on availability and acceptability are potential areas of focus for the country.

## Issue Area 1: Teachers Development

The issue of teachers' development is a big challenge in the education sector especially at the basic education level. Teachers' quality and quantity has posed a big issue in the teaching and learning of pupils in schools. According to the Nigeria Education for All (EFA) review, 60.59% of teachers are trained in 2011 and the Pupil Teachers Ratio(PTR) is as high as 70:1.

One of the major factors of poor learning outcomes in schools could be attributed to teachers' quality and quantity. For teachers to perform maximally in schools there is need for emphasis on training and retraining of teachers on new innovations and teachings methodology to cope with various categories of pupils. Apart from training of teachers which should be constant, there is need to recruit and increase incentive for teachers in rural and remote areas as many schools in the rural area are overcrowded and hence poor teaching and learnings taking place in schools. There is also need to review student performance in relation to teachers' quality, truancy, training and commitment in schools.

## Area 2: Learning outcomes

One of the aims of sending ones ward to schools apart from molding of one's child is to build the capacity of the child to be able to cope and compete with other children of age brackets.

Over the years there had been outcry over the continual decrease in learning achievements of pupils at all stages of the education system. The situation is worsening even as the university yearly turn out graduated know as "half baked

graduates"

<http://thenationonlineng.net/whos-to-blame-for-half-baked-graduates/>who

sometimes cannot read or write. In the secondary schools, student's performance in the national exams has continued to worsen with stakeholders crying over the poor performance in schools at all levels. In 2015, performance in West African Examination Commission (WAEC) of the 1,593,442 that sat for the examination, 616,370 (38.68%) obtained credits in five subjects and above, including English Language and Mathematics. According to the Head of National Office, WAEC, Dr. Charles Eguridu, 118,101 results of candidates, (7.41%) were withheld due to exam malpractice. This is a fall out from weak education sector in Nigeria.

Now, most parents especially the poor have found it difficult to send their children to schools (especially public schools they can afford but which is poorly funded and managed) when the end result of passing with good grades, getting a good job and helping the family is not guaranteed.



Looking at the Nigeria index score, sub theme - Availability- one could agree that some of the factors attributing to poor learning outcomes of students in schools are

inadequate classrooms, teachers, textbooks etc. other factors include on the Many factors could be attributed to the poor learning outcomes includes overcrowded classrooms, obsolete and out of date books & equipments in libraries and laboratories, unqualified and ill motivated teachers, poor learning environment etc.

### **Disadvantaged and Marginalized children**

Though the National Policy on Education (NPE 2013 pg. 65) outlined 10 categories of persons with special needs with the aim of providing access to education for all persons, in an inclusive setting, there still gaps towards implementation of the policy.

Despite the policy specifying the need to have a regular updated data on persons with special needs, provision of learning facilities and training and re training of teachers etc all these are yet to be implemented in schools as children with special needs are continually being marginalized and schools are not made accessible to them.

Apart from the children with disability or special needs, another category of the marginalized groups are the girl-child, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), Internally displaced Children, Out-of-school children etc. Much attention has not been given to these categories of children as millions of them do not have access to quality education in the country.

### **Safety/Security of the students at Schools and learning centers**

The safety and security of the students at various schools across the country particularly in the insurgency prone states of country is gradually becoming a major

threat to education sector because of several insurgent attacks being launched unannounced. The abduction of Chibok girls is one typical example of this. Almost 24 months after, over 200 school girls who were taken from their school hostels in Chibok, Borno State by Boko Haram militants, are yet to be found despite a global social media campaign and pleas from international leaders. This automatically led to closure of schools in the state for several months, thereby increasing the number of school children who are out of school.

### **Data availability**

The issue of data has continued to be a major challenge in Nigeria not only in the education sector. In the collection of data for the RTEI survey, most data that will enhance planning were not available. Despite having the Education Management Information System (EMIS), it was difficult gathering relevant information online. Though the Bureau of statistics, National Planning Commission (NPC), National Population Commission have some data posted on their websites even though most of the data are not up to date.

Most of the data were sourced from published documents by the government, development partners, NGOs, private organisation and individual research documents. This shows that except such documents are available and widely circulated, it will be difficult to get lay hands on relevant data. Also it is disheartening to note that available data are mostly supported by development partners that intend to intervene in a given area. This makes one wonder on the roles and responsibility of NBS, EMIS that are

annually funded to carry out research which are not conducted except spearheaded and funded by donor bodies.

Some data were not properly disaggregated e.g.

- Number of qualified teachers, qualification, number of trainings received, location and level of education teaching (primary or secondary)
- Non disaggregated data on household spending on education e.g. on uniforms, textbooks,
- Gross/Net enrollment or completion on
  - ✓ Rural / urban
  - ✓ Income quintiles
  - ✓ Students with disability

The survey reveals inadequate data on

- Number of pupil textbook ratio
- Number of schools with water and toilet facilities
- Number of learning facilities/ equipments available to schools (up to date) etc

Also the some data were not available e.g.

- Number of children with disability and disability type
- Number of recorded cases of violence and abuse in schools
- Overall passing score of national exams
- Number of private schools and children enrolled in private schools etc.



## Recommendations

- There is need to back up the policy with actions by increasing budgetary allocation to clearly and achievable set out education plans.
- There is need to critically look at teachers' professionalism and welfare in order to attract and retain capable hands to educate our children and this should be followed with constant training and retraining.
- Efforts should be made in capturing data on private schools in the country.
- Efforts should be made by government and other stakeholders to make available information online for accessibility.
- Government should adequately fund NBS, EMIS, NPC etc to carry out up to date research studies without relying on development partners.
- Government should make efforts towards utilizing research findings in policy and programme planning.
- CSOs and development partners should support government and make effort to disseminate information available to them to all stakeholders